

## 82. Clément Chantôme

Club: Paris Saint Germain, Toulouse FC (loan)

Date of Birth: 11th September 1987

Position: Midfielder

26 year old French midfielder Clément Chantôme has had a fantastic season on the pitch, but a very frustrating season off of it. After remaining with PSG for the first five months of the year, being one of the few of the club's youth academy players not to have been wiped away by the influx of foreign talent thanks to the Qataris, the midfielder was in the summer shipped off to Toulouse; the Ligue 1 club at which he remains on loan at. Despite wonderful performances, which we will come on to, Chantôme will maybe be disappointed to not to feature for the Champions this season, having made 26 Ligue 1 appearances for them in 2012/13. The likes of Adrien Rabiot now appear to be preferred to the midfielder, who does seem unlikely to play for his parent club ever again.

The start of 2013 was frustrating for Chantôme. Despite an impressive beginning to the 2012/2013 campaign in the midfield, a combination of the great form of Blaise Matuidi and the arrival of David Beckham meant that game time became limited for the 26 year old, who became a more and more aggravated figure on the PSG bench.

Nevertheless, his performances in 2012 allowed him to attract interest from many clubs across Europe. As we told you, Everton were highly interested in the player, and this was confirmed by Chantôme's agent. There was also interest from French clubs and when Chantôme was left out of the PSG squad for the 'Trophée des Champions', the Frenchman was given no choice but to leave the club: *"Clément Chantôme has never said 'I want to leave'. When you are a Parisian, and you support the club then why would you? He loves PSG. However, when you send him a sign at the beginning of the season like leaving him out of the squad, does he have a choice?"*

Chantôme's role in PSG's winning of the Ligue 1 title is criminally underrated. His performances reassured the likes of Verratti and Matuidi who were given more freedom for error with the 26 year old's ability to sweep up after his teammates by rectifying their mistakes and winning the ball back.



However, one thing that a move to Toulouse has done is given Chantôme confidence. With Téfécé he goes from having been a squad player, crowded out by some of the world's biggest football names, to a key player for the Ligue 1 mid-table side. This has worked wonders on the performance front for Chantôme and the 26 year old has probably been their most consistent player so far this season, occupying the holding midfield role.

Chantôme's distribution has been first class yet again, with a near 90 per-cent passing success rate in Ligue 1 so far this season. It has to be said in fact that Chantôme has yet to have a poor game for Toulouse all season. The 26 year old has been a constant presence in the middle of the park and in a 2-1 win away at St Étienne he was the stand out performer, looking calm and collected in the centre of the park. Toulouse have not been exceptional in defence this season, with one of the poorer records in the league, but Chantôme's defensive ability is clear for all to see. He has made a number of crucial interceptions this season and one of his main strengths is holding the ball up and bringing it out of danger. Toulouse must invest in some centre-backs during the January window to ensure that Chantôme's hard work is not in vain.

2013 has been a year out for Chantôme of the French National side, with vicious competition for places, especially for the holding midfield role he currently operates in. The midfielder has only ever made one appearance for Les Bleus, towards the end of 2012, but may never wear the Les Bleus shirt again. At best Chantôme has an outside chance of nabbing a spot on the plane to Brazil. Whether Chantôme will make his Toulouse move permanent at the end of the season, or indeed before, remains unseen, but it is definitely a club at where he has been able to express himself more. At PSG for the first six months of the season Chantôme played well when called upon, but opportunities were rare. At Toulouse, he has been consistently impregnable and has really laid down his marker. He is surely an early contender for Toulouse's player of the season.

*'I really hope so. It is always beautiful to be at PSG.'*

Clément Chantôme

On returning to PSG after Toulouse- 18th September 2013

**STATS CENTRAL:** Clément Chantôme boasted the highest pass completion rate out of any player in Ligue 1 throughout the whole of the 2012/2013 campaign: 93%