

66. Daniel Wass

Club: Evian TG FC

Date of Birth: 31st May 1989

Position: Midfielder



2013 has been some year for Daniel Wass. The 24 year Dane has established himself as a permanent fixture in the Evian side. At the end of 2013, it is clear that Evian will have to fight all the way in order to stave off the threat of relegation from Ligue 1. Wass is yet to receive any great recognition outside of the French footballing world. However, ask those who follow the domestic game across the channel about Wass's attributes and potential and a picture of an exciting versatile talent will emerge.

One of Wass' most enviable strengths is his versatility. Originally a right back, the Dane has crept up the pitch to right winger, but in truth is comfortable anywhere on the right hand side of the field. He has also played across the park at left back and, this season, has occasionally slotted into the centre of midfield. Wass is known for his pace and direct running, and can be frequently seen racing beyond his opposing full back, whether playing in defence or midfield. Quick footed and aware, Wass' runs between and beyond defenders are equally useful at creating space for those around him to drive into. Comfortable with either foot, the Evian number 18 is also impressive in the air, standing at just under six foot, but with an energetic leap.

In order to fully understand why Wass is emerging only now, one must assess his early years in the footballing obscurity of Denmark. Wass began his career excelling in the youth sides of first BK Avartha before being spotted by a scout for Brøndby IF in 2006. After only a year in the youth sides of the Drengene Fra Vestegen, he was promoted to the first team. Between 2007 and 2011, Wass appeared for Brøndby 85 times, scoring 8 goals. The only blip during his time spent at Brøndby was a loan spell midway through his career designed to give the youngster more experience. Wass was loaned out to Norwegian side Fredrikstad, but a managerial change at the Norwegian club led to Wass becoming surplus to requirements and he played only 3 games. On his return to Brøndby, Wass established himself in the starting eleven and, in the following season, became the club's first choice right back.

After an unsuccessful spell with Benfica he headed for Evian. At Les Croix de Savoie, Wass linked up with fellow Danes Christian Poulsen, Stephan Andersen, and Thomas Kahlenberg and, despite initially struggling to impose himself on the Evian squad, became a firm fixture in the side. On June 20th last year, Wass signed a permanent deal at Parc des Sports for a fee of €2.5m.

2012-13, Wass' first season as a permanent Evian player, saw the Dane make his mark as one of Ligue 1's brightest youngsters. Evian narrowly avoided relegation, finishing just two points above the drop zone, but were also agonisingly close to winning the Coupe de France; a last minute strike by Cheick Diabaté handing Bordeaux the trophy. Wass had by this point secured his place on the right hand side of midfield, scoring on the opening day of the season, and then again in late January against Ajaccio, racing beyond the last defender to nod over the oncoming keeper.

This season, Wass has found the net three times, but also provided three telling assists, all coming in different games during the campaign. His three goals have all demonstrated the young man's variety and technical ability: his pace saw him burst beyond the Monaco backline to slot home Modou Sougou's flick on, he rose highest to nod home against Toulouse and, last but not least, he rifled home a bullet free-kick in Evian's 2-2 draw against Montpellier HSC. Wass scored a similar effort last season, crashing home from distance against Bordeaux. The Dane's right footed set pieces are becoming something of a trademark. With a short run up, Wass bends the ball with dip and pace, and will surely find the net with such efforts in future.

The future for Wass looks bright. He has now played approaching 20 matches for his country, and will surely be a part of Denmark's qualification attempt for Euro 2016. As for the rest of the season with Evian, it could still yet be a successful campaign. After week 18, the club languish in 16th place, but have a comfortable 9 point gap between themselves and Valenciennes FC in 18th. An incredible 2-0 win over PSG at the start of the month has instilled confidence in the side that they can climb the table, and with Wass beginning to realise his full potential as part of the Evian attack, 2014 could turn out to be a very good year indeed for the young Dane.

'I must admit I'm not at my level yet. Maybe because the summer break was so short...'

Daniel Wass

On the strain of Euro 2012- 30th January 2013

DID YOU KNOW? Daniel Wass is only 24 but is already the father of two children.