

100. Emmanuel Rivière

Club: AS Monaco FC

Date of Birth: 3rd March 1990

Position: Attacker



After a frustrating 2012 at Toulouse, Emmanuel Rivière appears to have turned a corner in 2013 with newly-promoted big spenders Monaco. The 23 year old Frenchman has been labelled in the past as one of France's most exciting attacking prospects, 'the new Thierry Henry,' and is now giving some credence to this bold comparison. The Frenchman started his career at Coupe de la Ligue holders St Étienne, before moving to Toulouse in July of 2011. Rivière then made the trip to the South East coast of France to join Monaco for €4m at the start of the calendar year, the amount being €2m less than what he joined Toulouse for two years previously, which perhaps shows his apparent recent decline as a footballer.

Rivière was forced to accept that his situation may yet worsen before it ameliorates, after spending the first 6 months of 2013 struggling to get into the then Ligue 2 side Monaco's team; playing second fiddle to the likes of Valère Germain and Ibrahima Touré, who got 32 goals between them in the whole of last season's 2nd tier-winning campaign. Nevertheless, when Rivière got his chance, he grabbed it with both hands. Despite featuring in 14 Ligue 2 games at the back end of last season, he managed to contribute 4 goals to the title winning team, when only actually featuring from the start in 4 games.

Since the beginning of the 2013-2014 season, Rivière seems to have grown in confidence and fearlessness. The sale of Touré and the waning favour of Germain has put Rivière second in the striking pecking order, the Frenchman is second choice only to Falcao and has on occasions this season started up front alongside the Colombian. One notable occasion where this was effective, was during a 4-1 thumping of Bordeaux, where the two combined brilliantly, with Falcao acting as a target man and Rivière running onto the ball in behind the back four. Rivière went on to notch up a hat-trick and with that proved he has the chance to fulfil the potential he has been earmarked to have.

It is true that the attacker's playing time in 2013 has been somewhat limited, but Rivière has been consistently impactful when given the chance in Monaco's starting XI and gives manager Claudio Ranieri a 'wildcard' option that he has used to some effect at points during this calendar year.

Rivière has tended to perform best positionally just in behind the striker as a sort of attacking midfielder.

Whether this is the position where Rivière wants to establish himself is unknown, but the player has shown great vision for the pass here and, as mentioned, can work off the main striker, running intelligent lines across the opposition back four.

There are however areas of his game which the Frenchman must improve upon if he is to play a part in Monaco's future. Rivière is light on his feet and is developing a marksman-like approach to shooting but he needs to perhaps start spending some time in the gym due to his apparent lack of strength when attempting to hold the ball up.

The 23 year old also must improve his tactical awareness, as he is flagged offside all too often, much to the annoyance of his teammates. There are clearly substantial areas of Rivière's game that need improving, but his impact at Monaco has earned him a spot in the GFFN 100. However, at the age of 23, Rivière must be playing games if he is to make a lasting impact in Ligue 1, or even have a chance of playing for the French national team. For Rivière's sake, one would hope that Monaco did not look for any more attacking reinforcements in the near future.

Internationally-speaking, Rivière has, in the past, represented France at all youth levels, but it remains to be seen whether he will be able to take it to the next level and represent his full country in the future. 2013 has been his 2nd year out of the international circuit, as he is now too old to play for the Under 21 side. It is probably unrealistic to think that Rivière has a chance of playing for France in Brazil next year, but Rivière must begin to harbour these sorts of aspirations if he can build on the rapid progress he has made in 2013.

'I am here to fight for my place. Nothing is taken for granted, I must play like I did before my injury.'

Emmanuel Rivière

2nd November 2013

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