

91. Danijel Subašić

Club: AS Monaco

Date of Birth: 27th October 1984

Position: Goalkeeper



It's been a huge year for Monaco, who finally came back into Ligue 1 and made a big splash in the transfer market, but one plus this year has been the form of a player who survived the summer squad overhaul, a goalkeeper they bought back in January 2012: Danijel Subašić.

The 29-year-old Croatian has been ever-present in the Monaco side since his transfer from Hajduk Split and helped the principality team surge back into the top flight of French football with relative ease. This good form continued into the 2013/14 season, helping Monaco sit comfortably in second place in Ligue 1 and three points off leaders Paris St-Germain at the close of the calendar year.

Rewind to Ligue 2 at the beginning of 2013 where Subašić made 18 appearances for ASM, keeping seven clean sheets in the process as Monaco lost just one game and lifted the title. He conceded just 13 goals and played an instrumental part not only to the club's promotion but also in marshalling what went on to be Ligue 2's 3rd best defence of that campaign. After promotion to Ligue 1 for the 2013/14 season, both Subašić and Monaco have continued in the same vein of form to propel themselves up whatever league table stands in their way. The side have only managed to lose twice before the winter break, letting in just 13 goals in 19 games with nine clean sheets. This included a run of five without conceding a goal, an outstanding achievement from Subašić and his defence, which also contributed to a maximum points haul from those games.

Subašić's most treasured trait is his shot-stopping ability. He is an incredible athlete, with a strong leap which propels him across his goal, making saves that others just do not have the reflexes to pull off. On top of this, when he does make a save, he is assured enough to make certain the ball is pushed wide or over to prevent an opportunity on the rebound for the opposition, a quality sometimes overlooked as an integral part of a modern goalkeeper's game.

As is becoming evermore necessary for a modern goalkeeper, Subašić has shown good technical ability with his feet as well as his hands. This was actually best showcased last year when he scored a free-kick for Monaco back in 2012, curling it into the bottom corner. Subašić has had to adapt, playing for a team with Champions League aspirations. He has learnt that for vast periods of the game he will not be called upon at all and has worked to ensure 100% mental focus over 90 minutes, regularly coming up with a save in a game where he might only have that shot to deal with due to his side's dominance.

Subašić is not perfect. He is a little tentative when coming for crosses and has a tendency to stay on his line with balls coming across his six-yard box, a dangerous tactic that cost his side a goal against Marseille, for example. He too has contributed to several horror mishaps in recent times, shown against Valenciennes recently where he didn't get a full hand to a cross that Abidal inadvertently slid into the open net.

What should be recognised though is the self-belief he possesses in the face of the ever-looming threat that ASM flex their financial muscles again to replace Subašić. Endless speculation ran through the summer and it will raise its ugly head once more in January with Victor Valdes being touted as a Monagesque already. To keep up a level of performance for his side in spite of that should be applauded, as it cannot be easy to ignore; with management constantly questioning your ability.

With that in mind, 2014 could be a different year entirely for the Croatian goalkeeper. He might make the World Cup squad but is unlikely to start and he could well be pushed out of the Monaco side by the start of next season at the latest, despite signing a new contract until 2017. Regardless of both, Subasic can look back on a pretty successful 2013 and probably the best of his career, maybe the best he will ever have.

'The 1st choice goalkeeper is 35. I am waiting...'

Danijel Subašić

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