

75. Jordan Ayew

Club: Olympique de Marseille

Date of Birth: 11th September 1991

Position: Attacker

2013 have been a year of ups and downs for Marseille forward Jordan Ayew. The attacker started the year in good form for Marseille, but after a distracting transfer window in the summer, his performances have not been of the same level in the last six months of the calendar year and his goalscoring has dried up.

As the 2013/2014 season commenced Jordan Ayew scored with three goals in three games. This included a cracker from the right hand side of the box in a 3-1 defeat to Sochaux. In the other two, against Stade Rennais and Montpellier, J.Ayew's movement in the box was first class as he darted away from his marker to create space, receive the ball and slot home. Such form showed what the Ghanaian is capable of, but the truth is that he is very inconsistent, as it took him until November to find the net again.

Ayew appears to have lost some confidence in the box in the later part of the year and his finishing has suffered as a result. The player looks nervy on the ball and seems unable to hold the ball up and put others into play. Thus, despite not ever being a particularly creative player, the 22 year old's assist count appears to have suffered as well. At a height of around five foot ten inches, Ayew is not small, but, despite his best efforts to nip in front of balls as they fly into the area before languishing defenders, he fails to appear particularly strong in the air either. Thus the majority of his goals come from on the ground.

The Ghanaian is still young and his positioning will only improve when he is able to play consistently. This, in the future, should give him a greater head-start over defenders.

Another weakness that Ayew has displayed throughout the course of 2013 is his lack of discipline. Ayew is a very hot-blooded creature and is often too forceful when he comes off the bench. He famously picked up a red card within two minutes of coming on the pitch in February 2013 against Evian after earning two yellows in 120 seconds!



It was not all doom and gloom for Ayew in 2013 however. Despite being mainly used as a substitute, his defensive contributions were often evident because as mentioned, Ayew likes to press from the front, win the ball back and start attacks. Thus he works hard for his team and probably deserves more plaudits than he actually received during the latter part of 2013. Jordan's passing has also been excellent and this is something which has improved throughout the calendar year. Ayew had a passing accuracy rate of around 90% in the Champions League this season when he featured, which is fantastic for a striker.

Internationally, Ayew has probably reached his greatest low this year. Despite playing in the 2012 African Cup of Nations, Ayew was dropped for the 2013 competition and his current poor form leaves his participation in the World Cup in some doubt. Ayew has only played two games for his country over the year and has failed to hit the net. There is also an increase in competition for places in the attacking areas of the pitch from younger players after Ghana's strong performance in the Under 20 World Cup. We shall have to see if Ayew makes Brazil 2014, but he certainly needs to perform well in the coming months in order to do so.

Over the summer, the likes of West Brom and other English clubs were interested in bringing Ayew in on a loan deal, but no agreement was reached. Due to his lack of starts this season, this could once again be a possibility and so we shall have to see if Ayew ends January in a Marseille shirt. Whether this uncertainty about his future has knocked his form is unknown.

The cracker-jacker striker has a promising career ahead of him and can have a real future at Marseille, provided he reins in some of his childish tendencies.

'You know my temperament on the pitch. I am a bit too impulsive but I'm working on it.'

Jordan Ayew

22nd September 2013

#GFFN recommends: @FrenchFtWeekly: A band of francophiles who analyse French football in English intelligently and poignantly. All wonderful people too.