

83. Timothée Kolodziejczak

Club: OGC Nice

Date of Birth: 1st October 1991

Position: Defender

Ex-Lyon man Timothée Kolodziejczak has played an important part in Nice's successes in 2013 and has played in almost every league game for Les Aiglons over the last year. The 22 year old's performances have in Claude Puel's eyes merited him a regular first team place and truly Kolodziejczak has by no means failed his boss; both offensively and defensively speaking.

As a left back, one would perhaps not expect the player to be a goal threat of any nature. Nevertheless, Kolodziejczak got his first goal for Nice in the league against Montpellier in September. The player comes up for corners and is an aerial presence with his height (6ft). The player headed home from midway inside the box, which marked a great milestone for himself in 2013. However, as much as defenders nowadays fancy themselves to score from anywhere and anyhow their main priority has and always will be to defend. Kolodziejczak has carried out these duties with diligence and intelligence. His 'heads down' attitude to work has allowed him to reap the rewards. Rarely in 2013 did we see Kolodziejczak struggle to deal with an opposition winger.

A subtle skill which Kolodziejczak has already been able to hone in on, despite his tender age, is the balance between aggression and caution when going in to make a tackle. He keeps a cool head but is alert enough to recognise real danger and to deal appropriately with it; stopping movements down the flanks by putting his foot in at the right moment. The player's concentration appears to be constant and he rarely makes any mistakes. The great thing about Kolodziejczak is that if he does lose the ball, he will often fight in order to win it back for his team and recover his error.

At the age of just 22, the left-back does appear very calm and composed on the ball despite his youth and this sparks good omens for the future. This has been demonstrated often in 2013, as Kolodziejczak does not panic under pressure and indeed appears to look for the simple pass out of danger. However, if there is no such option available he will not hesitate to concede a throw-in or a corner going against the trend of the 21st century full-back who seems intent on playing their way out of trouble.



Kolodziejczak loves to bomb forward, and manager Puel has encouraged this; especially with his team's inability to find goals of late. Kolodziejczak does create an overlap for his team, opening up options for the midfielders. He does however limit himself. One rarely sees Kolodziejczak venture further than halfway through the opposition half; only coming away with two league assists this year, which demonstrates how reluctant he is to overcommit.

Kolodziejczak has averaged less than a cross a game so far this season, highlighting this. Either way, at just 22, this is something which he can definitely improve upon.

A strength that Kolodziejczak possesses is his versatility. The player is of course a left back and plays here most of the time, but has played for Nice in centre back this season as well, and arguably, this is where he has actually performed best. Kolodziejczak has also started one game for the Ligue 1 side in the middle of the park, just in front of the back four.

Internationally, it has been a year out for Kolodziejczak. The player has represented France at almost every youth level, but has now outgrown the under-21s and it could be a substantial period of time before he could get a full French international call up. Kolodziejczak faces strong competition in the left back area for France in the future, with the likes of young Lucas Digne also occupying this position. It is therefore vitally important that Kolodziejczak plays as many games for Nice at left back as possible. Nevertheless, there is a way out should the player want it. The 22 year old is also able to play for Poland, but has not yet made a decision about whether he wants to represent them.

'I'm not sure what he is doing. I said to him I hope we don't lose, otherwise you look silly...'

Eric Bauthéac

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