



Barcelona's latest recruit Mexican international defender Rafael Marquez (C) poses with the team's President Joan Laporta (R) and coach Frank Rijkaard during his official presentation yesterday.

## Rijkaard for balance

### Football

AFP, Barcelona

New Barcelona coach Frank Rijkaard plans to work hard on defence next season but will not lose sight of playing attractive football.

The 40-year-old Rijkaard replaced Serbian coach Radomir Antic last month and follows Johan Cruyff and Louis van Gaal to become Barcelona's third Dutch coach in the last decade.

"We've got good players, but in recent years the team has conceded too many goals. We have to work hard on the defence, but without forgetting how to play attractive football," he told the Barcelona website.

But he admitted he was unsure which players he would have next season.

Barcelona have signed Turkish international goalkeeper Rustu

Reeber, from Fenerbahce, and Mexican international defender Rafael Marquez from French first division side Monaco in the last month.

Marquez joins Barcelona on a four-year contract.

The 24-year-old, who played for French first division side Monaco, moved for a sum reportedly between five and seven million euros (5.6-7.9million dollars).

Marquez, who captained Mexico at last year's World Cup finals, will join up with former Monaco team-mate and fellow centreback Philippe Christanova.

They have also been linked with Auxerre's France striker Djibril Cisse and defender Jean-Alain Boumsong, Deportivo La Coruna's Dutch striker Roy Makaay, and Valencia's Argentine international defender Roberto Ayala and midfielder Pablo Aimar.

But they have given Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert until July 17 to sign a new contract or leave.

Barcelona have told Kluivert

they plan to cut his wages and the player is now free to activate a clause which would let him leave for a cut-price 1.8 million euros (2 million dollars).

They were beaten by Liverpool for Leeds United's Australian international Harry Kewell and appear unlikely to sign Paris St Germain's Brazil World Cup winner Ronaldinho who is also being chased by Manchester United.

Barcelona released one of their five Dutch players, veteran defender Frank De Boer, last month but plan to keep Philippe Cocu, Michael Reiziger and Marc Overmars, and possibly Kluivert.

"First, it's very important to know who's in the squad. I need to know which players I've got," Rijkaard said.

"We'll have to wait and then decide. I want a winning team that plays attractive football. People want players who give 100 percent but who also know how to play attractive football. It's very important to win because people want

good results."

He said it had been easy to accept Barcelona's offer.

"When a club like Barca offers you a job, it's not very difficult to answer. FC Barcelona is one of the best teams in the world, with wonderful fans," he said.

And he said he was unfazed by the demands after four years without a transfer.

"Pressure in a club like this has to be taken as normal," he said.

Rijkaard coached the Dutch national team from 1998 to 2000 and Sparta Rotterdam from 2001 to 2002.

He won 73 caps as a stylish midfielder for Holland. He played for Ajax, Sporting Lisbon, Spanish side Real Zaragoza and won three European Cups with AC Milan.

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