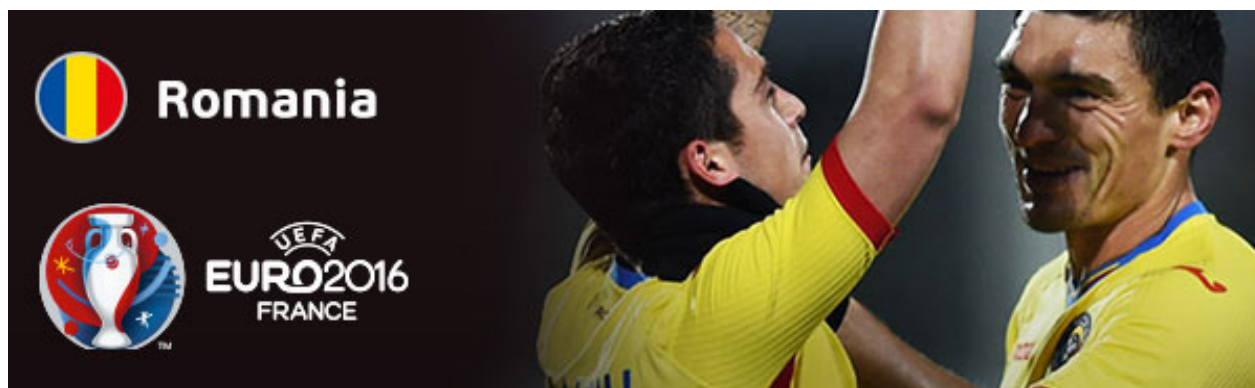


□□□□ România debutează astăzi la Euro 2016, jucând chiar în meciul de deschidere, cu Franța.

□□□ Partida România - Franța, de pe Stade de France din Paris, va începe la ora 22.00□ si trebuie subliniat□ faptul□ ca□ Romania□ va□ juca□ pentru prima oară în deschiderea unui Campionat European.

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□□□□□□□ Raț-enaccio: Can Romania stop France in opener?

Verwhelmed the first time he met France, Razvăn Raț's nerves have eased since and the defender is confident Romania have "nothing to lose, and everything to gain" in Friday's match

Aged just 20, Razvăn Raț made his Romania debut in a 2-1 friendly defeat in France under Anghel Iordănescu in February 2002. Now 35, the Rayo Vallecano left-back will be facing Les Bleus at the Stade de France under the same coach in the opening game of UEFA EURO 2016. He spoke to EURO2016.com about coming full circle

On making his debut against France

I was Under-21 captain at the time and I was shocked to get a senior call-up. I thought they only brought me along to prepare me for the future. The coach called me in after lunch for what I thought was just a friendly chat, but he told me I would be starting. I wasn't expecting that.

France were the European and world champions back then, so I was very, very nervous. I remember shaking hands with players like Zinédine Zidane who I had only ever seen on TV. I didn't play badly, but it was overwhelming emotionally and I got taken off at half-time – but it is a great memory.

On how the opening game will go

That France team was better than the current one; this team has top players at top clubs, but back then France were more competitive. Statistics mean nothing at a tournament like this [Romania have never beaten France in a competitive game].

They are the strongest team in our group, and their players are worth much more than ours, but that doesn't mean they have won the match. A Romanian win would be a shock, but once you are out on the pitch, anything can happen.

On the value of experience

I played at UEFA EURO 2008, and that experience will help me. It's about managing emotions – not being afraid, but making sure you keep focused on the job at hand. Our objective, and my personal objective, is to qualify for the next stage.

Every game is a challenge, but the greatest challenge is clearly the game against France. It is the opening game, against the hosts, who will have a lot of supporters in the stadium helping them. But I think that also puts a lot of pressure on France. In the end, Romania have nothing to lose, and everything to gain.

** sursa :-- [Paul Zaharia @UEFAcomPaulDZ](#)