



INTERNATIONAL RUGBY BOARD

SIX NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH PREVIEW

FRANCE



ITALY

Saturday 4th February 2012, KO: 15:30

Stade de France, St Denis

HEADLINES

- DIMITRI YACHVILI needs just 23 more points to equal Christophe Lamaison's 380 and become France's joint record points-scorer. Currently on 357, YACHVILI is 10 points behind Thierry Lacroix, who sits in second behind Lamaison.
- Italy has scored more than double the amount of tries that France has in its last five games - 15 against France's six.
- LOUIS PICAMOLE (25) is the only player under the age of 30 in the France starting forwards.
- Both France and Italy have lost three of their last five games, despite the former getting to a Rugby World Cup Final. France lost to Tonga and New Zealand twice, conceding 84 points and scoring just 66. Italy lost to Australia, Scotland and Ireland, conceding 118 and scoring 104.
- VINCENT CLERC needs just one more try to equal Philippe Saint-André's 32 for his country. Serge Blanco remains France's leading try scorer with 38.

CHAMPIONSHIP HISTORY

- Italy's 22-21 win in Rome last year was their first victory against the French in the Six Nations, and their first in Test rugby against France since a 32-40 win in Grenoble in 1997.
- France have scored an average of four tries in Italy's six visits to the Stade de France in the Six Nations.
- Italy's last two visits to the Stade de France have seen them concede 71 points, scoring 33 in the process.
- France have won their last eight matches at the Stade de France, stretching back to 2008 when they lost 13-24 to England.
- Italy's only away victory in the Six Nations came in Murrayfield in 2007 against Scotland.
- France haven't lost a home game in the opening match of a Championship since 1975.

HEAD TO HEAD

- In total France have played Italy 32 times, losing on just two occasions - in 1997 and in 2011. They've scored 962 points in the series conceding just 337, and have scored 143 tries, compared to 33 for Italy.
- Italy beat France 16-9 in 1993 and drew 6-6 with Les Bleus in Rovigo in 1983 but France did not award caps for these games.
- DIMITRI YACHVILI holds the French record for total amounts of points (54) scored against Italy. Diego Dominguez holds the record (113) against France for Italy.

All Time Records

>> Appearances

Points	Player
56	Ronan O'Gara Ireland
56	Mike Gibson Ireland
55	Brian O'Driscoll Ireland

>> Points

Points	Player
551	Ronan O'Gara Ireland
546	Jonny Wilkinson England
467	Stephen Jones Wales

>> Tries

Tries	Player
25	Brian O'Driscoll Ireland
24	Ian Smith Scotland
22	Shane Williams Wales



Facts & Figures

STARTING LINE UPS

- France make five changes to the starting lineup from the team that lost the Rugby World Cup Final against New Zealand. There are six changes to the bench.
- France's starting XV have a combined total of 605 Test appearances between them. The bench has another 236 caps. The most capped France team of all time (with 737 caps) was the side that lost 17-12 to Argentina in the pool stages of Rugby World Cup 2007. The starting lineup that lost to New Zealand in the Rugby World Cup 2011 Final had a total of 702 caps.
- The average age of the France starting XV is a few days short of 30 while the average amongst the replacements is 27 1/2.
- Italy's starting XV have 543 caps between them while the average age is 27.
- 215 of those caps are found in the front row with the LO CICERO-GHIRALDINI-CASTROGIOVANNI combination the most experienced of the Six Nations sides, despite it being just the seventh time the trio have started together for Italy.
- There are seven changes from the Italy team that lost 36-6 to Ireland in the World Cup.
- Toulouse and Clermont Auvergne dominate the France starting XV, with each side providing five players each. Toulouse have a further three on the bench alongside Clermont's MORGAN PARRA.
- 18 of Italy's squad play their rugby in Italy for either Aironi or Benetton Treviso, with only three players based in France and one in England (PARISSE - Stade Francais, LO CICERO - Racing Metro, CANALE - Clermont Auvergne, CASTROGIOVANNI - Leicester Tigers)
- SERGIO PARISSE captains his country for the 36th time, leaving him one short of the national record of 37 held by replacement MARCO BORTOLAMI.
- VINCENT DEBATY won his first and only cap for France in a 62-14 win against Romania in 2006. Younger brother Christophe has represented the Debaty's country of birth, Belgium.
- THIERRY DUSAUTOIR and NICOLAS MAS will win their 50th caps for their country when they line out against Italy.
- KRIS BURTON will make his sixth Six Nations appearance for Italy, his solitary win in Italian colours coming against France in Rome last year.
- DIMITRI YACHVILI will celebrate his 60th selection for his country against the Italians, having scored 357 points for France since he was first capped against Canada in 2002.
- JULIEN BONNAIRE wins his 71st cap for France against Italy, having represented his country in 26 of its last 27 internationals.
- AURELIEN ROUGERIE and WESLEY FOFANA's selection sees the France centre partnership an all-Clermont Auvergne affair for the first time in history.

DEBUTANTS

- Clermont Auvergne's WESLEY FOFANA will become France coach Philippe Saint André's first new cap when he starts in the centre against Italy. Toulouse's YOANN MAESTRI will also win his first cap if he comes off the bench.
- GIOVANBATTISTA VENDITTI makes his debut for the Italians on the wing while replacement TOBIAS BOTES will also win his first cap if he comes on during the game.

SIZE MATTERS

- Italy lock forward QUINTIN GELDENHUYS is the tallest player on the pitch coming in at an impressive 2.03m. Italian replacement prop LORENZO CITTADINI is the heaviest player at 124kg.

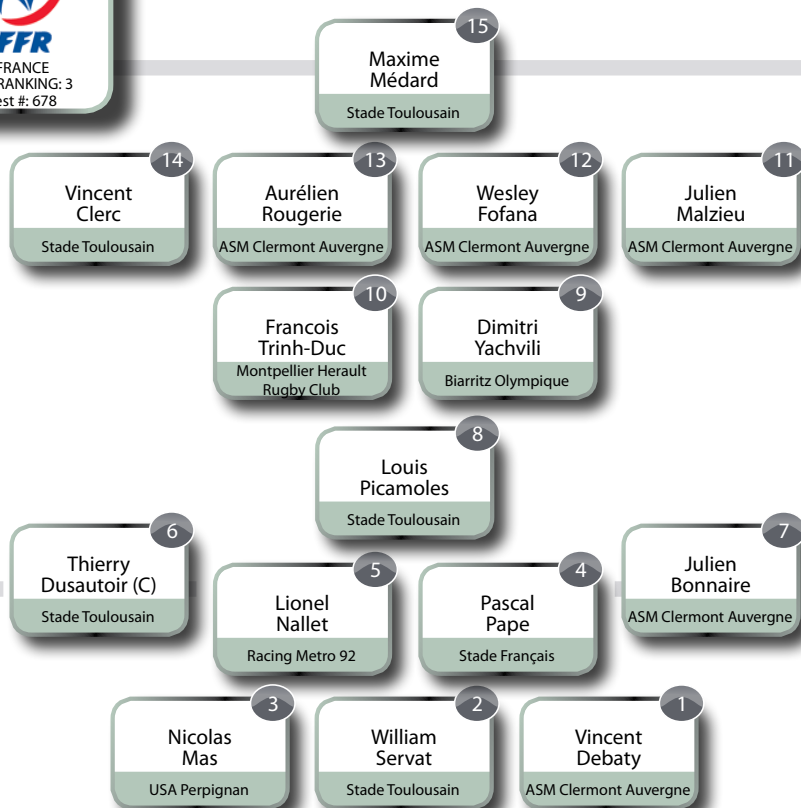
HEAD COACHES

- Today's game sees Philippe Saint-André and Jacques Brunel enjoy their first games as respective France and Italy coaches. Saint-André enjoyed three test wins against Italy in his playing career, 22-12 in 1990, 34-22 in 1995 and 30-19 and 30-19 in 1997. He had coaching stints with Gloucester, Bourgoin, Sale and Toulon before taking over the France side in December.
- JACQUES BRUNEL was assistant coach under Bernard Laporte in the French national setup from 2001 to 2007 before taking over the reigns at Perpignan and guiding them to their first Top 14 success in 54 years in 2009.

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

- NIGEL OWENS of Wales makes his 36th test appearance as referee, having made his debut back in 2003 refereeing Portugal versus Georgia.

Team Sheets



Replacements

16 Dimitri Szarzewski (Stade Français)
 17 Jean-Baptiste Poux (Stade Toulousain)
 18 Yoann Maestri (Stade Toulousain)
 19 Imanol Harinordoquy (Biarritz Olympique)
 20 Morgan Parra (ASM Clermont Auvergne)
 21 Lionel Beauxis (Stade Toulousain)
 22 Maxime Mermoz (USA Perpignan)

Key Stats

Caps Starting Lineup: 605
 Avg Age Starting Lineup: 29
 Oldest Player: Lionel Nallet (35)
 Youngest Player: Morgan Parra (23)
 Avg Weight Forwards: 110 kg

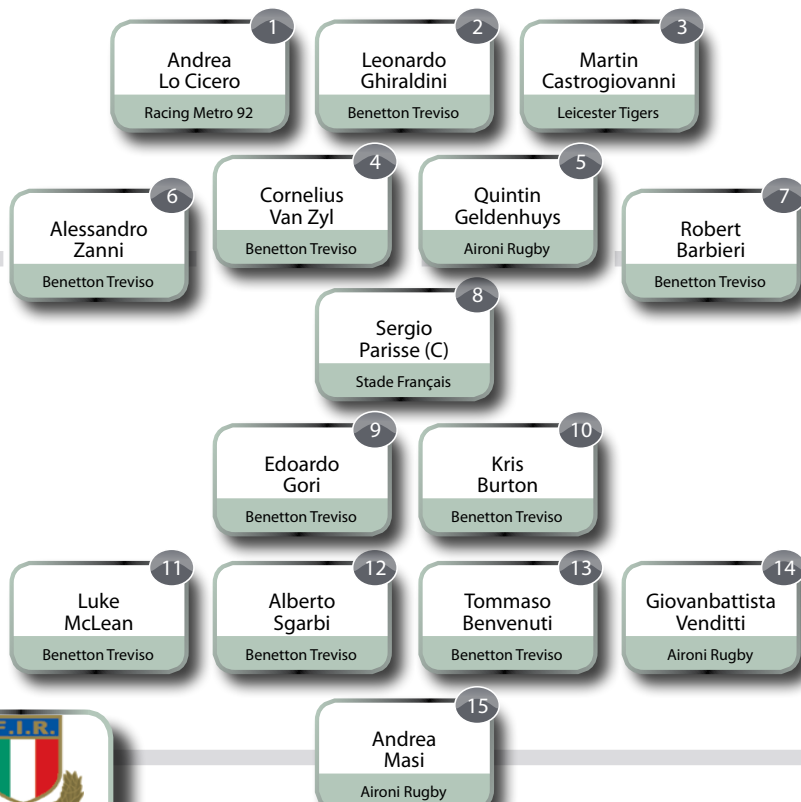
Officials

Referee:
 Nigel Owens (Wales) - 35 Tests
 Tests at Venue: 1 Tests
 France: 4 Tests
 Italy: 5 Tests
 Test Debut: 16/02/2003 - Portugal v Georgia

Assistant Referee 1:
 Andrew Small (England)

Assistant Referee 2:
 John Lacey (Ireland)

TV Match Official:
 Graham Hughes (England)



Replacements

16 Tommaso D'Apice (Aironi Rugby)
 17 Lorenzo Cittadini (Benetton Treviso)
 18 Marco Bortolami (Aironi Rugby)
 19 Simone Favaro (Aironi Rugby)
 20 Fabio Semenzato (Benetton Treviso)
 21 Tobie Botes (Benetton Treviso)
 22 Gonzalo Canale (ASM Clermont Auvergne)

Key Stats

Caps Starting Lineup: 543
 Avg Age Starting Lineup: 27
 Oldest Player: Andrea Lo Cicero (35)
 Youngest Player: Tommaso Benvenuti (21)
 Avg Weight Forwards: 111 kg



Head to Head

Recent Results

Date	Team A	Result	Team B	Venue
12/03/2011	Italy	22 - 21	France	Rome
14/03/2010	France	46 - 20	Italy	St Denis
21/03/2009	Italy	8 - 50	France	Rome
09/03/2008	France	25 - 13	Italy	St Denis
03/02/2007	Italy	3 - 39	France	Rome

Summary

France		32 Matches (0 Draw)	Italy	
30	Won		2	
962	Points		337	
143	Tries		33	
99	Conversions		23	
61	Penalties		45	
7	Drop Goals		5	

Player Records

For France against Italy		For Italy against France	
3 Players - 9	Appearances	12 - 2 Players	
Dimitri Yachvili - 54	Points	113 - Diego Dominguez	
Christian Darrouy - 7	Tries	5 - Alessandro Troncon	
Dimitri Yachvili - 15	Conversions	16 - Diego Dominguez	
Christophe Lamaison - 9	Penalties	25 - Diego Dominguez	
2 Players - 2	Drop Goals	4 - Stefano Bettarello	

Player Records in a Match

For France against Italy		For Italy against France	
Guy Camberabero on 26/03/1967 - 27	Points	20 - Diego Dominguez on 22/03/1997	
Maurice Celhay on 17/10/1937 - 4	Tries	2 - On 2 Occasions	
Guy Camberabero on 26/03/1967 - 9	Conversions	4 - On 2 Occasions	
Gérald Merceron on 02/02/2002 - 7	Penalties	5 - Mirco Bergamasco on 12/03/2011	
On 2 Occasions - 2	Drop Goals	1 - On 12 Occasions	

Team Records in a Match

For France against Italy		For Italy against France	
On 26/03/1967 - 60	Points	40 - On 22/03/1997	
On 26/03/1967 - 11	Tries	4 - On 3 Occasions	
On 26/03/1967 - 9	Conversions	4 - On 2 Occasions	
On 02/02/2002 - 7	Penalties	5 - On 12/03/2011	
On 2 Occasions - 2	Drop Goals	1 - On 12 Occasions	



Head Coach: Philippe Saint-Andre

Debut: v (-)
 Winning Ratio: 0.00%
 Average Tries per Match: 0.00

France Record Under Philippe Saint-Andre

0 Wins	0 Drawn	0 Lost
0 For	Points	0 Against
0 For	Tries	0 Against
0 For	Conversions	0 Against
0 For	Penalties	0 Against
0 For	Drop Goals	0 Against

Recent Matches

Date	Opponent	Result	Venue
23/10/2011	New Zealand	L 7 8	Auckland
15/10/2011	Wales	W 9 8	Auckland
08/10/2011	England	W 19 12	Auckland
01/10/2011	Tonga	L 14 19	Wellington
24/09/2011	New Zealand	L 17 37	Auckland
Points For		66	
Points Ag		84	
Tries For		6	
Tries Ag		10	

Player Info For France

Player	Pos	Age	Debut	Caps	Caps as Sub	Caps v Opponent	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Tries	Cons	Pens	DGs
Vincent Debaty	1	30	17/06/2006	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
William Servat	2	33	14/02/2004	44	10	5	29	1	14	10	2	0	0	0
Nicolas Mas	3	31	28/06/2003	49	13	4	31	0	18	0	0	0	0	0
Pascal Pape	4	31	14/02/2004	35	7	3	21	1	13	15	3	0	0	0
Lionel Nallet	5	35	28/05/2000	70	18	6	47	0	23	45	9	0	0	0
Thierry Dusautoir (C)	6	30	17/06/2006	49	2	3	30	0	19	30	6	0	0	0
Julien Bonnaire	7	33	21/03/2004	70	19	7	47	1	22	30	6	0	0	0
Louis Picamoles	8	25	09/02/2008	21	10	2	11	0	10	5	1	0	0	0
Dimitri Yachvili	9	31	23/11/2002	59	27	6	36	1	22	357	2	49	81	2
François Trinh-Duc	10	25	03/02/2008	35	9	4	21	0	14	70	9	2	1	6
Julien Malzieu	11	28	03/02/2008	16	5	3	11	0	5	20	4	0	0	0
Wesley Fofana	12	24		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aurélien Rougerie	13	31	10/11/2001	71	6	5	46	0	25	110	22	0	0	0
Vincent Clerc	14	30	09/11/2002	57	11	4	36	1	20	155	31	0	0	0
Maxime Médard	15	25	08/11/2008	28	4	2	18	0	10	48	9	0	0	1
Total				605	142	54	385	5	215	895	104	51	82	9
Dimitri Szarzewski	16	29	10/07/2004	56	29	4	37	0	19	30	6	0	0	0
Jean-Baptiste Poux	17	32	24/11/2001	37	19	2	23	0	14	15	3	0	0	0
Yoann Maestri	18	24		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Imanol Harinordoquy	19	31	16/02/2002	77	16	6	50	1	26	65	13	0	0	0
Morgan Parra	20	23	03/02/2008	36	11	3	24	0	12	232	2	33	51	1
Lionel Beauxis	21	26	03/02/2007	15	7	1	10	0	5	110	1	18	21	2
Maxime Mermoz	22	25	05/07/2008	15	2	0	7	0	8	5	1	0	0	0

Records For France

Caps

118 - Fabien Pelous
 111 - Philippe Sella
 98 - Raphaël Ibanez

Tries

38 - Serge Blanco
 32 - Philippe Saint-Andre
 31 - Vincent Clerc

Points

380 - Christophe Lamaison
 367 - Thierry Lacroix
 357 - Dimitri Yachvili

Player Records (In a Match)

Points: 30 - Didier Camberabero v Zimbabwe on 02/06/1987
 Tries: 4 - 2 players
 Conversions: 11 - Jean-Baptiste Elissalde v Namibia on 16/09/2007
 Penalties: 8 - Thierry Lacroix v Ireland on 10/06/1995
 Drop Goals: 3 - 3 players

Team Records (In a Match)

Points: 87 v Namibia on 16/09/2007
 Tries: 13 on 3 Occasions
 Conversions: 11 v Namibia on 16/09/2007
 Penalties: 8 v Ireland on 10/06/1995
 Drop Goals: 3 on 5 Occasions



Head Coach: Jacques Brunel

Debut: v (-)
 Winning Ratio: 0.00%
 Average Tries per Match: 0.00

Recent Matches

Italy Record Under Jacques Brunel		
0 Wins	0 Drawn	0 Lost
0 For	Points	0 Against
0 For	Tries	0 Against
0 For	Conversions	0 Against
0 For	Penalties	0 Against
0 For	Drop Goals	0 Against

Date	Opponent	Result	Venue
02/10/2011	Ireland	L 6 36	Dunedin
27/09/2011	USA	W 27 10	Nelson
20/09/2011	Russia	W 53 17	Nelson
11/09/2011	Australia	L 6 32	Auckland
20/08/2011	Scotland	L 12 23	Edinburgh
Points For		104	
Points Ag		118	
Tries For		15	
Tries Ag		13	

Player Info For Italy

Player	Pos	Age	Debut	Caps	Caps as Sub	Caps v Opponent	Won	Drawn	Lost	Points	Tries	Cons	Pens	DGs
Andrea Lo Cicero	1	35	18/03/2000	91	23	10	28	1	62	40	8	0	0	0
Leonardo Ghiraldini	2	27	11/06/2006	41	10	4	10	0	31	15	3	0	0	0
Martin Castrogiovanni	3	30	08/06/2002	82	21	9	23	1	58	55	11	0	0	0
Cornelius Van Zyl	4	33	13/08/2011	6	2	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
Quintin Geldenhuys	5	30	13/06/2009	25	3	2	7	0	18	0	0	0	0	0
Alessandro Zanni	6	28	12/11/2005	58	18	5	17	1	40	10	2	0	0	0
Robert Barbieri	7	27	11/06/2006	16	5	1	5	0	11	5	1	0	0	0
Sergio Parisse (C)	8	28	08/06/2002	83	3	7	24	1	58	43	8	0	0	1
Edoardo Gori	9	21	20/11/2010	9	4	0	4	0	5	10	2	0	0	0
Kris Burton	10	31	02/06/2007	9	4	1	2	0	7	9	0	3	1	0
Luke McLean	11	24	21/06/2008	33	5	2	7	0	26	59	4	0	13	0
Alberto Sgarbi	12	25	10/02/2008	14	3	0	3	0	11	0	0	0	0	0
Tommaso Benvenuti	13	21	13/11/2010	12	2	1	5	0	7	15	3	0	0	0
Giovanbattista Venditti	14	21		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Andrea Masi	15	30	26/08/1999	64	10	6	18	0	46	65	13	0	0	0
Total				543	113	48	156	4	383	326	55	3	14	1
Tommaso D'Apice	16	23	13/08/2011	3	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Lorenzo Cittadini	17	29	02/02/2008	8	5	0	2	0	6	0	0	0	0	0
Marco Bortolami	18	31	23/06/2001	88	10	8	27	1	60	35	7	0	0	0
Simone Favaro	19	23	20/06/2009	6	3	0	1	0	5	0	0	0	0	0
Fabio Semenzato	20	25	12/02/2011	8	0	1	2	0	6	5	1	0	0	0
Tobie Botes	21	27		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gonzalo Canale	22	29	23/08/2003	72	6	6	23	1	48	35	7	0	0	0

Records For Italy

Caps
101 - Alessandro Troncon
91 - Andrea Lo Cicero
88 - Mauro Bergamasco

Tries
25 - Marcello Cuttitta
22 - Paolo Vaccari
21 - Carlo Checchinato

Points
983 - Diego Dominguez
483 - Stefano Bettarello
294 - Luigi Troiani

Player Records (In a Match)	
Points: 29 - 3 players	
Tries: 4 - 2 players	
Conversions: 12 - Luigi Troiani v Czech Republic on 18/05/1994	
Penalties: 8 - 2 players	
Drop Goals: 3 - 2 players	

Team Records (In a Match)	
Points: 104 v Czech Republic on 18/05/1994	
Tries: 16 v Czech Republic on 18/05/1994	
Conversions: 12 v Czech Republic on 18/05/1994	
Penalties: 8 on 2 Occasions	
Drop Goals: 3 on 3 Occasions	

