

Football God 91

Chapter 91 Career discussion [1]

"So, dad, how many clubs have made contact to get my signing?"

Hearing that, Mr. Moses smiled proudly before raising his 2 hands up, showing 9 fingers.

Sam's eyes widened. "9 clubs?!"

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"Yes son," this middle-aged man's proud smile widened even more. "Just within yesterday and today after the FIFA Club World Cup final, 9 clubs contacted me but I already wiped 5 of them off your list".

"Why?"

"It's because they're clubs outside Europe's big 5 leagues".

Mr. Moses looked at his son. "You already told me what you wanted after the contract talks with Lille stalled. After Enyimba FC, you're only considering clubs in the big 5 European leagues, right?"

"Right," Sam nodded. "So, who are the clubs?"

Mr. Moses opened a document, looking through it. "First, our delegates from Lille contacted me again yesterday. They were the ones to contact first and since they have my phone contact, they called me directly".

"They've fixed a meeting date already".

"In 2 days, their delegates want to meet with us to discuss physically about getting your signature".

"Wow!" Paul was surprised.

Seeing his reaction, Mr. Moses grinned. "But Lille is just the tip of the iceberg. Unlike before, your star power already changed, we now have the bargaining chips".

"Apart from Lille Olympique Sporting Club, 3 other clubs from Europe also made contact for your signature," Mr. Moses looked at his son. "Wolfsburg from Germany, Villareal from Spain, and Fulham from England".

Hearing these 3 names, household names that literally every football fan who followed football knew, Sam felt a bit breathless.

Heck, it was literally just a year ago when he was still banned from playing football by his mom.

To get here in such a short time, he felt emotional as he heard these club names being called but he asked a question. "Did you say Wolfsburg?"

"Yes, what?"

Sam smiled. "Nothing, it's just that they contacted my captain too, it's the first time that delegates from a European club contacted him".

"Oh!" Mr. Moses nodded in understanding. "I see what they're trying to do now. They know he won't refuse their contract terms so by getting his signature, they want to use that relationship between both of you to get to you".

"They know that if Austin asks you personally to join Wolfsburg, due to your relationship in Enyimba FC, that would already be an advantage in their favor".

"Good signing strategy". Mr. Moses complimented them. "I'm impressed".

He looked at his son. "So Sam, what do you think about the 3 clubs?"

Sam stood up, walking around his room as he rubbed his silky short black hair. "I'm not sure dad, it's been just a year, getting to this stage already where I'm discussing Europe, I'm a bit overwhelmed, and disappointed too".

He looked at his father. "After my performance yesterday, I thought just maybe, I may have finally entered the radar of the top teams in the world".

"Even De Bruyne praised my ability," he smiled. "I thought that was enough, but I guess it's not yet enough".

Mr. Moses looked at his son, understanding how he felt. "Son, wayum wayum bi jegedi".

Sam looked at his father. "What does that mean?"

Mr. Moses grinned. "We're Isoko, it's a quote from where I come from." This middle-aged man had a look of reminiscing in his eyes. "When I was younger, your grandfather used to say it to me".

"It's another way for saying trust the process. Take it slow at a time, it's the little drops of water that creates a mighty ocean". He smiled. "That's what it means".

"I'm a Barca fan too. FC Barcelona may not have contacted you today, but keep believing son, one day, you'll become so big that even they can't ignore you".

"The club is in a period of transition now and I believe that in the future, you'll be the cornerstone that'll lead Barca back to it's peak, so be patient son".

"For now, focus on improving your game, shoring up on weaknesses and perfecting your strengths so that when you eventually go to FC Barcelona, you go there as the perfect specimen, the complete player".

Sam just stared at his father; a smile crept up his face. "Wayum wayum bi jegedi," he muttered, then he went to sit back on the bed.

"I'm ready dad, show me the contract terms".

"That's my boy!" Mr. Moses laughed, patting him on the head.

He opened his document again, focusing on certain parts.

Mr. Moses grinned as he saw the contract terms again. "Remember the last time?" He looked at his son. "I bargained for the terms to be improved, for your weekly salary to be at least 30,000 Euros and for your signing bonus to be at least a million Euros. Guess what? They did one more than what I initially wanted".

Sam's eyes widened. "Really?"

His father nodded. "This time around, Lille is offering you a weekly salary of 40,000 Euros and a signing bonus of 3,000,000 Euros on a 5 years contract".

"5 years?!"

Mr. Moses laughed. "Yes, that's the only part of their contract offer that I find worth negotiating. Apart from that, their offer is the highest of all the clubs that offered you a contract".

"I'm not giving 5 years of my football career to Lille," Sam said before focusing on the document again. "Tell me about the other clubs".

Mr. Moses nodded, opening the document to another page. "Wolfsburg's contract offer is the 2nd best offer after Lille, and theirs is much more reasonable in terms of the contract term".

"They're offering you a weekly salary of 30,000 Euros and a signing bonus of 2,000,000 Euros on a 3 years contract with an extension clause".

"Their contract also has more clauses for bonuses for games where you perform at an extraterrestrial level, winning the man of the match awards".

"Their bonuses for winning any trophy or individual award is also higher".

Sam paid keen attention as his father broke the contract terms to him, and then Mr. Moses opened his document again, going to the next club.

Chapter 92 Career discussion [2]

"Fulham and Villareal's contract offer are basically the same with very little differences, that is why I left both for last".

Mr. Moses opened his document again, opening to the page where the familiar emblem of the Spanish club was drawn.

"The only thing separating both clubs is that Villareal are willing to show their determination to get your signature by sending their delegates to meet us here in Nigeria to discuss the contract terms physically".

"As for their offer, Villareal is offering you a weekly salary of 25,000 Euros and a signing bonus of 2,000,000 Euros on a 3 years contract with an extension clause".

"Considering how determined they are to get your signature, even sending delegates here to Nigeria, I think I can wriggle around them and negotiate the salary to 30,000 Euros a week".

And finally, he opened to the last pages of the document.

"Just like Villareal, Fulham is offering you a weekly salary of 25,000 Euros and a signing bonus of 2,000,000 Euros on a 3 years contract with an extension clause".

"Compared to Villareal though, one of their bargaining chips is the presence of a familiar face in their team," Mr. Moses smiled at his son.

Sam completed his sentence for him. "Alex Iwobi".

"Yes," Mr. Moses nodded. "They went to all the trouble of specifically mentioning his name. They're giving you a chance to play with a veteran Nigerian international who also plays in their team in the midfield".

"Besides, another bargaining chip in their favor is the hype and publicity around the English premier league".

"They know how inviting the league is to foreign players due to the publicity around it, and they're banking on that to help them outbid other clubs".

Mr. Moses looked at his son. "So, what do you think?"

Sam did not answer immediately. Rather, he stood up and walked to his window, looking down at the boisterous street outside.

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A few seconds later, he looked back at his father and asked. "Dad, I need advice, what is your advice?"

Mr. Moses cleared his throat. "Son, it's your career, I can't dictate it for you, you know what's best for you but I'll start by asking you a question".

He looked Sam in the eye. "What are you playing football for? What do you want? Is it money or do you want to leave a mark in football?"

"..." Sam could not answer immediately.

Mr. Moses took a deep breath. "Ok, let me make it easier for you. Do you play football to make as much money as you can and retire rich, or do you want to be a legend whose story is forever imprinted in the history of football?"

This time, Sam answered immediately. "I want to be a legend".

But then, he looked at his father. "Don't get me wrong dad, I'm not a saint. I can't say I don't want money but I'm not greedy, I'm satisfied with what all 4 clubs are offering me as a salary".

"If I was maybe Kylian Mbappe and I received the kind of offer he got from PSG, maybe I'll hesitate," he chuckled. "But not with this".

He looked outside through the window again. "I want to enjoy football, I want to play to my heart's content, I want to enjoy iconic champions league nights, I want to life trophies," he looked at his father again. "I want to be a legend".

Mr. Moses smiled. "So?"

Sam smiled back at his father. "Since FC Barcelona is not yet noticing my shine," he grinned. "It only means I've not done enough yet".

"Dad, I want to do so much that no club in the world can afford to overlook me, and I think the best way to do this is going to the premier league".

Sam looked outside through the window again, his eyes turning dreamy. "When Lille's offer first came months ago, I was hyped, already envisioning myself playing for them already at some point but now, everything has changed".

"I have more options now, better options, a better league".

"In the premier league, there is tough competition with the likes of Arsenal, Manchester City, Liverpool, Manchester United and Chelsea all elite sides".

"If I can play with a league with all these elite clubs and shine even with a mid-table team," he smiled. "Then, I don't think even Barca can ignore me anymore".

He looked at his father one more time. "Dad, that is what I want".

Mr. Moses smiled again. "Wayum wayum bi jegedi," he muttered.

"Yeah," Sam nodded. "Wayum wayum bi jegedi".

"It's settled then," Mr. Moses finally stood up, folding his documents. "But they don't have to know yet".

"Huh?" Sam looked at his dad.

Mr. Moses grinned like a shrewd businessman. "Like I told you, with your current star power, 25,000 Euros is a bit too small for you".

"I will try to negotiate for higher, at least 30,000 Euros per week".

"And the key to doing this is to play hard to get".

"Really?" Sam asked, skeptical.

"Yes, trust your dad". Mr. Moses said confidently. "In 2 days, I will meet with the delegates from Lille and give them unreasonable demands".

"A day later, I will also meet with the delegates from Wolfsburg and do the same thing with them. They can't meet my demands, so they'll back out but the act of meeting them alone will make Fulham desperate if they really want you".

"Then, they should readily agree to meet my demands".

"Are you sure?"

"Trust me".

Well, his dad said to trust him and that was what Sam did, focusing on relaxing to recover at home with family and his best friend even as his dad became busy with the contract talks.

And in a few days, it was Christmas.

Just like last year, Coach James already arranged a game between his club, Black Hearts FC and D'Tigres again, another Christmas game.

This time, Sam and his best friend went to the pitch in the Delta State University, Abraka to watch as spectators.

After an exciting display, Black Hearts FC managed to win the game for the second consecutive year 2-1.

Sam celebrated excitedly with his old teammates.

The victory capped off a memorable Christmas day celebration for him.

A few more days later, Mr. Moses finally concluded the contract talks. Delegates from Fulham would enter Nigeria the next day for the contract signing.

Chapter 93 Signing for Fulham FC

It was December 27th, 2023, 2 days after Christmas.

It was a cool Wednesday evening.

Mrs. Moses made Sam's best native food, fufu and Banga soup that evening. After father and son ate to their fill, they were in high spirits.

Mr. Moses looked at his son. "Son, are you ready?"

"Yeah," Sam took a deep breath, then he smiled. "I'm ready".

Father and son were both dressed in a neat black suit as Mrs. Moses and Sophia walked up to them, adding the finishing touches to their dressing.

Then, Mrs. Moses gave them a thumbs up. They were ready to go.

"I love you". Mr. Moses whispered and kissed his wife on the lip before carrying his briefcase and turning to leave.

Sam grinned as he stared at his excited sister. "Sophia, when I come back, you better speak to me with a little more respect".

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"Yes big bro!" She said loudly, eliciting laughter from the rest of the family.

And finally, Sam and his father entered the car. After putting on the ignition, Mr. Moses waved at his wife and daughter before driving off with his son.

They had a meeting with the Fulham delegates scheduled for 4:00pm.

That evening, in the upper floor of Cold Scoop, one of the biggest restaurants in Abraka, Sam and his father met with the delegates from England representing the professional football club, Fulham.

As soon as they entered, the white man opposite them who was in a dark blue suit stood up with a big smile on his face, shaking his father's hand.

"Mr. Moses," he smiled brightly. "I can finally associate a face with the name, it's nice to meet you finally".

"You too Mr. Clark". Mr. Moses smiled back at him.

After shaking his hand, Mr. Clark, the delegate from Fulham FC finally focused on his real client. He extended his hand out for a handshake with a big smile on his face. Sam did not keep him waiting, taking his hand with a smile.

"I've heard so much and watched so much about you Sam, it's so nice to finally meet you in person".

"You too sir". Sam responded politely.

Soon, father and son sat down as Sam kept quiet while his dad did all the talking. They already finalized the terms, so Mr. Moses simply discussed certain finer details of the contract for a few minutes before finally ending all the talks.

Mr. Clark looked at Sam, smiling. "All that remains now is your signature, Sam, and you will become the newest signing of Fulham football club".

Sam looked at his dad and seeing him nod, he smiled before taking the contract document and a black pen, then he scribbled his signature.

When they entered this exclusive part of the Cold Scoop restaurant, Mr. Clark was the only one inside but at some point, a cameraman entered when Sam took the pen to sign on the piece of document, the cameraman recorded everything.

In the medialized world of modern football, this was very important. It would be part of the advertisement strategy when introducing Fulham's new player to their fans as part of a publicity campaign for the club.

As soon as Sam signed his signature, he stood up, including his father and the delegate from Fulham as with bright smiles, they shook hands again.

"We hope to have a nice working experience with you, Samuel".

Sam nodded. "I hope to have a great time in Fulham too".

"Due to the transfer window restraints, we can only register you as a player of Fulham once the January transfer window opens in January". Mr. Clark looked at his wristwatch. "Aside that, your medicals have already been scheduled for this week Saturday, 30th".

"I will make it".

"Your trip from Nigeria is all expense paid by Fulham FC. Also, we prepared a VIP ticket for you to watch our next game of the premier league at home against Arsenal on Sunday, 31st".

"After your medicals, right after the game on Sunday will be the day of your unveiling". Mr. Clark smiled. "I can't wait to see you in the colors of Fulham FC".

"Me too, Mr. Clark". Sam smiled back.

"Oh," the Englishman stopped. "Before I forget, about your signing bonus. The 2,000,000 Euros will be wired to your bank account early tomorrow".

Sam nodded, smiling again. "Thank you".

With that, shaking hands one last time, Mr. Clark finally left the popular restaurant as alongside his entourage, they finally left the city of Abraka.

As soon as the Englishman and his entourage left, Sam inclined his head, looking at his dad with an uncontrollable smile on his face.

The look on Mr. Moses' face was full of pride as he looked at his son, he laughed. "I love you son, you're my jackpot". He went closer and hugged him.

"I prayed to the football gods for a football career, I failed and see the way the gods answered my prayer," he grinned. "You're my blessing Sam".

Thinking of something, Sam grinned. "What do you think dad? Let's go to McCarthy Beach again, let's celebrate the event".

Unlike what Sam expected though, Mr. Moses shook his head. "I would have loved to go with you Sam, but your mom," he chuckled. "Well, you know your mom".

"She's even more excited than both of us combined".

"She's adamant that we're not going anywhere rather than the church to thank God for everything".

Sam grimaced. "Really?"

Mr. Moses chuckled, nodding.

"Can I skip it?"

Mr. Moses tsked. "Unfortunately, no".

Sam sighed, succumbing to the tyranny of his mother. That evening, returning home, as soon as they confirmed the good news, an over-excited mom went on her knees in tears, dramatically rolling on the floor.

"The God of chosen answers prayers!" She sang loudly in tears.

"My God has done it!"

"Oh God! I can't believe it; my son is going to Europe!"

That evening, Mrs. Moses dragged her full family to the church, Living Faith Church in Abraka where the pastor in charge prayed for all of them.

Only after this did the excited mother let the father and son do what they wanted. It was already too late to go to McCarthy Beach, so Mr. Moses took his son to a bar instead, Chill Zone Bar where they had a great time.

While they were in the bar was when Fulham FC finally released an official message on their social media handles of their new signing.

Internet exploded.

Chapter 94 A trip to England

In football, there is a term referred to as transfer windows.

A transfer window is a specific time during a football season when clubs can buy and sell players. The transfer window was introduced in 2002 as a compromise between FIFA and the European Commission to stabilize club squads and preserve contractual stability for players and clubs.

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Most European leagues have two transfer windows, one from the end of the season to August 31st, and then another in January.

To complete a transfer, a player is registered with the new club through FIFA during the period of the transfer window.

If transfers are done outside the transfer window, new signings must wait until the next registration period to play for the club.

This was the reason why Sam's new club registration was scheduled to be completed in January when the transfer window finally opens.

Immediately after Fulham FC released the news about their new signing, the internet exploded, taken by storm by excited Nigerian fans.

Support flooded across all social media platforms for Sam, with the fans showing high hopes and expectations of him performing well in the premier league.

Not all the storm was support though. Of course, there were always the dissidents who would discredit his achievements and doubt his credibility.

They labeled him a 1-season wonder of an unknown league, predicting him to flop in the premier league.

Sam did not care about all of that though, he didn't pay attention to it.

The past few days after signing the contract with Fulham FC were one of the most relaxing periods of his life as he enjoyed family time.

He also spent a lot of time alongside his best friend, both of them placing bets on how long it would take him to make his stamp in the premier league.

Enyimba FC also dominated the news as after Fulham FC met their new release clause of 8 million Euros for their young attacking midfielder, the Nigerian club became rich with money overnight.

And not just that, Enyimba FC dominated the news for another reason as Sam was not the only player who left Enyimba FC after the FIFA Club World Cup.

Austin also stole the headlines after completing his move to Germany to play for Wolfsburg, and the most surprising case was that of Emeka.

After an impressive season last season, Emeka also caught the eye of clubs in Europe as he was snapped by Ajax in the Eredivisie in Netherlands.

There were also rumors of European clubs approaching Farouk Mohamed.

All in all, it was a great period of transition for the Nigerian club but the club was not in a crisis as with all the money being injected into their coffers, they had more than enough money to build a brand-new squad from ground up.

The most significant news came on December 30th. After a few days of speculations and rumor, Coach Yemi Daniel became the next name in the departure list from Enyimba FC.

After serving the Nigerian club faithfully for a few years, the coach finally proved his credentials, earning himself a big money move to France to ply his trade in the French league.

On the 29th of December, a day before the news of his departure became public, Coach Yemi Daniel organized a get together with all his players in Abia State.

There, Sam regrouped with his teammates one last time as they ate, drank, danced, and played a friendly game to commemorate the past 1 and a half seasons together, performing miracles and creating iconic memories.

After the get together, returning to Delta State, Sam finally got ready to leave the country for good.

He spent a lot of time with his family before going to his best friend's place and spending significant time with him.

He and Ian went way back, all the way from JSS 1 in Abraka Grammar School which was about 8 years ago.

Ian also told him of his own life. After writing the last JAMB examination, Ian finally made the cut-off mark. If things went well for him, he was expecting to get an admission letter to study medicine in the prestigious UNIBEN (University of Benin) in Edo State.

Sam drank a toast with his best friend before finally bidding him farewell. That night he slept early so he could wake early on Saturday morning.

That morning, Sam woke up, completed his daily system quest, ate his mom's food, before going to the airport with his family.

He was going to England with his father who also doubled as his agent.

Right there at the airport, his mom made him kneel as she prayed on him for almost 20 minutes, banishing almost a thousand demons in the process.

When Sam's patience wore thin, she finally stopped, hugged him and kissed him on the forehead.
"My son, go and show the prime league".

Sam facepalmed. "Mom, it's the premier league".

"Whatever".

Mr. Moses laughed before kissing his wife and daughter farewell. Watching them enter the plane, Sophia broke down in tears.

Watching her cry, instead of consoling her, Sam laughed. "I'll be back before you know it!" He yelled in her direction.

And finally, the hatch closed, separating the family of 4.

A few minutes later, the plane finally moved and in no time, it levitated before gradually disappearing in the sky as Sophia wiped her tears.

Her mom stared at her. "It's ok".

She sobbed still.

"I said it's ok".

She sobbed still.

Then, she glared at her. "That's enough! When your brother was with you, you didn't show him this much love, stop being dramatic".

Sophia wiped her tears and glared at her mom before storming off.

"Spoilt brat," Mrs. Moses muttered, cursing.

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To Sam and his father, the journey was a smooth one.

After more than 8 hours in the air since they departed from the Murtala Muhammed International Airport in Lagos Nigeria, they finally arrived at the London Gatwick Airport in London.

And from there, they met with the delegates from Fulham FC who took them through the rest of the journey to Fulham in West London, England.

This was Sam's first trip to England.

Chapter 95 First game as a Fulham player; Fulham vs Arsenal

Arriving in England, Sam could tell that it was different to all the other countries that he had visited since he started his football career.

Maybe it was just his excitement doing it but he didn't care.

Back home, to Nigerians, London and England were synonymous with success, the same thing with Canada. This was why Sam felt that it was different, his excitement levels were consistently high since his arrival.

Craven Cottage has been the home stadium of Fulham football club since back in 1896. The iconic stadium is located in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

The ground's capacity was just 29,589, lower than some of the best stadiums across Europe but also with more capacity than the Enyimba International Stadium where Sam saw as his home ground for the past 1 and half seasons.

As soon as Sam arrived, he was led into the stadium, to the medical section where he was to have his medicals.

With his system taking care of things, Sam was not scared of any hiccups.

He passed his medicals with flying colors.

After the medicals, he was finally introduced to his coach. The 49-year-old Marco Silva, Fulham's senior team manager welcomed his new player in high spirits.

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After acquainting with his coach, one of the assistant managers, Goncalo Pedro took the job of leading the new player on a tour through the stadium.

Fulham FC may not be one of the top leading clubs in Europe, but as a club that has played consistently in the top division of the English premier league for years, they had a lot of history.

Sam was introduced to all this history by the assistant coach, after which he finally left the stadium to settle into the hotel that was recommended by the club.

Alone, Sam would have probably been overwhelmed by being exposed to the new environment and all the new unfamiliar faces but with his dad alongside him, joining him through it all, Sam was able to stay relaxed.

After his 8 hours journey, the father and son duo were already exhausted but before going to sleep, after taking their bath, they did the video call ritual.

"Hey! Sam!" Sophia yelled as soon as the call connected.

"Come on, tell me, how is England?"

"Are the roads made of gold?!"

"Come on, tell me!"

"Get off you stubborn child!" Mrs. Moses pushed her daughter aside before finally smiling at the camera. "How are you doing my son? How is England?"

Mr. Moses and his son were exhausted but he dared not indulge his wife. The duo did their best to summarize their experiences, from the 8 hours journey to getting to the city of Fulham, to Sam's medical, everything.

Only after they narrated everything did Mrs. Moses finally calm down, but then, remembering something, she asked. "Have you checked? Is there any plug there for African food?"

Mr. Moses grimaced tiredly. "I've not checked yet but be rest assured, it's England, surely there's a restaurant for homemade African dishes".

"I'm not resting assured anything!" She snapped. "Make sure you check tomorrow, my son is not about to go years on end without good food, got it?"

Mr. Moses sighed. "Got it ma".

She finally smiled. "Goodnight, I love you".

By the time Mr. Moses ended the call, Sam was already sleeping. He switched off the lights before also laying down on the bed.

He didn't sleep yet though, thoughts wandering through his head. 'The system, where did it come from?'

'What is its origin?'

He inclined his head on the bed, looking at his son. 'I hope it has no adverse effects. I'll stay positive'. He decided with a sigh.

Looking up at the ceiling of this hotel, he thought about tomorrow and his son's career. It still felt like just yesterday when he sent his son money to get boots and a jersey to play in the Christmas game on December 2022.

"How time flies," he muttered, smiling.

He looked at his son again. 'Can Sam really go all the way? Can my son really win the balon d'or trophy one day?'

'He'll be the first African to do it since George Weah'.

He smiled foolishly. 'I can't wait'.

As his agent, he knew everything about his son's football career. This was why he knew that the past few days of rest was the best that Sam would get in a long time, this was because the premier league season was already heating up towards its second half.

'19 matchdays out of 38 matchdays have already been played, that is exactly half of the season'.

'Tomorrow's game marks the start of the second half of the season'.

'I hope they win'.

Mr. Moses slept smiling.

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The next day was a big day in Fulham city.

The Fulham FC fans rallied for their beloved club in their home stadium as they welcomed one of the clubs that was currently the biggest in the English premier league, the high-flying Arsenal.

Despite the fact that it was a home game for Fulham FC, they were the heavy underdogs.

For this game, Sam got to sit down with his dad in the stands in a VIP chair as they got the best spot to watch the game in the stadium.

As soon as the game started, Arsenal started on a high confidently. They seemed on their way to sweeping Fulham FC aside like a storm as their starboy, the tricky winger, Bukayo Saka opened the scoring in the 5th minute of the game, giving his team the lead early.

To Sam, it was a damning goal that grounded him in the reality of his current club. In terms of quality, his current club, Fulham FC may be miles better than Enyimba FC but in the English premier league, they were just a mid-table team.

On this day though, the mid-table team created a miracle.

Sam bore witness as his club refused to give in to the high-flying Arsenal team, equalizing the game 1-1 after 29 minutes by Jimenez, the Fulham striker.

The game went to halftime with the score line draw.

When second half started, Arsenal started as the better side but against the run of play, Fulham created a miracle, scoring an unexpected goal in the 59th minute to complete their comeback and take the lead through De Cordova-Reid.

For the remaining minutes of the second half, Arsenal kept knocking but incredibly, Fulham FC held on to steal a famous win from Arsenal.

Fulham won 2-1.

"Yes!" Sam celebrated his new club excitedly.

To him, it was the best way to commence his support of the English club.

Chapter 96 Samuel Moses, no. 11

Immediately after the end of the English premier league game in Fulham, the footballing world was taken by storm.

That loss signified a momentum shift in the premier league title race.

What made it even more explosive was that it gave on-lookers a sense of déjà vu, they had witnessed this happen before just last season.

From the beginning of the 2023/2024 premier league season, Arsenal set a marker. Like in the previous season, they had been in shocking form, high-flying as they contended at the top of the premier league table, putting out convincing winning displays left and right.

They didn't just compete convincingly in the premier league, they also dazzled with scintillating performances in the UEFA champions league, convincing the world that the once all-conquering Arsenal was back in Europe's elite tier.

But in just 4 games, all that seemed to be spiraling down to a disastrous fall.

First was the game against Aston Villa at home during matchday 16. For Arsenal, everything had been smooth sailing till that game.

Unlike what most people predicted, playing against the imperious Arsenal at home, Aston Villa stunned the Flying Emirates, managing to snatch a narrow 1-0 win and after that game was when the momentum switched.

In their next game, in matchday 17, hosting Brighton at home, Arsenal won 2-0 but their next game was a tough encounter against Liverpool in Anfield.

In the matchday 18 encounter, Arsenal managed to ground out a 1-1 draw in one of the most intimidating stadiums in the world, Anfield.

After that game, to many, Arsenal was back, having shaken off the momentary rust of the Aston Villa game.

After that impressive display, in matchday 19, everyone expected them to carry on that form as they hosted West Ham united in their home stadium, the famous Emirates Stadium and that was when the first true shock of their season happened.

Against all odds, even as the race for the premier league title ramped up at the top of the table, facing West Ham at home, Arsenal actually managed to lose 0-2 to the visitors, shocking the footballing world.

That loss definitely rattled Arsenal nerves all across the world, leaving their fans uneasy and the aftermath of that was evident from their display again in the matchday 20 encounter against Fulham.

The only difference this time was that Sam was now a Fulham player, and watching that game live, despite the fact that he didn't play, he felt on top of the world as he watched his team win against one of the best teams in the world.

That game rocked the Arsenal title-charging momentum.

For Fulham though, it was an iconic victory.

The happy mood of the victory became the perfect atmosphere for Sam's unveiling in front of over 20,000 Fulham fans.

When the announcement was made after the game, the fans made a lot of noise, welcoming their newest Nigerian player as Sam jogged onto the pitch.

Sam was not the 2nd Nigerian professional football player to receive a contract from Fulham FC. Just this season alone, there were 2 Nigerian players in the roster before him and with his addition, he became the 3rd Nigerian.

Apart from Alex Iwobi, Calvin Bassey, the defender known for his no-nonsense defending reputation was also a Nigerian international.

Under the atmosphere of this stadium, Sam was not overwhelmed at all. Rather, he felt at home since he could feel their joy and adoration.

Having played for Enyimba FC for a full year, he was used to the atmosphere of packed stadiums. Instead of letting it overwhelm him, he embraced it, riding the energy of the excited fans.

Taking the ball, he juggled it to roars of excitement, spicing it up with a few skill moves to the delight of the fans before saying a few words to the excited fans.

He ended it with a vow. "I'll give my best for the badge".

After that, he was finally presented with his jersey which he showed to the fans. On the jersey was written his name and his new number.

{Samuel #11}

He would be playing as the new number 11 of Fulham FC.

After the unveiling, Coach Marco Silva, the middle-aged coach who was in a good mood after his victory against one of the top teams in the English premier league allowed his new signing into the dressing room as Sam was officially introduced to his teammates.

After the introductions, as the players met, a particular player met him. Noticing the player, Sam smiled. It was a familiar face, Alex Iwobi.

"Welcome to Europe brother," Alex Iwobi extended his hand for a handshake which Sam took with a big smile on his face.

"Thank you, sir," Sam greeted respectfully. "I've watched you play for the Nigerian Super Eagles for years; I've been a secret admirer for long, I can't believe I get to play with you now".

Hearing that, Alex Iwobi smiled. "Do you have a place you're staying in now? My home has a lot of space, you can stay with me till you get your own house".

"We're brothers you know, and we should help each other out".

"Thank you," Sam acknowledged his offer politely. "I'll speak with my dad about it, but now we're staying in a hotel".

"That's good". Alex Iwobi nodded before looking at his wristwatch. "You can join me; I'll drop you off at the airport".

"And if you're not too busy, you can drop in with your dad for dinner too".

Sam smiled. "Thank you, I'll tell him".

"Good luck man, I can't wait to see you integrated into the team".

With that, they finally walked to the park where the Nigerian international's car was parked. There, Sam reunited with his dad and together, Alex Iwobi took them on a lift, driving out of the stadium.

Outside the stadium, the Nigerian international signed a few autographs for fans, taking pictures too before finally driving out.

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About a dozen minutes later, Alex Iwobi dropped them off at the hotel where they lodged before leaving.

Later in the evening, Sam left the hotel with his father.

They went on a visit to Alex Iwobi's home.

Chapter 97 A dinner

Alex Iwobi's home was just as Sam expected it to be.

The Nigerian international lived in a luxurious 8-bedroom villa right there in Fulham, a few minutes' drive away from Fulham's home stadium, Craven Cottage.

For the duration of his stay with his son in England, having made preparations ahead of time, Mr. Moses already paid money to hire a car for transportation.

He drove his car to the Nigerian international's home.

Since they exchanged contacts after their little chat at the end of the game, Sam called Alex Iwobi, informing him of their visit ahead of time. This was why as soon as their car arrived at the villa, they were let in.

In no time, they were led to one of the massive dining rooms where Alex Iwobi, his wife, and his children were already about to eat dinner.

Seeing them enter, Alex Iwobi smiled. "Welcome, come on in".

"Thank you, sir". Sam nodded respectfully, entering with his dad.

"Sam, meet my wife". Alex Iwobi looked at his beautiful wife. "Darling, this is the Sam that I told you about. He's my club's newest signing, and most importantly, he's a Nigerian like me, he came from the outskirts of Delta State". Find more chapters on [empire](#)

Hearing that, the beautiful young lady smiled in wonder, looking at Sam with a mischievous smile on her face. "Delta State? Warri..., it's Warri right?"

Sam laughed. "Yes, Warri is in Delta State".

She grinned. "No warri me, no gimme issue, no gimme stress," she joked in pidgin, quoting words from a popular Nigerian comedy movie as Sam and his dad laughed in response.

Mr. Moses laughed as he finally sat on one of the chairs. "Alex, I see you're doing the needful to teach your wife the Nigerian ways even here in London".

Alex Iwobi chuckled, rubbing his long hair awkwardly. "I don't do anything, it's just her, she's very interested in Nigeria and things related to it".

"She's a big fan of AY and Sabinus, even Brain jotter too".

Mr. Moses laughed again on hearing that. "Those guys are good," he looked at her. "I'm telling you, watching their comedy skits can literally heal depression".

"Especially Sabinus," she added, laughing. "That guy is crazy!"

"I agree". Sam also joined in, laughing.

They talked about a few more random topics before digging into their food. They didn't want to teach the children bad table manners.

Mrs. Moses worried about where her son could get good African homemade dishes to eat, well, her worries were without basis for just today.

Sam had no idea if it was because Alex Iwobi knew they were coming, but his wife made Nigerian homemade dishes, preparing Banga soup and garri. Despite it coming from her, the combination was incredibly delicious.

'Damn,' Sam stole a glance at her. 'She most likely learned all this through YouTube or tik tok'.

'She really loves Nigeria'. He smiled.

When most of the food on their plates was almost gone, Alex Iwobi finally initiated another conversation as he stared at Sam. "So, how's Nigeria?"

"Nigeria is still Nigeria, the way you left it". Sam replied, making Alex laugh.

"Well, as you already know, Bola Ahmed Tinubu won the presidential election and is now our president so yeah, tough times ahead". He chuckled.

"How do you know that for sure?" Alex stared at him.

Sam stared back. "You say that only because you don't live in Nigeria. If you live in Nigeria, you'll know how much trouble we are in, it's unbelievable really". He chuckled mirthfully.

"And the rising inflation rate," Mr. Moses added. "If care is not taken, the dollar rate may hit a thousand naira soon enough, and in a democratic country like Nigeria, dubbed the giant of Africa, that's just disgraceful".

Alex sighed. "I guess like they say, it's what it is".

"It is what it is". Sam and his dad echoed.

After eating, Alex, Sam and his father went to relax outside where Alex finally brought up football related talks, asking about Sam's career so far.

He didn't have the time to watch the FIFA Club World Cup final, but he heard of the noise around a young Nigerian midfield prodigy that followed it.

He didn't even know Sam was this prodigy till now.

"Wait, so you're that Zinedine Sam that I've been hearing so much about?"

"Yeah". Sam smiled cheekily.

Alex laughed loudly. "Wow, and I was so worried about you, thinking of how you'll fit in here in England and force your way into the Fulham starting XI".

"If there's so much hype around you though, there must be a basis for it".

"I have a little pitch here in my house, we can practice together if you want".

"Besides," he said after remembering something. "You remember the offer I made you?" He shrugged, pointing at the villa. "As you can see, it's just me, my wife, my children, and some maids, that's all".

"It's a big house, it can comfortably take in 2 or 3 more inhabitants".

"So, like I said before, we're brothers," this time he looked at Mr. Moses a bit before looking at Sam again. "If you feel you're not ready to get a house here in England yet, you can stay in my home till you are ready".

He smiled. "Here, it's peaceful and we don't have security problems. And with me staying with you here, I can assure you that you'll be able to focus on your football".

"We can practice one on one here in my pitch before general training".

"And talking of general training," he looked at the time. "It's already getting late, as a footballer, you need to keep a good sleeping schedule".

"It helps in keeping you fresh for every training session and game".

"Tomorrow, training starts by 8, but as a new player of Fulham FC, you should be at the stadium at least 30 minutes before time".

Sam nodded. "I understand".

"So Sam, what do you think about my offer?"

Sam did not answer immediately, rather he looked at his dad.

Mr. Moses cleared his throat. "You know, before coming here, my son already told me about your offer and we already talked about it".

"But before making any decision, I want to ask," he looked at Alex Iwobi. "Why are you being so generous?"

Alex shrugged. "I was once a newbie in England too. I know how hard it is to settle down in a foreign country without someone to help you, and I don't want Sam to go through that. That's why".

Mr. Moss looked in his eyes for a few seconds, then he nodded. "I understand. Actually, I don't intend to stay in England for too long myself".

"I'll be returning to Nigeria soon".

"My son already agreed to stay with you. But during my duration here, we'll still stay in the hotel. When I'm leaving, I'll entrust my son to you".

He smiled. "I hope you take care of him in my absence".

"Don't worry, Sam is in good hands".

"Then I'm relieved".

Sam and his dad stayed with the Nigerian international for about 30 more minutes before finally heading back to their hotel.

Tomorrow was a big day for Sam.

This was because tomorrow, he would be having his first training session alongside his new teammates for Fulham FC.

Chapter 98 High-grade vitality elixir

~-----~

[You have completed System Daily Quest: Mentality Monster!]

[You have been rewarded with a low-grade physical conditioning elixir!]

...

[You have marked a system milestone of completing the daily system quest for more than 1 year!]

[You are eligible for a system reward!]

[Congratulations! You have unlocked bonus reward: High-grade physical conditioning elixir!]

>High-grade physical conditioning elixir: This is a miraculous elixir that is capable of completely eliminating fatigue, making post-match recovery instantaneous. It also accelerates recovery time from injuries<

[Congratulations! You have unlocked bonus reward: High-grade vitality elixir!]

>High-grade vitality elixir: This is a miraculous elixir that is capable of increasing the innate vitality of a football player, granting you more physical resilience to injuries, and also improving your general physicality and stamina<

[NOTE: A high-grade vitality elixir is different from a high-grade vitality fruit!]

~----~

Due to Alex Iwobi's advice yesterday, as soon as Sam got to his hotel room alongside his dad, he took his bath before quickly sleeping.

This was to wake up early the next morning.

The next morning, waking up early, he did his daily ritual, leaving the hotel building and jogging through the streets of Fulham.

Nobody recognized him in the street, a rare privilege that he already forgot how it felt like since he started gaining prominence in Nigeria.

That morning, he didn't just jog, he also jogged to Craven Cottage, Fulham's home stadium very early where he completed his remaining daily system tasks in the stadium gym.

After a long time, the system already changed the name of his daily system quest from getting back in shape to mentality monster.

Waking up early every day to engage in physical activities was not easy, not even for Sam. Afterall, footballers also get holidays, but Sam never got a holiday to rest from his daily system quests since he got his system.

Seeing those notifications though, he was stunned.

It still felt just like yesterday when he got his system and started completing daily system quests, but in the blink of an eye, a whole year already passed.

'I've really come a long way already,' Sam thought, feeling nostalgia.

Staring at the 2 bonus rewards that he got, Sam was hyped. He was hyped due to the description of the 2 high-grade elixirs, but also because of the fact that he still had a vivid recollection of his very first high-grade goodie from the system.

A recurring ankle injury was what almost ruined his budding football career before it even started, but after getting his system, a high-grade goodie from the system was what turned the situation around.

Sam could still vividly remember consuming the high-grade vitality fruit.

He had full trust in anything high-grade from the system, this was the main reason why he was so hyped on seeing the rewards.

'Damn, it pays to be diligent'.

'A befitting price for a mentality monster'.

He kept the high-grade physical conditioning elixir in his inventory. It was another miraculous elixir, but since he didn't have an injury now, he had no use for it. As for the high-grade vitality elixir though, he had an immediate need for it.

Without hesitation, Sam consumed the elixir, and then he felt changes.

There was a hot sensation that started from his chest, before rushing to his abdomen, leaving him burning up. 'F*ck! I shouldn't have ingested it outside!'

Sam clutched his stomach, reeling in pain.

The burning sensation lasted for a few seconds before coming to an end, suddenly disappearing but in those few seconds, Sam became drenched in sweat.

As soon as the sensation disappeared, he heaved a sigh of relief.

And right after, his system lit up with new notifications.

~----~

[You have ingested a high-grade vitality elixir!]

[Your physical constitution has improved!]

[Your pace attribute has increased by +5!]

[Your physicality attribute has increased by +4!]

[Your stamina attribute has increased by +3!]

~----~

"..."

"..."

".....!"

Sam's jaws literally dropped in shock.

He was so flabbergasted by what he was seeing that this time, he just could not keep his thoughts to himself. "What the f*ck!" He literally screamed right there in the streets of Fulham.

"What in the name of freaking Christ!"

"This thing can increase my pace?!"

"Damn! Is that even natural? Can pace be increased so easily?!"

"Hey man, keep it down". A bystander complained the next moment, dragging Sam back to the reality that he was not in the streets of Abraka, Delta State, but rather he was now in Fulham, England.

'F*ck!' He cursed in his head before jogging off.

Even as Sam jogged back to the hotel though, he could not take off the image from his system interface that was now stuck in his head.

'What the f*ck!' He kept on cursing in disbelief.

At some point though, he finally stopped, paying attention to his system status again, focusing on his attributes to confirm that he didn't hallucinate.

~----~

[Congratulations! Your overall player rating has increased to 80!]

...

Player Attributes:

*Pace: 81

*Shot: 77

*Pass: 80

*Dribbling: 74

*Defending: 38

*Physicality: 70

*Stamina: 84

Overall Rating: 80

~----~

"...!" Sam's eyes opened so wide that it almost seemed like they would just burst and pop out of their sockets.

'Damn! It's real!'

At that moment he felt a yearning, like a drug addict. 'My precious!' He screamed in his mind.

'How can I get more high-grade vitality elixirs?!'

'I want!'

In just one moment, Sam's attributes changed in such a way that they literally became unrecognizable. The same thing for his body; he didn't try it out on a pitch yet but Sam could tell that his body was different.

He looked ahead, an excited gleam in his eyes. Read exclusive chapters at empire

Coming to the English premier league, though Sam had confidence in his abilities, he could not help but feel a little trepidation simply due to the reputation of the league.

If at an overall rating of 78, he still felt some trepidation before, after this increase though, Sam literally oozed confidence.

He grinned, looking forward to today's training. 'Bring it on!'

Chapter 99 First training session

Sam returned to the hotel just before the 7:00am mark.

After greeting his father who was just waking up, he took his bath, got set before quickly taking the car off to Craven Cottage, his team's home stadium.

A little while ago in Nigeria, since he already hit 18 years, the legal driving age, Mr. Moses finally taught his son how to drive.

Sam already got his driving license.

Just like Alex Iwobi advised, Sam took it a step closer, arriving at Craven Cottage when it was just 7:15am.

He was the very first Fulham player to arrive for training.

About 15 minutes later, other players arrived and a few more minutes later, Coach Marco Silva also arrived.

Without wasting anytime, the manager quickly led his players to the gym in the stadium. Sam already knew before now that different managers had different coaching and training styles, but this was his first time experiencing it.

Unlike Coach Yemi Daniel's style of taking his players to the pitch, taking them through some light training before ramping it up, the Fulham manager, Marco Silva's ways were more modern, more refined. Find exclusive stories on empire

Entering the gym, Sam quickly noted something. 'It's far more advanced than any other gym I've seen in Nigeria'.

'Damn! I'm going to love this'.

Alongside the other players, following the instruction of the assistant coaches, the players started working out in the gym.

The first set of exercises were game-recovery exercises.

The feat of defeating Arsenal in their last game was not an easy one. After such a grueling defeat, most of the players comprising the starting XI of Fulham FC were still suffering from post-match fatigue.

This was why the first set of exercises were post-match recovery exercises.

After the unique set of exercises, Coach Marco Silva took it up a notch, giving his players freedom to work on themselves the best way they knew.

Most of the players, especially the defenders immediately started lifting weights and working on their legs, trying to condition their physicality.

As for the forwards and midfielders, they mostly did agility training, using the treadmill and other modern gym facilities.

In the gym, Sam followed Alex Iwobi's leadership, sticking to his fellow Nigerian like glue. They started in the treadmill, jogging at first before progressing to a full-blown sprint before reducing the intensity again.

After about 40 minutes of exercising in the gym, Coach Marco Silva clapped. "Ok, that's enough, time to go outside to the pitch".

"You have 10 minutes of rest, catch your breath and join me on the field".

"Yes, coach". The players answered.

"How are you feeling?" Alex Iwobi asked as Sam chugged down a bottle of water.

Hearing the question, Sam smiled and looked at him. "I feel great, better than before even. I can't wait to impress the coach".

Alex grinned. "I love your confidence; you'll need it in the premier league".

Just like the coach said, he kept to his time and exactly 10 minutes later, he entered the gym again, clapping loudly and summoning them to the pitch.

On the pitch, the real team training finally started.

After a few more general training drills, Coach Marco Silva divided his players, separating them into 6 vs 6 sides. This was the first real training game of the day.

Sam was isolated in a team filled with foreign faces, and the team he was facing was that having Alex Iwobi.

He was not deterred though; he was determined to do his thing.

FWEEEE!

As soon as the game started, Sam showed his intensity and physicality, running all over the place, showing his incredible stamina as he won back the ball frequently while winning most duels.

He didn't play like an 18-year-old at all, rather, he played like an imposing young man who was in the prime of his physicality.

Sam was in a great mood; he was enjoying the game.

He would have been the best player of this game, if it was not so technical.

In 6 vs 6 games, the pitch was not as open as an 11 vs 11 game. The space to run in was much smaller, time spent on the ball was shorter which meant a shorter time frame to make decisions.

6 vs 6 games were games of technicality and fast decision making.

Sam covered the most distance in the game but it was clear that his technicality was not yet at that elite level of his teammates.

Despite this though, Sam was a stand-out performer as he showcased his skills to his coach, helping his side win 6-5 against Alex Iwobi's side.

After the game, the Nigerian international approached him with a big smile on his face, wiping his sweat. "You're good Sam".

"Honestly, I didn't expect such a performance, kudos man".

Sam grinned. "Thanks". Then, he sneaked in a cheeky question. "Do you think I'll make it into the coach's starting XI for the next game?"

Alex smiled. "Not a chance man. Don't get me wrong, you were one of the stand-out performers today, but Silva is not that flexible".

"I've worked with him before in Everton so I know. He prefers sticking with proven veterans rather than exciting new players, so you'll need to prove yourself to him over an extended period of time before he really trusts you".

Sam grimaced. "Thought so".

Coach Marco Silva introduced more training drills as time went on. Throughout though, the coach never set up an 11 vs 11 training game, sticking with the smaller 6 vs 6 and 3 vs 3 games.

After a few hours of going at it, the coach finally called it a day, today's training was over.

After Fulham's game against Arsenal on 31st December, they had 4 days of rest before their next game which was in the FA Cup.

Fulham would be taking on Rotherham on 5th January 2024, a club from England's lesser divisions in the FA Cup third round.

And after the training session, Coach Marco Silva finally dropped his starting XI.

Samuel Moses was not part of the names that made the list.

Chapter 100 FA Cup- third round

(FA Cup!]

(3rd round fixture:)

>Fulham – Rotherham<

>Date: 5th January, 2024<

...

Sam did not make Coach Marco Silva's starting XI, but he was not that discouraged though. This was because even bigger names in the Fulham FC squad did not make the coach's starting XI for the FA Cup game.

The likes of Raul Jimenez, Willian, Alex Iwobi, Calvin Bassey, and even Bernd Leno, the Fulham no. 1 goalkeeper were not in the starting XI, telling Sam that the coach had no intentions of playing with his strongest squad.

In hindsight, it made sense, Fulham was playing against a club from the lower divisions; the coach would want to rotate his team.

(Fulham FC starting XI:)

(M. Rodak: Goalkeeper)

(K. Tete: Right Back)

(T. Adarabioyo: Right Center Back)

(I. Diop: Left Center Back)

(T. Castagne: Left Back)

(H. Reed: Center Midfielder)

(S. Lukic: Center Midfielder)

(H. Wilson: Right Winger)

(A. Pereira: Center Attacking Midfielder)

(B. De Cordova-Reid: Left Winger)

(R. Muniz: Striker)

It was not Fulham FC's strongest lineup but it was still a strong team on paper compared to the starting XI from Rotherham.

For the next few days in the prelude to the game, Sam was not disappointed, even more motivated by the coach's decision as he put in more than 100% in every training session, always being the first player to report to training since he arrived.

And in every training session, he was consistently always among the best performing players, showing his ability in every game.

And with his performances, his teammates finally started opening up to him, recognizing his ability with the ball on his leg.

Sam was slowly building prominence in the squad with his displays and hard work during every training session. His hard work finally paid off a day to the game as Coach Marco Silva called him aside.

"You're doing well, Sam, keep it up. I didn't want to rush you into games, to observe you more first but I think I've observed enough".

"Sleep early today and get ready, tomorrow, you'll play".

Hearing that, Sam smiled with gratitude on his face. "Thank you, coach, you won't regret this decision".

"That is up to me," the coach stared at him. "You just do your thing".

"Yes coach".

He was still not in the starting XI but that little assurance from the coach was all that Sam needed to sleep well that night.

Returning home, he followed the coach's advice, sleeping early.

In the blink of an eye, he woke up, it was already a new day, the D-day.

Craven Cottage was filled to the brim with the home supporting fans as they came out in droves to support their club.

Once the players lined up on the pitch, the referee's whistle went off, kickstarting the game.

Since they were playing at home, the Fulham players had the advantage of home support against their opponents. Stacked against their already numerous advantages, they started the game on the front foot.

For the first few minutes of the game, Fulham FC dominated possession, pressing the lower division team but an early goal didn't come though.

Rotherham remained defensively disciplined, defending doggedly until they finally grew into the game, making the game even.

Both teams had their chances, probing with attacks and finally, Fulham was the one to open the scoring first in the 24th minute.

After Lukic won the ball back in midfield, he passed to Pereira, the Fulham attacking midfielder who immediately skipped past challenges with his mastery over spatial awareness, bombing down the Rotherham half.

When he was close to the 18-yard box, one of the Rotherham center backs came closing him down with malicious intent and this attacking midfielder finally passed to his left where the Fulham left winger, De Cordova-Reid lurked.

The pass was not perfect but the left winger reacted immediately, pouncing before the nearest Rotherham player could clear the ball.

De Cordova-Reid pushed the ball away from the outstretched leg of the Rotherham player, cut into the box 18 from the right, then took a look at goal before hitting a curled shot towards goal.

Wrapping the inside of his right leg around the ball, it flew high, rotating rapidly as it curled into the top right corner of the post, leaving the Rotherham goalkeeper ruing his luck since he came so close to pushing the ball out.

"Goal!" De Cordova-Reid pumped his fists in excitement before rushing towards the corner flag to celebrate.

In the 24th minute of the game, Fulham finally took the lead.

That goal seemed to embolden the Fulham players, making them even more confident as the momentum fully swung in their favor. Enjoy more content from empire

It was just the final touch remaining for the floodgates to open as Fulham became rampant, going on one attacking raid after the other, launching floods of attacks against the Rotherham defense line.

Despite Fulham's dominance throughout the first half though, especially in the final stages of the first half, they failed to extend their lead, going to halftime with the score line still 1-0 in their favor.

When second half started, Fulham resumed the game with the same momentum, dominating their opponents, only lacking the final touch to put the ball into the opposition net a second time.

De Cordova-Reid came close to doubling his goal tally this game a few times, but he just fell short at the last moment.

Muniz, the Fulham striker for this game also came close with half-chances, but the Rotherham goalkeeper was on top of his game.

At the 60th minute, Coach Marco Silva finally made a few changes, subbing De Cordova-Reid out of the game after an impressive performance so far.

Sam still had to wait for his turn though.

The game continued, the second half with no goals till the 75th minute when the Fulham manager, Marco Silva pulled the plug on his substitutions again.

This time, he made a triple change, taking off Muniz, the striker, Pereira, the attacking midfielder, and Wilson, the left winger.

Sam and Alex Iwobi were introduced into the game at the same time in the 75th minute, 15 minutes to the end of the game.

Sam jogged into the game with a slight smile on his face, only one thought was on his head. 'There's still time to make my mark'.