

## Football 116

### Chapter 116 Coach Oscar

"Hello Oscar, didn't think we'd get to see you today," Dad spoke up from the other end of our group indicating that the two knew each other. The man has a warm aura around him making him seem knowledgeable.

"I just got back from a morning game with my team which worked out well for me to meet you here," He replied with a smile shaking hands with both Dad and Mom exchanging pleasantries with them.

Listening to their conversation I realised that he was at any game and was a big part of the reason we were considering Ace Academy. Apparently, he is friends with the creepy scout who tried to talk to me a week ago. So, when his friend told him that he found a unique talent he jumped at the chance to see me play.

That is how he ended up at my game, but he didn't decide to go talk to my parents until he was sure he wanted to coach me. He seems like quite the likeable guy with a knowable vibe. They spent most of the before the game talking about trivial stuff with Mom and Dad asking him some more questions.

"So, Kid what do you think of the Academy," He Asked me after settling on his seat next to me as the players took their position on the field. Surprisingly, he pulled out a notepad looking as if he was ready to study something.

"I like it here, it seems like a lot of fun," I honestly told him after getting over the sudden surprise of him starting a conversation. He seemed to expect my answer chuckling lightly as he focused back on the field.

"See that boy with the number 8," he commented as he pointed to a blond boy stretching lightly outside the centre circle. He seemed to be more nervous than most boys on his team which is a little surprising given the fact that he is playing the number ten role.

"Yeah, he seems really nervous," I answered him whilst trying to figure out why he pointed him out for me.

[You know that boy is actually quite good] Eva commented causing my confusion to further increase. Maybe I am missing something everyone else seems to see that I'm just not able to comprehend.

'Huh, how do you know?' I asked her hoping she would clear up my confusion on the boy.

[Unlock the snoop tool and you will understand,] Is all she said before proceeding to ignore me. Looks like she was just baiting me this whole time to advertise the system skills.

"That's Cole Jones he will be turning 14 in January but is already good enough to play with the under-sixteen in fact today is his first day in the starting lineup," Coach Oscar calmly stated finally clearing up my confusion on what was so special about the boy.

After all, to be able to beat what is probably hundreds of older kids for a spot on the team already speaks volumes. Then again this is not a tournament so maybe there are more than just two teams for regular season games. The game kicked off soon after and the boy who was nervous a second ago seemed to have undergone a transformation.

Taking control of the ball from the pass back of his striker he calmly scanned his surroundings whilst charging forward. He seemed to be debating whether to initiate a quick attack or slowly build up

momentum by keeping possession. Only hesitating for a second, he nimbly dodged the tackle of the opposing striker and charged forward.

"He's quick," I subconsciously commented with astonishment after witnessing him perform a sudden 360 turn dodging another opponent.

Just as I thought he would continue his run forward he swung his leg sending a weighted pass down the right flank. The ball sprung to life as soon as it left the laces of his boot narrowly slicing past players to find its intended target. On the flank, the right winger did not lose a step as the ball arrived perfectly into his run.

Managing to leave the opposing left back by a step he arrived at the edge of the box sending a cross into the box. The set of actions were so quick that by the time I turned my attention to the box bodies already leaped into the air. The ace academy number nine fought head-on with two defenders managing to barely beat them for the header.

However, the ball did not sail far as the keeper was there to punch it out of the box giving his team a second of relief. The danger was not over though as Cole could be seen fighting with an opposing midfielder at the edge of the box. With the boy being a head taller than him the youngster didn't bother fighting the aerial duel but instead fought for the landing position.

As expected, the taller midfielder managed to win the ball with his chest but with Cole's intelligent movements, he quickly lost control of it. Using his body to block the opposing midfielder he trapped the falling ball pushing it half a step in front of him. The very next second he let loose a powerful shot that reminded me of the one Ben took last week.

Resembling a rainbow, the ball drew an arc sailing above the heads of the players in the box falling to the bottom left corner. Instinctively reacting the keeper lunged after the shot stretching out his body to

the max. His efforts were not enough though just missing the ball by more inches as it reverberated the inside of the net.

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"Did you teach him that shot," I asked the coach to my right with burning eyes after seeing the same shot again.

Ever since seeing Ben score a goal like that, I've been trying to replicate it but to no avail. Although I am fairly good when it comes to controlling the ball, dribbling, and just generally pulling off skill moves in the heat of the moment my shooting has a lot to be desired for. That's not to say that my shooting is terrible since I've already scored five goals in three games.

It's when I actively try to think about my shooting and try to break down every step that it gets hard for me. One might argue that as long as you score in the moment it doesn't really matter, but I believe being able to pull off a shot consistently is more impressive. For example, if I'm able to constantly create threatening shots from my right flank as Robben does, I'll have more freedom when attacking.

"Yes and no, although we do our best to guide our players with various skills Cole is special by how fast he picks things up," The old man answered me proceeding to brag about the blond boy with a curly mop of hair. He proceeded to talk about how they like to break things down to the basics when working on specific skills.

"I need to improve my accuracy when shooting from outside the box," I eventually blurted out after hearing about how they host some camps specialising in shooting techniques. Although my shooting is not a huge worry right now but it's better to fix future problems earlier rather than later.

"Hahaha, you have a great smell for goals so I'm sure you will pick things up quickly with some formal training." He answered sounding rather enthusiastic about the prospect of me developing my firepower.

For some reason, he seemed to be more excited at seeing my growth after a period of development than I am. It makes sense though as he seems like he really loves his job as a coach. Just by looking at how he wholeheartedly analysed the game for me, you can tell how much he loves the sport.

Watching the game with him felt more like a study session rather than casually spectating a match. My way of viewing the gameplay below started to be subtly affected by him. Things I would usually just do when I get the ball I started to analyse more after seeing some of the wingers below.

The fact they are faster and stronger also helped as it made me realise that If I were to play against them now, I would be overwhelmed. It was not just due to the physical disadvantages of our age difference, but their overall game intelligence played a massive factor. They seemed to be trying their best to execute their coach's tactics whilst also adapting to the flow of the game.

"He Coach if I join your academy will I be assigned to you?" I involuntarily asked him after realising the many areas that I'm still lacking in. Since he gives off a knowledgeable vibe and clearly knows a lot about football, he's the perfect candidate to be my coach.