

Football 118

Chapter 118 ON The Bench Again

"Finally, we're here," I exclaimed as I jumped up from my seat not wanting to spend a second longer on this bus. Don't get me wrong I don't mind the bus itself just the fact my teammates were behaving as if we were on a field trip.

Surprisingly I wasn't the only one rushing to get off the bus as Ben the goalkeeper also followed suit. By the annoyed look on his face, he must have been tricked by his friend to sit at the back of the bus as well. I don't even know how one of the boys managed to sneak in a speaker. I wish they didn't bring it though as their music taste is honestly questionable.

"Quickly get your bags from the compartment, The other team is already warming up, so we don't have any time to waste." Trainer Oliver loudly exclaimed ushering my teammates out of the bus. Although he sounded urgent the look on his face was pretty relaxed plus he's wearing shades as if he is ready for a holiday.

"Have you played them last year?" I asked Ben as we waited for the rest of our teammates to exit the bus. Luckily it didn't take long for them to shuffle out of the bus as they were also pretty excited for the game.

"Yeah, we played one of their two sevens teams, but I think they merged them for nines," he answered me as we started making our way to the changing room after grabbing our bags from the lower compartment.

According to Ben one of their Sevens teams was actually quite good and they had a boy who got scouted by Juventus Academy. Apparently, that boy was one of the few well-known players in their age group. Too bad I wouldn't get to play against him as he attends the Juventus academy full-time now.

Although this means that we will have an easier time in this game I just hope it won't be too boring. Coach Bauer did say that they are a pretty solid team so it shouldn't be that easy for us Plus they have the home advantage. It might not seem like much but having the home advantage can really boost a team's performance.

One of the benefits is that you are already used to the park that you're going to be playing on. The fact that your home fans can easily get there to support you is also another psychological boost. For example, in our last game, we had the stands fully packed with our classmates which must have been scary for our opponents. Just the thought of over a hundred people just being there to cheer against you waiting for you to fail is pretty exciting.

'Wait that was wrong, it's scary right,' I quickly corrected my train of thought not wanting to jinx my team in today's game. It would really be a sorry sight to see Max easily losing the ball due to the pressure of the away fans. Then again knowing him all he needs is to see a good-looking senior girl in high school and he'll turn into Messi.

"I'm not playing today, so score a goal for me," Ben suddenly said bringing me out of my thoughts just as we entered the changing rooms. Looking at him to see if he was joking, I was met with a serious look. Then again when he is never serious, I don't think his facial expression has ever changed outside the times when he saved a hard shot.

"Alright since you can't play, I will score the second goal just for you, I already promised the first one to myself," I answered him with a confident smile quickly sitting down on one of the benches in the locker room. An amused smile crept up on my face after seeing Ben's mouth twitch slightly after hearing my words.

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"Looks like you are also not playing," Ben's amused voice resounded from my right as I was struggling to keep up with reality. The game just started five minutes ago and I'm still sitting on the bench. Yeah, the plot doesn't make sense to me either, but the coach was adamant about his starting lineup.

"I just need five minutes and I'll score two," I answered him with indignation trying to think on the positive side instead of sulking here. Ben didn't seem to buy my words as he adjusted his hat and focused on the field.

[Your coach is probably trying to rotate the team and giving you a chance to rest, look most of your main players for the past three games are on the bench,] Eva suddenly commented and surprisingly she was comforting me which was weird. Usually, she would just tell me to get over it and just do the most out of the chances that I get.

'Yeah, I realised that as well, but I've just been looking forward to my first away game,' I responded helplessly knowing I couldn't change the decision that was made plus coach was probably doing the right thing in rotating the squad.

[Just use this chance to work on your game analysis and maybe you can improve your game intelligence,] She spoke up again encouraging me to continue working on improving myself. That's when I realised why she was so supportive, turns out she just wanted me to work hard to improve my skills. Not like I can be mad at her for that since I wouldn't pass up a chance to improve my skills in any way.

'I know just feel sorry for Mom who came all the way here and doesn't get to see me play,' I responded to her with a wry smile on my face after spotting her in the stands cheering happily with some of the parents that had made the trip.

Focusing back on the field I watched as my teammates continued to fight the positional battle with the Pasco Middle School. For some reason, they didn't have an animal as their team names like us and those we played this season. That doesn't mean that they are not a good team quite the opposite Actually they have won two games and drawn one making them also undefeated like us. Our lineup is the familiar 431 but unlike usual we are more defensive today.

GK: Mike Terrance

Ryan Garcia (Lb), Ole Wagner (CB), Jake Smith (CB), Logan Foster (RB),

Finn Parker (CM), Damian Green (CDM), Lucas Scott (CM),

Blake Young (ST),

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In the 10th minute, Ryan could be seen sprinting down the left flank shoulder to shoulder with the opposing right winger who controlled the ball. He was quite a tricky winger who expertly utilised his speed to keep the left back on his toes. Coming to a quick stop at the edge of the box he created a little separation from his marker.

Ryan wasn't to be outdone though taking a step back and closing off any breakthrough options. Watching the winger perform a few stepovers in front of him he kept his calm as he bent his knees slightly lowering his centre of gravity. In their face-off to see who would flinch first, Ryan won this round as the winger let his eagerness get the best of him.

He knocked the ball further down the wing in hopes of getting away from his opponent but that was a mistake since Ryan was waiting for such an opportunity. Seeing his chance, he took a big step to his right and immediately followed through with a slide tackle. The opposing winger not expecting this tumbled to the ground after feeling the strong resistance of the ball at his feet.

Quickly getting up from the ground Rayn scooped up the ball with his right foot before it could go out for a throw-in. Not wanting to go on a run after having expended a lot of energy defending his flank, he sent a crisp pass forward. The pass wasn't perfect as it bounced off the ground, but it reached its destination the waiting feet of Jake.

The striker seemingly had no plans of stopping the ball to wait for backup as he clumsily received it with his right. He didn't stop there though as he turned with the momentum of the ball to his left side looking to break through in one go. That was wishful thinking though as the next moment, he found himself crashing to the ground as the opposing defender dispossessed him of the ball.

While he was questioning what went wrong on the ground the Pasco Central defender charged forward a few steps before releasing a shot towards goal. From almost the halfway line the ball took off to the Eagle's goal like a cannonball. The whole ground seemed to be at a standstill as everyone craned their necks to see where the shoot would end up.