

Football 131

Chapter 131 State youth cup round one

"Gutten Mittag lads were back again for another game of football." Coach Hanz Bauer stated in a solemn tone gaining the attention of the players in the changing room. Most of them were dressed in their red and black home kits as they tried their best to calm their nerves for the upcoming match.

The importance of the match can be seen in everyone's faces with some even whipping away a light trickle of sweat of their faces. They had just finished their warm-ups and are now eagerly awaiting their coach to list today's starting line-up. Perhaps the only two boys in the room who don't seem to be nervous in the slightest are Tom and Rakim.

The blond striker perhaps wasn't nervous due the confidence in his own skill and simply wanted to unleash his pent-up energy. Whereas the young winger seemed rather bored opting to play with one of his dreadlocks. He seems to be more preoccupied with choosing what boots he will wear rather than worrying about his opponent.

Coach Bauer tried his best to not scold the two of them after noticing that his two most efficient scorers didn't seem to care about the pressure. If he was being honest, he is quite relieved that they aren't intimidated by today's challenge since he will need them to perform.

"Today is our first game in state youth cup, if we lose it's the end of the line for us, so I want you to go out and give it your all." He stated in a calm tone glancing into the eyes of all his players making sure they knew what was at stake. From their serious and slightly childish nods, he could tell that they were fully focused on today's match objective which was to Win.

"We didn't go far last year but this year we are a lot stronger," he spoke up again with a confident smile raising the atmosphere in the room. The boys seemingly hanging onto his words nodded eagerly believing his words a hundred per cent.

"In between the sticks we will start off with Ben in the first half and Mike in the second," He calmly stated continuing to list the rest of the squad before either keeper could voice their disagreement.

~~~

[Red Oak Eagles vs. East River Crocodiles]

The Eagles surprisingly are playing in an unfamiliar formation with coach Bauer choosing to pair up Rakim and Tom upfront. This is actually not such a surprising change as the two of them are quickly becoming a deadly duo since the start of the season. Tom is quite excited to have a partner upfront since this will dissuade the opposing defenders from entirely focusing on him.

GK: Ben Walker

Logan Foster 2 (RB), Ole Wagner 5 (CB), Ryan Garcia 3 (LB),

Max Taylor 7 (CM), Ben Miller 10 (CAM), Finn Parker 8 (CM),

Tom Walker 11 (ST), Rakim Rex 22 (ST),

Perhaps the only player not happy about this formation change is Rakim who could be seen mumbling something to himself outside the centre circle. Not particularly psyched at not being able to play his favourite position the youngster could only stare daggers at his opponents.

He knew that arguing with his coach about his position was useless and might even lead to him being benched, so he decided to take out his frustration on his opponent. His series of actions left Mark the opposing striker across from him speechless.

He inwardly questioned himself trying to determine if the two of them had any animosity. However, no matter how long he thought about it he couldn't think of any bad blood they could have with each other. In fact, he even realised that he had no idea who the smaller boy was, which further confused him. All his musing came to an end though upon noticing the young striker kick up dirt out of frustration.

This scene caused him to inadvertently take a step back not wanting to be anywhere near this crazy kid. Lucky for him none of his teammates noticed his timid actions so his pride could be maintained. Deciding to calm his nerves he gave the small striker a once over wanting to clarify that he is not some monster.

What met his sight though were the green eyes of the boy that had a subtle glow to them due light of the setting sun. But all of that didn't matter to Mark as the glow in his eyes reaffirmed his idea of the boy being a monster. Averting his eyes, he noticed that the boy was wearing a mismatched pair of black Nike boots further confirming the Idea of the boy being crazy.

~~~

[FWEET]

The referee's whistle signalled the start of the match prompting Rakim to pass the ball to Tom. In a show of tacit understanding, the two youngsters did not pass the ball back and instead chose to charge forward. Quickly the opposing striker wearing the blue kit closed down Tom with a powerful charge.

The blond striker didn't seem to mind the pressure though utilising a simple stop-and-go manoeuvre to bypass the opposition. Continuing to charge forward he sent a sharp pass to his left finding Rakim's waiting feet. The youngster scooped up the pass with his right foot turning in one motion narrowly avoiding the tackle of the opposing midfielder.

Utilising his arms to push off the midfielder behind him he charged head-on at the Crocodiles defender. His speed was picked up by another notch swaying his body from side to side as he performed stepovers. His action achieved their goals as the two central defenders subconsciously inched closer to him.

Just as they reached the edge of the box one of the defenders couldn't wait any longer and decided to lunge forward in an attempt to steal the ball. However, that seemed to be the signal the striker was waiting for as he dragged back the ball with his right and immediately swung his left foot.

He did not shoot though as the ball followed a rainbow-like arc floating just above the defender's head who had lunged towards him. Not expecting this he could only helplessly turn his head to see a red figure with a white number eleven fish the ball out of the air. One touch to bring the ball under control was all that Tom needed before swinging his other foot.

Although his left foot is the weaker of his two feet it was barely noticeable as the shoot flew to the top right corner. With how much the young ace practices using his weaker foot it is to be expected. This strength in his weaker foot served to torment the crocodile's keeper who could only try his best to lunge after the ball.

All his effort was for naught though as no matter how much he stretched in the air he just couldn't reach the ball. With a soft thud, the ball nestled itself into goal signalling the first goal of today's cup match. Tom seeing his shot go in exclaimed with excitement turning around to celebrate with his partner only to be met with a figure jumping into his arms.

The two Eagles strikers excitedly ran to the side where their parents were seated to share their excitement of scoring a goal. But their happiness was met with dumbfounded expressions as most of the spectators had barely taken a seat and the pair of them had scored a goal. However, the same could not be said for the rest of the eagle's players who sprinted forward with enthusiasm enveloping the two in a huddle to celebrate.

As the celebration died down, Tom couldn't help but feel a sense of relief and satisfaction. After all, he had been working tirelessly to perfect his left foot and it paid off in one swift movement. Not only that he was thankful for the fact that Rakim decided to send him the pass in the end.

He didn't doubt the fact that Rakim would have rather scored the ball himself since he is also like that. Both of them love scoring goals and would do anything in their power for their own goals. On the other hand, the two of them love winning even more so they act unselfishly when it comes to helping the team win. But Little did he know that the person whom he praises as selfless has an internal mission of creating assists in this game.