

Football 168

Chapter 168 Semi Final (3)

As the keeper launched the ball up the field, it soared over the midfielders, creating a moment of suspense as both teams vied for control. The Tampa Bay Bears, invigorated by their coach's commands, shifted their strategy the importance of this match quickly sunk in.

With how fierce their opponents are they did not have the time to ease their way into this match. So as if all of them had agreed with one another they charged forward deciding to implement a high press on the eagles. They plan on breathing down their neck not leaving them enough time to even think once they have the ball.

In the pre-match talk, their coach had stressed that although the Eagle's attacking prowess is one of the deadliest in their age group the rest is rather average. Their defence lacks speed preferring physical confrontation instead of a duel of speed. This works out perfectly for those who prefer sending their speedy attackers on a run into the hinterlands of their opponents.

Leo their tall and lanky central attacker dropped back to the halfway line jumping into the air to meet the ball. The Bears are sporting a 413-formation with their two wingers often dropping down to the midfield. Leo calmly jumped half a body length higher than Ben heading the ball to his right towards his left winger.

Winger who had failed to stop Max earlier now saw the opportunity to redeem himself. Seeing Logan waiting for the ball to drop he saw his chance as he leapt into the air cooling up the ball and knocking it forward. His speedy action left the flat-footed Logan panicked as he hurriedly turned to chase after him. Due to the fact he strayed too far forward his entire right flank was now empty.

The Bears winger wouldn't waste this opportunity as he knocked the ball quite a bit forward and chased after it. Unleashing his speed, he was a lot faster than when he was chasing down Max. In a matter of moments, he arrived at the edge of the Eagles box as Ole stepped forward to meet him.

The calm captain angled his body in a way that directed the winger towards the corner flag. His measured side steps as the winger got closer seemed to be just waiting for the chance to charge forward. The Bears winger had no plans of letting his opponent dictate their first confrontation. Since he had the ball the initiative of the confrontation is on him.

Swaying his body to the side he performed two quick stepovers looking for a breakthrough opportunity. It came the moment he feigned a charge inward Ole subconsciously stepped in that direction ever so slightly. The boy's defensive instincts were on point as the winger was planning on following through if he didn't move.

Seeing Ole shift to the right to cover the middle he saw his opportunity and pierced into the box through the opening Ole had just created. Seeing his mistake Ole immediately jumped backwards looking to once again appear in the path of the winger. This time with less aggression since they officially entered the box.

However, the Bears winger seemed to have other plans as in a moment of inspiration his individual brilliance shone through. Remembering what had happened earlier he performed a crisp Ronaldo chop pulling the ball behind his body as he change direction. His sudden move left Ole off balance scrambling to find a way to stop his opponent.

Enlightenment comes in the weirdest forms and Ole's came in the form of Logan who tried his best to come to a stop not wanting to crash into his captain. He had desperately chased after his marker after his mistake and when he finally reached him the guy took a page out of Max's playbook. The guy's sudden change of direction sent him on a collision path with his sturdy captain.

Trying his best to stop, his studs dug into the grass, but the damp surface made it impossible for him to stop immediately. Before he could react, he felt Ole's strong hands push him away using their light collision to follow after the Bears winger. He was too late though as the winger drew his leg back swinging it like a whip sending a powerful shot towards the goal.

As the ball rocketed from the winger's boot, a hush fell over the crowd, their anticipation tangible in the crisp morning air. The shot was a stunner by-passing Ole's outstretched leg as it sailed towards the goal. The shot rocketed towards the goal, heading in a straight line for the far corner.

Ben, who was between the sticks, tried his best to jump into the air trying his best to block the ball. Despite his leap that seemed to defy gravity for a boy his age, it wasn't enough. The tips of his gloves stretched to the maximum as the ball grazed the tips of his fingers. The crowd held its breath as the ball deflected off his fingertips, brushing the side of the post and nestled itself into the back of the net.

The crowd erupted into a cacophony of cheers and groans as the net billowed, marking the first goal of the match for the Tampa Bay Bears. The scorer, a blur of motion just seconds before, slowed to a triumphant jog, his arms spread wide as if to embrace the adoring cheers of their supporters. With this goal, he had made up for his mistake a couple of moments ago in the sweetest way.

Coach Simmons on the sidelines jumped up in joy after seeing his team take the lead. Just a moment ago he was dreading the danger that the Eagle's attack posed but in the next, they had taken the lead. They accomplished this most beautifully with a quick counter right after narrowly surviving a deadly attack.

After Punishing them for blazingly charging forward they should play more cautiously now. At least that's what he hoped since then his boys could quickly stabilise the situation. "Get your heads in the game, if they score one you have to score two," Coach Bauer's calm voice could be heard as he instructed his players to brush off the conceded goal.

Hearing his opponent's calm instruction brought Coach Simmons out of his happy mood. The game had just started and the fact that their coach was way too calm unsettled him. So, to be on the safe side he shouted a few instructions to his players who jogged past him as they made their way back to their half.

He stressed the fact that the game had just started and that they should remain focused. Talking to his wingers he instructed them to prioritise defence for the next five minutes expecting a fierce retaliation from their opponents. His players didn't argue with instructions and simply nodded as they retook their positions.

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'5 minute'

After a fierce midfield battle between both teams utilised his nimble footwork and quick thinking to retain possession of the ball. A quick one-two with Ryan to get out of the scuffle and he was off to the races. He knocked the ball forward with gusto quickly reaching his maximum speed with the ball.

One of the bear's wingers trailed from the side seemingly wary of Rakim who followed from the flank. His hesitation to engage Ben worked in the midfielder's favour as he continued to charge forward. The Bear's first line of defence was their CDM who is a stalky boy with a sturdy physique.

Seeing Ben go unchecked as he crossed the halfway line, he gritted his teeth and sprinted forward. Now on a collision course, Ben decided to slow his charge opting to perform a couple of steps over in hopes of baiting the defender in front of him. However, the closer he got he realised that it wouldn't be easy to trick the defender in front of him.

Not willing to risk a collision with the stocky he lifted his head looking for a way out. That was when he realised the fact Rakim had been running parallel to him hugging the sidelines. The reason he noticed this is due to the fact the winger that had been trailing him had made up his mind to encircle him with his charging teammate.

Knowing that Rakim is a lot faster than him he decided to risk a lobbed pass over the opposing right back who had edged forward. Like an arrow released from its bow, he swung his foot lifting the ball into the air and sending it diagonally over the right back's head. Rakim who had been lurking on the sideline jumped into action as he raced down the flank chasing after the ball.

The crowd seeing this held its breath eager to see how this scene would play out. This got more interesting when the right back turned on his axis and chased after the ball. Having the advantage of being closer he stayed ahead of Rakim in the flanks. However, the winger was quickly gaining on him as he sprung into another gear.