

## Football 170

### Chapter 170 Semi Final (5)

Max's duel with the 3 Bears players was only a small interlude in the action-packed match. Just moments after the play resumed the Bears intercept the ball from a sloppy pass and launched a quick counterattack. Their CDM daringly sprung up from the ground and sent a sizzling through ball forward.

Their lanky striker seemed to understand his thoughts immediately turning and running onto the ball. Henric who had been guarding him stuck to his side calmly keeping up with him as he tried his best to contain him. The long-legged boy didn't seem to mind his presence though as he deftly took control of the ball.

Logan who was supposed to be playing right back had wandered too far forward giving the striker a lot of breathing room towards the flank. He wasn't going to waste this as he performed a quick faint forward in the direction of the goal, before promptly turning on his heel away from the defender. His feint is all he needed to get Henric to flinch as the defender prioritised guarding the way to the goal rather than sticking to him.

Having gained some breathing room from his marker he lightly knocked the ball along the edge of the box. Not willing to risk ducking it out with the Eagles captain who was speedily heading towards him he swung his foot. A muffled but powerful bang resonated throughout the park as the ball rocketed from his boot racing towards the goal.

As the crowd held its breath, they watched Ben the Eagles keeper who had been phenomenal up until now remain rooted to his line. He had been standing close to the near post ready to charge out if the striker dared to step into his box. All of that was for naught as the Bear's number nine fired a rocket of a shot leaving him no chance to react.

All he could do was turn his head and watch the ball heading for the far end of the goal. However, luck seemed to be on his side as a distinct bang rang out shaking his entire goal. His entire goal shook slightly as the ball bounced out for a goal kick showcasing just how powerful the striker's legs were.

The onlookers erupted in a mixture of disbelief and relief, the echoes of the ball striking the frame still ringing in everyone's ears. Ben spurred by this narrow escape took on a more determined stance as he glared at the striker who shook his head in disappointment. Although his lanky build doesn't seem to carry much power his legs surprisingly hid a rocket within.

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'19' Max nimbly bypassed the opposing right fullback and cut into the penalty box from the side. He didn't hold onto the ball for long choosing to send a cross towards the penalty box. Unfortunately, Tom, found himself smothered by his more physical marker, sticking to him like glue not leaving him any breathing room.

Through sheer grit and skill, he received the ball with his chest and immediately swung his foot sending a strong side volley towards the goal. But the Keeper's reaction speed remained on point lifting off to his left before the ball even left his feet. His instinct proved him right as he stretched out his hand pushing the ball away as it bounced off his post.

"Huh," the crowd took in a sharp breath as they had just witnessed the striker's superb athleticism. However, the keeper's heroics were all they ended up remembering. The play wasn't over though as the ball bounced back into play flying to the edge of the box.

The ball fell to the feet of Ben the Eagles CAM who surprisingly found himself unmarked. His marker in his haste to help his team defend the earlier attack had charged ahead of him leaving him free to roam.

Knowing that If Tom couldn't win the ball in the box, he wouldn't fare any better he decided to roam the edge of the box.

His bet paid off as he calmly received the ball as he scanned for the best spot to place his shot. The fact that the nearest opponent was more than 2 meters away allowed for the luxury. He didn't wait long letting loose a measured shot towards the right side of the goal. His shot was precise and powerful with little deviation as it soared into the back of the net 2:1.

The Bear's keeper could only scramble to his feet as he desperately jumped after the ball. All the desperation in the world couldn't save him though as he watched the ball nestle itself into the back of the net. "Yahhhhhh," Is all he heard as he fell to the ground hearing his opponents celebrate their goal.

"What are you shithead's doing? Am I the only one guarding this goal?" The keeper exclaimed in anger, feeling frustrated by their lack of focus throughout the attack. He did his part in saving the deadly shot their striker somehow managed to pull off. However, that was all useless as his teammates simply let one of their players take a free shot at goal.

"Whose man was that, and why is he just strolling about free at the edge of my box" He shouted again as he stormed forward to one of his midfielders who just so happened to be Ben's marker. "Calm down bro well do better I promise," His team's captain quickly intervened pulling him into a hug and easily holding him in place.

Surprisingly the riled-up keeper instantly cooled down upon his intervention. "He's right we've got no room for passengers, so if you can't give 100%, get off the park we don't need you," the Bears captain shouted at his players surprising some of them who were trying their best to hide their presence.

Quite a few had been slacking off when it came to keeping up the team's high defensive intensity. They hadn't faced a team that was so fluid in their attacks in their own league which startled them. The fact that their opponent's midfielders and wingers never stopped running annoyed them further.

Their seemingly endless attacking spirit started to take a toll on their defensive style focused on high pressure. The wingers seemed to relish the idea of dribbling past them with various skill moves. They found it hard to contain either of them once they had a ball at their feet. Max on the right wing proved more manageable due to his style of play.

This resulted in them subconsciously guarding any passes towards the left flank, feeling more comfortable letting Max drive at them. However, their underestimation of him came back to bite them hard as he managed to set in motion a goal. Hearing their captain calling them out for their lack of focus and effort made them feel ashamed.

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The Bears sprang into another gear after going behind a goal on the score sheet. Their captain's words helped wake up their desire to win which has served them well so far. They hadn't gotten this far in the competition by only giving half-measures.

With a renewed vigour they now played with a purpose surprising everyone most of all their coach. Seeing the tension rise between his players coach Simmons had been ready to break up a fight, but his captain quickly took control of the situation. He didn't even have to encourage them as they went out of their way to play even harder once the game resumed.

Players whom he had to chase after during training for their procrastination now ran like their life depended on it. They didn't give their opponents even a moment of breathing room. Their hard work resulted in a few goal-scoring opportunities that were only stopped in the last seconds.

Ben between the sticks showcased his ability as a shot-stopper blocking every shot that came towards his goal. He somehow managed to bring one of his body parts wherever it looked like he would finally concede. It wasn't until the final minutes of the first half that they gained a clear shot-scoring opportunity.