

Football 172

Chapter 172 Injured

Sitting on the sidelines the Eagles could be seen attentively listening to coach Bauer's half-time talk. "Logan and Ryan you will be coming off for Jake and Finn," He stated with a slight frown as he started adjusting the team's formation to a 341 choosing to bolster the midfield.

"You wingers have been doing most of the job so far in getting the ball into the back of the net," he said as he explained his reason for bolstering the midfield and giving the wingers more responsibility. He wasn't joking with this statement, four out of the team's seven shots had come from the two wingers.

Both Rakim and Max proved to be a problem, they created quite a few goal-scoring opportunities. However, the two of them couldn't mesh with their wing-backs on the defensive end, oftentimes resulting in dangerous situations. By having a more compact defensive lineup the hope was to forgo the wings and focus on defending the centre of the pitch.

Having three tall central defenders any crosses into the box will hopefully be stopped before they ever reach the goalkeeper. "Finn I need you to anchor the midfield for me when on the defensive end, that doesn't mean the rest of you can slack I want to see more fight from all of you." Coach stated with a serious expression as he continued to point out some mistakes his players had made throughout the first half.

Not only did he give advice to the boys playing but also those on the bench. He reminded them to stay warm as he would put them on the moment those on the field failed to deliver. Being so close to the finals the fever for some silverware ignited their fighting spirit. Thus despite receiving some criticism tall, the players remained attentive to their coach's words.

"Yes Sir!" Everyone exclaimed, after receiving final instruction directly jumped up from the ground ready to resume the match. Listening to a few more motivational words from their coach they headed back

onto the pitch ahead of time. All feelings of pressure over losing the lead had been replaced with excitement.

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The second half started rather slow as the Bears passed the ball around in their own half in an effort to draw out the Eagles. For about three minutes they managed to keep the ball under control. Their opponents weren't so eager to rush forward choosing to retain their formation and press as a united front.

With the addition of Finn the middle of the field quickly became congested as the Bears found it harder to get past them. The Eagle's more compact formation when defending instantly showed its effects forcing their opponents to use their wings.

Coach Simmons on the sidelines instantly sensed the danger if this trend continued. However, before he could think of what to do the Egals won the ball in the '35' minute. The Bears left mid managed to sneak by Max's sloppy guard only to find himself dispossessed by a slid tackle in the next moment.

Jumping up from the ground the midfielder made use of his fresh pair of legs and charged forward. Finn ran toward the opposition goal area through the middle going deeper into their half. Just before the Bears CDM could mount a tackle on him, he played a delicate pass to Ben who had been following from the side.

"Ben here" Rakim yelled as he made a quick run down the left wing forcing his marker to follow. Ben did as the wonder told him and quickly sent a through ball to him. Rakim made a quick run down the wing deftly receiving the ball as two defenders tried to close up any opportunity for him to make a cross into the box.

He quickly created an opening with a few stepovers, enough to open up a passing lane into the box. It looked like he was going to get a cross-off but it turned out to be a feint to get the players out of the way. It worked as planned as both defenders took the bait but the expected cross never came.

Instead, he sent a crisp pass to the edge of the box where Ben found himself with a little breathing room. Despite having enough space to think he didn't have a clear shooting angle, as the Bears CDM and central defender stood in his way. With no option, he did the only thing he could think of pushing the ball back with a quick heel flick and immediately ran forward.

Finn who had been trailing received the ball and quickly pushed it forward a little to his right before sending a weighted pass into the box. Tom was at the end of that pass managing to beat his marker to the ball, with just enough time to knock it to the approaching Ben. Tom was brought down the next second by a bit of rough handling from his marker.

However, the crowd focused more on the attacking midfielder who now controlled the ball. He quickly got his foot on the ball and with a swift three-sixty rotation, got away from the defender that trailed him. The only thing standing between the midfielder and the goalpost now was the goalkeeper but before he could take the shot, he was brought down from behind under what could be described as a very nasty challenge.

The referee blew his whistle and quickly rushed to the scene showing 2 yellow cards to the Bear's defender. Normally he would have received a straight red card for a nasty tackle like that. The only reason he wasn't was because this was a nine-a-side game allowing for coaches to replace players who were sent off.

That is exactly what was happening right now but none of that could placate Ben who was writhing in pain on the ground. The only saving grace was the fact he was holding his non-dominant foot which should affect his playing style much. The pain he was feeling was no joke as he remained on the ground without any indication of getting up.

Seeing this trainer Oliver rushed onto the pitch with his medkit immediately checking on his foot. The match took a standstill for around 10 minutes as everyone on the field prayed for the midfielders well being. The defender that had injured him could be seen crying on the sidelines regretting the result of his actions.

Ben slowly got up with the help of Oliver and slowly limped out of the park. Seeing this the spectators applauded him sending encouraging messages to the young baller. Despite the encouragement of both team's fans tears continued to trail from his face. He was still in pain evidenced by the limp on his left foot, and at this moment all his thoughts were on easing the pain.