

## Football 183

### Chapter 183 Cup Finale (3)

The referee blew his whistle again, signalling for the corner kick. Max, undeterred by the previous attempt, carefully placed the ball at the corner flag. This time, he aimed for a higher cross letting his teammates duke it off in the air for a chance of glory. Following the ref's signal he closed in on the ball sending a whipped cross into the box.

The ball sailed towards the far post, where Lucas Scott was waiting and battling with his marker. Lucas jumped into the air alongside his marker both of them flicking their heads towards the oncoming ball. He managed to beat his marker to the ball sending it towards the centre of the box with the back of his head.

The ball hit off another player losing some momentum falling to the ground, and wobbled dangerously in front of the goal. However, before it could trickle into the net an Ascenders defender managed to clear it, sending it high and wide. The chaos in the box came to an end with that as the Ascenders got a chance to breathe and regroup.

'25' The blue number 8 received the ball just past midfield and immediately turned on the jets sprinting down the left wing, his pace causing problems for the Eagles' defence. Jake, determined not to let him through again, stayed close, matching his every move. For every muscle twitch, he matched it perfectly booking any route towards the goal.

He attempted to outmanoeuvre Jake with a series of quick stepovers, but this time, Jake was ready. He anticipated the move and expertly timed his tackle, winning the ball and sending it out of play for a throw-in. His tackle was clean connecting with nothing but the ball earning some applause from those watching.

Helping the number 8 up from the ground the boy wasn't angry and congratulated him for a clean tackle. Not wasting time he quickly picked up the ball and threw it to his team's number six near the touchline. He brought the ball down with little effort and charged towards the centre of the field.

Always scanning his surroundings he came to a quick stop when he spotted Lucas charging in from the side. Nimble dodging the player, he continued forward heading for the goal, charging directly at the defence. Before either Ole or Henric could decide who would charge at him he let loose a weighted pass forward.

His team's number 9 stepped forward deftly taking control of the ball whilst holding Henric back. He tried to turn but his marker remained firm not leaving him enough room to breathe. He eventually settled for dropping that ball back to his number 6 who had continued his run. Not even bothering to receive the ball he fired off a powerful shot from about 25 yards out.

The ball soared through the air, spinning rapidly as it headed towards the top corner. Mike, between the sticks, could only watch from his line as the ball pierced the back of the net. The pitch was still for a few seconds before erupting in the jubilation of both the IMG players and their fans. 2:0 the scoreboard read as they secured their lead in today's final.

The eagles who were still full of fighting spirit now had a lost look in their eyes. Their belief in themselves was severely shaken as they watched their opponents celebrate. Mike in between the sticks was the most annoyed shooting at his defence and teammates for letting their opponents do whatever they wanted.

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Despite the setback, Coach Bauer remained steadfast in encouraging his players from the sideline. "Heads up, lads" he shouted from the sideline, his voice cutting through the noise of the celebrating

parents and students who came to watch. "We've got plenty of time left. Keep pushing!" he reaffirmed before giving a few instructions to some players.

His words had some effect as Ole quickly collected the ball out of the net wanting to restart the match faster. The play quickly resumed after their opponent finished celebrating. Tom knocked the ball back to Lucas outside of the centre circle and immediately rushed forward.

The eagles quickly launched an attack right from the get wanting to punish their opponents for celebrating in front of them. Using a quick passing play between Rakim, Lucas and Tom they quickly arrived at the edge of the IMG box. However, Tom's final shot narrowly missed the edge of the goal causing the spectators to groan in frustration.

'27'

Following the narrowly missed shot the Eagles stepped up their pressing play, forcing the match's tempo to speed up. In a matter of moments, their entire team was in the opposing half. No one was lazy and everyone chased their man with eager eyes hungry for a goal.

Their efforts paid off as Ryan, Rakim and Lucas managed to corner an IMG midfielder who received a poor pass from his teammate. Before he had the chance to look Rakim shoulder-tackled him sending him lightly off balance. However, the disparity in their builds allowed him to steady himself and push the winger away quickly.

His trouble didn't end there though as Ryan suddenly accelerated leaving his man and nimbly stole the ball. The midfielder who was focusing on Rakim couldn't react to this only able to watch Ryan's speeding figure.

The left-back action set off a chain reaction as almost all the Eagles rushed forward looking to score a goal. The only player that remained back was Jake just in case their opponents attempted a quick counter. Ryan wasn't thinking about any of that, as he quickly reached the left edge of the opposing box.

Meeting the opposing right back head-on he performed a few stepovers slowing his speed slightly. As they neared each other he feinted cutting right, inwards before blowing past his defender on the left side. Quickly reaching the touch line he looked into the box for someone to cross it too.

He spotted Tom engaged in a physical duel with his marker near the front post, Ole and Henric drawing the attention of two tall defenders near the penalty spot. Max lurked close to the back post looking to pick up a bargain if the ball sails past the scuffle in the box. Lucas remained calm at the edge of the box just outside the D looking for a rebound.

Taking all of this in within the span of a second he made up his mind and swung his leg. All those rushing into the box ready to leap into the air abruptly stopped. The expected cross never came as Rayn swung his leg cutting back a pass to the edge of the box he had been at moments ago. No one was expecting this least of all the right back who had been desperately chasing after him.

Coming to a sliding stop before he could collide with Ryan he watched the rolling ball arrive at a pair of green Nike boots. Taking a touch to adjust his angle rakim drew back his leg and fired off a curled shot aimed at the far right corner of the goal. The ball flew at a high velocity spinning rapidly at an angle as it homed in on the top right corner.

The opposing keeper who had been near the front post could only watch the ball without being able to react. In the next second the ball impacted the post and nestled itself into the back of the net. "YASSSS," the eagles exclaimed venting their emotions at finally getting onto the scoreboard.

One of their players fished out the ball from the goals before joining the celebrations. They weren't done with putting a point on the scoreboard and were already looking for an equaliser. Placing the ball on the spot after a quick celebration they were raring to go again.