

Football 220

Chapter 220 Demoted

[14:00, Mon 15th /01/19, Lennoxtown Training Centre, Glasgow]

As the final whistle blew, signalling the end of the training session, Coach Andrews gathered the team for a final debrief. "Good work today, everyone. I saw some excellent teamwork and individual skills out there. Keep up this level of intensity, and carry it into Wednesday's game against St.Mirren"

The players nodded their expressions a mix of exhaustion and determination. As they dispersed, Rakim felt a hand on his shoulder. He turned to see Callum McGregor, the team captain, standing beside him. Not sure what he what the guy wanted he still decided to hear the man out.

"Nice work today, Rakim," Callum said. "You've got some serious talent. Keep pushing, and you'll make a big impact here." His words caused his eyes to widen in surprise as he wasn't expecting the compliment. After all, he had given him a less-than-warm welcome to the club despite being the captain.

"Thanks, Callum," Rakim replied, still not knowing what to think of it. "I'm looking forward to learning from all of you." he continued being genuinely serious as there are many things he could learn from these professionals. Callum simply nodded before heading inside to get clean up calling it a day.

Rakim said goodbye to the rest of the guys who greeted him before continuing his training. Deciding to work on some set pieces he set up a plastic wall after getting direction from some of the staff. Taking freekicks had become something he started taking after realising he would be getting fouled a lot.

he wanted teams to fear fouling him near their box just in case they gave him a setpiece opportunity. However, his skills had become rusty after not practising it for a while. After spending half an hour just taking freekicks from five different angles he only managed to convert around 70% of his attempts.

Although the ratio could be considered good given the fact there wasn't a keeper it wasn't all that impressive. Rakim also noticed that he struggled to control them once he added more power to his shots. He knew that he would have to practise his set pieces more since this hadn't been part of the training plan.

His coaches focused on maximising his attacking prowess on the wing and creativity. Plus the more he played against older players the training in that direction was rammed up so he wouldn't be too disadvantaged. His growth spurt helped things but left him on the thin side as he didn't do any weight lifting. Chalestenics, Yoga, and varicose activities are what his coaches used to build muscles that wouldn't damage him in the long term.

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"How was training Andrews?" Brandon Rodgers asked his assistant coach after serving the latter a cup of tea. He always liked to drink something warm when working thus always keeping a kettle of warm tea in his office.

Coach Andrews didn't reply right away taking a sip of his tea before answering. "It went well the lads were quite spirited," He replied before going over what he had covered in today's session making sure to note which players stood out.

Since they had just come out of the winter break most of them were still rusty but they were still fit. Not in their best state but they could get away with only being 75% match fit in the Scottish premiership

given their strength. He mentioned a few names of players whom he thought were still match-ready not losing a step from before the break.

"Scott, Sinclair, Callum in particular in perfect shape," Coach Andrews stated realising their importance to this year's Celtic squad. He quickly went over them emphasising that they were in form and were ready to start in Wednesday's game. "Dembele and Rakim also Performed well in training, especially the new kid, I can't believe he was shot, boss,"

His words caught the man's attention but he didn't want to hear about it after remembering his battle with the board. At this point, it wasn't about the team's performance for him but about power plays. Since the board brought the boy in the better he performs the more power they get with the decision-making of the team.

Knowing them they would sell any player that performed decently to the highest bidder. He didn't mind that thinking but as a coach, he wanted to challenge the biggest competitions in the world. So he decided to stick to his previous plan of not utilising the boy since the team was strong enough to maintain their standing.

"Just send him to Chris in the Academy, as for Dembele let him continue in the first team," He stated with a calm expression leaving no room for arguments from his assistant coach. The latter wanted to protest not wanting to see a talented play be suppressed but he knew that this was a fight he couldn't interfere with.

"Okay I'll let them know," he hastily replied as he proceeded to pull out his phone to let the academy manager know. He would also have to let Rakim know but he wasn't partially looking forward to this phone call football was a business and it was better for the kid to know early.

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"Hey Eva did I just get demoted?" Rakim asked her after hanging up the phone call with Coach Andrews still not believing what had happened. He had just come out of the shower after spending an hour swimming in the pools of his apartment complex. The place had its own fitness centre with all the amenities justifying the £8,500 a month price tag.

So he was still out of sorts when the coach who had been praising him throughout training told him that he would be training with the reserves. Not only that they had decided after gathering extensive data that it would be best if he played with the under 20's. He had wanted to ask if the guy was making some kind of practical joke that he wasn't getting.

After all, they had only seen him train for 2 and a half hours plus medicals that he aced, so where was this extensive data coming from? Luckily he managed to hold himself back just in time not wanting to let them know what he was thinking. Since they practically controlled his future at the club. Safe to say that he was beyond pissed at the unfair treatment he was receiving but there wasn't anything he could do about it at the moment.

If he had a bit more prestige and wasn't a former wunderkind who had just recovered after a shooting, he would have more options. Alas, all he could do now was make them regret not playing him by performing beyond a doubt with the under-20s.

{I believe you have, I'm not so sure why myself but it looks like your professional debut would have to wait a little longer,} She responded with a bemused tone probably enjoying his plight but quickly went on to point out the facts.

{Welcome to professional football, here you play for yourself first and the team second. Everyone is looking to further their own career which goes for coaches as well so keep this in mind moving forward} She points out that whilst the sport may be a team sport for a player to achieve success they must be selfish.

That goes especially for forwards whose job relies on their output on the pitch. Just performing well for the team won't cut it a qualified forward needs goals and a lot at that. This is the reason part of the reason good players insist on bigger wages within their teams. One is compensation for their services to the club and second, it reflects the value the club places on them.

For example, a small club like Celtic wouldn't let a player like Scott Sinclair who is on a £25,000 a week wage just sit on the bench if he is healthy. Whereas Rakim is not only on loan but only costs them a measly £750 a week to keep on payroll. Thus while his commercial value is high with the bit of media attention he has it's not to the point where it could affect the managers decision-making.