

## Football 229

### Chapter 229 Mini Derby (4)

On the field, Rakim shook off the disappointment of the missed opportunity and simply went back to his position. The clock was ticking, and every second counted. In the 79 minute, he called for the ball, after beating his marker with a quick feint. Receiving the ball the next moment he turned in one swift motion nimbly dodging his marker's attack.

Not continuing forward he sent a pass towards the middle where Scott had just gotten open. The midfielder received the ball with a nimble touch as he charged forward. He dribbled the ball forward just daring one of the defenders to step forward and challenge him. Performing a quick feint and a quick change of direction he shook off a midfielder who had been tailing him.

Looking up he contemplated taking a shot as he neared the box but saw a better option. Thus he swung his foot sending a piercing-through ball into the space between RCB and right RB. His seemingly aimless pass into the box connected with the neon boots of Rakim who had taken an arced run in.

"Offside," The defensive line quickly called out looking for the sideline official to agree with them but his flag remained lower. By the time they realised that the ref wasn't going to blow his whistle, Rakim was one one-on-one with the keeper.

Watching the keeper rushing out with his hands outstretched trying to block his path, a small smile appeared on Rakim's face. He swayed his body back and forth as their distance continued to close. Just as they were no more than a meter apart he dragged his left boot along the ground as he performed a feint to the left.

His feint did the trick prompting the keeper to step in that direction, by that time it was too late. Before he could even realise what happened Rakim's left foot slotted the ball through his open legs. By the time

he hit the ground, the ball was already nestled in the back of the net bringing the score back on level terms 2:2.

"Told you he is unstoppable," Boab exclaimed in cheers as the Celtic crowd celebrated their team's goal. He had held his breath when the play was building and only breathed in relief upon seeing his new favourite player score.

"He's good I give you that," Tam responded to his friend as he watched their team cheer after scoring the equaliser. "Not just good, he's phenomenal," he continued after thinking about how his words didn't do justice to the player he'd been watching.

Unlike his friend, he isn't one to be mesmerised by a player's performing skills. However, the more he watched the young winger the more charmed he was by his playstyle. He quickly realised that the kid was special and playing in a league of his own compared to the rest of the players playing. He honestly couldn't understand why the club was letting such an amazing talent play in the youth league.

Things ramped up in the 82' minute as both teams started battling more fiercely. No player in the middle third was able to hold onto the ball for more than a couple of yards before being stopped. It was either by well-timed tackle or a foul that earned them a free kick, nevertheless mounting an attack became a challenge.

At this moment Rangers number Six manoeuvred past a Celtic midfielder near the halfway line. Releasing the ball forward where Cole positions himself just in time to dodge another charge. The number 10 didn't take control of the ball and simply let it pass through his legs, duping his marker. Truning in a swift display of agility he called for the ball that had ended up with his team's striker behind him.

The number 9 didn't hesitate to pass him the ball as he struggled to hold off his marker. Cole deftly received the ball charging forward with uncanny speed as he nimbly dodged a slide tackle. Entering the final third he sent a quick pass to his nearby left winger as he bypassed another Celtic player.

Calling for the ball back as he got open again he was met with a figure smothering his side the moment he received the ball. It was Scott, who had raced back to help his team in defence after losing the ball. The midfielder's presence threw Cole off-balance, forcing him to pivot away from the goal.

As He struggled to maintain possession, the nearby Celtic right-back was charging forward to try and steal the ball. Seeing this out of the corner of his vision the midfielder knew he had to make something happen. Leaning a little on Scot he exerted his strength forcing the midfielder to step back to regain his footing.

Using this chance he nutmegged a nearby midfielder trying to steal the ball from him. Rounding the stunned play he brought that ball under his control dropping his right shoulder he feinted right before turning left. This little trick created separation from the Ranger's right back who had finally reached him.

Now able to see the goal again he didn't wait to correct his course and charged forward. scanning his surroundings as he neared the 18-yard box a plan formed in his mind. Not hesitating he sent a crisp pass to the other striker Expecting a pass back. This would set up a chance for him to take a shot at goal as the defenders would be distracted for a split second.

The striker had other plans though as the moment he received the ball he feinted a pass before turning in the other direction. His move successfully tricked his marker allowing him to turn in one motion, but that's where his luck ended. Because whilst his marker was fooled the nearby left back wasn't allowing him to anticipate his move.

Performing a crisp textbook slide tackle he swept away the ball and the player in one fell swoop. His exaggerated reaction and pleas for a penalty were ignored by the ref as a nearby Rangers defender sent the ball forward to a nearby midfielder. He wasn't the only one calling for a penalty as the Rangers contingency did the same but the ref simply shook his head as he followed after the ball.

The ball was carved at the feet of the Celtic number 14 who had been subbed on in the 80th minute. Barely able to get in the swing of the match he found himself in possession of the ball. He could feel all eyes turn towards him causing him to freeze for a second.

The world in his view seemed to slow down for a second as he could see the animated shorts of the onlookers. Their faces moved but their words blended with the crowd, his manager was shouting something but his raging heart was the only thing he could hear. Watching the ball rolling towards him as his feet subconsciously stopped it he watched a flood of blue set their sight on him.

Not just from the players that had surged forward but he also spotted the opposing defenders behind him inching towards him. His state ended as a piercing voice much closer than the rest sounded from just beyond his right shoulder. "Man on to your right," hearing those words seemed to be the trigger he needed to awaken him.

Time once again resumed its normal flow as his right foot dragged the ball with him as he turned left, turning 180 degrees. The drowned voices once again made sense as he felt a pair of feet kick up astro behind him. Stepping forward now that he faced the goal he was only able to see that the opposing CDM had performed a sliding tackle.

A dose of adrenaline hit him as he realised what would have happened if he hadn't moved out of the way. Driving forward he channelled the sensation he spotted Rakim who had made the shout. The winger didn't wait to receive his thanks but was already in attack mode. Watching his seemingly erratic movements resembling a wide receiver trying to beat his man caused a smile to appear on his face.

The winger's dreads fluttered in the wind as his feet flashed in a sequence of shutter steps as his centre of gravity shifted from left to right. Not once did he look to see what his team's midfielder was doing trusting he would get the ball. At least that's what the boy in question was thinking as he swung his foot to send a chip beyond the back line.

The moment his foot connected with the ball Rakim turned right taking a long step before turning on his axis beating his already confused marker. Glancing up as he turned he instantly read the ball's flight path as a familiar sensation appeared in his mind. It was a subtle calling beckoning him to reach it to grasp the glory that awaited, it was his goals sense.