

Football 231

Chapter 231 Under Pressure

"The young phenom that shook the world by a shooting makes major news again," Gary Lineker stated letting his charismatic air draw in the viewer's attention. "His return to the football scene was met with scepticism but I know quite a few teams who are regretting their choice," He continued with a light smile as the image of Rakim flew in the air and trapped the ball with his foot.

"I said it before he has no business playing in a youth league," Micah chimed in with a bright smile looking quite energetic that his prediction was proven right. "I mean he is making the whole league look silly with all the skills he is pulling off." He again made his point prompting the behind the scene team to play some of the scenes of Rakim performing different skills.

These scenes quickly mesmerised the viewers as it seemed like the winger was dancing past players. Whenever he had the ball at his feet no player could touch him as he did whatever he wanted. Some of his goals and assists appeared each more mesmerising than the other.

"C'mon Micah even you didn't expect him to get right back to business after having just recovered from the shooting," Rio retorted joining in on the banter with his friend driving the conversation forward. "Now Big Michs could see it in his eyes, he got that dog in him," He responded with a serious expression looking into the camera with a serious gaze for a few moments before bursting out in laughter.

They continued to banter like that for a few minutes as Rio and Micah's debated the validity of intuitions. It wasn't just about football as they got a little off-topic but remained entertaining for the viewers. However, Gary Lineker had to step in to bring the conversation back on topic which was Rakim for now.

"While I enjoy hearing about Micah's ability to grill the perfect steak we should get back on topic. Rakim has been having an incredible start back into organised football, some might say he hasn't lost a step

despite the shooting," He stated with a serious expression as he started talking about the winger's achievements since lacing his boots back on.

Clips would occasionally play in the background letting the audience feast on his skills. Just as he was about to analyse a play that he found brilliant he was interrupted by his final guest. The network would occasionally pull in someone to fill the fourth seat to boost ratings and this time was no different. Thus despite being the main host, he can't actually decide who will be his co-hosts.

"I'm sorry but I have to respectfully disagree with you lads. I'm happy he recovered from the shooting but let us stop hyping him up for the littlest things." Steve Clark stated in a confrontational tone causing the other pundits to reel back in surprise. None of them had expected such a negative take on the winger whom they touted as brilliant despite what he had to overcome.

"Let's not confuse the facts he is performing well in a football desert-like Scotland. Five games performing well in a minor youth league and everyone wants to call him a genius again," He concluded making his stance clear and giving both the audience and pundits a chance to check in his words.

Micah was the first to speak up after the moment of silence of shock as realisation set in. "You can't be serious my granma's left toe can tell that the kid is special," He exclaimed in disbelief not understanding the man's views after having seen the magic Rakim performers on the field.

When he first saw the clips of him dancing with the ball up and down the wing he couldn't believe it. The boy hasn't lost a step, in fact, his playstyle became more gracefully as he seemingly glided past opponents. One can't even tell that he's been shot by the way he plays as he's easily able to dismantle older players.

"No I'm dead serious," Steve retorted with a haughty expression standing up from his stool. "The boy wasn't good enough for the senior team, he's had some ok matches in a youth league and people like

you want to call him the next Messi," he reported with a calm expression his right hand slamming onto the table for emphasis.

Internalising his words made the others remember the fact that the winger was indeed still playing in a youth league. They had been so mesmerised by the skills he displayed that they completely forgot those facts. Despite Steve's rude remarks, he was in the right that the kid's good performance doesn't matter until he does it in a professional league.

"The Celtic Managers not being able to recognise his value to the team isn't his fault," Micah stated again doubling down on his stance of not liking the fact a small reporter turned pundit is trying to discredit players he has taken a liking towards.

"Let's not blame Rodgers for the player's shortcomings, he's just not ready," Steve stated not willing to give up this argument so soon, as it was his chance to make a lasting impression. This is half the reason the network had him on; his controversial takes drew viewers and sparked debate.

"He's doing everything right. He joined a new team, and the manager sent him away after one training session. How does that make sense?" Micah fired back, his frustration evident. "Not only didn't he complain he out-performed everyone he's played against. He is making them look stupid despite only being 15," he finished making his point not willing to let that point get lost in translation from what is about to be a shit storm online.

"Look, it's not about his potential. It's about the here and now. Potential doesn't win matches; performance does. And until he proves himself in a senior team, all this hype is just that—hype," Steve countered, folding his arms.

Rio leaned forward, sensing the tension rise. "Alright, Steve, let's put it this way. If Rakim keeps this up and gets promoted to the senior team, will you admit you were wrong?"

Steve smirked. "If he does, boohoo he's got his foot in the door. I won't bother to acknowledge him until he performs well in a major competition, until then I'm sticking to my guns." his responses left the Ex-United defender at a loss for words not knowing what to say.

He was trying to give this coworker an out since he was sure that Rakim was special. Having played with two special players at United he has a similar feeling as when he watched them play. The boy at just 15 plays with such grace and skill that he makes it look easy. He's got that special thing that every great forward has thus he doesn't understand why Steve is trying to deny the obvious.

"The boy has a long way to go, we should be discussing Matteo Smith's debut with the Spanish side Villarreal" Steve concluded his point wanting to directly dismiss the conversation and lift up a player of his choice.

"Let's not get ahead of ourselves, Steve," Gary interjected, trying to defuse the situation. "Rakim's journey is just beginning, and it's worth noting how far he's come despite the setbacks. But before we move on let's watch a clip of what Rakim had to say in yesterday's post-match interview."

After his words fell their figures on people's screens were replaced with the figure of Rakim standing in front of a Celtic wall. He had a towel over his neck and was still sweating from the match that just concluded. The moment the video appeared on the screen it immediately began playing with the reporter's voice resounding.

"Congrats on the match and winning yet another Man of the match,"