

Football 251

Chapter 251 251 Vs HEARTS (4)

(FWEEEEET)

Callum McDonald resumed his commentary, "Welcome back, everyone. The second half is underway, and we've seen some changes. Rakim Rex is on for Celtic, making his league debut, and Oliver Bozanic has come on for Hearts, replacing Steven Naismith."

"That's right, Callum," Roy Townsley added. "Rex is a name that is hard to not remember in the league, despite this only being his official league debut his name has been on everyone's lips." He said with a slightly excited tone after finding something interesting to talk about whilst the match was ongoing.

Callum followed his lead since nothing exciting was happening at the moment. Simply calling out the names of players who received the ball would get boring after a while. "Just six days ago he made his professional debut in the Europa League at just 15 years 7 months 3 days. Not only did he remain composed with the hostile welcome from his own team's fans he scored 2 to shut them up.

"Safe to say that he is an exciting talent, and I can't wait to see him play again those ten minutes live weren't enough," He continued as Rakim recorded the ball for the first time, he calmly brought the ball down with his chest.

Then he feigned a dash down the wing as the ball fell to his feet causing his marker to preemptively jump to run in that direction. However, the expected run of the winger never came as he calmly passed the ball back to Tierney. Forming a triangle with him and Bitton they maintained possession for a few moments before he sent a high ball across the field. The ball was towards Forrest who found himself unmarked allowing him to calmly receive the ball.

"I see what you're talking about Callum, his composure right there is simply superb. instead of risking a run, he maintained control of the ball with his teammates drawing in the hearts of players before emptying it to a free teammate." Roy commented sounding genuinely impressed at what he had just witnessed. Being a midfielder in his playing days he appreciated players who remained calm more than those who always took risks.

"Yeah, the way he moves makes it hard to believe he is just back from a gunshot injury," Callum stated after watching Rakim get past a Hearst encirclement through clever footwork and good body control. he danced around his marker and fed the ball to Henderson, who advanced up the field.

The chance didn't amount to much due to the Herts back line tightening up. This forced Brown to take a long shot from outside the box which sailed over the bar without troubling the keeper. This didn't bother the Glasgow boys and they continued to press their advantage. Rakim continued to display his ability to beat players as he connected with his teammates drawing some attention from their opponents.

Minutes ticked by with both teams finding their rhythm and once they did the match became more competitive. Hearts began to push forward, winning personal battles as they looked for a breakthrough. The intensity of the match picked up, and the game started to balance out as Celtic and Hearts each had their moments of attacking.

Rakim tried an outside curly after drilling past a great midfielder and losing his man but ended up hitting the woodwork. In another chance, he released Henderson with a through ball into the box but the CAM couldn't angle his shot past the on-form Zlamal. Burke managed to connect with the corner guiding its goal ward but couldn't bring it down enough as it sailed out for a goal kick.

Hearts also had their fair amount of chances as Clare found himself speeding down the wing after receiving a timely through ball. He latched onto it as he entered the final third of the pitch nimbly avoiding a slide tackle from Scott. He then released Ikeazu with a sharp pass who sent a first-time shot

at the Celtic goal. Being put to work after a long time of wait didn't bother Bain as he palmed the ball out of the park.

The resulting corner also proved dangerous as Hertas Souttar rose above the body's in the box. He sent a powerful header towards the back post but unluckily for him Tierney was guarding near the post and headed the ball away from the goal. That was the last notable attempt from them until the [56] minute when Arnaud Djoum made a daring run into the Celtic penalty area.

With the ball at his feet, he manoeuvred past players just looking for that shooting lane to open up. However, Kristoffer Ajer, stood in his way trying his best to remain composed but upon seeing they had entered the penalty box he was forced to make a move. Trying to intercept the ball as Djoum moved it to his right, they collided sending the pair crashing to the ground.

The referee pointed to the spot, and the crowd erupted in anticipation. Even though he chose to give a penalty he did not award the defender a booking, deeming it not to be a malicious challenge. That did not stop the Celtic players from swarming him and trying to change his mind, but his decision remained resolute.

Oliver Bozanic stepped up to take the penalty. The stadium fell silent as he placed the ball on the spot. With a composed run-up, Bozanic struck the ball firmly into the bottom corner, beating Celtic's goalkeeper and giving Hearts the equaliser they needed so badly.

"Oliver Bozanic scores, and Hearts have equalized!" Callum McDonald's voice rang out as the stadium erupted in cheers. "A calm and composed penalty that left Bain with no chance. It's 1-1 here at Tynecastle Park."

"Very well taken by Bozanic," Roy Townsley agreed. "It was a crucial moment for Hearts, and he stepped up with the confidence you'd expect from a seasoned player."

[57] As the players reset and Celtic kicked off, they played with more vigour trying to take the lead again. Despite Hearts more active playstyle now that they managed to even out the score they took a defensive stance. Thus the boys in green found themselves passing the ball around them as they were unable to break through.

[60] The short stalemate was broken when Rakim received a pass meant to be just a test from Tierney. However, the winger suddenly chose to let the ball pass through his legs and circumvented his marker. Bringing the ball back under his control he accelerated into the box with a nimble piece of footwork that allowed him to bypass Soutter and Lee.

Approaching the five-yard box at breakneck speed he eyed Zlamal who was trying to block his way forward. Performing a quick step over in an attempt to confuse him, he didn't even look up for a passing option. He could practically smell a goal and wasn't going to hesitate thus he smacked the ball with the inside of his right foot.

The ball swerved as it took flight heading for the far corner flying past Zlamal who was trying to close down the near post. A moment of pin-drop silence was followed by a crescendo of cheers the moment the ball impacted the back of the net. Before everyone could even react The number 45 jersey was seen running to the corner flag filled with Celtic fans.

He performed his familiar Griddy dance that he had blown up after his debut in Valencia. Adding more swagger to the dance like whipping his shoes a bright smile was plastered on him as he celebrated his first league goal. Surprisingly Edouard and Tierney joined him performing their own version of the dance before pulling him into their embrace.

"If you are just tuning in it's 1:2 at Tynecastle Park, as Rakim Rex puts his team ahead in his league debut with a goal," Callum exclaimed, excitement palpable in his voice. "The kid's electric. One moment he is calm and the next Boom he's one-on-one with the keeper."

Roy chimed in, "Absolutely. His dribbling is something special agile and confident. Not every day you see a player of his age with such composure on the ball."

"You're right Roy the way he is moving at such a young age is unbelievable." Callum intoned agreeing with Roy's point. "What is that dance though, we saw him do it in Valencia too after his brace," He asked, genuinely curious as the camera once again showed their celebration.

"That my friend is called the Griddy, all the kids are doing nowadays,"