

Football 259

Chapter 259 Training

[Glasgow Scotland, Thursday, 08/03/2019]

The cold wind swept across the fields of Lennoxtown, Celtic FC's state-of-the-art training facility nestled just outside Glasgow. Rakim stood at the edge of the pitch, his breath forming small clouds in the chilly morning air. The rolling hills of Scotland provided a serene backdrop, but nothing was peaceful about the intensity of the training sessions he had been doing throughout the week.

Due to them not having a game over the weekend as a perk of their busy schedule, it allowed him to acclimate to life within the first team fully. The new manager Lennon has started introducing his coaching philosophy giving him a genuine chance to earn a spot on the squad. Determined to prove himself he started working harder in his free time doing all he could to get better.

The past few days had been gruelling, as he began his new workout routine aimed at making him match fit. Because his mother couldn't supervise his training from across the pond she asked one of her colleagues to create a plan after meeting up with him. It consisted of a lot of cardio, ball control drills and escape manoeuvres when he found himself in a tricky situation.

With all that in mind Rakim had been wearing both ankle and body weights as he completed his drills. Since he refused to actively lift weights they had to get creative to help him strengthen naturally. His training has caused his physique to slowly resemble that of an agile sprinter with muscle definition slowly forming in the right places. Adjusting his diet and recovery routines also helped in this process making him genuinely feel like a professional player. His lanky 6'1 frame started to fill out with more muscles as his chalestenics workout started bearing fruit.

Since it was still early barely 8 am he began with a brisk jog around the training ground. He jogged for half an hour, and by the time he was done the early morning mist began to lift, revealing the lush green

expanse of Lennoxton. He could hear the distant shouts of his teammates as they arrived for the day's training session.

Despite the cold, his body felt warm after completing his jog allowing him to get right into training. The morning was spent on personal training with the coaches setting up a few stations based on player positions. Rakim joined the group of wingers consisting of Micky Johnston, Scott Sinclair, Forrest and Daniel Arzarni among others.

"Good morning lads, Well have you working on your ball control, change of pace and crossing accuracy. We've set up cone and pole drills to start with, so whenever you are warmed up join us," Coch Jacks one of Lennon's assistant coaches instructed them before heading away to talk with some of his staff. Nodding at his instructions the players quickly split off to begin their own warm-ups to get their bodies right.

Rakim went through a quick 10-minute dynamic stretch routine before joining the coaches at the course they set up. The cone drills were pretty straightforward and after watching the coaches demonstrate it once he got a hang of it. Manoeuvring the ball through the course set-up he went through it a couple of times before being joined by the other players. Making sure to interchange the leading foot each time he started to speed up his pace.

Coach Jack took them through various cone drills before adding a crossing section at the end as the players reached the side of the box. Joining the back of the line Rakim watched Morgan dribble past the cone maze and manoeuvre around the last few poles before sending a sharp cross into the box. The ball dropped into the yellow box just in front of the back post earning him a satisfied nod from one of the trainers.

[Ding Limitied time Mission triggered]

[Achieve a 80% of cross completion out of 10 crosses]

[Rewards: 300SP]

'huh that's random,' the winger thought to himself as he eyed the sudden mission notification he received from the mission. Other than keeping track of his day-to-day training this is the first time in a while it was actively trying to reward him for it. The last time it rewarded him for training was when he was playing with the under-17 English team.

So he was more than surprised at the notification but also took it in stride happy at the challenge. When it was his turn he nudged the ball forward with his right foot dribbling through the rows of cones in a slalom pattern. like the wind, he manoeuvred the ball around a designated cone going full circle before accelerating past a small gate.

Performing a reverse elastic he slipped past the first two poles, followed by a drag back Cruyff allowing him to change direction and accelerate through the last gate. The moment he passed he heard the coach on the sidelines shout red and without hesitation, he glanced up and swung his foot. His left boot connected with the ball scoping it up in the air and sending it flying in a lobbed arc towards the penalty spot.

As Rakim's cross arced through the air, it seemed to hang for a moment before dropping sharply into the red box constructed around the penalty spot. It was the smallest box out of the five and the fact he hit his target seemed to satisfy the trainer at the side. Nodding his head he collected his ball from one of the ball boys before joining the back of the line.

The next few crosses followed a similar pattern. Rakim moved fluidly through the cone drills, his body adjusting to the subtle shifts in balance as he weaved through the obstacles. Each cross was a calculated

effort, aimed with precision towards the designated area. By the time he reached his tenth attempt, sweat trickled down his forehead, and with only one missed cross-completion ratio was good.

Completing his last run-through with the same gusto as the first he practically flew through the course. He sliced through the cones, narrowly avoiding a misstep, and as he approached the final gate, he heard the call for a blue cross. Without breaking stride, he whipped his foot around the ball, sending it flying low and fast above the turf. The ball landed with a satisfying thud in the square on the six-yard near close to the near post.

Coach Jack gave a short clap, and Rakim allowed himself a small, triumphant smile. He had hit nine out of ten crosses on target, successfully completing the mission assignment. Feeling satisfied with his achievement he collected a ball before joining the rest of his group at the next exercise.

[Ding: Mission achieved]

[Rewards: 300sp credited]

[FOOTBALL SINGULARITY SYSTEM]

USER: Rakim Rex

AGE: 15yrs

TALENT ASSESSMENT: Grade - S

Singularity Points: 12080 -> 12380

Position: Winger

(Evaluation: A wounded wunderkind who has fallen from the radar of major teams who doubt his potential after his injury)

[USER STATS: Under 23 Grade]

>Physical Fitness: A

Balance and Coordination: S

Speed: B++

Agility: A+

Strength: C+

Stamina: C+

>Football Technique: S

>Game Intelligence: A

>Mental Ability: S+

>Singularity Skills: MR ShowTime: Grade B

Watching the system notification appear in front of him he frowned slightly as there hadn't been any changes in a while. However, he felt that he was on the verge of a breakthrough in multiple of his stats. Feeling a renewed sense of confidence in his current workout routine he rejoined his teammates. The morning sun had fully risen now, casting a warm glow over the training ground.

Players gathered in small groups, some chatting, others stretching or going through their own drills. Even though the drill continued to be intense the atmosphere around the ground was much more relaxed. Time flew by in this setting and before they knew it they completed the 2 hour morning session just in time to have breakfast as a team.

"Alright, lads I want to thank you all for all the effort you have put in over the past week. I know the league is practically over but I want to start building for the next season and that starts by finishing strong. So let's continue pushing ourselves and give the fans a worthwhile show," Coach Lennon, addressed the group with a smile before ushering them inside to get their breakfast at the canteen.