

Football 276

Chapter 276 Talk with Gaffer

Lennon returned to the locker-room shortly after the players had finished cleaning holding a short address before ushering them to the buss. Despite being happy at the progress the team is making regarding the new tactics the fact his roster would look wildly different. Especially realising the fact he couldn't hold onto the young phenom whom's creativity he has grown to appreciate.

When the bus dropped the Celtic players at Celtic park, they quickly gathered in the 1st team canteen and had a team dinner. They made quick work of the food and in only a few minutes, most of them had packed their bags and returned to their homes. They needed to rest well and ready themselves for the team training the following evening.

Rakim though didn't leave immediately. The coach had asked to meet with him in his office after the team dinner. He was surprised by the call at such a late hour, but he still had to comply. After all the man was his boss and from the short time he has known him he has treated him well. Not just on the pitch but also off it through out regular days when he would train with the team or by himself in the clubs facilities.

When he got there, he found the coach making final notes on the just concluded match. Several five-by-seven cards and charts with player formations and movements littered the L-shaped desk in the office. Rakim could even see his name and the number 45 circled in red on one of the cards. He looked around the office with a bit of wonder as this was his first time entering the office as Brendan had never invited him here.

Stacks of papers littered Lennon's table along with different formation charts that the man had been tinkering with. Only now did he realise just how cumbersome the job of a manager of a professional club must be. Not only must they perform on match day by checking the egos of their players and gearing them up for battle. They must also deal with the day to day running of the team whether that be planning for the future or something as simple as deciding what he could afford to put off for later.

"Have a seat, boy," Coach Lennon said, placing down his marker chair in front of his desk reminding Rakim of Dean Oak office. Smiling at this he wasted no time sitting down holding back a yawn that was threatening to break through. "We need to talk about your future son," He followed up the moment he saw that Rakim was settled in his chair also wanting to make this conversation quick.

"We both know that your future isn't with the club," Lennon began, his voice steady but laced with a hint of regret. Rakim's heart sank slightly, even though he had anticipated this conversation. It was a strange feeling. Despite the club not being his first choice it had ended up as the club where he made his professional debut. Even with his rocky start here it was still the only club that was willing to take a chance on him after his shooting.

Lennon leaned back in his chair, his eyes steady on Rakim. "Listen, I've been in this game long enough to know when a player has outgrown his surroundings. Kid you're probably the best talent I've had the pleasure of coaching and the fact you have a bright future ahead of you is there for everyone to see." Taking a pause after stating that he looked into the boy's eyes who had remained silent throughout seemingly not knowing how to react or respond.

"You need a stage where you can shine and sharpen your fangs and despite some greedy shareholders floating the idea of signing you I believe it would be a mistake on your part if you agreed. Thus I've decided next week's game against Rangers would be your last season game and you will only be returning to the team sheet for the championship game against Kilmarnock."

Hearing his words Rakim shifted slightly in his seat, unsure how to respond. His gaze flickered to the papers scattered on Lennon's desk. The marvel of being in the coach's office all seemed so distant now, as he could feel a chapter in his life being closed in front of him. "But I still want to play more for the team," He tried to interrupt not liking the idea of the sudden 3 week break from competitive football he would get after the Glasgow derby.

"I know you do son, I don't think I've ever seen you not smiling when a ball is at your feet but my decision remains final. You will probably transfer into one of the 5 major leagues and that is a different beast from what you have experienced here. Use the time to up your training and work on things your not so good at, your strength for example." Rakim sat there in silence for a few moments after Lennon finished speaking seriously thinking about his words. If he was being honest he would rather play but using the chance to up his strength and stamina stats.

He could feel that he was on the verge of breaking into the B grade with both of those and a more focussed emphasis on them could be the push he needs. "Ok, I'll work hard in those two weeks, you'll see a better me in the Championship games." He told him after deciding to take his advice and make the best of the free time he was being given. The rest of the discussion went by very quickly. And in about ten minutes, he thanked the coach for his advice and exited the office.

He walked out deep in thought already thinking of exercises he could use to improve his stats. Before he knew it he arrived at the stadium exit reaching the parking lot where his Uber was already waiting for him. His mother was still in the country but she had been busy dealing with the Titan Hood launch that was now in full swing. First samples were already being made and Rakim would get to see them any day now as the publicity would soon start.

Getting into the car the guy driving wasn't too chatty and immediately started driving leaving him to his thoughts. [You want to see your match report?] Eva suddenly asked Just as he was busy noting down different exercises that he would run by his mother. 'sure why not,' he absentmindedly responded not at all caring about it more excited at the prospect of getting better.

[Ding: Post-Match Review]

>Goals scored: (0) = 0Sp

>Assists: (3) = 30Sp

>Cards: 0 (Yellow) = 0Sp

>Final Match score: 1:3 Winn = 30Sp

>Match Rating: 8.9

(Note: A solid performance for reliable player who could be the core of a medium ranked team,)

'Hmm, Is the system mocking me for not scoring today?' he muttered to himself not used to receiving system messages for a match report.

{The system rates you according to how well you did and what it deems as a satisfactory performance for someone aiming to become the singularity. A player that cannot be replicated should dominate in any situation he finds himself in.} Eva commented quickly clearing up his confusion only leading to more questions as he felt that his performance in the midfield had been quite great.

{This might be due to you focussing on becoming a winger/forward since you started playing, that you neglected exploring other positions. With the stats, skills and abilities I've seen you display over the years you should have been much more dominant in the midfield,} She continued her lecture clearing up his confusion as she started breaking down mistakes he made throughout his stints as a midfielder.

From Evas point of view his instincts of want to reach the goal as fast as possible the moment he received the ball was a double edge quality for a CAM. Many times he found himself fouled or having to exert more than the necessary energy to escape dangerous situations. Him initiating attacks on his own also didn't work and according to Eva it was Dundees mindset that allowed his lack of experience to be overlooked. Having two of the best defensive midfielders behind him to wipe his ass when he needed to restart also helped.

'Sigh and here I thought I'd get a little praise for getting 3 assists,' He lamented the moment she finished her lecture which just so happened to be when the car stopped outside his apartment complex. "Thanks boss," he told the driver before slinging his bag over his shoulder and heading for the door. Feeling the light aches and scrapes all over his body from the amount of turf he ate he knew she was right in her analysis.