

Football 39

Chapter 39 First Game (2)

For the next ten minutes, the game continued in favour of the Black team. The boys in black dominated the midfield with the extra man in the middle managing to keep the majority of the ball possession. Their formation allowed them to maintain a Highline putting pressure on the white team.

The team in white played a very defensive game trying their best to regain possession of the ball. As the whole team continued to drop into their own half to defend the black team's onslaught an odd scene played out. On the right wing, a figure could be seen staying close to the halfway line almost as if he didn't know he was supposed to help defend.

It was quite peculiar as when the boy had the ball, he seemed like an animal hunting for a goal. However, he seems to have zero sense of positioning as he ended up in the wrong position a few times causing his team to lose the ball by obstructing their attack.

Couple that with his seeming lack of motivation to come back and defend his teammates started avoiding his wing entirely during counterattacks.

In the eighteenth minute, Weah received the ball on his wing cutting across the edge of the box trying to get a shot on goal. With a fake shot, he managed to create a bit of separation from Tyler who was hot on his trail. Taking this opportunity, he no longer hesitated to send a powerful shot towards the goal.

Unlucky for him the goalkeeper was able to react in time to hit the ball back into the field. Nearby defender Chris reacted quickly and launched the ball up the field towards the halfway line.

In the middle of the park, Giovanni defeated Ron in the trial duel knocking the ball towards Jonas. The latter deftly took control of the ball, holding the defender back with his body as he turned to the side to send a pass to Yunus.

The latter didn't bother taking control of the ball and played a one-two with the approaching Jon allowing him to get past Reece easily. Bringing the ball down the wing at a high speed he only looked up for a second as he sent a sharp cross into the box.

Jonas jumped up high in an attempt to meet the cross head but before he could make contact with the ball, he was outmuscled in the air by the defensive duo of the black team knocking the ball out of the box.

Jonas's eyes followed the trajectory of the ball as he tumbled to the ground from his aerial manoeuvre. Dest could be seen waiting for the ball to drop but just as he was getting ready to receive it a figure wearing the number twenty-two strip jumped from his blind spot and chested the ball.

Rakim who had chested the ball didn't wait for it to drop and swung his right leg sending a powerful shot towards the goal. To his dismay, he couldn't keep the ball down as it skimmed off the top bar going out for a goal kick.

"Damm, I knew I should have just walked it in, this is what I get for trying to act cool" Dest heard the boy in front of him muse out loud. Hearing the boy's confidant words his mouth twitched.

"This guy is not taking our defence seriously at all" He mumbled as he walked back to his position ready to restart the game.

For the last minute or so both teams were at a stalemate before the first half finally ended. Both teams went to the side to get some refreshments and regain some of their stamina for the second half.

[MC POV]

"Hey, Luigi what I'm I doing wrong? I'm never in the right position, it feels like I'm out of sync with all of you" I told Giovanni seriously thinking about why I'm always out of position when I try to get the ball from my teammates. My words seemed to surprise the tall boy as he sent me a quizzical look seemingly thinking about my words.

"Wait did you just call me Luigi?" The boy suddenly spoke up seemingly jarred out of his train of thought.

"Yes, you two remind me of Mario and Luigi, especially with your Italian name" I answered his question and motioned for him to answer my question. It seems my answer caused his brain to slightly glitch as he stayed silent for a while.

"Your, just running around randomly when we attack trying to score every time you get the ball, like that last shot you could have passed to Yunus who was in a better position." He Brutally started directing my playstyle showing no mercy for my feelings. It feels like swords were stabbing at me with every word.

"When we're defending you kept getting in the way at least you started staying forward which was slightly helpful, and once you have the ball you just head straight for the goal instead of trying to connect with your teammates." He continued to rant lecturing me on all the things I was doing wrong.

He's kind of like Lisa when she rants on and on about mistakes, I make when she is teaching me something in class.

"Alright stop rambling I'll try and fix my mistakes in the second half," I told him As I walked back onto the pitch after taking a small sip of my Gatorade.

[You know he wasn't wrong; you are way too focused on reaching the goal that you block out everything else,] Eva spoke up to me as I took my position on the field jumping up and down to stay loose.

'I know I was just so excited about my first game and simply wanted to score goals, guess I got carried away' I answered her frowning slightly as thinking of ways to improve in the second half.

[You call running into your teammates twice, leaving your position three times to chase after a ball that was meant for your teammate and choosing to shoot a difficult shot from the edge of the box when your teammate was wide open in front of you.] She sarcastically listed all my mistakes throughout the first half. If it wasn't for the fact that she had tried to advise me against my actions during the game, I would think she was taking pleasure in this.

'I know, I know, it looks like the second half is starting let's do better' I mentally told her as the whistle announce the second half.

Jonas kicked the ball back to Giovanni who took control of the ball easily as he scans the area for the best passing options before being shut down by Pepi and Ferreira.

"Luigi Pass here" Rakim shouted at the boy getting his attention as he got free from his marker ready to receive the ball. The boy hesitated slightly before he sent a powerful pass between the two attackers.

Rakim didn't hold onto the ball flicking it to Jonas with his left foot as he avoided the pressure from the defender behind him.

Jonas was slightly surprised about getting the ball but still managed to take control of it. Not wanting to hold onto the ball for long he sent a pass to Yunus who had slipped beyond his marker.

The winger pushed the ball forward and continued to charge in the direction of the opponent's box. Reece who was beaten by the wing immediately chased after him trying to bring him down before he could enter the box.

Just as he managed to place a hand on the winger suddenly came to a stop causing the right-back to run past him. Yunus who created some space from his marker cut into the side of the box heading towards the goal him.

Bruce the closest defender immediately charged at him attempting to disposes the ball, not wanting to risk losing the ball to the defender, Yunus sent a sharp pass across the six-yard line.

Jonas who had followed up on the winger's run into the box slid feet first into the trajectory of the pass attempting to push it into the net. Unlucky for him he just barely missed the ball as it skipped past him.

The goalkeeper was slightly relaxed seeing that the attacker missed the ball. Feeling relieved, he subconsciously turned his head to see where the ball had ended up. That is when he heard a woosh sound as the net behind him started to shake.

Looking forward he saw the same boy who had scored the first goal running to the side celebrating widely. He suddenly felt a sense of Deja Vu watching the boy celebrating and the downcast looks of his teammates.

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[A few moments ago]

[MC Pov]

Watching Giovanni receive the ball I immediately wanted to run forward and score a goal. But remembering his words I decided to play a bit smarter and run slightly ahead into an open position.

"Luigi pass here" I shouted to get him to give me the ball and it worked as he sent a weighted pas to me. The slight hesitation in his pass allowed one of the opponent's midfielders to close me down from the back.

Knowing I might lose the ball if I take a touch to control it, I simply flicked it to my left where Jonas was. Turning around I was expecting to get the ball back, but it seems he sent it down the flank sending Yunus off to chase after it.

Not knowing what to do I simply started to mirror Jonas's running motion into the box making sure to stay further back. When Yunus made the pass across the box, I saw the opportunity I had been waiting on. With a burst of speed, I quickly got rid of my marker and swung at the ball with all my strength sending it into the net.

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The game took a minute before it resumed mostly due to one player celebrating like no one's business.

With the sound of the whistle, the game resumed as both teams started to battle for dominance. The Black who had controlled most of the first half were now struggling to make headway into their opponent's half.

This scene can be contributed to the fact that Rakim seemed to be playing more as part of a team than a one-man show. Although he still made mistakes in his defensive positioning his however pure athleticism seemed to help him make up for it. He managed to poke free the ball from the opponent a couple of times adding to the pressure they felt when controlling the ball near him.

The black team did not lose hope and continued to press forward looking for a chance to create something. Their patience paid off as they managed to force an error from their opponents in the thirty-fifth minute.

Jake played a quick one-two with Ferreira easily getting past Ryan who had come up to far trying to win for the ball. He confidently charged towards Chris who was marking Pepi forcing him to make a choice whether to attack him or continue to mark Pepi.

Chris who seemed rooted on the spot did not notice that Pepi had sneaked away from him. He only regained his wits when he saw Ryan sent a teasing pass into the box just out of his reach. Turning around to see where the ball went, he saw the striker he was supposed to be marking receive the ball with his left foot. Not hesitating for a second, he shot the ball to the far corner of the goal.

The Goalkeeper stretched his body to the fullest in an attempt to block the shot. His reaction was too slow though as the ball hit the back of the net.

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"Well, that wasn't my fault don't even try blaming me for that," Standing outside the centre circle Rakim smiled brightly as he told Giovanni of his achievement. The boy who heard this could not help his mouth from twitching slightly.

"You know that they managed to equalise with us, right?" He retorted with an annoyed look on his face. However, his words did not seem to damper the happy mood of the boy as he continued to smile brightly.

"We have a little less than a minute left, just let me send me the ball and I'll score," The smaller boy said as he went to his position ready to restart the game. Giovanni who heard his words didn't respond and only watched his back seemingly contemplating what to do.

[Mc Pov]



Feeeeew

Hearing the whistle, I waited for Jonas to pass the ball back to Giovanni before bolting deep into the other team's half. Looking to the side I saw Weah following me attempting to block off the passing lane to me.

I decided to hit an emergency stop before I turned around making eye contact with Giovanni who still had control of the ball. Noticing the separation, I created with Weah he sent me a weighted pass. Taking a step towards the approaching ball I flicked it over my body as I circumvented with who had managed to recover from my previous manoeuvre.

Stretching out my left leg I quickly took control of the ball moving forward without losing my momentum. To my left, I spotted Jake lunging at me attempting to tackle the ball away from me. In that split moment, I decided to jab at the ball with my left foot moving to the middle of the field narrowly avoiding his tackle.

dribbling towards the middle of the field I sent a short pass to Jonas who was at the edge of the box holding back his defender using his body. The boy Understood my intentions and sent it back to me when I ran past him.

In the sixteen-yard box, I scanned the position of the Goalie. He was quickly approaching me from the right making his body big in an attempt to force me to the far left. Deciding to comply with him I rolled the ball to the left with my right foot forcing him to react to my move. Once I was sure he was committed to going left I knocked the ball back with my left foot changing direction again.

He seemed to want to do the same, but his lower body buckled at the sudden change of direction. Going by him I rolled the ball into the net as I run to the side lines spreading my arms with a huge grin on my face.

