

Football 75

Chapter 75 Battle Of Youth (1)

Not bothering with the defenders to his side he deftly created a bit of separation through a short burst of speed. Seeing his opportunity arrive before him he showed no hesitation before the goal, unleashing a thunderous shot.

The ball took the most direct route to the net flying to the top right corner. The goalkeeper's efforts to make himself as big as possible before the striker was left for nought as the ball sneaked between his hands. Seeing his shot drill into the net Tom instantly run off to celebrate with his teammates.

After a brief moment where the green team wildly celebrated, the game kicked off once again. Having learnt his lesson from the kick-off not so long-ago Max sent a weighted ball straight to the defence directly bypassing Ryan in the midfield.

Jake was the one to take control of the ball a few yards in front of his team's penalty box. Just like a pack of hyenas who smelled the scent of blood the green team's forwards charged forward ready to steal the ball. Jake who was feeling the pressure from the opponents didn't panic in the slightest as he slowly dribbled the ball forward.

Before Tom and his partner could have a chance to close him down, he sent a sharp pass to his right. On the flank was the small figure of Rakim who unlike his attacking counterpart chose to track back instead of charging forward after the kick-off.

Turning with the ball's momentum the winger wasted no time racing down the wing. The speed at which he travelled was quite the sight as he didn't seem to be slowed down by the ball. It wasn't until he crossed the halfway line when the opposing midfielder approached to close him down.

Rakim after seeing that Finn came to close him down, had no intention of decreasing his pace in the slightest. Finn angled his body sideways in a way that tried to force Rakim down the flank. With a burst of speed as the two almost came into contact with each other Rakim sped down the wing.

Not wanting to lose in a duel of speed Finn kept pace with the young winger trying to use his hand to slow him down. The two of them continued to race down the wing until they came to the edge of the box. As if having reached his goal the winger displayed an impressive amount of body control and technique as he dragged the ball behind him using his left foot. With his right foot as a pivot, he came to an abrupt stop as he waited for the ball to keep up with his movements.

Using a light hop to adjust his balance from his sudden stop he tapped the ball with his right foot bringing it back under his control. Finn who had been left running by himself came to a sliding stop trying his best not to fall down. Using the separation, he created from the midfielder Rakim took a big stride into the box.

Finn seeing that the younger boy had embarrassed him kicked off the ground with a burst of speed planning to redeem himself. Using his longer strides he arrived at the side of the winger helping Jon in the defensive tasks. Not bothered by the extra pressure Rakim started performing stepovers whilst swaying his body slightly.

Just as Finn was about to lose his patience, he saw his opportunity to strike as Rakim had the ball at his left foot. Seeing that the winger was focused on his teammate he decisively lunged in for a tackle using all his strength. However, just before his foot could make contact with the ball Rakim dragged the ball back slightly before pushing it through his outstretched legs.

Like a switch had been flipped the young winger performed a quick three-sixty turn circumventing the downed midfielder. Taking control of the ball behind the fallen Finn, Rakim took two steps before firing off a powerful shot. His right foot swept across the ball sending it speeding across the keeper's position hitting the net at the far corner.

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Reece who had just received the ball from his defender chose to quickly pass the ball back as he felt the pressure of Ben's charge. Jon who had received the ball back was at a slight loss especially since Max came to close him down. Left with no option he sent a high ball up the field.

The ball travelled quite a distance reaching just before the opposing eighteen-yard box. Blake who managed to control the ball first was sent tumbling to the ground as Jake swept him off the ground with a sliding tackle. The referee did not blow the whistle indicating that the challenge was fair much to the displeasure of the attacker.

Not wanting to risk holding onto the ball so close to his own penalty area he sent a high lob up the left flank. Rakim on the wing tracked after the ball in the air as he jumped in an effort to bring the ball under his control. However, before he was able to make contact with the ball, he felt a shoulder pushing him out of the way.

Managing to brace his fall the winger could only watch as Reece comfortably headed the ball to his teammate. Scenes like these continued to transpire on the field as both sides fought for dominance. It was truly a battle of youth as neither of the teams gave an inch to the other team.

For every brilliant pass, there would be an equally clinical tackle to go with it. It almost looked like a tug of war by how for some time the ball did not enter either team's penalty area. Except for the goalkeepers, all the other players were sweating quite profusely as they continued to perform their roles.

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In an effort to break the deadlock between the two teams, Rakim used a quick one-two passing manoeuvre to lose his marker. Leaving Finn to chase his shadow the young winger made his way towards the middle of the park. Spotting Blake who had backtracked charging at him Rakim sent a pass to Rayan on his right.

Quickly running past the striker, he slotted into the space ahead before calling for the ball again. Rayn who was facing a pincer attack from both Blake and Reece did not hesitate to pass the ball forward to him. Just as Rakim was about to receive the pass he sensed a presence behind him and chose to directly pass the ball.

Sending the ball down the right flank in one swift motion as he rounded Henric who had come up behind he started running forward. Ben who was liberated from his marker wasted no time chasing after the ball and pushing it down the wing.

Jon who was left to mark Max was left with only the option of closing down the winger's passing option as he waited for assistance. It worked as It forced Been to go further with the ball without being able to send a pass to the lurking max. Entering the box, he saw his chance as Max chose to stay at the edge of the box finally being open for a pass.

No longer hesitating Ben sent a swift cut back to the edge of the box right to the striker's feet. Maybe due to impatience or a lack of composure, the striker chose to only take one touch to control the ball before deciding to shoot from there. His movements although rushed allowed him to adjust properly as he brought his right foot down to smash the ball.

With a loud bang, the ball left his feet only to bounce off something in front of it catapulting it into the air in the opposite direction of what the striker intended. Slightly at a loss as to what was going on Max looked down only to see the grass-covered figure of a blond-haired boy wearing a green bib.

The slightly chubby boy was panting heavily as he lay on the ground with his foot still outstretched watching the flight path of the ball. Although he was barely gasping for breath he could be seen with a bright smile on his face seemingly satisfied with his achievements.

As he rested on the ground he finally succumbed to his bodily need for a bit of rest after the crazy sprint he had just performed. Ever since he was easily beaten on the wing, he had been sprinting back all in an effort to make up for his mistake. Whilst other players gave up he circumvented them as he chased after the ball like a beast on a hunt.

Just as he thought he was too late as the opposing striker had a clear lane to the goal, he saw him stopping to adjust for a shot. Giving it one last push, he slides in from behind making sure to avoid physical contact with the opponent as he stretched his foot into the path of the ball. It all paid off in the end as he was to make a crucial stop for his team.

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After a hard-fought aerial duel, Reece managed to beat Ryan to the falling ball. Taking a second to scan his surroundings he sent a quick pass back avoiding the charge of Ben. Henric calmly took control of the ball looking for an opportunity to launch an attack. However, he was left disappointed as both his midfielders were being covered by the opponent's wingers.

Frowning slightly at the lack of a forward passing option he no longer hesitated and started charging forward. His long hair violently fluttered in the wind as he charged forward with determination. Max the

Red team's striker wanted to use this chance to seal the ball, so he utilised his speed instantly catching up with Henric.

Henric who was dribbling towards the halfway line noticed the opposing striker but was unperturbed as he continued charging forward. Seeing that the striker was persistent Henric quickly used his shoulder to nudge the striker lightly sending him tumbling to the ground.

As if nothing happened, he continued forward as Ryan came to close him down. Before the midfielder could have a chance to steal the ball the defender abruptly stopped the ball as he sent a sharp pass down the right flank.

The ball drew a large bow over the pitch travelling over the heads of all the players. Tom who was being closely marked by James reacted first as he circumvented his marker and started heading towards the landing point of the ball. Although James was a step behind, he managed to close him down by the time Tom fished the ball out of the air.

As Tom quickly brought the ball under his control, he stared down the defender in front of him looking for an opportunity to get by him. Performing a few stepovers and a couple of feints he tried his best to bait the defender. However, having seemingly learned from his defensive partner's mistakes he kept his composure as he waited for backup.

His bet paid off as Ben raced back boxing Tom in and applying more pressure on the striker. Working together they managed to force Tom to back up all the way to the touchline. Maybe through a stroke of genius or inspiration, the striker performed a couple of quick stepovers forcing his markers to back up.

Utilising the bit of space, he created pushed the ball forward towards James baiting him in enough to attempt a tackle. Seeing this he dragged the ball back slightly jamming it between his feet in one motion and flicking it over his head from behind him.

James who had just lunged in for a tackle came up empty causing him to lose balance ending up tumbling to the ground only to watch the ball soar above his head. Tom didn't wait to see where the ball would land as he instinctively circumvented James with two steps before watching the land a few yards to his left.

Making his way over to the ball he quickly brought it under his control protecting it from Ben who had followed him. Both had an intense physical battle as they entered the box from the right. Tom seeing that the keeper was approaching to close him down decisively chose to cross the ball.

The ball horizontally travelled along the five-yard line as the keeper scrambled back into position. Looking at the ball that cut across in front of the goal two figures could be seen sliding in trying to hit the ball first. The two were Jake and Blake who seemed to have just reacted to the sudden cross.

Through luck, Blake managed to bring the tip of his boot to the ball first, sending it flying towards the goal. Mike the goalkeeper had just managed to adjust his feet when he jumped into the air using both of his hands to push the ball away from the goal.

The ball went flying to the side hitting the far post as it bounces back into play heading to the edge of the box. Ryan was the one to pick up the ball first immediately turning around for a counterattack.