

Football 83

Chapter 83 Eagle's V Beavers (3)

[Mc Pov]

"Well, that took a turn for the worse" I muttered to myself as I got settled in my position ready to restart the match. There are less than ten minutes left in the first half, so we still have a chance to pull ahead. However, looking at the gloomy expression of my teammates told me that it would be a hard road ahead for us.

The game quickly restarted with our kick-off, but we remained calm, unlike the other times when we rushed forward. Damian our Defensive midfielder took control of the game's flow passing the ball around our defence to slow down the game. Floyd tried to close down Henric using his speed, but the latter quickly passed it to Jake.

Although it felt weird not going for the attack It wasn't exactly new to us. Coach had instructed us during training to let Damian control the passes when the game starts getting too hectic. The reason for that is the fact that he manages to keep a cool head even with all the pressure. As Damian continued to manoeuvre the ball around our backcourt the whole Beavers team got dragged into our half.

I don't think even they noticed how dangerous this was especially with how speedy our offence is. Damian seemed to have the same idea after a one-two with me on the left flank he quickly raised his hand before sending a long ball forward down the opposite flank.

Like a flip had switched I quickly turned around and started running down my flank. On the right flank, Max managed to lose his marker as he chased down the airborne ball. He managed to fish out the ball just before it could go out for a throw. Quickly composing himself he didn't panic as the left back managed to close down.

The winger performed a quick step over trying his best to force a mistake from his matchup. That didn't work as the right-back was determined not to let him by no matter what he did. Noticing that he wasn't going to get by the defender he sent a sharp pass into the middle of the park to the feet of Ben who had just made it up the field.

The Midfielder performed a quick turn circumventing past Leo in one movement before he sent a through ball into the box. Seeing his actions, I intently reacted as I slotted into the box racing to receive the pass. The right-back is hot on my tail and the centre-back was coming from my right as well.

Not one to back down I lunged for the ball with my left dragging it behind my back in one movement. Both defenders slid along the grass slightly as they tried to regain their footing. I wanted to shoot but the defender was blocking my shooting lane now, so I decided to go with the unconventional route. Passing the ball back to the open space in the middle of the box for Ben.

I watched him take a touch to control my pass before quickly taking the shot. The shot contains quite a bit of power as it flew to the bottom right corner of the goal. The keeper tried his best to save the shot but, in the end, he wasn't able to pull off another heroic showing.

The moment the ball pierced the net the crowd that had been silent during the build-up play erupted in an avalanche of cheers. Quickly racing over to Ben, I started celebrating with him exhaling a sigh of relief at finally being ahead in the game. It wasn't just me who was feeling relieved as the whole team came up to celebrate this goal.

Not long after our celebration the game restarted with us leading 2:1. However, before the beavers could launch an attack the referee blew the whistle to signal the end of the first half. Not bothering with all the fan fair going around along the stands we quickly made our way to the changing rooms as the cheerleaders took the field.

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The halftime break granted us a moment of respite, allowing us to catch our breath and refocus our minds. Looking around the locker room there were mostly joyful faces on my teammates, but I did notice the key players frowning slightly. They were probably thinking about how the first half could have easily gone the other way.

'Hey Eva, what are we doing wrong?' I asked her since she would probably know the crux of the problem. Because even though most of us are individually the better players on the field the game was still at a deadlock. I don't know if it's something we are doing wrong or maybe the other team just has an effective game plan.

[I'm not going to spoon-feed you the answer, but I will tell you this, stop holding back and start treating the game like a mission to reach the goal. I have noticed on a few occasions where you are playing it safe to match those around you instead of using every weapon in your arsenal,] she started scolding me as if she had just been waiting for this moment, almost causing me to spit out the energy drink I bought from the system.

'Thanks, I think,' is all I could say to her as I started going through all the ways I could have done more in the game. She was right I am too laid back when it comes to being involved in the game.

I've just been blindly trusting my teammates to bring the ball up the field instead of getting involved in making it happen. It wasn't until Damian took control of our midfield in the last ten minutes that I started getting involved more. However, that was mostly due to him drawing the entire game towards him not really allowing me to wander off.

"Hey, listen up everyone, we need to stay focused in the second half, your opponents aren't going to give up on the game, so you need to be prepared yourselves." Coach Garret spoke up capturing our attention as he started detailing what he wanted us to do in the second half.

The tactics weren't all that complicated as he had us practising them during training. It was just a case of implementing what we practised he did however point out certain players for us to pay special attention to as they have been causing the most problems for us. Leo Stephens is number one on that list since according to Coach most if not all their attacks stem from his influence.

"Alright, it's time to head back out there boys, for the first ten minutes I want you all to score a goal to stabilise our lead. Remember playing is only fun when you win, Win on three." With that, his halftime talk ended as we loudly cheer Win on the three-count hyped up to fight for another half.

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As we returned to the field, determination burned in our eyes as we quickly lined up on the field. The game was far from over, and I was personally ready to seize the moment. The referee's whistle pierced the air, and the second half began with a renewed sense of vigour.

We surged forward into the opposing half as the Beavers kicked off the second half. It didn't take long for the first physical confrontation of the game as Tom clashed with Ryan Shepherd in an attempt to steal the ball from them.

Tom fought hard, using his strength and agility to gain an advantage but Ryan was unrelenting as he used his body to protect the ball. After a bit of back and forth, he managed to win the ball, and with a quick flick, he passed it to Max on the right flank. The winger utilised his fast pace, and sprinted down the wing, leaving the left-back in his wake.

Max looked up, scanning the field for options. Spotting Ben making a run towards the edge of the penalty area he sent a sharp pass to him. Ben calmly took control of the ball but before he could do anything with it, he was swept off his feet by a sliding tackle. Looking around for what happened he was met with the fierce look of one of the Beaver's defenders as he passed the ball to one of his teammates.

Ben's interception had ignited a spark of tension between the two teams. The Beavers were determined not to let their opponents extend their lead and pressed forward with renewed aggression. The midfield trio of Ryan, Leo, and Steve orchestrated a quick counterattack, passing the ball swiftly among themselves to exploit the spaces left by the momentarily disorganized Red Oak Eagles.

Leo Stephens, the focal point of the Beavers' attacks, displayed his technical prowess as he efficiently raced up the field, leaving defenders in his wake. He cleverly evaded the tackle of Damian and threaded a precise through ball, into the eagle's defensive weaknesses.

Floyd inserted himself into the right side of the box latching onto the through ball. Using his pace allowed him to gain a momentary advantage over the Eagles' defence. With a burst of speed, he made a beeline towards the goal, his eyes fixated on the back of the net. The Eagles' defenders scrambled to catch up, desperately trying to block his path and prevent him from scoring.

All the while Ben Walker stepped off his line and, braced himself for the imminent challenge. He watched intently as Floyd closed in, ready to make a split-second decision to anticipate the striker's move. The tension in the air was palpable as the crowd held their breath, awaiting the outcome of this critical moment.

With lightning-fast reflexes, Ben lunged to his left, stretching his arm out to his fullest as Floyd unleashed a powerful shot towards the bottom corner of the goal. The ball seemed destined for the back of the net, but Ben's fingertips managed to graze it, diverting its trajectory at the last possible moment. Gasps and exclamations erupted from the crowd, astonished by the goalkeeper's incredible save.

The ball ricocheted off the post and rolled out of bounds, earning the Eagles a crucial moment of reprieve. The tension remained high as the Beavers were awarded a corner kick, an opportunity to continue their assault on the Eagles' defence.