

Football 93

Chapter 93 Red Oak Eagles VS Central Jaguars (3)

There was a dull bang as his foot impacted the ball but the next second it flew off to the top left corner as if possessed. The Keeper still had his arms spread wide in a low stance by the time the ball rattled the back of the net. It was as if he had given up chasing after the shot, knowing he couldn't get anywhere near it.

"Bro that shot was crazy," Tom shouted in my ear as he put an arm around my neck practically voicing my emotion. Being happy that he was so eager to celebrate my goal only made me more excited as we went back to our half to set back up again.

"Surprised me as well just felt like I should shoot and so I did," I told him with a smile as I waved to Mom who was in the stands with Emma and Lexi. How Lexi had managed to join the two baffles me as I've never seen her interact with Emma in school.

Emma not being on the sideline to cheer us on was a sad realisation that Max had to break to me with tears flowing from his eyes. Apparently, they would only cheer us on during playoffs or when we play our cross-town rival. This is due to the Football season being on around this time so they would perform during their games once they manage to make the JV roster.

The only saving grace is that the kids our age playing PEE-WEE didn't get cheerleader support either. The only person who really suffered under this rule is Max because he performed like a possessed being whenever girls are cheering him on. Honestly, it wouldn't be a problem for him to run past the whole team to score a goal as long as a group of girls cheered his name.

Some of my teammates who were still excited at us tallying another goal onto the score line rushed towards us to congratulate me. I wasn't mad that some of the defenders didn't bother to rush up as it

was a waste of their stamina. Plus, Henric who did rush to join in the celebration made a comment about it being the most he run this entire game causing me to almost trip.

"Hey Tom, is it just me or do they look more depressed, like they have fully given up," I asked the boy as he was older than me by a year or two and would have more experience. Hearing my words his smiling face halted slightly as he gazed at our opponents before a wry smile graced it.

"Yeah, this game is practically over, oh well just send me a few more assists so I can keep up with you for the golden boot race," he told me with a smile as he quickly ran back to his position. Hearing his words, I decided to just shake it off and focus on playing out the last five minutes of this half.

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"Alright, boy you have played well in the first half I've seen some good transition play from my midfielders and attackers. Let's keep this up in the second half and continue to score goals." Coach Garret's voice echoed through our circle as we gathered around him in front of our bench. Since it wasn't cold and there wasn't as much fanfare as last week, we simply remained at our bench for the halftime talks.

All of my teammates had happy smiles on their faces enjoying the atmosphere of being in the lead. I was happy that we were winning 3:0 but the game had become boring, especially for the last period of the first half. Not sure why but the more I saw our opponents drag their feet around the park the angrier I became. It just made all my effort on the pitch have a bitter aftertaste.

"We'll be making a couple of changes after the first twenty minutes of the second half so make sure to stabilise the situation," Coach Garret said in a solemn tone as he started giving out instructions on what we should watch out for. Already used to his strict coaching style I quickly focused on what he was saying eliminating all distracting thoughts.

"My Defenders stay firm I want you to push up the midfielders more and try to keep the game in their half of the pitch." he finished his speech by encouraging the defenders and giving them suggestions on how to get more involved in the match. The focused look on Ole's face told me that he needed this more than anyone as he was getting bored almost doing nothing in the first half.

According to Eva, he's the type of defender who loves the ball at his feet, the more he gets involved in the game the more he expresses himself. Anyways the team talk quickly finished off and we spent the last couple of minutes just relaxing and recovering our energy.

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The second half soon kicked off with the Jaguars in possession of the ball. One of their strikers knocked the ball back into their half passing it to one of their midfielders. Seeing this as a sign I immediately charged forward into their half heading straight for Javier who received the pass.

He looked a lot calmer than when the half had ended so maybe the break helped him regain his confidence. Seemingly panicked by our charge he quickly hit the ball back to his central defender before Tom and I could box him in. Not bothered by this we immediately locked onto the defender that the ball was heading to with a quick change of direction.

With a burst of speed, we arrived in front of the defender in no time, but he didn't bother holding onto the ball and opted to hit it up the field. Stopping my approach, I turned around and started walking to my wing. The ball didn't fly that far barely crossing the halfway line.

Rising up to meet the ball in the air was Jake and Andrés They were both around the same height, but Jake had the advantage of meeting the ball head-on. I showed as he managed to wrestle for an advantageous position in the air knocking the ball to Finn in front of him.

The midfielder promptly brought the ball under his control dodging a tackle from Antonio. He didn't advance the play further and hit it back to Ole who played the role of sweeper. He swiftly took control of the ball shifting it to his right in one smooth motion.

Seeing him scanning the field I promptly run into an open position between the midfielders. I was too late though as he sent a crisp pass along the ground to Max on the opposite wing. He was closely guarded by Diego, but he didn't seem to mind it as he let the ball slip through his legs before making a quick turn around the defender.

Seeing that his marking assignment had slipped past him the defender utilised his hands to pull him back just as Max caught up with the ball. The winger didn't force his run and performed an emergency stop creating a little breathing room from him. Not risking losing the ball he knocked it back a couple of yards towards the centre of the field where Ben was lurking.

Ben remained calm despite the pressure he was receiving from Javier performing a quick roulette to dodge his tackle. He passed the ball to the open Finn right afterwards. Finn who received the ball chooses to dribble forward for a bit getting dangerously close to the opposing box.

Sensing the danger one of the Jaguar's defenders stepped up to close him down. Not flustered by the player in front of him, he made use of the open space created by the opposing charge to send a through ball into the box.

I was on the end of that ball managing to catch it with my left before it could go out for a goal kick. Not bothering to adjust any further I squared the ball across the field trying to find one of my fellow strikers. The ball raced across the five-yard line as Tom fought both Lucas and Diego in a physical dual.

He managed to outmuscle both of them getting a foot to the ball and sending it towards goal. The keeper was lucky enough to get his foot to the ball managing to deflect it. The ball however didn't travel extremely far traveling towards the edge of the box.

Max was the first to find himself at the end of the ball since his marker decided to chance after Tom. Just as he took control of the ball and was about to shoot, he was talked from the side by Antonio who tracked back.

Not losing balance though he remained in control of the ball using his body to protect it. Noticing that he won't be able to get a shot of now, especially with Diego closing him down from the box he passed it to the top of the arc.

Waiting at the top of the arc was Ben who found himself unguarded with a clear shooting lane. He didn't bother taking a touch and immediately let off a shot towards the goal before he could be closed down. The shoot resembled a rainbow as it took off from the ground hooping over the heads of Tom and Lucas who were in its shooting lane.

The keeper had reacted quite well to it jumping to the right side of his goal. He miscalculated though as whilst he was still in the air the ball abruptly descended heading for the bottom right corner. Trying his best to adjust and salvage the shot he stretched his bottom hand down, but it was too late.

Just by a tiny fraction, the ball managed to slip past his fingertips nestling itself into the nest. This whole operation felt like it took an eternity but in reality, it was a matter of moments from the shot to the crowd's eruption upon seeing the ball enter the goal.

Having a sideways view of the whole operation I felt a buzz at seeing that shot and was the first to rush up to Ben to celebrate with him. Not knowing why, I felt so excited by the shot I just felt a sudden urge to try it. Looking at Ben's amazed expression I could tell that he himself was amazed by the shot. Not bothered by this though I embraced him in a headlock to congratulate him on his goal.

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"How did you hit that shot?" Both Tom and I started to pester him as soon as the other guys gave him some breathing room. The celebration of this goal was more intense than any goal we scored today, and everyone could feel that it was special. Not just because the shot was amazing, but it felt more like a team performance that led to that goal.

"Honestly I was aiming for the top right, but I slipped, and it ended up rolling on my foot as I shot," he told us still having a slightly dazed expression on his face as he recounted the mechanics of the shot. Not expecting the answer, I could only give him a wry smile as I chose to just head back to my position.

The fact that he was still able to adjust his shot even though he slipped just goes to show you just how talented he is. He makes his long shots look easy at this point maybe I'll ask for some pointers at some point.

[you should your accuracy is not as good as you might think,] Evos voice suddenly sounded in my head causing me to almost trip. she has been silent for most of the match that I had forgotten that she could hear my thoughts. Taking a second to realise her words I was just about to retort when I heard someone calling for me on the sidelines.

"Rakim come off," I looked over to see Coach Garret waving me off the field with Lucas Scott standing at his side. I was confused about what he meant so I c looked around myself before pointing my finger at myself just to make sure.

"Yeah C'mon," he called out again just to reaffirm my suspicion as I started jogging towards him and started questioning life.