

Football God 131

Chapter 131 Hectic schedule [4]

After the Tottenham game, once again, Fulham FC was on the spotlight due to the impressive overall Fulham display but more importantly, because of Sam's incredible display, overshadowing the likes of Heung Min Son and Maddison.

And most of the attention was focused on his heel flick assist.

Once again, Sam was trending on multiple social media platforms as YouTube editors edited the life out of his heel flick assist.

At some point, when the noise grew too loud for him to ignore, Sam went to YouTube to watch it himself and he had to admit, he would become a fan too if he saw something like that.

This YouTube guy was so good he made the perfect video edit.

From the background music, to the light effects, to the vibration, everything was perfect, making it a short video that stayed stuck in your brain after watching it.

Sam left a like for the YouTube guy, once again creating another storm.

He didn't care about this new storm though. After leaving a like and saving the video on his iPhone, he left online and focused on recovering from the game.

Winning against Tottenham was not the end of the world. Sam was still a long way from achieving his goal, Fulham needed to do more, much more.

Fulham's next game was another league away game, and it was against Sheffield United.

(Premier league:)

(Sheffield United – Fulham)

(Date: 30th March 2024)

This game was scheduled to take place 14 days after their last league game, which was literally like a holiday to the players.

This was why the English FA finally rescheduled the Manchester United match, rescheduling it in-between this time in a day Manchester United was free.

And just like that, the Fulham players got another hard game to play.

They were not deterred though. Since Sam became a starting XI Fulham player, part of his mentality was already rubbing off on his teammates.

These players no longer feared anyone or opponent.

A few more days of intense training and preparation later, Sam finally made his first trip to the most iconic stadium in England, Old Trafford.

Old Trafford was exceedingly loud as the fans in red sang and cheered their team on, making the noise rise above the roof in extremely loud decibels.

Like usual, both teams started with their strongest line-up.

With Muniz upfront, Alex Iwobi, Sam, and Wilson behind him, Fulham started with their best attack. Lukic and Reed were the defensive midfielders today.

The 4-man defense comprised Robinson in left back, Basse and Adarabioyo in central defense, while Castagne as the right back. And of course, Bernd Leno started in between the posts.

Compared to them, Manchester United had a much scarier starting XI.

Just like Fulham, Manchester United lined up in a 4-2-3-1 formation.

Marcus Rashford started up front as the striker, and behind him were the trio of Alejandro Garnacho on the left, Bruno Fernandes, the Portuguese enforcer in the middle, and Forson on the right.

Behind them were the duo of Casemiro and the young prodigy, Kobbie Mainoo. Behind them making up the 4-man defense were Diogo Dalot, Raphael Varane, Harry Maguire, and Victor Lindelof.

Andre Onana started in between the posts for Man U.

FWEEEE!

From the first minute, it was clear that this was going to be an intense encounter.

Both teams were experiencing contrasting forms in the league.

Manchester United were going through a rough patch in the league, barely winning games but write them off at your own peril. Their history alone made them a fearsome opposition to every opponent in the league.

It seemed so too today at first as in the first half, Manchester United dominated this game in Old Trafford with a string of impressive plays.

Everything offensive in this Manchester United side went through Bruno Fernandes, and the player on the left was the rod of destruction with which Fernandes controlled this game.

Alejandro Garnacho had a crazy first half as he constantly beat his man, turning Castagne inside out. He hit the post, setting up Rashford 3 times in the first half alone only for the English star to fluff his lines.

Manchester United heavily dominated the first half yet they had nothing to show for it, the first half came to an end 0-0.

During second half though was when the atmosphere in Old Trafford truly changed. Not for good though, but in woe.

In second half, led by their young Nigerian prodigy in attacking midfield, Fulham FC came back roaring like a Dragon that finally awoke from its slumber.

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And again, Sam was at the center of everything good for his team.

The Manchester United team completely lost cohesion under this pressure, their captain, Fernandes visibly showing his frustration on the pitch as he shouted at his teammates and that discord finally proved costly.

After a simple corner routine, Wilson floated the ball in as Calvin Bassey, the Nigerian international rose above every other player, planting a firm header into the Manchester United net.

"...!" Old Trafford was silenced.

65 minutes, 0-1 to Fulham.

That goal definitely seemed to bring the frustrated Manchester United players back to reality. But they didn't try to play like a team at all, rather going alone and trying to do everything themselves individually.

Rashford barely passed the ball when he got it, Garnacho seemingly being content with turning Castagne inside out with no end result, while Fernandes took outside the box shots at every opportunity he got.

It was clear that it was desperation driving them on now, but sometimes, even desperation yield results.

In the 89th minute of this game, when their fans already started leaving the stadium, Manchester United finally equalized this game also from a corner.

Harry Maguire, the English international defender was the one who leaped highest this time, planting a powerful header towards the top right corner.

And with it, Man United came back into this game, but the status quo lasted only 7 minutes.

Another moment of magic, another Sam assist, and another Alex Iwobi late goal doomed Manchester United fans all over the world to a painful defeat.

In the 90th plus 7 minute, Alex Iwobi scored the final goal of this game as he picked up crumbs from another defense splitting Sam pass.

Fulham FC managed to steal all 3 points from Man United in Old Trafford.

Chapter 132 A thriller [1]

(Premier league:)

(Sheffield United – Fulham)

(Date: 30th March 2024)

One game played, another game incoming.

This was the sentiment of the Fulham players as the league season heated up towards its final stages.

Despite the fact that this season, Manchester United was infamously in an inconsistent period and form, the win against the top English club was undoubtedly still a confidence booster to the Fulham players.

If they could beat Manchester United, they could beat anybody!

With this mentality, the Fulham players quickly forgot about the past games, focusing on their next fixture in the league against Sheffield United.

Again, it was an away game in a tough stadium.

In the build-up to the game, Sam stayed diligent, constantly being the first player to report to training and putting more than 100% in every training session.

After all the preparations, the days moved fast and finally, it was D-day.

Sam made his first trip to Bramall Lane, Sheffield United's home stadium.

This stadium had a historic significance. Bramall Lane is the oldest major league ground in the world, having hosted its first game in 1862, in a match between Hallam and Sheffield Club.

Sam did not enter this stadium to pay attention to some piece of history though, like he trained for, he approached this game to win.

Having strung together a winning run already after downing the likes of Tottenham and Manchester United in the league, Sam was determined to continue the winning run against Sheffield United.

And like usual, both teams approached this game with their strongest lineup.

Muniz started again as the striker ahead of Raul Jimenez, and behind him, there was Iwobi who started as the right winger today, Willian on the left, and Sam directly behind Muniz.

These days, Pereira was a stranger to the Fulham starting XI as the young Nigerian already monopolized his spot in the lineup through sheer brilliance.

Behind the 4-man attack were the 2 defensive midfielders, Lukic and Palhinha playing as the pivots and behind them, the 4-man defense comprised of Robinshon, Calvin Bassey, Adarabioyo, and Castagne.

And of course, Bernd Leno started in between the posts.

Unlike most games in the premier league where Fulham FC approached as the underdog on paper, this time, on paper, they were the superior side.

And as soon as the referee's whistle sounded to kickstart this game, that superiority showed as Fulham started on the front foot, dominating possession.

Sam had been putting more than 100% so much in games, pursuing the ball so much that he almost forgot what it meant for his team to hold majority of the possession already. This game reminded Sam of that joy, that feeling of dominance.

Despite the fact that they were playing in a hostile stadium, the changed mentality of the Fulham players reared its head as they managed to shut out all the noise, playing their football.

Sam, Muniz, Willian, and Palhinha were all playing at an elite level this game as they took the game by the helm, dictating it.

Leading from his area in the attacking midfield position, Sam orchestrated the offense with his passing range and his incredible vision for his age.

He kept on prying the Sheffield United defense open like it was not there.

This was one of those games where Sam thoroughly enjoyed himself. But despite Fulham's clear dominance on the pitch, it didn't show on the score line.

Sheffield United's 3-5-2 formation enabled them to bombard the midfield with players, and this moment, all these midfield players played defensively, neutralizing any attack before it could threaten their defense.

With the Fulham players playing at such an elite level though, they were cut open occasionally by defense splitting passes.

And this was when their 3-man defense reared its head.

Muniz was having an amazing game, having multiple chances to score already but the Sheffield United's defense made it hard for him. Not just them, Grbic, the Sheffield United goalkeeper was on top of his game.

He kept on trying to no avail.

After 40 minutes, Sam took matters into his own hands and tried an incredible effort from outside the box but somehow, Grbic still managed to tip the ball away from his net for a corner.

And when the corner was played, the in-form goalkeeper snatched the ball from the air before it could pose any significant threat to his team.

Despite all of Fulham's dominance in the first half, it ended goalless.

In the dressing room, Marco Silva took it easy, praising his players for their dominant performance but sternly, this coach demanded more.

"You can do more, so go out there and do more!"

"We need goals!"

Motivated, the Fulham players charged back into the pitch but as soon as they entered the pitch again was when they noticed something different about the Sheffield United players.

Clearly, Marco Silva was not the only one who did some Jose Mourinhoish stuff, the Sheffield United coach did the same thing.

The Sheffield United players approached this second half with a do or die mentality, they were determined to win by all means.

FWEEEE!

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded to restart play, the game started and immediately, it was clear that the intensity of the players in red and black changed.

Led by Brereton, one of the 2 Sheffield United strikers, this team fed on the energy of their fans all over this stadium that now rose to a crescendo as they played like a pride of injured Lions pouncing on their prey.

The Fulham players did not buckle though, matching their energy but 13 minutes after the restart, the deadlock was broken.

In the 58th minute of this game, Sheffield United broke the deadlock.

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The Sheffield left winger received the ball in the left wing before driving forward resolutely with it, skipping past the first challenge then the second and just as he approached the goal, forcing Leno to rush out to meet him, he kicked the ball with the outside of his boot, passing it across goal.

Calvin Bassey, the Nigerian international reacted immediately but someone else reacted faster with poacher instincts, Brereton.

The Sheffield striker pounced before the Nigerian international could clear the ball, tapping the ball into an empty net.

"GOALLLL...!!!" Bramall Lane exploded!

The Sheffield United fans erupted in ecstasy.

And that became the start of an unforgettable classic.

Chapter 133 A thriller [2]

Brereton's goal opened up the game.

With that goal, the goalless game got its first goal and it was not from the team that everyone expected. Rather, it was from the home team.

And that, dear friends, became the catalyst for an all-time classic.

FWEEEE!

That goal served as a wake-up call for the Fulham players. At some point, dominating their opponents already made them complacent and they began looking down on the Sheffield United players, till this shocker woke them up.

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded again, it was like electricity to the Fulham players and now, it coursed through body, supercharging their body with adrenaline.

Sam especially entered the zone state immediately. 'Damn! I can't believe I actually became complacent!'

'This is professional football! Dammit Sam!' He berated himself.

'Looking down on the competition is the gateway to defeat!'

Once he removed the distractions from his mind, Sam was able to focus on this game again and with it, he entered the zone state.

The first goal of this game entered in the 58th minute from Sheffield United, and just 4 minutes later, Fulham responded!

It was a corner routine.

As soon as the ball was floated in from the corner, Palhinha who was isolated at the far side of the 18-yard box headed the ball, directing it towards the top left corner as the Sheffield goalkeeper and defenders watched it float in.

None of them expected the ball to enter, but it did.

"GOALLLLL...!" The Fulham fans in the away stands responded immediately, roaring at the top of their lungs.

"Yeahhh!!!" Palhinha pumped his fists in excitement, throwing a fist at the fans to acknowledge them before charging back to the midfield.

In the 62nd minute of this game, it became 1-1.

Game on.

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded again, Fulham took charge, having briefly regained momentum over this game through that goal.

They were about to restart their domination when Sheffield dented another question mark on the game.

A Sheffield player stole the ball from Lukic in midfield before immediately charging on a solo run into the Fulham 18-yard box.

Acknowledging the threat, the Fulham players reacted urgently, trying to cut this player off but this player was already in the zone state.

Like the wind itself, he cut through Fulham like a hot knife through butter, effortlessly skipping past challenges and at some point, he raised his head to take a look before playing a cut back pass into the 6-yard box.

Bam!

1 touch, another tap-in goal!

2-1!

"GOALLLL...!" Bramall Lane erupted again.

From the scoreless first half, this game was already transitioning into a thriller and the motivated Fulham players were not going out without a fight.

Sheffield brought the battle to them, and they responded in kind.

In the 68th minute of this game, mere 6 minutes after Fulham's equalizer, Sheffield United went back on the lead through McBurnie, their second striker but just 2 minutes later, they doubled their lead, sinking Fulham into the abyss.

This time, it was another mazy run from midfield but instead of a simple cut back, after taking a look at the scrambling Fulham defense, this Sheffield player floated a teasing cross into the net.

"Clear the ball!"

"Mark him!"

The Fulham players roared as they moved into action.

Calvin Bassey and Adarabioyo reacted, pouncing towards the ball but none of them could get to it first as the thorn in Fulham's side this second half pounced again, sinking the dagger into the heart of Fulham fans watching this game across the world.

"Brereton...!!!" The commentator roared.

"What a second half we're seeing!"

"Sheffield United have taken the game back from Fulham! What a performance, what a goal! What a game!"

It was the deadly Sheffield United striker again. He tried to head the cross into the net and when he couldn't, he instinctively raised his leg, poking the ball into the net with his lap past a sprawling Bernd Leno.

In the 70th minute of this game, Fulham were down by 2 goals.

But that was when it became interesting.

"Come on guys!" Sam clapped, motivating his teammates. "It's not over yet, we can still do this, come on!"

Led by the young Nigerian, Fulham refocused on this game, trying to create another miracle even as both coaches started making changes.

For the remaining minutes of this first half, Sam give beyond 100%, playing like a monster with endless energy.

He pursued the ball, he won back possession, he played defense-splitting passes, he took shots at goal, but nothing seemed to work.

70 minutes passed, no goal...

80 minutes passed, no goal...

85 minutes passed, and that was when the miracle started.

De Cordova-Reid was just subbed into the game mere seconds ago.

As play continued, Sam won back the ball in the midfield and as the Sheffield United players surged towards him, recognizing his threat, Sam protected the ball with his physicality, observing his options before playing a horizontal pass.

The ball cut through the field to De Cordova-Reid who was isolated in the middle of the pitch. This winger took just 2 touches of the ball.

The first touch to control the ball, and the second to unleash a thunderous shot that almost tore the Sheffield United net open.

"GOALLLL...!" The Fulham fans regained their energy immediately!

"De Cordova-Reid...!!!"

"What a goal!"

"Mere seconds after entering the game! Can Fulham mount a comeback? Can they create another miracle?!"

In the 86th minute, De Cordova-Reid scored to reduce the Sheffield United lead by half courtesy of Sam's assist, and 7 minutes later, the miracle was completed, this time by Muniz.

Having scored the second Fulham goal, De Cordova-Reid became provider for the third in the 90th plus 3 minutes of this game. Discover more stories at [empire](#)

Bursting into the box after a pacey run from the right, this winger crossed the ball to Muniz. It was a flawed cross, arriving behind Muniz but the Fulham striker improvised.

Rising into the air even as he was marked by Sheffield United players, Muniz jumped acrobatically and unleashed an overhead kick!

BAM!

Grbic, the Sheffield United goalkeeper was rooted to the spot, only watching as the ball floated past him into the net.

As soon as he fell down, seeing the net shake even as the stadium became loud again, the Fulham striker jumped back on his feet, pumping his fists excitedly as he picked up the ball and rushed back to the center of the pitch.

In the 90th plus 3 minutes, it became 3-3.

From a goalless first half, this game became an incredible 6 goal thriller.

But was there more to it?

Would Fulham do the crazy and win this game?

FWEEEE!

Play restarted.

Chapter 134 A thriller [3]

From 2 goals down, Fulham overcame the odds against them and managed to score 2 quick-fire goals, bringing the game level.

But could they do more?

In the 90th plus 7 minutes, Sam tried.

'Win!' 'Win!' 'Win!'

The mantra already started in his head, ringing like an alarm.

By now, Alex Iwobi was already subbed out of the game. After winning the ball back in midfield, Palhinha immediately passed to Sam.

Bam!

Immediately after taking a touch of the ball, like electricity, adrenaline surged into Sam's body, setting all his electrons into an excited state and immediately, in a state where instinct and intention became one to him, Sam moved.

Sam took one touch of this ball and with his spatial awareness, he noticed the Sheffield United player rushing towards him.

With his second touch, he spun like a roulette, ditching the player in red and black as gasps erupted around this stadium.

The second Sheffield United player charged in on a sliding tackle but already in the state of zone, Sam reacted as if in ultra-instinct, pushing the ball with the outside of his boot as he nutmegged this player just before he could hit the ground sliding.

Whoosh!

And as his boots slid in, Sam jumped over him.

More gasps erupted over this stadium.

Sam was still deep in the middle of the pitch as he did all this and immediately after skipping past both challenges, he raised his head just in time to notice Grbic, the Sheffield United goalkeeper slightly off his lines.

"...!" It was like thunder struck inside his head.

Since making the switch from the NPFL to the premier league, Sam had played multiple games already but the goalkeepers in England were all elite players, he had never noticed a goalkeeper stray off his lines till today.

There was only one explanation for this oversight, the pressure of this game finally got to this goalkeeper.

Fulham was not the only one chasing the winning goal.

Sheffield United were also desperate to get the winning goal after letting their 2-goal lead slip, and the pressure and information colliding in the head of this goalkeeper was what caused this oversight.

Sam gave zero f*cks about the cause though, he only cared about the reality before him and immediately, he pounced.

Raising his right leg even as the veins all over his body stretched taut, Sam swung his leg and hit the ball with venom.

BAM!

Like a rocket, the ball rose as soon as his leg hit it, shooting high into the sky before dipping back down after attaining a certain height.

All the while, Grbic, the Sheffield United goalkeeper who was now panicked charged back desperately to defend his goal.

He would not arrive in time.

"What a shot from Samuel!"

"Is this the decider? The miracle of Fulham?!"

"And ohhhhh...! Can you believe it? It hits the crossbar!"

The stage was already set for Sam to score a historic goal to drag Fulham FC from the ruins of defeat, creating another clutch moment in his first season for the English club to win another premier league game.

Everything was set, it was so close, but it was just not meant to be.

As soon as the ball bounced away for a goal kick, the ref's whistle finally sounded, bringing this game to an end.

Sam collapsed on the pitch immediately, looking up at the sky as a bitter smile crept up on his face. "So close," he muttered.

"It was so close".

"What a tightly-contested affair!" The excited commentator raved. "What an end to an incredibly exciting game!"

"I dare say this is the best game of the whole season!"

"What a game!"

"What an atmosphere!"

"This is what football fans watch the game for, games like this, they're legendary!"

"A thriller, that's what this is called!"

"Damn! What a second half!"

"The first half is basically forgettable at this point. It all seemed like this was going to be a boring game between 2 mid-table teams but what a thriller, a 6-goal second half thriller!"

"I won't forget this game in a long time, I doubt anybody who watched it would".

Sam stayed on the ground, panting heavily till one of his teammates came up to him, offering him a hand.

Sam finally smiled, taking the hand and helping himself up.

It was De Cordova-Reid, the Fulham winger. This player grinned before patting Sam on the back. "We gave our all, that's what matters".

Sam grinned back. "Yeah, that matters".

And with that, they finally made their way to the dressing room.

After the incredible second half thriller, all the players who participated were mentally exhausted even more so than they were physically exhausted.

All they wanted was to rest and sleep to recover.

They had no choice though, one of them still had to face the reporters. Having changed the game with his goal and assist despite being subbed on late, De Cordova-Reid won the man of the match award for this game.

This winger approached the media, answering the questions of the reporters on various topics, a lot of them focusing on Sam.

De Cordova-Reid answered to the best of his ability, trying his best not to say anything controversial and after a few minutes, he was finally free.

After such a grueling game, all the Fulham players were eager to leave.

They quickly left to their team bus but before entering, they signed a few autographs for the away fans who came all the way to watch their game.

After signing autographs and taking a few pictures, they finally made their way to their team bus which took them to the airport.

About an hour later, Sam finally entered his hotel room.

His mom wanted a video call again but Sam was just too exhausted for it. Immediately after taking his bath and entering his bed, he slept off.

When he woke up, he would call his mom and speak with her.

Sam didn't necessarily achieve his primary goal of winning the game, but it was still a good game nonetheless.

And most importantly, he learned a good lesson.

'Never underestimate the competition'.

Chapter 135 Passive Skill- Stalwart

Unlike what most people expected when the much-anticipated transfer of the young Nigerian midfielder to the premier league was concluded by Fulham FC, Sam's start in England had been nothing short of blistering.

It didn't take him long, directly on his debut game that he opened his account for Fulham, getting his first goal for the club.

And it was just a first of many more goals and assists to come.

It was not just the goals and the assists though, Sam's work rate on the pitch alone elevated Fulham as a team.

But most importantly of all his achievements was the EFL Cup trophy.

No matter how much his haters and doubters tried to downgrade his achievements, it was still a fact that before the Nigerian Zidane era as fans already started calling it, Fulham had not won a single trophy in years.

With Sam's addition though, within just a few games, he won Fulham its first trophy in years. If that was not legendary, nothing else was.

Sam took the premier league by storm.

But while to the outside world, it seemed incredibly easy what he did on the pitch, personally, Sam knew that it was harder than even he expected.

Back in Nigeria, in the NPFL, Sam was not just a star, despite playing just 1 and a half season for Enyimba FC, he was already more or less a superstar.

Making the transition from the NPFL to the premier league though, Sam learned something, he learned firsthand the sheer physicality of the English premier league.

He still impacted games, helping Fulham win, but it was more because of his mentality than any other thing. In most of these games, Sam engaged in so much physical duels that his body was left aching at the end of it all.

Of course, with the physical conditioning elixirs that he consumed daily; it helped a lot with his post-match recovery but even this was not enough during the first few months.

That was how intense and grueling the physical drain of the premier league was but after almost 3 months, Sam was finally adapting.

This growth was fully embodied in the Sheffield United game.

Despite doing everything that he normally did during games, riding on his incredible never give up mentality, Coach Marco Silva could not help but notice something during the game.

Despite facing the physically imposing Sheffield United players, unlike in other games when Sam wriggled his way out of trouble through sheer energy and skill, today, Sam stood up to the physical challenge than in other matches.

Sam didn't even notice this, only his coach who was now fully invested in his development noticed.

Coach Marco Silva did not inform him though, only discussing it with his assistants to know how they would approach Sam's future development.

After the Sheffield United game, Sam was exhausted and was why he slept early. Waking up around 4am in the morning though, he saw a new system notification that surprised him.

~----~

[You have completed premier league matchday mission: A stalemate!]

[You played over 90 minutes of this game, doing your part in an exciting 6-goal thriller that ended in a stalemate!]

[Calculating reward..., please wait...]

[Calculation complete!]

[You have been rewarded with 15 Skill Points!]

[You have been rewarded with bonus 5 Skill Points!]

...

[Due to your role in participating in such an intense and grueling thriller, effectively asserting your authority over the game, real-time game experience accumulation has triggered!]

[Congratulations! You have broken a bottleneck!]

[Your physicality has improved by +3!]

[Your overall system rating has increased!]

[You have unlocked a passive skill: Stalwart!]

>You have proven your credentials as a reliable stalwart with well-rounded attributes in the middle of the pitch. You can score, you can assist, you can dribble, and you can press; you are the complete package<

>+10% to all 4 packages when on the pitch<

>All 4 packages refer to your shooting attribute, your passing attribute, your dribbling attribute, and your stamina attribute<

[System Remark: Solid Player!]

...

Player Attributes:

*Pace: 81

*Shot: 79

*Pass: 80

*Dribbling: 74

*Defending: 38

*Physicality: 73

*Stamina: 84

Overall Rating: 81

...

[Owned Football Skills:]

[Passive skill: Stalwart]

[Active skills:]

[Basic mastery level: La croqueta; body feint; Power shot; step overs, roulette, knuckle shot, overhead kick]

[Intermediate mastery level: Elastico, Cruyff turn]

...

[Legendary Inheritance: Elastico]

~----~

Staring at the notifications on his system's interface, Sam was pleasantly surprised. He grinned. 'Surprise surprise!'

This was not Sam's first time knowing of a passive skill.

He first noticed it when he played against Liverpool in the EFL Cup semifinal. Then, walking into the tunnel shoulder to shoulder with the likes of world-class stars like Virgil Van Dijk, Alexis Mac Allister, and the others, he had a prime opportunity to go on a rampage with his snooping tool.

The good thing about his snooping tool was that he could use it to scan multiple players at once to know all of their ability status.

And of the 11 Liverpool players that he checked before the game started, 3 of them had passive skills, the only time Sam had seen them in a player before he also saw one in Cole Palmer when he clashed with Chelsea in the final.

Alexis Mac Allister had a passive skill called midfield maestro. It improved his playmaking skills by 20% on the pitch.

Allison Becker, the Liverpool goalkeeper who Sam got the opportunity to scan on the bench also had a passive skill called One-on-one specialist. It improved his one-on-one saving skills by an incredible 40% on the pitch.

Cole Palmer had a passive skill called midfield enforcer. It improved his ability of contributing to a game by scoring a goal or assisting by 15%, and this percentage increases to 20% in the final minutes of a game.

As for Virgil Van Dijk, the Liverpool legend did not have just 1 passive skill but 2. His first passive skill was called Solid Defender; it improved his zonal marking and tackling abilities by 20% on the pitch.

As for his second passive skill, it was called Power Header. It worked in conjunction with the Power Header skill, increasing Van Dijk's chances of scoring when he uses the power header skill by 30%.

After reading the status of these players in awe, admiring their passive skills, finally, Sam got his very own passive skill and it was just as impressive as theirs.

Chapter 136 A new girl in the hotel

Immediately after receiving the best morning news from his system in the form of his very own passive skill, excited, Sam finally woke up, going about his day with gusto as he started with his daily system quest.

Just as he got set in his gym clothes, about to jog out, his iPhone beeped with a new notification and it was from his coach.

It was the fixture for Fulham's next game.

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 31)

(Nottingham Forest – Fulham)

(2nd April, 2024)

Seeing the message, Sam felt a bit nostalgic all of a sudden.

It still felt just like yesterday when the Fulham agent came all the way to Abraka, Nigeria to get his signature in December last year. Heck, it still felt like yesterday when he and his dad just stepped foot in London, England.

But in the blink of an eye, it was already 4 months.

"How time flies," Sam muttered before quickly jogging out.

He didn't know why his coach could not send the fixture on the night after the game like he did normally, but he had a guess. 'He's exhausted'. He thought.

The players were not the only ones who were exhausted after the grueling game in Bramall Lane against Sheffield United, the rollercoaster of emotions throughout the second half also left Coach Marco Silva extremely exhausted.

Sam guessed that this was the reason why his coach sent the fixture only now. Besides, personally, he was still feeling the hangover.

In the second half, he wore himself out, both mentally and physically.

This morning, Sam's legs still felt heavy. He frowned slightly as he thought about the fact that their next game was just in 2 days.

There was no way for the Fulham players to be at 100% for that game, but it was what it was, the grueling nature of professional football at the highest level.

Sam could only hope that he and his teammates would pull through.

He didn't just jog out this time. Having learned his lesson from recent days, he wore a gray Gucci hoodie, burying his face with the hood so that he would be less recognizable in the streets of Fulham.

These days, he was no longer a figure of obscurity in Fulham.

Though it was already reducing as the recency bias of the EFL Cup died, Sam was still very much a cult hero for Fulham fans already and he was popular.

With this disguise though, Sam hoped to evade them. At first, he was able to avoid attention but when he was jogging back, he realized how naïve he was.

The fans already knew the hotel where he stayed, and most of them already knew that he came out every day to jog too. They blocked Sam, forcing him to sign more autographs, take pictures, and even do videos!

Celebrity life was not for the weak.

In a way, he enjoyed it too though, it was refreshing when it was not toxic.

"Sam, please don't leave Fulham, play for us forever".

"Sam please win us the premier league! You can do it, right?"

"Sam, please help us win the next game against Nottingham Forest. My dad promised me a box of chocolate if Fulham wins".

Sam responded with smiles to all the fan wishes, and when he was done, he finally jogged back to his hotel, completing his daily system quest.

Entering the hotel premises that morning though, he could not help but notice a new white girl that he had not seen before. He knew she was new because he had never seen her in the hotel before.

Sam would have ignored her as he entered the hotel, but she took the initiative to wave at him, stopping him.

She smiled, exposing her cute dimples. "Sam, right? You're the Nigerian who plays for Fulham FC, I know you". She chuckled with her soothingly sweet voice.

Sam smiled back at her, extending a hand for a handshake. "Nice to meet you".

"Nice to meet you too," she took his handshake, still smiling. "Since I already met you here, I guess I'll just make it to your next home game. That's against Nottingham Forest, right?"

"No," Sam chuckled, suddenly more confident as the conversation steered in a direction that he was knowledgeable in. "Our game against Nottingham Forest is an away game, we'll be going to their home stadium in The City Ground".

"Oh," she sighed, seemingly disappointed.

"If you'll stay long enough though, you can visit Craven Cottage to watch our next game, it'll take place on the 6th".

"Oh!" She finally brightened up again. "I think I'll stay that long. I'll definitely make it Sam, and don't lose, make sure you win".

"We will!" Sam said confidently, grinning, and then he was finally about to walk in when this girl stopped him.

"Wow, so mean," she chuckled. "You won't even ask for the name".

"Oh, sorry, my bad". Sam scratched his short black hair. "You're?"

"The name is Kayla, Kayla Banks".

Sam smiled, deliberately moving animatedly as he faced her with a smile. "Ok Kayla Banks, it's nice to make your acquaintance, how's the family?"

She chuckled. "Not funny!"

"I know". Sam laughed and then, he finally left, entering inside the hotel and quickly locating his hotel room.

Once he was inside his room, he quickly forgot about Kayla. He met a lot of people these days, meeting one more person did not register deeply in his brain.

Entering his room, he went straight to his bathroom before taking his bath and freshening up, getting ready before leaving for training at exactly 7:15am.

Again, Sam was the first Fulham player to arrive for training.

Like in recent weeks, as soon as he arrived, the first thing he did was use his game analysis A.I system perk to analyze his last game performance, noting down his weaknesses and strengths and with this, he drafted today's personal training plan.

He worked with that plan, commencing training before more Fulham players started showing up for training.

When the coach finally arrived, the finishing touches were done to make the pitch set for training and at exactly 8:00am, training started.

Today's training was nowhere as productive as the Fulham players hoped, almost all of them were still weighed down by fatigue.

Only Sam performed admirably after consuming a physical conditioning elixir earlier in the morning already.

Just like that, training came to an end.

The next day, Sam repeated the same routine and then the next and in no time, the D-day for matchday 31 of the premier league already approached.

Sam joined his teammates and went on a trip to Nottingham City.

Chapter 137 Matchday 31; against Nottingham Forest

The Fulham players already did the needful, doing the training part to the best of their ability after the grueling Sheffield United game, and now they were in another away stadium in England to grind out another result.

For this game, both teams started with their strongest lineups.

Fulham started with Bernd Leno in between the posts, the 4-man defense comprising of Robinson, Calvin Bassey, Adarabioyo, and Tete while the double pivot role was taken by Joao Palhinha and Lukic.

Like usual, Muniz started ahead of Raul Jimenez and behind the striker was the 3-man offense of Sam, Wilson, and Alex Iwobi.

As for Nottingham Forest, they started with a formidable team comprising popular names like the likes of Aina, Danilo, Anthony Elanga, Morgan Gibbs-White, and Callum Hudson-Odoi.

On paper, both teams were evenly matched but despite this, the odds were on Fulham to win based on recent form.

When the game started though, the reality was far different from what most people expected.

Starting in front of the Nottingham supporters, the game started slow at first, both teams playing slow and conservative football for the first few minutes until a goal came from nowhere, destroying the slow tempo of the game.

Just like Fulham, Nottingham Forest played with a 4-2-3-1 formation and it started from one of their double pivots, Danilo.

After some basic passing in midfield to keep and rotate possession, receiving the ball, Danilo teased, turning around with it before playing a grounded through pass out of the blue that cut the Fulham defense open.

Tete who started as the right back for Fulham today erupted, trying to get to the ball but his speed was child's play before the rapid Callum Hudson-Odoi.

The Nottingham Forest winger went off like a jet, accelerating past the right back, calmly taking the ball in his strides before charging towards goal.

Bernd Leno was forced to charge out of his goal to close the rampaging left winger down and when he did was when this winger curled the ball round him, calmly slotting into the bottom right corner.

In the 9th minute, Nottingham Forest broke the deadlock, going ahead as their tens of thousands of supporters in The City Ground erupted.

That goal increased the tempo of this game after the restart.

Forced awake by the goal, the Fulham players finally showed up to work, doing their normal thing as they pressed and passed Nottingham Forest to death.

For the next few minutes that followed, Fulham dominated and it was Sam again providing the goods as he kept on playing promising passes to his striker and wing forwards only for them to fluff their lines.

It was clear that the Fulham forward line was not gelling today.

10 minutes after the first goal, in the 19th minute, against the run of play, Fulham's profligacy in front of goal was punished again by Nottingham Forest.

And this time, it was scored by the powerful striker, Wood.

After some incredible play from Anthony Elanga along the wing, the former Manchester United player, Wood came on the end of a delightful cross, heading home to double his team's lead in this game.

If the first goal was a shocker, then the second was a reality check.

The Fulham players played with even more urgency as they dominated proceedings, trying to score their first goal even as Nottingham Forest started wrestling back authority over this game.

As the game wore on, the Fulham dominance lessened and lessened till it became virtually non-existent.

The Fulham players were showing signs of tiredness.

And then, they paid the price again for their lethargic legs as in the 45th plus 3 minute, Morgan Gibbs-White, the Nottingham Forest attacking midfielder added salt to injury, scoring an incredibly volleyed shot to make it 3-0.

"GOALLLL...!" The City Ground exploded.

None of the tens of thousands of Nottingham Forest fans in this stadium saw this coming before kickoff. It felt like some fantasy dream, and they were thoroughly enjoying it as their club tore Fulham to shreds.

During half-time, Marco Silva went on a rant, berating his players for the lethargic performance as he asked for improvement in the second.

"Come on guys, we can't draw our last game and lose this one".

"Not after the standards we've already set".

He glared at them. "It's not over yet, I want you to win as you go back out there. We can still win this game".

When the game restarted again though, reality showed that Fulham could not. And not just that, Fulham suffered a tragedy.

Just 3 minutes into the first half, taking matters into his own hands after winning possession deep in his half, Sam went on a mazy run as all his sights were set on goal but acknowledging his threat, Danilo, the Nottingham Forest defensive midfielder took one for the team as he brought Sam down aggressively.

Immediately after hitting the ground in horrible fashion, Sam grabbed his right calf as he screamed in pain.

The referee had to stop the game, calling the medical staff in.

"...!" In that moment, Coach Marco Silva felt like his heart was in his throat.

After a little diagnosis on the pitch, Sam could not continue. Apparently, he suffered a muscular injury. It was not too serious but he could not continue.

Sam limped out of the field of play, leaving his team in shambles.

'Dammit!' He cursed in his mind.

With Sam gone, the Fulham team tried to revert to their old ways and play their game in his absence. It worked once, just 6 minutes later as after a well hit set-piece from the corner, Adarabioyo jumped highest, heading the ball into the net and reducing the score line to 3-1.

After that goal, the Fulham players became even more motivated to get the 2nd goal and then the 3rd but they quickly learned it was not going to be easy.

Nottingham Forest played like a team, defending valiantly throughout the course of the second half and in the end, they got a famous victory.

Fulham lost 3-1, the club's first loss in a while in all competitions.

Their unbeaten run crashed landed in painful fashion.

Chapter 138 Matchday 32; against Newcastle United

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 31)

(Fulham – Newcastle)

(6th April, 2024)

After further extensive tests at the wake of the Nottingham Forest game, the fear of Fulham fans across the world were finally allayed.

The doctors confirmed that Sam did indeed suffer a muscular problem but it was just a minor tear, he would be available for selection in Fulham's next game.

Coach Marco Silva was the most relieved person by this news.

The Newcastle game had special meaning to the Fulham players and fans. Afterall, it was Newcastle who knocked them out of the FA Cup in the 4th round.

This game was like a revenge game and since it was going to be played in Craven Cottage, Fulham's home, the players and fans were determined to win.

During the build-up to the game, Sam could not train with his teammates as he focused on recovering from his minor injury.

And for the first game in months since forcing his way into the Fulham starting XI, Sam was not on the Fulham starting XI. He started on the bench.

Both teams started with their strongest available lineups.

With Sam injured, Pereira finally returned to the Fulham starting XI, forming the 4-man offense alongside Willian in the left, Alex Iwobi on the right, and Muniz starting as the striker.

Behind them were Joao Palhinha and Cairney in defensive midfield, while the 4-man defense comprised Castagne, Adarabioyo, Calvin Bassey, and Robinson.

Bernd Leno started in between the posts.

Newcastle United did not pull their punches either as the likes of Aleksander Isak, Anthony Gordon, Bruno Guimaraes, and Kierran Tripper all started.

After Fulham's recent run of 2 games without a win, this team was determined to return to winning ways in the league.

Buoyed by the loud noise being made by their fans, the Fulham players played their best football against Newcastle, taking the battle to them but as the superior team on paper, Newcastle United also refused to give an inch.

It was a game of pound for pound filled with exciting battles all over the pitch.

The first half was a cagey affair that ended goalless.

When second half started though, both teams showed certain signs of fatigue and exhaustion but the game continued at a very high intensity.

Both teams kept on going at each other, going on dangerous attack after attack as the offensive players of both sides tried their best to impose themselves on the game and be the difference maker.

The defense was on top of its game though, both teams defending doggedly to keep the game scoreless until the 80th minute of the game.

The deadlock was broken, sending all Fulham hearts across the world to despair, seemingly dooming them to a 2nd consecutive loss in the league.

Winning the ball back in midfield, Bruno Guimaraes, the elite Newcastle midfielder who dominated in the fluid Newcastle 4-3-3 formation drove forward a bit with the ball before unleashing a thunderous shot to score a worldie.

The ball went straight towards the roof of the net at the center, but the reason why it beat Leno was because of the tremendous power behind the shot.

It almost tore the net open, breaking the deadlock in tyrannical fashion.

After trying their best all game only to concede so late, the Fulham players gave up but shortly after was when Coach Marco Silva finally said f*ck it.

He pulled the plug late, retrieving Pereira just 2 minutes later in the 83rd minute and taking the risk to introduce Sam into this game after confirming with the player that he was fit enough to play.

At some point, Coach Marco Silva already took off Willian as he introduced De Cordova-Reid into this game and this player contributed to the miracle that followed after Sam entered the pitch.

Sam didn't even need to chant his mantra this time. Having watched his team play and be frustrated for 80 minutes, his blood was boiling.

As soon as he stepped foot into the pitch, he went to work, doing what he did best, abusing his stamina to impose himself on the game.

With Sam's endless energy, it was clear immediately that the team was elevated with his presence because his teammates also started pressing more.

It happened in the 89th minute.

Palhinha won the ball back in midfield and without hesitation, he passed to Sam who skipped past a challenge, nutmegging a Newcastle player before quickly spreading the game open, threading a pass to the left where Cordovo-Reid lurked.

This left winger immediately erupted as soon as his leg got the ball, taking it in his strides as he turned Kieran Tripper, the English right back inside out before floating a cross into the box.

Sam was the one who passed the ball to De Cordova-Reid but in a moment of abusing his stamina again, he had been running since and when the left winger crossed the ball, he already arrived at the 18-yard box.

Jimenez who was already subbed into this game was marked tightly, including Alex Iwobi who lurked but the Newcastle players failed to do it all, failing to spot Sam's late run and that was what doomed them.

As Sam charged into the box, all his eyes were fixated on the ball.

And as it descended, he jumped and nodded powerfully.

BAM!

Having increased his mastery of the power header skill to intermediate mastery already, Sam executed a perfect header, combining a mixture of power and placement that left Dubravka, the Tottenham goalkeeper with no chance.

The ball rushed towards the top left corner of the post before nestling in and immediately, the away fan section in Craven Cottage erupted.

While the commentator screamed, immediately waxing lyrical about the young Nigerian prodigy, the excited Fulham fans blasted in chants.

"Sam!" "Sam!" "Sam!"

Tens of thousands of fans sang around this stadium.

In the 89th minute, Sam equalized, making it 1-1 to Fulham.

He celebrated his goal, charging towards the corner flag amid roars from the Fulham fans even as he slid on his knees, pointing to his head before the camera.

"Mentality," he mumbled to himself, grinning.

That goal took the momentum away from Newcastle United completely for the first time this game.

FWEEEE!

When play restarted, Fulham worked hard, chasing the winning goal as Sam stayed as the most dangerous player in the field of play.

Despite his effort and the team's overall effort, Newcastle were able to barely hang on and ride this game to an end.

The game ended 1-1, another draw and Sam won the man of the match award after rescuing his team again late from the throes of defeat.

Chapter 139 Need for speed? Need to win!

(Premier league:)

(West Ham – Fulham)

(Date: 14th April, 2024)

Located in the south of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park is London Stadium, another of the iconic stadiums in England. The London Stadium's history was that it was built to host the London 2012 Olympics.

And now, it was the home stadium of one of the elite teams in the English premier competition, West Ham United.

The 62,000-capacity stadium was one of the biggest in all of England, and this was the venue for Fulham's next challenge in the premier league.

It was an imposing and incredibly tough stadium to get a good result from.

After extending their winless run in the premier league by the stalemate against Newcastle United, Coach Marco Silva finally came under pressure by the media and the fans.

They seemingly forgot that he already led this team to win its first trophy in years, rather, all they focused on was the recent defeats and draws.

If Fulham extended the winless run by either losing or drawing to West Ham the next game, threads of #MarcoSilvaOut popping out on social media may not be too surprising.

This was the nature of football. You had to perform, and keep performing, that was the only way to stay in the good favors of the fans.

Once you start performing badly, you lose faith with the fans.

After the recent run of form, this was the situation that now plagued Coach Marco Silva, making their next game even more important.

The buildup to the West Ham game was intense.

After the Newcastle game on the 6th, instead of the short 3-day break that separated the Nottingham Forest and the Newcastle game, this time, the Fulham players had a good 7 days to prepare for their next game.

The players used this time judiciously.

Playing 32 games in a 38-game season was no easy feat. The players were exhausted, but with the 7-day rest, they had enough time to rest, reset, and refocus on their ambitions for the rest of the season.

And again, during this period of reset, Sam stayed diligent.

When Sam was younger, in the era of mobile games, there was a mobile game he once played called need for speed. In that game of racing cars like asphalt, the main emphasis was speed, speed above everything else.

You have a fast car, you win.

You have a slow car, you lose.

You have a slow car and you want to win, you either upgrade your car or you save money to purchase a faster car.

At this moment, in the build-up to the West ham game after the draw at home against Newcastle United, only one thing rang in Sam's head that served as extra motivation for him, the need to win!

Fulham FC could not afford to lose another game, nor could they afford to draw the game; the only acceptable result for the West Ham game was a win.

Forget about the collective, personally, Sam did not want to lose another game. He could not afford it; after all, his system already struck again.

2 days earlier in the build-up to the game, he got a new system notification.

~----~

[You have received a new system mission: Win!]

[Mission Description: Fulham FC is going through a rough patch of form, a winless streak, this is not supposed to be in the resume of a player aspiring to become the next Football God!]

[Mission Objective: Win!]

[Mission Reward: Form Boost!]

>Form Boost: This is a system boost that randomly boosts 3 of your main attributes by +3 stat points for one game<

...

[Penalty for mission failure: -5 decrease to one of your attributes!]

~----~

It was a very simple mission, with a very simple explanation.

In essence, the system was just telling him; win or suffer the consequences!

The system mission left Sam thinking. 'This unrelenting need for me to win by the system, is it truly just to make me improve? Why do I feel like the system gets something from me becoming a better footballer?'

'Sometimes, it's demands are not just for me, it seems a bit more personal'.

The rational him wanted to prod more about this but Sam didn't care too much about it. 'Who cares? It wants me to win, I want to win, that's all that matters!'

Instead of looking at it as punishment by his system, Sam rather looked at it as even more motivation.

In the 7 days leading up to the game against West Ham in the London Stadium, Sam trained like hell, giving about 150% every training session!

It got so intense his manager had to tell him to calm down a few times.

Sam's obsession with winning felt overbearing in the build-up to this game. Even as it scared his coach a bit, Marco Silva was also happy because this mentality of his star player seeped into the rest of his team.

Watching the young newcomer who already became a star do so much, putting so much effort even in his fame, trying to impress every time, the other Fulham players could not help but be impressed.

And with being impressed, they also felt their bloods boil hot.

'This guy...'

'I won't let a newcomer steal all of our shine!'

'I won't let his monopoly over coming first every training session stand anymore!'

'I want to challenge him!'

'Damn! I don't believe I'm less talented than he is!'

'Hehe! Sam, just watch, I'll prove to you in training!'

Not all the Fulham players thought like this but with the majority thinking like this, the Fulham squad as a whole was fired up as they trained like a beast.

In those 7 days, if Fulham FC was a meek Wolf before that was injured after the string of losses and draws, Coach Marco Silva watched as his team transmogrified from a Wolf to a Lion, and then to an angry Dragon.

Fulham FC was angry!

Fulham FC wanted to win!

And then, in the blink of an eye, it was D-day.

The Fulham team traveled to the London Stadium.

Chapter 140 Resurgence; a statement display!

When the Fulham players lined up in the London Stadium, camping in hostile territory, as they heard the loud roars of the West Ham supporters, they didn't cower, rather they felt their blood boil hot like a Dragon who was provoked.

Fulham FC was provoked.

And in mythological history, even in the tales of the Lord of the Rings and the iconic Game of Thrones series, when a Dragon was provoked, it never ends well for the trouble makers.

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded, the Dragon roared.

FWEEEE!

West Ham United started kick-off but it was almost like Fulham won the ball back immediately, due to their insanely aggressive press!

Right from the first minute, this team showed their intent to press like monsters, showcasing relentless energy on the field of play.

And for the first time in how many games, Fulham FC entered a game with tyrannical momentum, breaking the deadlock early.

Kickoff just started as the West Ham players pinged the ball between themselves when Muniz pounced like the head of a Dragon, stealing the ball in a dangerous position in just the 1st minute of this game!

Panicking, the West Ham defenders tried to recover but the striker was already off, charging towards the West Ham United post.

The goalkeeper rushed out and as he did, calmly, Muniz kicked the ball, lobbing it above this goalkeeper and into the net.

"GOALLLLLLL...!" The away fans section erupted.

As soon as the ball found its way into the net, Muniz charged behind the post, pupils dilated as he stared at the horde of West Ham supporters.

He glared at them and roared. "Come on!!!"

"BOOOO...!" The West Ham supporters responded with a chorus of boos but Muniz didn't give a damn, his actions already set this pitch on fire.

When the referee's whistle sounded again to restart play, West Ham tried to get back into the game but this team found soon enough that doing that was going to be an uphill task.

West Ham could not retain possession. The players barely received a pass when they were hounded by not one but multiple Fulham players.

It was almost like the Fulham players were everywhere, playing with such an intensity that rivalled that of a prime Liverpool's gen-gen pressing.

Maybe if it was a technical team like Manchester City, they would have been able to beat this crazy press with sheer technicality and brilliance but West Ham United was no Manchester City.

Knowing this, a prowling Fulham capitalized.

The second goal of this game came just 7 minutes after the first, in the 8th minute after a well-worked team move as De Cordova-Reid ended it, scoring an incredible curled effort that beat the West Ham goalkeeper.

10 minutes later, Alex Iwobi completed a first-half riot by Fulham after another trademark penetrative through pass from Sam.

Running into the pass, all the Nigerian International had to do was poke the ball as it went in between the legs of the West Ham goalkeeper.

"GOALLLL...!" The away fans section exploded in cheers again.

"...!" The rest of this stadium was as silent as a church.

"What a goal!" The commentator raved.

"The 3rd Fulham goal in just the 18th minute!"

"Damn! Fulham are on a ruthless streak today!"

"It's not that West Ham are playing bad, Fulham are just playing on a truly devastating form today, what a first half this is turning out to become!"

"And who knows? It's just the 18th minute, things may soon turn worse and ugly for viewers of the West Ham persuasion!"

"The only question is if Fulham can keep the intensity. This intensity is not something that can be sustained across 90 minutes of a football match".

"At some point, they'll get tired and they'll have to reduce the tempo, is that when West Ham will finally come into this game?"

Well, things didn't go exactly as the commentator predicted, but one prediction did go as he thought.

Things did turn ugly.

After going 3 goals down in just 18 minutes, the West Ham players finally rallied, organizing themselves and playing solid football to frustrate the rampant Fulham players who were playing incredibly intense football.

For about a dozen minutes or so, they figured Fulham's press out, slowly growing into the game and trying to impose their authority till the 32nd minute when all of their efforts were ruthlessly destroyed by individual brilliance.

In the 32nd minute of this game, Sam got his second goal contribution of this game after assisting Alex Iwobi earlier.

And again, it was one of those trademark rocket shots from outside the box.

Receiving the ball just outside the West Ham 18-yard box, Sam nutmegged a player to the side, setting himself up before unleashing a rocket straight into the top right corner. The goalkeeper stood no chance.

As soon as the ball entered, Sam jumped, screaming at the top of his lungs as he pumped his fists excitedly.

"BOOOO...!" The West Ham fans drowned him in boos in return but he didn't care, he wanted more and Fulham got more.

In the 45th plus 3 minutes, Sam added salt to injury, scoring Fulham's 5th goal just before halftime as he lashed in to a cross in the 18-yard box with a venomous volleyed shot!

POW!

The West Ham goalkeeper didn't even see it coming, he was rooted to the spot.

"My God!" The commentator exclaimed. "This is not just a defeat anymore, this is bullying!"

"What a statement first half from Fulham!"

The first half ended 0-5 to Fulham FC.

When second half started, Coach Marco Silva made a few changes, taking off Alex Iwobi and De Cordova-Reid but the Fulham momentum didn't stop.

By now, all the West Ham players wanted was a consolation goal to save face but it didn't come, rather the score line only turned uglier.

In the 66th minute of the game, Sam got his 4th goal contribution, setting up Willian who scored the 6th goal of this game!

It was a total destruction.

And 8 minutes later, in the 74th minute of this game, Sam got his hatrick, capping off his unreal performance with 5 goal contributions!

"ZINEDINE SAMMMM!!!"

"ZINEDINE SAM!" The commentator screamed in a shrill voice. "The boy is a menace! A force of nature! A typhoon of destruction!"

"He has single-handedly ripped West Ham to shreds!"

"The Nigerian Zidane is a menace!"

"Oh ye premier league, fear the Nigerian wonder!"

Just a minute later, Sam was finally subbed out of this game in the 75th minute but only after nailing West Ham's defeat, dooming this elite team to a humiliating 0-7 home loss, Fulham's highest margin win all season.

The game ended 0-7, Sam scooped up another man of the match award and his first premier league match ball after scoring a hattrick.

This was a statement victory.