

Football God 201

Chapter 201 Fulham; table toppers

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 15:)

(Fulham 1-1 Arsenal)

(Date: 8th December, 2024)

...

(Leicester City 2-2 Brighton)

(Date: 8th December, 2024)

...

(Ipswich Town 1-2 Bournemouth)

(Date: 8th December, 2024)

...

(Tottenham 3-4 Chelsea)

(Date: 8th December, 2024)

...

(West Ham 2-1 Wolves)

(Date: 9th December, 2024)

A day after Fulham's top of the table clash against Arsenal in the premier league in Craven Cottage, West Ham finally took on Wolves in the last encounter of matchday 15, eventually deciding the final results.

After matchday 15, this was how the premier league table looked like.

(Updated premier league table standings:)

(1. Fulham GP: 15/ W:12/ D:2/ L:1/ Pts: 39)

(2. Liverpool GP: 14/ W:11/ D:2/ L:1/ Pts: 36)

(3. Chelsea GP: 15/ W:9/ D:4/ L:2/ Pts: 31)

(4. Arsenal GP: 15/ W:8/ D:5/ L:2/ Pts: 29)

(5. Man City GP: 15/ W:7/ D:4/ L:4/ Pts: 25)

(6. Nottm Forest GP: 15/ W:7/ D:4/ L:4/ Pts: 25)

(7. Brighton GP: 15/ W:6/ D:6/ L:3/ Pts: 24)

(8. Aston Villa GP: 15/ W:7/ D:3/ L:6/ Pts: 24)

(9. Bournemouth GP: 15/ W:7/ D:3/ L:5/ Pts: 24)

(10. Brentford GP: 15/ W:7/ D:2/ L:6/ Pts: 23)

(11. Newcastle GP: 15/ W:5/ D:5/ L:5/ Pts: 20)

(12. Tottenham GP: 15/ W:6/ D:1/ L:8/ Pts: 19)

(13. West Ham GP: 15/ W:5/ D:3/ L:7/ Pts: 18)

(14. Man United GP: 15/ W:4/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 16)

(15. Leicester GP: 15/ W:3/ D:5/ L:7/ Pts: 14)

(16. Everton GP: 14/ W:3/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 13)

(17. Crystal Palace GP: 15/ W:2/ D:7/ L:6/ Pts: 13)

(18. Ipswich Town GP: 15/ W:1/ D:6/ L:8/ Pts: 9)

(19. Wolves GP: 15/ W:1/ D:3/ L:11/ Pts: 6)

(20. Southampton GP: 15/ W:1/ D:1/ L:11/ Pts: 4)

By the end of matchday 15 of the English premier league, incredibly, Fulham was still the table-topping club in the elite tier of the English premiership.

"Max, again, it's another matchday of the English premier league. I have to say yes, you got me on this one, Fulham have really exceeded my expectations by far this season. But I still believe that they won't win the league".

"So, tell me, with the Merseyside derby at Goodison Park between Everton and Liverpool postponed, of the 9 matches that were played in this matchday, which of them do you think was the best and provided the most entertainment value".

After listening to the question, Max, the premier league pundit flashed a smile. "My biased mind would say Fulham vs Arsenal. I mean, the S factor partnership was in full display, you needed to see Sam operate man". He laughed.

"But then, if I say that, I would be lying to my true self".

"Despite how much I don't want to admit it, Charles, I have no choice but to accept it that Tottenham vs Chelsea was the true outstanding game of this matchday and it was not even close".

"Chelsea traveled to the home of fierce rivals Tottenham Hotspur, and while they had one of the worst starts to a London derby you could possibly have, Enzo Maresca's men rose to the occasion and pulled off a magnificent comeback, needing two penalties in their favor to do it".

"But man, what a game it was!"

"The true definition of an end-to-end game!"

"My inner yearning for a mind-blowing story could not help but think if Tottenham would actually score an equalizer in stoppage time after Heung Min Son put that 3rd goal behind the Chelsea net".

"Honestly, it was the best game of this matchday by far".

"Going 2 goals down in how many minutes, a Cole Palmer-led Chelsea proved their mettle, proving their credentials in this season's title run-in".

"This season, in terms of influence, I would say Cole Palmer, Mohamed Salah, and Samuel Moses are currently the best players of this season's premier league".

"They've been just so influential for their clubs".

"I would say they're the front runners for the PFA Player of the year award too, they've just been terrific this season".

Hearing that, Charles, the show host chuckled. "It's crazy how you say Samuel Moses so casually and nothing in me even protests it, it's honestly crazy".

"Last season, no one knew Samuel Moses. All we heard was side talk about a talented Nigerian kid who arrived in Fulham, no one expected this, no one expected what we're currently bearing witness to".

"Look at his current transfer value, the kid is rated by transfermarkt for a value over 50 million Euros already".

"He has to be the biggest bargain buy of the century!"

Max laughed. "You're right on that one Charles".

...

While football fans across social media platforms raved about Chelsea's incredible performance and result, noting the similarities in Fulham's performance against Arsenal too, a certain comparison finally arose on social media.

(Cole Palmer vs Samuel Moses)

No one knew who started it exactly, but across social media, polls started being made as a fierce popularity contest started.

Cole Palmer fans clashed against Samuel Moses fans.

In the end, after fierce voting across multiple social media platforms, the better of the 2 players currently was finally decided by majority voting by the fans.

(Cole Palmer- 52% votes)

(Samuel Moses- 48% votes)

Cole Palmer just barely got the edge over Sam in the voting.

The result of the poll caused a ripple effect across social media as it brought more renown to Sam, increasing his popularity even more.

And as his popularity increased was when a certain video suddenly became viral, trending on all viewing social media platforms.

Sam rarely paid attention to social media but he was surprised when even Emile Smith Rowe asked him to enter his tik tok or YouTube account and search for Samuel Moses.

At first, he was reluctant despite the fact that it was Smith Rowe asking until he received a call from a certain phone number.

(Incoming call from Favorite...)

Sam's eyes widened as he got a call from Kayla. 'What happened? Is it that serious?'

When he picked up the call, Kayla said only a single sentence. "Come online, I sent you a video on WhatsApp".

'Huh?' Even more curious now, after the call, Sam finally opened his phone.

As soon as he clicked on the video, his jaw dropped in shock immediately.

Chapter 202 Viral video

Sam clicked on the video.

It was made in a rickety setting, a setting that Sam was all familiar with.

It was a bare-bones building with wooden bench arranged in rows, all filled to the brim with people. There were 2 big tv screens at the very front of this building, and both showed the same football match.

This was a viewing center in Nigeria, and showing on the 2 big tv screens was the unforgettable FIFA World Cup final 2022 played in Qatar between Argentina and France.

It was the 108th minute of the game in the 2nd period of extra time.

By then, the tension in the game was already palpable, and in extension, the tension in the viewing center was also palpable as the viewers ignored their sweat, their eyes fixated on the proceedings on the big screen.

And then it happened as Lautaro Martinez, the Argentine striker received a pass inside the France 18-yard box.

As soon as this happened, a youthful boy quickly jumped to his feet, roaring. "Pass! Pass the ball! Pass the f*cking ball!"

Watching this scene, Sam could not help but blush fiercely.

The video was not of the best quality, and the youthful boy on the video looked darker and younger than the current him, but Sam had no doubt that this was him on the night of the most memorable game of his life.

'Damn! Who made a video of me?' He lamented.

The video continued...

As the youthful boy screamed, filled with tension, instead of passing, Lautaro Martinez took a shot.

Bam!

It hit the French goalkeeper, Hugo Iloris.

"F*ck!" Sam could not help but mutter again as he watched the recording, having been transported back to the unforgettable day that it happened.

On that day, he also cursed; he was already cursing when Lionel Messi pounced, poking the rebounded ball back in.

Jules Kounde, the French fullback who currently plied his trade for FC Barcelona in La Liga did a goal line clearance but goal line technology judged the ball to have crossed the line.

"GOALLLLL...!" The viewing center erupted with the roars of ecstatic Argentina fans, and Sam was at the forefront of the celebrations.

Unbounded, no longer caring about how he looked, Sam pulled off his Argentina jersey, leaving only his white singlet as he waved the jersey wildly while running to the front of this viewing center.

By now, he already lost his composure in the emotion of this incredible football game. He was on a high where he no longer cared about anybody.

He celebrated like a mad man, not caring how he looked. At some point, he even hugged his dad excitedly without knowing it.

The other Argentina fans also celebrated wildly.

This was where the video came to an end.

Sam felt a deep sense of nostalgia as he watched the video, but at the same time, his face turned a deep shade of pink as he blushed. 'Curse the bastard who took this video!' Tears streamed down his face.

He finally understood why everyone wanted him to go on social media.

At that moment, his phone rang again.

(Incoming call from Best Buddy...)

"Get lost!" Sam cursed.

When he took his best friend's call, Ian simply stayed, not saying anything for a few seconds and then he burst out laughing like a mad man.

"Get lost!" Sam truly felt like crying, he cut the call.

Thinking for a few seconds, Sam picked up his phone and dialed Kayla's number again, calling her to vent and unleash his grievance.

But as soon as she picked his call, Kayla also burst out laughing.

"Even you too?"

She laughed still, wheezing uncontrollably. "Sam, you just have to see the look on my face right now. My tummy is paining me God!" She laughed loudly.

"Stop...!" Sam complained grievously.

"Pass! Pass the ball! Pass the f*cking ball!" Kayla mimicked him, laughing in between.

"..." Sam felt like crying.

In the end, Kayla took Sam deeper, taking him to the comment section of this video on YouTube where Sam saw comments that cracked his ribs.

>Comments:<

{I-am-Ronaldinho: Lmao, I always said that every great football player is first a big fan of the sport. Just look at Sam, the guy was even more of a maniac than I am, I love him even more now- emote laughing emoji}

{Zidane-meatrider: Lol, Sam wins the award for the best reaction to that goal. But come on man- emote crying-laughing emoji, Sam looked so wretched and overweight there. Man, I can't believe that's him, how did he come from that to becoming this?- emote laughing emoji}

{I-smoke-smoke: Man, this video takes me back, so many fond memories are swirling through my head now. I can relate so much with Sam man, that night, this was exactly how I and my brothers reacted to the goal, peak night y'all}

{Fake-I-show-speed: Sam is lowkey just like us, a crazy football fan lol}

{Fulham-till-I-die: That's our superstar! Zinedine Sam!}

{Trenches-is-where-I-come-from: See that shirt pull, and that shirt waving?- emote laughing emoji, That's the pure Nigerian footballing spirit, Sam is Nigerian ghetto-bred through and through, now I believe}

{Trenches-is-where-I-come-from: To the Coach of the Nigerian national team, I hope you're seeing this, you better select Sam and play him in our next international game. The boy is too valuable and likeable to leave behind.}

{Manchester-United-till-I-die: Who else does Sam's celebration remind of Ryan Gigg's legendary solo goal against Arsenal in the FA Cup?}

{Flying-Emirates-is-my-home replied to Manchester-United-till-I-die: No one, you're the only one who's reminded of that}

{Fish-in-the-sea replied to Flying-Emirates-is-my-home: emote laughing emoji; emote laughing emoji; emote laughing emoji}

{Manchester-United-till-I-die replied to Flying-Emirates-is-my-home: Lol, salty Arsenal fan}

{Flying-Emirates-is-my-home replied to Manchester-United-till-I-die: Lol, delusional Manchester United fan, I don't talk with Europa league club fans}

{Manchester-United-till-I-die replied to Flying-Emirates-is-my-home: Hahaha, where is your champions league trophy?}

{Flying-Emirates-is-my-home replied to Manchester-United-till-I-die: At least I'm not 14th in the premier league table lol}

{Manchester-United-till-I-die replied to Flying-Emirates-is-my-home: Hehe, forever 1st runner ups, the immortal league bottlers}

{Fish-in-the-sea replied to Manchester-United-till-I-die: emote laughing-crying emoji; Emotional damage! I'm dying in laughter lmao- emote laughing emoji}

Reading through the comment section, before Sam knew it, there was a big smile on his face as he read.

"Hehe," he chuckled.

Chapter 203 Back-to-back challenge

After Sam's video back from late 2022 went viral, his popularity grew even more as a lot of more football fans knew about him.

He was now so popular that even non-football fans now knew about him.

And this popularity translated in all his social media pages as within just a few days after the Arsenal game, they surged, almost tripling in followership.

And it was not just his social media pages either, compared to late last season or even early in this season, his transfermarkt value already experienced a big change after the string of performances that he was putting out this season, dragging Fulham to the top of the premier league table.

(Instagram – Samuel Moses)

(15M+ followers)

(22 posts)

...

(Facebook- Samuel Moses)

(32M+ followers)

...

(YouTube- Samuel Moses)

(5M+ subscribers)

...

(Transfermarkt!)

(Name: Samuel Moses)

(England- Premier league)

(Date of birth/Age: August 6th, 2005)

(Citizenship: Nigeria)

(Height: 1,86 m)

(Position: Attacking Midfielder)

(Current International: Nigeria)

(Market Value: 55 million Euros)

Compared to the last time that Sam checked, his transfermarkt value already almost doubled!

This was crazy growth when it was not even half a season yet.

The biggest growth though was undoubtedly in his social media accounts, and it was mostly expedited by the boon of his viral video, and also because he had the best social media manager in the world in Kayla Banks.

His girlfriend became his social media manager some time ago.

Since then, in all the major social media platforms where Sam was barely active, his stock started rising as he got more and more followers.

Sam never had a YouTube account before but after taking over as his manager, Kayla did the job for him, creating a YouTube account on his behalf.

And within that short time, to get up to 5M+ subscribers already was crazy!

After every game that Fulham played, Kayla never failed to post, engaging his fans to grow his accounts. And it was even more effective since Sam never failed to perform in every single game that he played in.

It was like the concept of fatigue never worked against him.

One of the biggest arguments against this high-flying Fulham side was that once the season starts ramping up, and the games started coming thick and fast, they would be hit by exhaustion which will be their true reality check.

In reality, even Fulham fans were realistic, scared of the impact that fatigue would have on their team as the season progressed.

Fatigue did start hitting already, but the impact was nowhere as much as they expected, this was because of the overall effort put by the players into training.

Since Sam's arrival to the club, Fulham FC already changed fundamentally as a club. It was a club that now had high standards of discipline.

With Coach Marco Silva not hesitating to place Sam on a pedestal to his other players, making them look up to him, this coach watched as the spirit in his team was transmuted from complacency to that of mentality monsters.

None of the veterans in Fulham were fine with losing so consistently to the young Nigerian midfielder, nor the young players in the club either.

Watching Sam train so hard despite being so good already, putting his 110% in training every time, the rest were all forced to do the same.

This was why this season, the effect fatigue had on the Fulham players was so minimal, and this also translated to injuries.

Since the season started, no main Fulham player has succumbed to injury yet because their consistency in training kept their body at the perfect level always.

And since they were now even going as far as rationing their diet, the ones that could, the Fulham squad was in its best physical shape in decades.

And an ecstatic Coach Marco Silva was the one reaping the rewards as he watched himself slowly become a legend, leading his club to the top of the English premier league table. The pressure was much but they were surviving.

And it was not over yet, not nearly.

After the grueling challenge of Arsenal at Craven Cottage on 8th December, Fulham's next engagement was still in the premier league and this time, it was an even more daunting challenge.

This time, Sam and his teammates were traveling to Anfield to face Liverpool, their biggest rivals at the top of the table.

It was going to be another top of the table clash.

And in terms of difficulty, this could not compare to the game against Arsenal at all since they played at home in Craven Cottage. This time, the Fulham players would be traveling to one of the most difficult stadiums in the world.

Having experienced first-hand the sheer atmosphere that could be created in that stadium last season, Sam knew exactly the type of challenge that his team was about to face.

'This is what will truly define our season'.

'The decider that'll tell if we're just pretenders or true challengers!'

As for what Sam wanted? 'I will prove that we are true challengers!'

The build-up to this game was brutal as not only did the media fan the flames, putting the pressure on the Fulham players, Liverpool players also went to the media, making comments that added even more drama to this game.

Liverpool and Fulham had never been rivals but due to the comments and atmosphere leading to the game, it felt like El Clasico.

And despite the imperious form that Fulham had been in lately, the odds and comments from neutral fans online still went against them.

To most football fans around the world, Fulham's run of form was still nothing but a fluke, the true Fulham would be exposed soon enough.

And what better place to expose them than Anfield, the killer of enemy dreams?

A fan even said that if Fulham won, he would cut his manhood as proof of his conviction, causing a stir online and adding even more spice to this game.

With all these going on, time moved and very shortly, it was D-day.

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 16 of 38:)

(Liverpool – Fulham)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

Chapter 204 Playing with 10 men; defiant Liverpool

11 minutes, 1-0...

17 minutes, red card...

Everything happened so fast, it felt like a dream to the Liverpool fans, or more like a nightmare. In 17 forgettable minutes to the fans in red, all the plans and hopes that they had for this game came crashing down in oblivion.

The context of this game changed completely.

Anfield became as quiet as a mouse.

The home fans already made all the noise that they could, protesting the referee's decision but the man refused to budge to the whims of the home fans, he stuck with his earlier decision.

And since VAR didn't stop him, his decision stood.

The Liverpool fans in Anfield watched in disbelief as a dejected Andrew Robertson trudged off the field with drooped shoulders.

In the build up to this game, Liverpool fans approached the game with the superior mentality, adamant in teaching the pretend table toppers a lesson in football but 17 minutes into this game and they were tongue-tied.

Pereira's goal so early in the game already rattled their nerves, and now this red card made them lose their composure completely.

While Liverpool reeled in disbelief, Fulham thrived as they were suddenly doused with confidence. Fulham was on course to a famous victory in Anfield.

For their opponents, for the first time in a long time, Liverpool fans felt trepidations at Anfield, a rarity.

But this was not a situation that was entirely new to them.

This was not a situation that they had not encountered before. Afterall, they were trailing behind by just 1 goal and with a handicap.

Could this handicap compare to trailing 3 goals down against a strong FC Barcelona team led by a prime Lionel Messi in 2019 who was plundering all types of goals for fun?

The Liverpool fans gave their reply to this question with their next action.

BOOM!

Loud chants and cheers blasted around this stadium.

At this moment, the home fans already adopted the us against the world mentality, mostly due to the referee's decision.

Their already loud voice since the beginning of this game truly went through the roof this time, turning Anfield into a literal microphone to channel their loud voices as the referee got prepared to blow his whistle to restart play.

And when the whistle eventually sounded, the game continued, but in an entirely different vein.

FWEEEEEE!

A lot of people expected Arne Slot to make a defensive change after Andrew Robertson's red card but this coach didn't, rather giving his players the go ahead to take the game to their opponents.

And the Liverpool fans responded to their coach's instructions with gusto.

Liverpool was no weak team; it was a strong premier league team comprised of talented young lads and centurion veterans of countless battles on the pitch from the Egyptian King, Mohamed Salah to Trent Alexander-Arnold, to Virgil Van Dijk.

They were a well-equipped weapon of mass destruction.

Besides, Anfield was the best advantage that they could ever hope for, a stadium where they were famous for historically creating miracles.

It didn't matter that they were trailing 1 goal behind their opponents, it didn't matter that they were playing with 10 men, all they wanted was to equalize this game and eventually win it and they would do everything possible in their power to achieve that objective.

If it was their will to win, who could stop them?

After the game restarted, Liverpool took it slow at first, teasing their way back into the game as they got used to running around with one man less than their opponents.

It was hard, but nothing too hard for this elite team to do.

After a few minutes of acclimatizing to their handicap, their warm up was complete as the Merseysiders ramped up the pressure, taking the game to their opponents in aggressive fashion.

The game changed immediately, turning into a ferocious pound for pound battle between 2 heavyweight title challengers.

While Sam led the Fulham charge, Liverpool's Egyptian King led their charge.

Bam!

A dozen minutes after the red card, in the 29th minute of this game, Liverpool came close to leveling the game as Luis Diaz's shot grazed the post, going out for a goal kick.

It was a goal kick but the Liverpool fans roared their players on like they just scored a goal; their passion was in full display.

The atmosphere in Anfield now was like a battlefield.

Despite Liverpool's seemingly unstoppable drive and relentless energy though, in the end, the reality was that they were playing with less men than their opponents and Fulham was not going to let that advantage slide easily, not with the black mamba himself playing for them.

The home fans may be doing their best to create a hostile environment for them, but the Fulham players did not lose their ability to play football so easily.

They followed the mamba spirit exuding from their talisman, Samuel Moses.

The S factor did not really work this game as the energetic Liverpool players locked Sam and Smith out through their sheer work rate, preventing them from connecting to devastating effect the way that they normally did but this did not stop Sam from doing ridiculous things on this pitch.

Afterall, before the S factor became a thing, he was used to creating miracles on his own on a football pitch.

The more Liverpool played, suffocating this game, the more Sam's competitive spirit grew and the closer he got to the state of flow.

When Liverpool threatened to score, Sam was the tip of Fulham's spear that retaliated, constantly taking the battle to their opponents with his mazy runs, stunning physicality, and incredible technique.

From the halfway line up, Sam was a threat wherever he got the ball.

With a defender gone, the Liverpool defense was more open for him to play his penetrative through passes.

Virgil Van Dijk's impressive defensive display this game was the only reason why Sam's name was not yet on the scoresheet.

Last time out, it was the Frenchman, William Saliba against Arsenal and now, the Netherlands International was hoping to do the same thing against the electric Sam. For now, and maybe till the end of this game, it was working.

In the end, despite an incredible first half, after those early shocking proceedings, this game became all bark and no bite.

The first half ended with Fulham still leading 0-1 in Anfield.

During half-time, a slightly uneasy Coach Marco Silva simply told his players to calm down, to not fall into Liverpool's intensity trap.

This coach was uneasy simply because this was Anfield.

And just like he predicted, Liverpool came out for the second half with even more intensity, Mohamed Salah especially playing like a man possessed.

The second half barely started when the complexion of the game changed.

"The ball goes to Salah, and he loops it over the Fulham defense".

"Who will get on the end of this one? And ohhhh, Luis Diaz!!!"

"Goal, finally!"

Instantly, like a dynamite, Anfield exploded as the ecstatic Liverpool fans roared at the top of their lungs.

"And all of a sudden, Liverpool are back in the game!"

"What a pass, what a header!"

Just 2 minutes into the second half, in the 47th minute of this game, Liverpool finally got their equalizer.

Chapter 205 Remember the name, Samuel Moses

In the blink of an eye, Fulham's lead was canceled.

Everything happened so fast, the second half just barely started when in a moment of individual brilliance from the Egyptian King, Liverpool were back in the game and Mohamed Salah got another assist for his troubles this season, increasing his goal contribution tally even more.

But that goal was not the end of this game, rather, it was just the beginning.

47 minutes in, 1-1...

FWEEEE!

The referee blew the whistle for the restart and like expected, that goal became the prelude to even more drama and action in this game.

Anfield remained extremely loud, cheering their team on as even with one man down, Liverpool played fearlessly with skill and courage.

While they played, they were also wary of Fulham's threat, fully conscious of the fact that they were playing with just ten men but perhaps, they were just not wary enough.

After Luis Diaz's goal, it was still an end-to-end game but the momentum was now slightly on Liverpool's side as X Factor seemed to start favoring them this game.

But with Alisson Becker and Leno both being in terrific form, the scoreline remained 1-1 as both goalkeepers pulled off sensational saves, keeping their respective teams in the game till the later stages of this game and that was where the true drama began.

In this game, close your eyes for a moment and you would miss an important highlight or moment leading up to more drama.

The Liverpool and away Fulham fans had their eye peeled open, paying keen attention as they finally bore witness to another goal in this game.

This time, it came in the 76th minute.

"Now Iwobi..., sliding it through for Robinson again, and he's tucked it back and ohh, it's innnn!"

"Fulham are back ahead, and it's Muniz with the goal!"

Having replaced Raul Jimenez at some point this game already, Muniz got on the end of the incredible team move, scoring Fulham's second goal of this game and giving his team the lead again in Anfield.

This time, Alex Iwobi and Robinson's imprint were all over the goal as it was the former's delicious pass and the latter's inside run that resulted in the goal.

76 minutes, Liverpool trailed again, this time 1-2...

There was less than twenty minutes to the end of this game but clearly a certain fanbase didn't give up on the game yet.

Boos rang around Anfield as they jeered their opponents. Clearly, they were defiant, having no intentions of giving up yet as after the referee's whistle, they continued cheering their team on.

Just 10 minutes later, the status quo changed, again.

Liverpool was just relentless.

Again, another moment of individual brilliance opened up this game, this time orchestrated and finished by Liverpool.

Having just returned from a lengthy injury layoff, it was Diogo Jota, the Portuguese International who added the finishing touch for Liverpool this time.

"It's Jota..., twisting, turning, scoring!"

"Returning with a bang!"

The Portuguese International brought this game back level exactly ten minutes after Fulham scored their goal to go 1-2 ahead.

Charging towards the corner flag, Diogo Jota jumped and pumped a fist in celebration even as the commentator kept on going lyrical about his goal.

In the 86th minute of this game, 2-2...

Surely, with less than 4 minutes to go till fulltime, this game was going to end in a draw, this was what the regular football fan would think.

But players were not regular, and definitely not a certain Fulham player called Sam.

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

The mantra was back.

The mamba spirit was already rearing its head again.

It was not just Sam, clearly, the Liverpool players also wanted to go all the way and get the winner. It was a clash of convictions and determination now.

For most of this game, Sam played good but not yet at his scintillating best as the talented Liverpool midfield and defense did a good job in curbing his impact on the game, till now.

Now, with the knowledge that his club actually needed him did Sam finally take the last step, entering the zone state.

Bzzz!

In Sam's perception, everything about this game changed.

Sam became Liverpool's nightmare in the later stages of this game.

After Diogo Jota equalized, Liverpool was chasing the winner till exactly the 90th minute of this game when Sam pulled a trick out of his magic box full of tricks, stunning Anfield and all its inhabitants.

Lukic won back the ball, passing to Sam and then from deep, he went on a marauding run, cutting through the Liverpool half like a formless Wraith.

In the zone already, using feints, subtle shifts and shuffles of the ball, and delicately timed la croquetas, Sam penetrated through the Liverpool players like they were not there till he met a roadblock in Virgil Van Dijk.

Thud!

Not willing to take the risk, Sam stopped in his tracks but without pause, he quickly shifted the ball to his right side, and then...

POW!

With his dominant right foot, Sam unleashed a thunderous piledriver shot towards goal.

Virgil Van Dijk tried to block the shot but he didn't react on time as the ball went past him, flying towards goal like an unstoppable rocket.

Alisson went on a full stretch dive, his hand grazing the ball but it was not enough to stop it as it forced its way into the bottom left corner.

"Come on!" Sam jumped right there on the field, in front of Virgil Van Dijk, veins popping, pupils dilated in ecstasy as he screamed at the top of his lungs.

"What... a... goal!" The commentator raved.

"My God, I'm speechless, this is just Sam at this point".

"This is Sam-class! The boy is in an entire stratosphere of his own!"

"Having been quiet for some time, he's suddenly surged to life when his team needs him the most!"

"He always shows up when Fulham needs him, he is their superhero!"

"Surely, that's the end of the game, Liverpool are done".

But no, Sam was not satisfied just yet.

Having borne witness as Liverpool clawed their way from behind twice in this game already despite being a man down, he was not satisfied with a 1 goal lead, and this was why he ditched even more misery to the Liverpool players, and in extension to their fans all around the world.

In the 90th plus 5 minutes, Sam doubled his goal tally for this game, scoring his second goal of this game and it was an absolute beauty.

Having been locked out for much of this game but with space all of a sudden to operate due to Liverpool's urgent need for another equalizing goal, Emile Smith Rowe got all the time he needed to float a dangerous pass into the box.

At first, it seemed like the pass was aimed towards Muniz who lurked in the box but no, it was aimed at the player whose late run just brought him into the box as the ball descended.

The ball was too high for Sam though and having read the danger, Virgil Van Dijk already reacted, charging towards his position to clear the ball.

Sam had no time to control this ball due to the impending arrival of the imposing Netherlands International, and so, he simply decided not to control it.

Thud!

Kicking the ground, Sam leaped and then twisting his body in mid-air, he swung his right leg with venom at the ball in the air, executing an incredible scissor kick that packed a lot of punch with it.

BAM!

Alisson was rooted to the spot; he didn't even move.

The ball was hit with so much power that it almost tore the net apart.

Anfield was once again silent, while the away fan section exploded soon after even as a mind blown commentator screamed shrilly at the top of his voice.

"Zinedine Sam!"

"Zinedine Sam!"

"Zinedine Sam!"

"This boy is just too good to be true!"

"Remember the name, Samuel Moses!"

Fulham won the game 2-4 after an unforgettable battle on the pitch.

Chapter 206 Title favorites?

(Premier league results:)

(Matchday 16 of 38:)

(Arsenal 0-0 Everton)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

...

(Wolves 1-2 Ipswich Town)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

...

(Newcastle 4-0 Leicester City)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

...

(Liverpool 2-4 Fulham)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

...

(Nottm Forest 2-1 Aston Villa)

(Date: 14th December, 2024)

...

(Brighton 1-3 Crystal Palace)

(Date: 15th December, 2024)

...

(Man City 1-2 Man United)

(Date: 15th December, 2024)

...

(Southampton 0-5 Tottenham)

(Date: 15th December, 2024)

...

(Chelsea 2-1 Brentford)

(Date: 15th December, 2024)

...

(Bournemouth 1-1 West Ham)

(Date: 16th December, 2024)

(Updated premier league table standings:)

(1. Fulham GP: 16/ W:13/ D:2/ L:1/ Pts: 42)

(2. Liverpool GP: 15/ W:11/ D:2/ L:2/ Pts: 36)

(3. Chelsea GP: 16/ W:10/ D:4/ L:2/ Pts: 34)

(4. Arsenal GP: 16/ W:8/ D:6/ L:2/ Pts: 30)

(5. Nottm Forest GP: 16/ W:8/ D:4/ L:4/ Pts: 28)

(6. Man City GP: 16/ W:7/ D:4/ L:5/ Pts: 25)

(7. Bournemouth GP: 16/ W:7/ D:4/ L:5/ Pts: 25)

(8. Brighton GP: 16/ W:6/ D:6/ L:4/ Pts: 24)

(9. Aston Villa GP: 16/ W:7/ D:3/ L:7/ Pts: 24)

(10. Brentford GP: 16/ W:7/ D:2/ L:7/ Pts: 23)

(11. Newcastle GP: 16/ W:6/ D:5/ L:5/ Pts: 23)

(12. Tottenham GP: 16/ W:7/ D:1/ L:8/ Pts: 22)

(13. West Ham GP: 16/ W:5/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 19)

(14. Man United GP: 16/ W:5/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 19)

(15. Crystal Palace GP: 16/ W:3/ D:7/ L:6/ Pts: 16)

(16. Leicester GP: 16/ W:3/ D:5/ L:8/ Pts: 14)

(17. Everton GP: 15/ W:3/ D:5/ L:7/ Pts: 14)

(18. Ipswich Town GP: 16/ W:2/ D:6/ L:8/ Pts: 12)

(19. Wolves GP: 16/ W:1/ D:3/ L:12/ Pts: 6)

(20. Southampton GP: 16/ W:1/ D:1/ L:12/ Pts: 4)

After 16 games of the 2024/2025 premier league season, this was how the premier league table looked.

Not only was Fulham still sitting at the top of the premier league table, but now, they were 6 points clear at the top!

It was safe to say that the results of matchday 16 sent the football landscape reeling in shock, it felt like a change of guard, a season of change.

The highlight of the matchday was Fulham's incredible top of the table clash against Liverpool. In truth, realistic Fulham fans never thought their team could win against Liverpool, that was how high the odds were against Fulham.

No neutral premier league fan actually expected them to draw the game either, that was Anfield!

And yet, not only did Fulham not draw, they actually won in Anfield.

To the world of football, this was big news.

And it was not the only big news that came out of matchday 16, another noteworthy news was the result of the Manchester derby.

Manchester United vs Manchester City is an old derby game with a lot of history, from Rooney's overhead kick stunner, to Aguero's last minute goal stealing the premier league title from their local rivals, this derby was expressed in a lot of different ways and in matchday 16, this derby created more history.

Manchester City was playing bad, enduring an extended rough patch of form but still, many thought of them as the favorites going into the first Manchester derby of the season.

Afterall, the game was played at the Etihad.

Till the 88th minute of the game, Manchester City seemed in cruise control till Bruno Fernandes' penalty kick in the 88th minute drew them level, and then Amad Diallo's stunning goal in stoppage time painted Manchester red.

Manchester United fans across the world went bonkers in celebration, it was a landmark moment in the Ruben Amorim era for the reds.

Despite the fact that they still sat in 14th position in the league, Manchester United fans did not care as they celebrated like they already won the league.

Another highlight of matchday 16 was Tottenham's 0-5 hammering of Southampton. All 5 goals came in the first half, making it a truly scintillating half.

Arsenal's draw against Everton also raised a lot of eyebrows since technically, they were still in the title race but it didn't draw nearly as much attention as the already aforementioned matches.

And this attention was not just on social media, popular TV news and shows broadcasted the result of the matchday, including a familiar TV show.

...

"Max, tell me your verdict of matchday 16 of the premier league".

The premier league pundit grinned after listening to the host's words, and then suddenly jumping from his chair, he screamed. "Zinedine Sam!"

"Zinedine Sam!"

"Zinedine Sam!"

"Maxxxx...!" The host complained laughingly.

The pundit laughed. "There you have it Charles, that is the highlight of matchday 16 of the premier league for me, Samuel Moses is the highlight".

The host recovered his composure and asked. "Not the Manchester derby?"

"Nah, Sam is".

"Man, that was Liverpool, and that was Anfield, yet both were tamed by the presence of just that 1 young Nigerian midfielder".

"Last time, I told you that Sam's influence is on the same level of Mohamed Salah and Cole Palmer, right?"

"I'm taking that back," he grinned. "Right now, Sam is out and out the best player in the English premier league!"

"Woah, that is a lot of compliment coming from you".

"Yes, he deserves it, he more than deserves the title!"

"Sam is just bonkers man! It's not just one game, it's not just against specific clubs, he does it against everybody, even the so-called big 6 clubs".

"He's powerful, he's fearless, and endlessly skillful, the boy is a menace for any team that faces him on the pitch!"

"I would say the perfect word to describe him is to call him a gladiator".

"Yes, that is what Sam is, a gladiator".

"No matter who you are, no matter what reputation you have, play against Sam and he'll take you to deep waters and drown you there!"

"Right now, there's no stopping him, no way to stop him!"

"Some say he's too young, others say he's playing for a small team but take it from me, he's balon d'or level already!"

"Woah! You serious?"

"Yes, I am!"

"Wow Max, honestly, I've never seen you this passionate about any club or any one player before. This is surprising".

"So, would you say Fulham are now favorites to win the league title?"

"Definitely!"

Well, across the world, the name, Samuel Moses was truly being remembered as Sam went viral again across social media.

Chapter 207 Feeling on top of the world

After the game against Liverpool, Sam felt on top of the world for various different reasons.

First was the sheer boasting factor that was birth from beating Liverpool in Anfield courtesy of his game-winning goals and man of the match display.

Second was going 6 points clear at the top of the premier league table. Despite the fact that Liverpool had a game in hand, this was still an impressive feat from a Fulham perspective.

After the game, an emotional Coach Marco Silva could not hold himself as on the way back on their team bus, this coach went bonkers, popping champagne and drenching his players in it right there in the team bus.

In Fulham, it was like a festival day.

The celebrations were everywhere as Fulham fans flooded the streets in the thousands, celebrating their victory against Liverpool like they already won the league. It was the perfect statement victory against their doubters.

At the moment, Fulham was the team on top of the premier league.

Other factors affected their form. Afterall, compared to them, while playing in the league, Liverpool and other big teams also played grueling games in the revamped UEFA champions league.

But to Fulham, none of that mattered. In the grand scheme of things, it was just excuses, they secured their spot at the top through sweat and blood.

This was why collectively; they felt on top of the world.

But experience taught them not to get too lost in the moment though. Afterall, it was just one win, the premier league was far from being over.

Like a man once famously said, a league season is a marathon, not a sprint.

If Fulham are to go all the way and win the league, they must approach the season like a marathon, taking it one step at a time and staying disciplined to ensure that they were always in their best state to face challenges.

Personally, for Sam, another reason why he felt on top of the world was because after his 1 assist and 2 goals against Liverpool, he finally took his tally for the season to 17 goals and 13 assists in just 19 games!

It was a milestone that was special to him because with that, he finally crossed 30 goal contributions for the 2024/2025 season.

And it was not even halfway across the premier league season yet!

~----~

[You have completed Season Quest 5: 30 goal contributions!]

[Mission Requirement: Register at least 30 goal contributions in the 2024/2025 professional football season!]

[You have been rewarded with a legendary inheritance!]

...

Early in the season after playing their first game against Manchester United, Sam finally got a notification informing him of new season system quests.

He got 5 new season system quests and of them all, only season quest 5 did not require him playing all the way to the end of the season before he saw results.

Despite this though, he never expected to register 30 goal contributions already before even the halfway point of the premier league season.

In that aspect, he exceeded his own expectations.

'Speaking with Austin was the magic dealer. It was truly a good decision to decide to create a great bond with my teammates here in Fulham'.

'Becoming close friends with Emile Smith Rowe has to be my best decision of this new season'.

'Without him, I wouldn't have met this milestone so fast'.

Sam trusted in his ability. At some point, he knew that he would eventually register 30 goal contributions, it was just the speed that stunned him and clearly, he was not the only one that was stunned by it.

While he was thinking excitedly about the new legendary inheritance that he would get from his system, the system lit up with more notifications.

...

[You have exceeded the expectations of the Ultimate Football System by registering 30 goal contributions before the halfway point of the season!]

[You have completed hidden system mission!]

[Congratulations! Your reward shall be upgraded!]

[Commencing upgrade..., please wait...]

[Upgrade completed!]

[You have been rewarded with a legendary inheritance!]

...

This time, the process of the system unveiling his reward was even more mysterious than before.

This time, it unveiled it like he was getting an ability card.

The system screen briefly went black only for an unfamiliar black card with gold rims to appear, hovering at the center of the screen.

The next moment, the card cracked to the sound of cheers even as celebratory ribbons were shot around the black and gold card.

After the card cracked, a vivid extremely life-like depiction of a famous football player appeared before Sam, looking straight at him.

"...!" Sam felt breathless.

The face looking at him was a face that Sam would never forget even if he was in his deathbed. This football player was that legendary, and famous.

This player wore a familiar white jersey with gold strips at its corners. He had gold-dyed noodle hair, and at the moment, he was holding a football on his right hand, a confident gleam in his eyes.

"It's Cristiano Ronaldo!" Sam screamed in his hotel room.

And then, it was unveiled.

...

[You have been rewarded with a Legendary Inheritance!]

[You have been rewarded with the advanced mastery of the Legendary Football Skill: Power Shot!]

[NOTE:]

>You have inherited the legendary inheritance of one of the greatest legends in the history of football, the great Portuguese, Manchester United, and Real Madrid legend, Cristiano Ronaldo<

>Cristiano Ronaldo is a legend of the game who made the Power Shot skill his trademark during his legendary stints in Manchester United and Real Madrid<

>CR7's trademark was cutting in from the left, and unleashing thunderous shots that left the goalkeeper no chance<

>You've awakened the advanced mastery of the Power Shot skill. To get to the legendary mastery level through your inheritance, all you have to do is train and get better, the other requirements have already been fulfilled by your inheritance<

...

[You have gained the football Title: Legs of Steel!]

...

[Your shooting attribute has increased by +5!]

[Your overall player rating has increased by +1!]

Chapter 208 [Bonus Chapter] CR7's heir

In the world of football, fans tend to hype new players up, dubbing them the new Messi, the new Ronaldo, or even attributing them to nations like the Turkish Messi. But all of them were fake, till now.

In his room, Sam got an upgrade that would make any offensive football player in the world incredibly envious, he became Cristiano Ronaldo's heir!

Sam was an avid Lionel Messi fan but who cared?

Which sane football player aiming for the top of the footballing world would pass up on an opportunity to inherit a legendary skill from Lionel Messi's rival?

Sam loved Lionel Messi, but he respected Cristiano Ronaldo.

At the peak of his powers, Lionel Messi was above every other footballer at such a stratosphere that it took a special kind of player to compete with him at this peak, and that special kind of player was Cristiano Ronaldo.

Like Messi himself once put it during a rating a world-class players, it was him and Ronaldo, then everyone else.

That was how high they were above everybody.

Against Messi's sheer talent and brilliance, the Portuguese legend became the first black mamba of football before Sam, challenging the legendary Argentine head-to-head for almost 2 decades through his sheer hard work.

Sam would be a fool not to respect him.

And now, he just became CR7's heir.

After the series of notifications that Sam got after the Liverpool game, this was how Sam's system player status now looked like.

~----~

[Player status!]

Host: Samuel Moses

Current Career Status: Premier League player, EFL Cup reigning champion

Talent Rating: A+

Player Position: Attacking Midfield

Player Attributes:

*Pace: 81

*Shot: 85

*Pass: 80

*Dribbling: 78

*Defending: 38

*Physicality: 76

*Stamina: 84

Overall Rating: 83

...

[Owned Football Skills:]

[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<

[Active skills:]

[Basic mastery level: Body feint; step overs; roulette; knuckle shot; overhead kick; rainbow flick; trivela shot, basic penalty technique, basic freekick technique]

[Intermediate mastery level: Elastico; Cruyff turn; La croqueta]

[Advanced mastery level: Spatial awareness; Power shot]

...

[Legendary Inheritance: Elastico]

[Legendary Inheritance: Spatial Awareness]

[Legendary Inheritance: Power Shot]

...

[Ability cards:]

>Shoot it like Lewy<

[Card uses remaining: 2]

>Thread it like KDB<

[Card uses remaining: 2]

>Bend it like Beckham<

[Card uses remaining: 2]

...

[Title: Space Interpreter!]

[Title: Legs of Steel!]

[System Remark: An elite young talent playing in one of the best leagues in the world!]

~----~

Looking through his player status, Sam could not help but feel that it was truly unfair to other players. 'It's just unfair'.

'While others have to work their whole life for it, here I am, in my room, chilling after a game and leveling up just like that'.

With the way he was before, Sam was already a menace in the premier league, terrorizing every opponent that he met but with now all of a sudden as CR7's heir, his threat increased to a whole other level.

Sam's shooting was already elite before now and though he didn't try it out yet, Sam believed that his shooting was now at a truly demonic level.

Looking at his ceiling with a smile gently nursing his features, he thought. 'Is this how it feels to be a genius?'

'Something that others struggle for, you get it effortlessly, the only facet being that I'm someone who became a genius through a system'.

Beating Liverpool in Anfield already made this day one of the best days of Sam's life and career, becoming CR7's heir increased his joy even more, but little did Sam know that his joy was yet to peak.

The electronic ringing sound of his house reverberated the next moment.

Immediately, Sam looked at the time.

[10:32pm]

'Who is visiting me by this time?' He thought, perplexed. 'Is it Smith Rowe? Or Ian? Did something happen?'

To be on the safe side security-wise though, Sam decided to check his CCTV system first and that was when his jaws dropped in shock.

"...!"

The next moment, in a scramble, he quickly put on his slippers before charging towards the door and opening it.

As soon as she opened it, a familiar figure jumped into his arms.

"Congratulations babe!" Kayla hugged him tightly. "I watched today's game, haha, you were terrific!"

Sam had so many questions in his mind, like, 'what are you doing here? What about school? How did you suddenly come to England?'

Despite his many questions though, he shelved all of them aside simply because it felt incredibly good to meet his girlfriend again.

Together, they went inside as Kayla finally explained her impromptu visit.

She guessed that he would be in a good mood after his masterpiece performance in beating Liverpool, and since she was already a bit bored of school, she made the impromptu decision to embark on the trip and surprise him to celebrate today's victory physically with him.

And here she was.

Sam did not care about the details though; all he cared about was that his girlfriend was here with him. He was incredibly happy.

That night, Kayla decided to reward him with food as she went into the kitchen to make a new Nigerian food recipe that she learned.

It was already far past Sam's bedtime but for his girlfriend, he was ready to indulge for just one night.

That night, Sam ate with his girlfriend, enjoying her delicious food and having a nice time together.

And later into the night, they got intimate as Sam had a second intimate encounter with his girlfriend.

It was a feeling that he was never going to get bored of.

Truly, today ranked extremely highly in the list of the best days of his life.

By the time that Sam finally slept with his girlfriend in his arms, he felt like a fulfilled man who was successful and had achieved it all.

He felt on top of the world.

Chapter 209 [Bonus Chapter] Matchday 17

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 17 of 38:)

(Aston Villa – Man City)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(West Ham – Brighton)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Ipswich Town – Newcastle)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Brentford – Nottm Forest)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Crystal Palace – Arsenal)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Everton – Chelsea)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Man United – Bournemouth)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Fulham – Southampton)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Leicester City – Wolves)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Tottenham – Liverpool)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

Fulham's game against Liverpool was not the end of the world and conscious of that, under their coach's tutelage, the Fulham players kept on pushing, giving their all in training.

After that Fulham game, the players realized something.

They didn't really pay attention to it before now but after that Liverpool game, when they did, they discovered that the stock of every single one of them that played for Fulham game-in game-out already increased considerably.

Their valuation in transfermarkt already experienced a massive increase and this did even more in bolstering the confidence of these players.

There was this feeling of inferiority complex among mid-table teams before, most especially when they're facing teams that were superior on paper.

But now, after the victory against Liverpool, Fulham truly shed their identity as a mid-table team this season and their mentality changed with it.

Even in training, they now played like players playing for a big club, there was no margin for error in their game anymore.

The only acceptable outcome from them in games was perfection if they truly wanted to go all the way and win the premier league trophy.

After the Liverpool game, they had 18 days of rest to prepare for their next game and they did not waste it, continuing to give their all in training like upcoming stars who aimed to impress their coach.

They didn't care that their next opponent was going to be Southampton, the club currently in the worst form in the premier league.

They would prepare for it like any other game.

Like this, the days passed and in no time, D-day was here.

Like expected, both teams started with their strongest lineups.

For Fulham, Raul Jimenez once again led the line as the starting striker, while behind him was the trio of Harry Wilson who was returning from injury, Sam, and Emile Smith Rowe.

Behind the forwards was the duo of Lukic and Berge, while the 4-man defense comprised of Antonee Robinson, Cuenca, Diop, and Tete. Bernd Leno naturally started in between the posts for Fulham.

For Southampton, McCarthy started in between the posts. Walker-Peters, Harwood, Bednarek, and Manning started ahead of the goalkeeper, while the 3-man center midfield comprised of Aribio, Downes, and Fernandes.

Dibling started as the sole attacking midfielder, while ahead of him was the offensive duo of Armstrong and Sulemana.

They played in a 4-3-1-2 formation.

It was another Fulham home game played in Craven Cottage.

On paper, Fulham were poised to blow Southampton out of the water and as soon as the first whistle from the referee blew, Fulham did just that, coming out of their shell like an apex predator that smelled blood.

And in this game, with Alex Iwobi rested, the S factor partnership struck in all it's deadliness as within just 3 minutes, the first goal entered.

After a series of tiki taka passes to cut through the Southampton formation, Sam released the final pass back to Emile Smith Rowe who poked it in behind the defense for Raul Jimenez to run into one-on-one with the goalkeeper.

McCarthy, the Southampton goalkeeper charged out immediately to snuff out the danger but keeping his cool, Raul Jimenez calmly rounded the goalkeeper before poking into an empty net to score his team's first goal.

The crowd in Craven Cottage didn't roar as loud as they did at other times when their team scored, they simply sang their club songs, cheering on their players as they were feeling in a good football mood.

They knew that their team would win, just by how many goals.

After that first goal though, Southampton improved, matching Fulham's intensity. Even as their attack remained blunt against Fulham's defense, they were able to stay compact and defensively disciplined, keeping the rampant Fulham attackers at bay.

10 minutes, 1-0...

20 minutes, 1-0...

30 minutes, 1-0...

This game was seemingly about to dissolve into a boring affair where Fulham just attacked fruitlessly and Southampton defended, till a certain player decided to take matters into his own hands and entertain the home supporters.

Still feeling in the mood of his girlfriend having visited after the Liverpool game, culminating in one of the best days of his life, Sam's good mood translated into samba football on his part.

He didn't even go full throttle to flex his ability as CR7's heir in this game yet, he simply decided to enjoy his football.

And then, Sam did it, spraying passes left and right, cutting the Southampton defense down time and time again with his passes like some otherworldly Butcher that decided to ascend from the abyss to torment humans.

He was Southampton's ever-present nightmare and finally, the result came as in the 37th minute, Sam set up Emile Smith Rowe, slipping the ball in for him to rifle into the net, doubling Fulham's lead.

37 minutes, 2-0...

3 minutes later, Sam did it again, setting up Emile Smith Rowe again with a perfectly weighted lobbed pass in the Southampton 18-yard box for the in-form winger to poke into an empty net from close range.

40 minutes, 3-0...

Fulham was tearing Southampton apart.

But then, not satisfied yet, Sam did it again 5 minutes later, setting up Emile Smith Rowe for the third time this game.

This time, it was a simple pass outside the box, setting the English winger up to unleash a thunderous shot from outside the box.

McCarthy, the Southampton goalkeeper dived, touching the ball with his fingertips but it was not enough as the ball snuck past his grasp and into the net.

"Yessss!!!" Emile Smith Rowe celebrated exuberantly.

It was his first hattrick of the season, and it was also Sam's first hattrick of assists in his career.

45 minutes, 4-0...

Southampton were not only being torn apart; they were being humbled.

During half-time, Coach Marco Silva finally made a single change, taking off Sam and putting on Pereira to replace him.

Sam already had a perfect game.

Chapter 210 Matchday 18

Alex Iwobi never had to be introduced into the game.

After Sam and Smith's masterpiece in the first half, Coach Marco Silva had the luxury to heavily rotate his team in the second half, giving rest to a few important players of his squad in preparations for Fulham's next game.

With Sam out of the game, Fulham's threat in front of goal lessened considerably as Southampton finally started coming out of their box.

They tried to create a few chances for their forwards but none of them was concrete enough, the rugged Fulham defense kept every attacking opportunity that they created at bay.

In the end, even Emile Smith Rowe was taken off in the 65th minute of this game after one of the best games of his career.

Fulham was still winning 4-0.

In the 72nd minute, Fulham finally added the nail to the coffin as Raul Jimenez set Pereira up to slam in the 5th goal of this game, dooming Southampton to sure defeat and shutting off all non-existent hopes of a comeback.

By the 90th minute, the body language of the Southampton players made it seem like they could not wait to leave the pitch.

This was not just any defeat; it was a mutilation.

Emile Smith Rowe won another man of the match award for the season after contributing with 4 incredible goal contributions.

Later that evening, after the titanic clash between Tottenham and Liverpool, the premier league table was finally updated again after an exciting matchday.

(Premier league results:)

(Matchday 17 of 38:)

(Aston Villa 2-2 Man City)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(West Ham 1-2 Brighton)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Ipswich Town 1-4 Newcastle)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Brentford 1-1 Nottm Forest)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Crystal Palace 1-2 Arsenal)

(Date: 21st December, 2024)

...

(Everton 0-2 Chelsea)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Man United 2-1 Bournemouth)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Fulham 5-0 Southampton)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Leicester City 1-1 Wolves)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Tottenham 1-3 Liverpool)

(Date: 22nd December, 2024)

...

(Updated premier league table standings:)

(1. Fulham GP: 17/ W:14/ D:2/ L:1/ Pts: 45)

(2. Liverpool GP: 17/ W:11/ D:2/ L:2/ Pts: 39)

(3. Chelsea GP: 17/ W:11/ D:4/ L:2/ Pts: 37)

(4. Arsenal GP: 17/ W:9/ D:6/ L:2/ Pts: 33)

(5. Nottm Forest GP: 17/ W:8/ D:5/ L:4/ Pts: 29)

(6. Brighton GP: 17/ W:7/ D:6/ L:4/ Pts: 27)

(7. Man City GP: 17/ W:7/ D:5/ L:5/ Pts: 26)

(8. Newcastle GP: 17/ W:7/ D:5/ L:5/ Pts: 26)

(9. Aston Villa GP: 17/ W:7/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 25)

(10. Bournemouth GP: 17/ W:7/ D:4/ L:6/ Pts: 25)

(11. Brentford GP: 17/ W:7/ D:3/ L:7/ Pts: 24)

(12. Man United GP: 17/ W:6/ D:4/ L:7/ Pts: 22)

(13. Tottenham GP: 17/ W:7/ D:1/ L:9/ Pts: 22)

(14. West Ham GP: 17/ W:5/ D:4/ L:8/ Pts: 19)

(15. Crystal Palace GP: 17/ W:3/ D:7/ L:7/ Pts: 16)

(16. Leicester GP: 17/ W:3/ D:6/ L:8/ Pts: 15)

(17. Everton GP: 17/ W:3/ D:5/ L:8/ Pts: 14)

(18. Ipswich Town GP: 17/ W:2/ D:6/ L:9/ Pts: 12)

(19. Wolves GP: 17/ W:1/ D:4/ L:12/ Pts: 7)

(20. Southampton GP: 17/ W:1/ D:1/ L:13/ Pts: 4)

After 17 matchdays of the English premier league, this was how the premier league table looked. Fulham was still leading the line with 6 points.

This was no longer a shock to the premier league audience though, this time, the shock was that Manchester City, the reigning premier league champions finally dropped to 7th position in the league after their run of atrocious results.

Manchester City was truly going through a crisis, nothing seemed to be working for them at the moment.

On the pitch, under the eye test, Man City seemed to have regained their mojo and were playing well but the X factor was just not in their favor.

Fulham did not have time to worry about the form of the champions though, this was because their next game was a troubling one.

After clashing against almost all the top clubs in the English premier league and surviving this season already, they were now finally about to clash with the club that was rated as currently the most in-form team alongside them.

Chelsea was in imperious form, and now, these 2 teams were set to clash in a London derby that was going to send ripples through the premier league scene.

(Premier league:)

(Matchday 18 of 38:)

(Man City – Everton)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Newcastle – Aston Villa)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Nottm Forest – Tottenham)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Bournemouth – Crystal Palace)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Chelsea – Fulham)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Southampton – West Ham)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Wolves – Man United)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Liverpool – Leicester City)

(Date: 26th December, 2024)

...

(Brighton – Brentford)

(Date: 27th December, 2024)

...

(Arsenal – Ipswich Town)

(Date: 27th December, 2024)

Having quietly snuck to 3rd place in the premier league table while claiming that they were not in a title race, a resurgent Chelsea finally had a shot at the surprise package of this season, Fulham.

The buildup to this game proved to be even more explosive than the build up to Liverpool vs Fulham as the media fanned the flames.

The game was dubbed the London Rumble.

It was a chance for Fulham to prove their credentials for the umpteenth time this season, proving that they were not up there by mistake and it was also a chance for Chelsea to show their credentials in front of their home fans.

It was a Chelsea home game meaning the fans in blue would be welcoming the high-flying Fulham in Stamford Bridge.

It was going to be a tough game but the Fulham players were undeterred.

They approached it like every other game this season, giving their all in training, staying at an elite level throughout.

With them doing their part, time did its part, accelerating and in the blink of an eye, it was 26th..., it was D-day.

Chelsea welcomed Fulham to Stamford Bridge.