

Football God 38

Chapter 38: Plateau United vs Enyimba FC

Arriving in Jos, Plateau State, Sam did not have the luxury of taking in the sights of this entirely new state in his country to him as led by their coach, all the players went to their hotel.

Coach Yemi Daniel had very strict away game rules. From beginning till the end of the game, no player was expected to leave the hotel without permission.

They came to play a football game, and the coach would not tolerate any distractions. Just like that, Sam's yearning for adventure was doused.

He didn't complain though, he was happy to stay focused on the game.

After one last tactical set-up and talk in the hotel, Coach Yemi Daniel bid his players farewell, sending them off to sleep.

And again, Sam shared a room with his captain, Austin Oladapo.

That night, they had more time to bond between themselves, talking about Plateau United, their tactical set-up, their playstyle and their best players.

Despite their long talk though, Austin was disciplined, telling his younger teammate to go to sleep once it was past 10:00pm.

The next morning, Sam woke up early with his captain and together, they jogged out of the hotel premises as Sam took the opportunity to complete his daily system quest.

Watching him go through a specific routine, Austin was amazed. "This routine, how did you know to start it up?"

Hearing him, Sam grinned. "You see, I'm very ambitious. I want to play for FC Barcelona one day, I want to become a legend there like Lionel Messi is".

"To play for FC Barcelona, I can't afford to slack, that's why I created this rigorous daily training routine for myself".

Hearing him, Austin smiled. "I believe you Sam. I can't wait to watch you play and dominate in upcoming big European Champions League nights".

"I hope you don't forget me and get me a ticket to watch you live someday".

"I will". Sam laughed.

And with that, both players jogged back to their hotel rooms. For the rest of the day, they used different means to relax, preparing mentally for the game in the evening and when it was time, they left with their coach on a bus.

The Jos International Stadium, the home ground of Plateau United was a big stadium with a capacity of 60,000, one of the best in the country.

For this game, though the stadium was in no way filled to the brim, there were still lots of fans in the stands cheering their team on.

Sam was about to face-off against another hostile atmosphere alongside his teammates in away ground. Despite this though, the knowledge that Austin was on his side managed to calm his nerves.

Sam did not let the excitement get to him.

A few minutes later, the players finally walked out into the pitch and after the coin toss by the referee, Enyimba FC was to start kick-off.

Austin briefly patted Sam. "Don't let the fans get in your head, at all times, keep your head in the game".

"Yes, captain". Sam nodded.

FWEEEE!

The game finally commenced.

Enyimba FC kicked off the game, showing their intent to play their normal style despite the fact that they were in the away ground of such a strong team.

They had no intentions of wilting under the pressure of their opponents despite the fact that their opponents were buoyed by the presence of their fans.

From the first minute, Enyimba FC played scintillating possession football despite the loud noise being made by the opposition fans.

For the first 10 minutes of this game, both teams were even as they each had their moments. And the more time passed as the game settled, the tighter the game became, the perfect stage for the star players to shine.

24 minutes into the game, a star finally got his chance to shine as Enyimba FC won a corner amid boos from the Plateau United fans.

After going to the corner flag, Austin took a look before playing a quick corner.

There was pushing and tussling in the box but in the end, Farouk Mohammed managed to rise above all the players as this player planted a firm headed shot towards the top left corner of the post.

The Plateau United goalkeeper was rooted to the spot and could only watch as this ball nestled into his net.

Landing awkwardly but recovering immediately, Farouk charged towards the corner flag to celebrate. "GOAL....!" He roared exuberantly.

In this tight game, in the 24th minute, Enyimba FC got the lead 0-1.

FWEEEE!

As soon as the game restarted, urged by their restless fans, the Plateau United players finally geared into another level, taking this game like a war all of a sudden as they became extremely physical.

In the next 10 minutes, 3 yellow cards were given by the referee but then, Plateau United won another corner in the 35th minute of the game.

Their star midfielder took his duty, curling a cross in as 2 players rose highest, Onyebuchi, the Plateau United defender and Farouk, Enyimba's defensive midfielder. Both players vied for the ball in the air but in the end, Onyebuchi won, awkwardly planting a header towards the bottom right corner.

Ojo, the Enyimba FC goalkeeper reacted, charging towards the ball as his hand pushed it a bit but it was not enough. He pushed it into his net.

"GOALLL...!" The stadium immediately came alive.

In the 35th minute of the game, Plateau United leveled the score.

With that goal, the momentum shifted as Plateau United rode the energy of their fans, mounting attack after attack against the Enyimba FC backline.

And it was during this time that a certain midfielder got his chance to shine. As if he had endless stamina, Sam ran all over the pitch, winning tackles and interventions as he helped his team win the midfield battle.

In the end, despite how nervy the last few minutes of the first half was for Enyimba FC, they managed to hold on to a draw by half time.

The game was a tight one.

As soon as the referee's whistle sounded, the players went to the dressing room where they were addressed by their coaches.