

## Football God 46

Chapter 46: A busy schedule [4]

Enyimba FC welcomed the Tunisian club to the fiery Nigerian atmosphere of Enyimba International Stadium, eager to exert some much-needed revenge after accumulating only a single point across 3 CAF Champions league group stage games.

To Enyimba FC, it was a must win game. Losing directly meant that they would get stuck in the group stage of the CAF champions league, having failed to progress.

The players didn't want that, the fans didn't want that, Coach Yemi Daniel didn't want that, and most importantly, Sam didn't want that.

FWEEEEEE!

From the first minute of the game, Sam moved with the strides of a man on a mission and today, he was indeed on a mission.

Enyimba FC ran riot against the Tunisian team in front of their home fans, bolstered by their much improved midfield compared to last season.

A familiar name opened the scoring in the 37th minute of the game.

Who else but Samuel Moses?

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

The Enyimba FC fans roared at the top of their voices.

This was already becoming a familiar trend this season.

Latching onto a cross from the left side of the pitch from Chijioke just outside the 18-yard box, Sam hit an incredible first-time volleyed shot.

BAM!

The ball flew like a rocket, literally leaving afterimages behind as it tore its way into the top left corner, absolutely rattling the net!

Running to the corner flag while spreading his arms to acknowledge the adoration of his fans, Sam celebrated by dishing out the iconic suiii celebration.

The whole stadium erupted, doing the celebration alongside him.

Sam already became a fan-favorite in Enyimba FC.

With that goal, the tempo was set as in the 45th plus 2 minute of the first half, Emeka lashed into a loose ball in the opposition 6-yard box, tapping it into the net before the ES Tunis goalkeeper could react.

With that, Enyimba FC led comfortably 2-0 by halftime.

When the second half started, ES Tunis played with more urgency, dead-set on forcing themselves back into the game but buoyed by the roars of their home fans, Enyimba FC dug in and played dogged physical football.

In the 66th minute, the game was finally put to bed as Austin launched an incredible outside the box shot into the top right corner of the net, making it 3-0.

The roar of the Enyimba FC fans reached a crescendo at this point.

In the 72nd minute, Sam was subbed off by Coach Yemi Daniel to rest as he was treated to an explosive standing ovation by the Enyimba FC fans.

ES Tunis got a consolation goal at the 89th minute of the game but it did very little in turning the situation of the game around, only depriving Ojo of a clean sheet.

At the end of the game, Austin won the man of the match award but in every one's eyes, Sam was a very close second best player of the game.

Enyimba FC truly kicked off their CAF champions league campaign that evening. A week later, they visited CR Belouizdad at home.

Having lost to the Algerian team in the first leg despite playing at home, this was a grudge match and Enyimba FC was determined to get a result.

During the first half, it didn't seem so at first as the Algerian team set the tempo and quickly raced to a 2-0 lead at half-time.

When the second half started though, like was characteristic of Enyimba in recent weeks, this tenacious Nigerian team came alive like a previously slumbering Dragon as they played and ran their opponents ragged at home.

And of course, like most Enyimba FC fans were already familiar with, Sam was at the center of most of what happened.

Sam assisted Austin twice within the first 10 minutes of the second half, drawing his team back level and in the 80th minute, Emeka played the hero, heading the ball in from a well-executed corner kick routine.

Incredibly, the game ended 2-3 in Enyimba FC's favor.

Sam won the man of the match award.

With that victory, they finally took their points tally in the group stage to 7 points, climbing from the bottom to joint second place in their group table.

After more league games, for their last CAF Champions League group game, Enyimba FC hosted Al-Merrikh at home after a first leg away game where they drew 0-0 in their opponent's home.

It was the last game of the group stage, all 4 clubs in their group vied to get maximum points to see if they could squirm their way into the next stage of the tournament and Enyimba FC was no different.

The game was another thriller and an emotional rollercoaster to the Enyimba FC home fans.

In the first half, Enyimba FC raced to an early 2-goal lead as the fans were on a high till a lightning-quick 2 goals in 4 minutes from Al-Merrikh leveled the game.

Both teams went to half-time with the score level.

In the second half, the situation worsened when against the run of play, Al-Merrikh managed to sneak another shot past Ojo, making it 2-3 in their favor.

The desperate Enyimba FC fans made their frustrations known to their players through their loud noise, and their players responded dutifully.

In the 76th minute of the game, Victor Mbaoma lashed a goal past the Al-Merrikh goalkeeper, making it 3-3 and in the 83rd minute of the game, Sam aptly introduced his name into the score line, this time scoring with his head after a pass from Victor Mbaoma.

After another impressive display, he got his name on the scoresheet again.

The ecstatic Enyimba FC fans did the ritual.

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

They drowned the stadium with their loud voices, chanting his name at the top of their lungs as Sam celebrated euphorically.

The game eventually ended 4-3 in Enyimba FC's favor.

And with that, they managed to clinch 2nd spot in their group, progressing to the next round of the CAF Champions league.

Victor Mbaoma won the man of the match award for this intense game.

Even after that game, the schedule didn't lighten up for Enyimba FC as the FA Cup games also reared their head, entering the fray.

And with that, Enyimba FC truly had a packed-up schedule.

Despite the strain on the players, somehow, Coach Yemi Daniel managed to coach his team, still putting out impressive performances as they stayed in all 3 competitions that they competed in.

And finally, on 21st April 2023, the squad traveled to Algeria to play JS Kabylie for the first leg of their CAF champions league quarter final game.

Just January, Sam kicked a ball professionally for the first time and yet in no time, he was already playing in the quarter final of the CAF champions league.

How time flies...