

LEGENDS 130

Chapter 130: Vs Rio Ave III

After the Rio Ave team took the lead, the Porto team had done their best to try and get back on level terms, but the Rio Ave team wasn't budging and even sent some shots at the Porto side, coming dangerously close to extending their lead two times.

This kept the Porto team on tenterhooks and they weren't able to fully focus on the attacking side of their game due to the fear of going further behind.

In the end, neither of the two teams was able to trouble the scoreboard operator any further until the referee whistled for the end of the first half.

The players of the two teams walked off the field and down the tunnel and headed for their respective locker rooms.

The Porto players filed into the locker room where Sergio Conceicao and the bench players were waiting.

Sergio Conceicao waited for the players to all sit down, drink some water, and get comfortable, but the players could hardly swallow the water down their throats with the way the manager was glaring at them.

"I've spent quite a while thinking and I want to ask, which one of you is going to explain to me what happened out there?" Sergio Conceicao finally opened his mouth and let his words flow out.

His words grated against the players' ears like scratching glass against glass, and they shrunk in their seats, none of them wanting to be the one that would have to do the duty of explaining.

"Nobody?" Sergio Conceicao asked, seeing no one speak.

"Nobody wants to tell me how we bottled a lead just 11 minutes after taking it and against a weaker team for that matter?"

“Nobody wants to tell me how you conceded a goal just a minute after I gave you very clear instructions on how to avoid such a situation?”

“Nobody wants to explain to me how Mehdi Taremi did not score only once... but TWICE within the span of 11 minutes and would have added another if not that he didn’t get another chance to do so, huh?”

“Nobody?” Sergio Conceicao asked again in a questioning tone, his tone dangerously low.

“My instructions were for you to stay focused and wrestle back the control of the midfield from them, but what did I see you doing out there?”

“You almost didn’t bother marking your man and let them dictate the game’s pace while also graciously giving them the lead,”

“You know, when I became the manager of this great club, I thought I would be coaching Dragons who had enough pride to not let what just happened, happen,”

“But instead, you guys make me feel like I’m managing a team filled with Santa Claus’, especially with the way you keep giving away goals like it was Christmas!”

“Pffft...” Danilo Perreira could not control himself and almost laughed, but he quickly covered up his mouth, unfortunately, it was too late as Sergio Conceicao’s eyes had locked on him the moment he slipped up.

“Oh, you think this is funny?”

“Do I look like a comedian to you?” Sergio fired question after question at Danilo Perreira, his voice dangerously low.

“Well, the joke’s on you,” the manager stated with his head slightly tilted and a scary smile appearing on his face.

“Sergio!” Sergio Conceicao called out to Sergio Oliveira.

“You’re coming on for Danilo, he can go watch a comedy show if he wants to laugh,” Sergio Conceicao stated in a tone that let everyone in the room know that there wasn’t any room for reconsideration.

Danilo Perreira wasn’t amused by the manager’s decision though and was going to make his objection known as he felt like the manager was using him as a scapegoat, but before he could get any words out of his mouth, he felt a firm grip on his shoulder.

He looked over to see Pepe’s hand on his shoulder while shaking his head at him, indicating that he shouldn’t do anything for now and stay silent.

Fuming as he was, Danilo Perreira listened to the team captain whom he had great respect for, and bottled up his anger and objections, choosing to stay silent.

“As you head back out there for the second half, I want to see better from you than that sorry excuse of a performance that you guys displayed earlier,”

“Pepe, Ivan, keep that Taremi guy away from our box by any means possible, I don’t care if you foul him as long as you don’t get a red card or give away a penalty,”

“I don’t want to see him take away the match ball at the end of this match,” Sergio Conceicao instructed and warned.

“Wilson, Alex, I want you guys to follow the two Rio Ave wingers into the middle of the park and mark them everywhere they go,”

“You’ll both be adopting an inverted full-back position for this match, but if you see an opportunity to get the ball forward or to send the ball forward, then make sure to take it...”

“Otherwise, focus on keeping those two wingers from helping the midfielders control the midfield,” the Portuguese manager continued giving instructions.

“Fabio, Sergio, I don’t think I need to mention that your job in the middle of the park is to make sure that the opponents don’t have the luxury of making the passes they want,”

“As for Luiz and Jesus, I want you guys to help the midfield as well, but whenever we are on the ball, I want you guys to overload the opponent’s penalty box,”

“You have to help the strikers out a bit more,” Sergio Conceicao instructed, clapping the back of his right palm onto his left palm.

“As for you guys, I want your full efforts on getting us an equalizer. This is not the time for fancy flicks of the ball,” Sergio Conceicao intoned, his eyes on Tiquinho Soares and Moussa Marega.

“I don’t care if you have to squeeze the ball past the goalkeeper, but I want to see the ball in the back of the net before the 70th minute,”

“Stay ready for any ball’s coming your way, and don’t be scared to bulldoze your way through their defense, especially you, Moussa,”

“We need to quickly equalize the game so that we can have enough time to go even further and take the lead,”

“Is that clear?” Sergio Conceicao asked in a loud voice.