

LEGENDS 134

Chapter 134: Vs Rio Ave VII

Fweeeeeee

The referee's shrill whistle put a stop to all the celebrations going on at the Estadio do Dragao.

Standing beside a Rio Ave player who was curled up on the floor with his hands clutching his face, the referee held his hand up.

Immediately the Porto players who were engaged in celebration, disengaged and changed the target of their engagement to the referee.

But the referee held his hand up to them as he considered the situation.

It was clear that a foul had happened somewhere, but he hadn't noticed it until the ball went in.

Seeing as he hadn't noticed it earlier, it seemed like the foul hadn't directly caused the goal and that was enough grounds for the goal to stand, but he couldn't just decide on that as the Portuguese Football Federation would have his head if he was wrong.

Deciding to check clearly, he put his hand to his earphones and told an assistant referee that he was coming to check the situation.

Quickly heading off the field and moving to the sidelines to check the situation with the help of the Video Assistant Referee(VAR).

On reaching the screen, the replay of the situation played out.

The foul had happened just after the corner was taken by Telles and it seemed that Moussa Marega had hit the Rio Ave player hard on his chest while trying to push him away when they fought to reach the ball earlier.

'Wait, hit on the chest?' The referee wondered to himself for a split second as he recalled that the Rio Ave player had been clutching his face in pain.

'How shameless,' The referee sighed in annoyance, he was not amused by the Rio Ave player's antics.

Clearly, he was trying to make a mountain out of a molehill and use that opportunity to get the referee to cancel the Porto team's goal.

The problem was that it was hard to determine if the foul had been a major cause that led to the goal, but any form of slight favor the referee had for the Rio Ave team had just been washed away by the shameless act of the Rio Ave player.

Also, looking at the fans of the Porto team, he feared that he would not be able to leave the stadium in one piece if he dared to cancel the goal, especially since it was a beautiful goal that was guaranteed a place in the hearts of the Porto fans if it stood.

Quickly making a decision in his heart, the referee headed back to the field, made a box-shaped gesture with his fingers, and pointed at the Rio Ave goal, making his decision known to everyone.

The goal would stand.

The referee didn't think that shameless player would have been able to stop the goal even if he hadn't been touched by Marega earlier.

If he was going to be focused on defending against the goal, then he would have stood up earlier as it was clear that he was not really hurt from Marega's hit on his chest if he was clutching his face instead.

Those were the referee's thoughts as he allowed the goal to stand.

On hearing the referee's decision, the Porto fans' cheers shook the stadium and the Porto players regained a happy expression on their faces.

The Rio Ave who had seemingly been fouled still walked up to the referee, wanting to convince him, but the referee waved him off.

Less than a minute later, the ball was back in the center circle, awaiting the Rio Ave team to kick off.

The kick-off was a bit delayed as the managers of both teams were making substitutions.

On the Porto side Vincent Aboubakar and Mattheus Uribe would be coming on for Moussa Marega and Wilson Manafa respectively, while on the Rio Ave team, the right-winger and one of the midfielders were being replaced by their counterparts on the bench.

It seemed that not only was Sergio Conceicao intent on going on to win the game after getting their equalizer, the Rio Ave manager seemed to have similar thoughts of taking back the lead instead of going on the defensive to preserve the draw as any other manager in his shoes would think to do.

It was clear that the remaining minutes left in the match would be frenetic with both teams wanting to take the lead.

There would definitely be shots flying at both ends of the field as there was all to play for in this match, especially for Porto who would not want to lose any points as Benfica was already too close behind them for them to make any such mistakes.

After the substitutions were made, Mehdi Taremi kicked off for the Rio Ave team.

The Rio Ave player who received the ball from Taremi immediately sent the ball to the new right-winger and the Rio Ave right-winger immediately took off into the Porto half at great pace with the midfielders and forward of the Rio Ave team surging into the Porto half after him to support and open his passing options.

The Rio Ave right winger soon came face to face with Jesus Corona and he immediately passed the ball to Taremi, intending to initiate a one-two routine with him, but the ball that Taremi had sent behind Jesus Corona was immediately intercepted by Telles.

The Porto defensive line was no longer going to allow the Rio Ave team to just easily get past them like they had been doing previously.

After intercepting the ball, Telles quickly sent the ball back to Augustin Marchesin as there were already too many Rio Ave players advancing at the Porto defenders, thus making their half of the field somewhat of a hot spot.

The best option was to give the ball back to the goalkeeper for him to clear and that was exactly what Telles did.

The ball rolled to Augustin Marchesin who quickly came out to meet the pass, controlled the ball's pace so that he could really get his foot under it, and then sent it flying to the midfield, completely bypassing the Rio Ave players who were surging forward in attack.