

LEGENDS 219

Chapter 219: Dragon Style

The looks of utter shock and confusion from the people in the room was a sight to behold. The looks on the faces of the Porto players and Sergio Conceicao were especially funny as it was as if they had received the shock of their lives.

They had all been speaking in Portuguese and requiring the help of the translators to get their words across and Jason had just gone and started speaking in German like it was his natural language so how could they not be shocked?

“Cautious style of play...? What’s that?” the translator translated Jason’s words into English.

“Ich wei? nicht, was du mit einem vorsichtigen Spielstil meinst... aber ich werde immer mein Bestes geben, um dem Team zu helfen, indem ich meine Talente so einsetze, dass es dem Team zugute kommt. Bisher hat der Trainer nicht gesagt, dass er ein Problem mit meiner Spielweise hat, also glaube ich auch nicht, dass die Mannschaft ein Problem damit hat.” As if completely ignorant of the strange stares he was receiving, Jason continued speaking in German.

“I don’t know what you mean by a cautious style of play... but I’ll always do my best to help the team by making use of my talents in a way that would benefit the team. So far, the manager hasn’t said that he has a problem with the way I play so I don’t think the team has a problem with it either,” the translator on the side continued translating his words to English while the other translators followed suit and translated into the language they were supposed to be translating it to.

“?hm... Okay, ich bin sicher nicht der Einzige, der überrascht ist, dass Sie Deutsch sprechen k?nnen, aber ich würde nicht fragen, da es nichts mit der Pressekonferenz zu tun hat,” the young German reporter responded with a surprised look.

“Uhh... Okay, I’m sure I’m not the only one who’s surprised that you can speak German but I wouldn’t be asking as it has nothing to do with the press conference,” the translator continued doing his job.

“Sie haben Recht, es hat nichts mit der Pressekonferenz zu tun, also h?tte ich nicht geantwortet, wenn Sie gefragt h?tten,” Jason responded with a slight smile appearing on his face.

“You’re correct, it has nothing to do with the press conference so if you had asked then I wouldn’t have answered,” the translator did not hesitate to translate Jason’s words into English.

Jason’s witty response elicited a small laugh from the reporters and soon the press conference continued.

The reporters continued asking various questions from the player and the manager though most of the questions were directed at the manager.

A few questions about transfer rumors surrounding Jason popped up a few times as well, but the manager waved off the question and when Jason was asked, he simply replied “No comment,” with a completely impassive face.

After a few more minutes of grueling questioning, the press conference finally ended and the four Porto players and their manager stood up to leave and went to join the rest of the players that were already training in preparation for the game.

Jason, Pepe, Soares, and Telles quickly went to join the team to warm up for the game and after a while, the manager called for the end of their pre-match training and the Porto players headed off the field, leaving the Rangers F.C players on the field as they were still doing their warm-ups.

In the Porto team’s locker room, Sergio Conceicao began the pre-match tactical meeting by stating the team’s formation for the match and calling out the line-up,

“For this match, as we already decided and practiced in training, we will be using the 4-3-3 attacking formation, before I go further to explain, I’ll first call out the names of the players in the starting line-up,”

“In goal, we will be having Augustin Marchesin defending our honor,”

“Our two center backs will be Ivan Marcano and Pepe,”

“In the left back and right back positions are Alex Telles and Wilson Manafa respectively,”

“There will be two center midfielders and one central attacking midfielder for this formation, so Sergio Oliveira and Danilo Perreira will be playing as the two central midfielders while Otavio shall play as the central attacking midfielder,”

“In front, we’ll have Fabio Viera on the right wing, Jason on the left wing, and Soares in the center as the sole striker,” Sergio Conceicao listed out as he drew eleven circles on the board to represent the players in their positions.

Sergio Conceicao had chosen the 4-3-3 attacking formation over his usual 4-4-2 holding formation for many reasons.

The first reason was due to selection problems in the squad.

Jesus Corona had been injured in the last match of the Liga NOS against Braga and this meant that they had fewer wingers so he had to manage the few players he had as the team was already quite lacking in the wing department... numerically of course, the quality was just as good as anywhere else if not better.

Vincent Aboubakar’s contract had already expired and he was already a free agent at this point so he was now lacking numerically in the striker department as well because even Ze Luis had received an offer from another team and was already negotiating.

He wanted his team to get used to playing without those guys so he had chosen this formation.

Another one of the reasons he had chosen this formation was because of the firepower and flexibility it gave the team.

Using the 4-3-3 attacking formation which traded the stability in the midfield of the 4-4-2 holding formation for more attacking options and flexibility in switching from attacking to defense was probably the best way to defeat the Rangers team.

The Porto team had already faced the Rangers team twice in the group stage and not only had they not won either of their two meetings while using the 4-4-2 holding formation, but they had also even lost the second time.

While this did not suggest that the 4-4-2 holding formation was useless against the Rangers team, Sergio Conceicao was not willing to use the same tactic as the last time he had lost and hope to win by luck.

After all a wise man once said that doing the exact same thing twice and expecting different results each time was absolute stupidity.

Of course, this did not hold true for humans as humans were imperfect beings whose 1+1 wasn't always equal to 2, but it was close enough that Sergio Conceicao couldn't simply stay unresponsive without trying to fix an obvious problem.

They were here to try and win the Europa League, not to simply try their luck at the trophy so such risky changes were necessary if it meant having a better chance at their goals.

"This 4-3-3 attacking formation aims to be able to attack the Rangers team hard and fast before they can respond whenever we are on the attack,"

"We already have four attacking options in person of Soares, Fabio, Jason, and Otavio but the two wing backs will also move forward whenever there is a chance and be ready to support by sending in crosses or taking long-range shots,"

"Sergio and Danilo will permanently anchor themselves in the midfield, only moving forward just enough to support the others in keeping possession of the ball by passing the ball around, but otherwise I want you guys focused on defense at all times,"

"If we get caught on the counterattack while the wing-backs are forward, then I want you guys to cover the wings and delay the counter as much as possible and if possible eliminate the threat," Sergio Conceicao explained as he drew on the board and made all sorts of gestures to ensure the players understood the game plan.

"If we are on the defense, I want you guys to make sure you shut down the Ranger's team between the space after the halfway line and the edge of our penalty box by boxing them in and leaving no options for them in the center,"

"We want to force them to the sides where it's harder for them to just take a shot at our goal and there we double our efforts to shut them down and retrieve the ball,"

"On the attack, we'll also make use of the wings and I'll make a distinction so you guys understand... if the ball ends up on the left side and Jason ends up with the ball, Fabio should move into the box ready to receive the ball while Otavio should draw closer to Jason so he can receive a pass if need be when Jason comes off the dribble,"

"Jason, I want you always cutting in and accessing your options before deciding whether to send a pass in or to make a run for the goal yourself," Sergio Conceicao said, his eyes falling on Jason who quickly nodded in affirmation while muttering a response.

"On the right, the same, but since Fabio is not as good as running through defenses like Jason, we will focus more on a tiki-taka style on the right side of the field,"

"One good thing is that since Jason, Otavio, and Fabio can play in each other's positions without any problems, they can change positions anytime according to the situation if they can find a weaker side in the opponent's defense,"

"Tiquinho, I don't know how you're going to do it in the match, but I want you to always remain open and onside so that you can respond immediately if the ball comes your way, is that clear?" Sergio Conceicao asked with a very serious tone, his eyes on Tiquinho Soares.

"Yes Coach," Soares didn't hesitate in his reply.

"Good, we're here to win guys, let's make sure we do so... Dragon style," Sergio Conceicao made a closing remark with a smirk and the players responded with cheers.