

LEGENDS 228

Chapter 228: Here to Play and Not to Speculate

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{There goes the final whistle, bringing an end to an interesting game and it's Porto who take the available spot for the next round of the Europa League}

{They win with quite the margin, but their performance deserved such a result}

{Their opponents are dejected, but on stages like this, there is no sympathy for those who do not win and they have lost}

{Rangers shall have to pack their bags not long after arriving and head back to Scotland to reassess and try again next season}

{The score ends Porto 5 : 1 Rangers} The commentator gave his finishing commentary as the match ended and the players trudged off the field.

There were two sets of players as expected, the victors and the ones who fell short, and one did not have to be a genius to know who had positive emotions displayed on their faces and the ones who looked like they wanted the ground to swallow them whole.

The deafening silence in the stadium was eerily similar to the silence of disappointed fans and this weighed heavily on the Rangers players' psyche.

The Porto team however didn't feel the same mental pressure, but they also didn't spend too much time celebrating and soon began moving off the field since there wasn't much need for fan service when the fans weren't physically present.

As the players headed off the fields, some of the players of both teams were approached by reporters for an interview and Jason who had been on the bench at the final minute wasn't left out.

In fact, there was no way he could be left out as he was the man of the match for the game after his stellar performance and managing to get two assists to his name and even score a spectacular free-kick goal.

Jason who was holding the Man-of-the-Match award in his hand as he faced a middle-aged man who held a microphone and asked him a question,

“Porto has won by quite a margin and will be going to the next round of the Europa League, how do you feel about that?” The reporter asked Jason.

“Uhm, well, it’s hard to say anything other than it feels good to win and I hope we can keep winning, both for us and for the fans,” Jason responded with a small smile.

“Haha, I’m sure the fans would be delighted to see you keep winning,” the reporter laughed lightly at Jason’s response.

It was a professional response that was required to keep a good conversation flowing between an interviewer and the interviewee and this reporter was showing off his experience in this field as he immediately went on to ask another question as soon as he stopped laughing.

“It was a great win for your team and you guys looked sharp from the onset of the match. How did you prepare for the match and what were your feelings coming into the match?” the reporter asked the second question.

“... Well, we’ve been in Germany for a few days and we’ve been hard at work training hard because we came here to win,”

“We’d like to win all our games going forward and if possible even lift the trophy and that’s what we’re working towards,” Jason answered after some thought.

“Wow, you’ve got big dreams, huh?” the reporter replied quickly, seemingly amazed but it was just another professional reaction as Jason’s answer was something almost every player would say and was

nothing new, after all, you couldn't admit that your team had no chances of winning even if it was true, could you?

If one dared to do something like that, the media would have his head placed on every media platter possible.

"It doesn't cost much to dream does it?" Jason responded, not bothered by the reporter's flimsy, characteristic response as this was something he was already used to from other reporters.

"You're right, it doesn't cost much to dream, but you haven't just been dreaming, you're also acting on your dreams, especially with your performance in today's match,"

"2 assists and 1 goal, not to mention your stellar performances for the team, on and off the ball, especially making sure that you tormented the Rangers captain with your dribbling, what do you have to say about your performance," the reporter asked another question, not yet willing to let Jason off.

"I don't know what you mean by tormenting, I just played like I usually do and got the ball to where it was needed, either by sending the ball ahead or taking it there myself, there's nothing more to it," Jason responded with a grin, feeling amused by the reporter's choice of words in asking his questions.

"Haha, true, you did mention something about not caring about a cautious style of play in the pre-match press conference so I guess it was to be expected," The reporter laughed off Jason's response which was a bit sharp.

"I did?" Jason asked as if he didn't remember saying those words.

"Huh? You don't remember? You know what, never mind," the reporter was a bit surprised by Jason's response, but he quickly handled the situation and moved on to the next question.

"Now that you have qualified for the quarter-finals, do you hope for a weaker opponent so that it can be easier to advance to the next round of the competition?" The reporter asked again.

“... It doesn’t matter what one wishes for nor does it matter who comes, we came here to win and that is what we hope to do irrespective of whoever we are up against,”

“Nothing else matters, we are here to play football to the best of our ability, not to speculate and hope for a lucky draw,” Jason thought for a while before giving an answer.

“That will be all,” he said after answering and began walking off immediately he stopped talking, leaving the reporter behind.

“We’re here to play football and not to speculate,” the middle-aged reporter muttered under his breath as he watched Jason walk off with the MOTM award in his hand.

‘Seems I found the headline for tomorrow,’ the reporter thought to himself with a smile as he turned away from the camera before giving closing remarks and ending the interview session.

With that done, he started walking out of the stadium with his fingers already twitching and itching to write an article.

In Porto’s locker room...

Jason walked into the locker room with his award in hand after having done everything that needed to be done outside.

He had done interviews and taken pictures before finally heading to his team’s locker room so he could get ready to leave along with the other players.

On getting to the locker rooms, he met his teammates and exchanged high fives as he responded wittily to his teammates’ comments and congratulations on the MOTM award.

After exchanging some words with his teammates, Jason quickly began freshening up and preparing to leave the MSV-Arena once the manager was back.

Soon the Porto head manager arrived and he had a few words to say before the players headed out.

“Good work out there guys. Your performance out there got us the win we wanted and hopefully, we can keep this up going forward,”

“There are a few other matches to be played in the Round of 16, but I’ve heard that the draw for the quarter-finals will be on the 10th of the month... that’s about four days from now, and our match will be sometime after that, depending on the draw,”

“That means we have till then to prepare for whatever is going to be thrown at us and I hope you’ll put forth your best so that we can repeat today’s success again, or maybe do even better,”

“That’s all for now, let’s get ready to leave so you can have some rest since you won’t be getting a day off,” Sergio Conceicao finished his address and led the players out as they headed out of the stadium and boarded their team bus to leave the MSV-Arena.

The days that followed were full of training for the Porto players who made use of the field they had borrowed to train as much as they could in preparation for their coming match and there was hardly much time for breaks until their training for the day was over.

For their safety, it was also recommended that the players should not play tourists by exploring the streets of Germany for whatever entertainment they could find.

Some players were a bit disgruntled by this arrangement, but since it was for their own good, they complied and didn’t leave their hotel any other time than when they went for training.

Luckily, the hotel they were lodged in was truly a luxurious hotel so it had many facilities to offer that kept the players entertained whenever they were not training.

The players also had to keep an eye on the other Europa Leagues going on to try and narrow down what team they would be put up against and like this, the days passed.