

LEGENDS 235

Chapter 235: Blue and Black VS Blue and White VIII

The second half of the Europa League quarter-finals between Inter Milan and Porto got off to a slow start with Porto not making much effort to attack immediately after they kicked off, rather they contented themselves with passing the ball around in their half of the field and doing their best to keep hold of the ball.

Inevitably, they ended up losing the ball as it was impossible to hold onto the ball for too long in a game of football, but as soon as they lost the ball, they immediately dropped back according to their newly adjusted game plan and had all their players staying behind the ball.

This led to a situation where Inter Milan started racking up their possession stats even higher than they already had and they even took the occasional shot at the Porto goal, but Porto's defense stayed strong and took almost all the danger out of every Inter Milan attack before they could even get a shot away.

Thus all Inter Milan managed after almost ten minutes were a few awkward shots from weird angles or worse shots from more acceptable angles but impossible distances.

#57th minute...

It was almost a quarter of an hour since the second half resumed but the Porto team hadn't even launched an attack at the Inter Milan team and had simply focused on defensive football and made sure to stay behind the ball at all times while they searched for the perfect counterattacking opportunity.

In another situation, the Porto team would have already lost their composure and would have begun launching attacks irrespective of their game plan and this would have left them open to attacks from the Inter Milan team.

But due to most of the Porto players having come into the match with a half-defeated mentality, they weren't feeling the need to be in a hurry in a game that they already thought they would lose and this weirdly worked in their favor.

The Inter Milan team was once again with the ball and they were trying to launch an attack, but the Porto team players were staying very defensive-minded and weren't budging in the slightest bit.

On the right side of the Porto penalty area, Alexis Sanchez was facing off against Alex Telles who was following his every movement and not leaving an inch for Sanchez to pass through.

Alexis Sanchez went back and forth trying to dribble past Telles but Telles remained undaunted, displaying a defensive acumen that he seldom showed since he was a more attack-minded player.

After constantly trying to get past Telles and failing, Sanchez opted to pass the ball infield towards Borja Valero who was the closest Inter Milan player.

Without looking around carefully, Sanchez sent the ball infield, but Otavio who had been watching the ball from just outside his team's penalty area saw that the pass was a little slow and Borja Valero wasn't moving to meet the ball but rather waiting for the ball with ease.

Not willing to let this chance pass by, Otavio suddenly burst forward and intercepted the ball before taking off down the field, his movements finally showing Porto's first attacking intent of the second half.

The remaining Porto players who had been so willing to stay back and defend immediately surged forward the moment they saw Otavio snatch the ball and dart forward into the open space where there were fewer Inter Milan players in front of him than behind him.

Not wasting any time on any forms of trickery, Otavio immediately sent the ball forward towards Tiquinho when an Inter Milan player appeared nearby to try and tackle the ball.

Receiving the ball and skillfully turning on the spot, Tiquinho was about to begin darting with the ball down the center of the field at Inter Milan's goal when he suddenly noticed Jason darting down the right side of the field at an incredible pace.

Not wasting any time debating his next move, he immediately gave up on making a run and instead sent a lobbed pass over to the right side of the field.

Jason darted past the halfway line in pursuit of the lobbed ball and due to the slow pace of the ball, he was able to gain speed and even run past the ball that was still in the air, but he soon noticed Stefan de Vrij dashing into his path.

With his mind instantly making the calculations, Jason suddenly turned to face the ball while still moving and as the ball came down towards him, he flicked it back up smoothly over himself and over Stefan de Vrij who had come close enough.

Completing the dangerous move that somehow worked and raised the ball over Stefan de Vrij, Jason made use of the split second that the Inter Milan defender was surprised at missing the ball to immediately dart after the ball and bring it under control before continuing down the right wing as fast as he could.

Stefan de Vrij had been surprised at Jason's ingenious tipping of the ball over him and had in his surprise allowed Jason to get past him, but he quickly recovered and was soon giving chase, but Jason's pace wasn't something that he could match and Jason only gained more distance despite Stefan's efforts at catching up.

Running down the wing, Jason was about to cut into the Inter Milan box when he noticed his teammates arriving near the penalty box, just a few meters behind him and he immediately opted to send a grounded cross into the penalty box.

Being kicked while Jason was still in motion, the ball flew into the penalty box at an optimal pace, not rising off the ground as it traveled across.

Before any of the remaining Inter Milan defenders could go at the ball to clear, Moussa Marega who had been coming from behind met the ball with a powerful kick that seemed to unleash all his fury at the Inter Milan goal.

The ball rocketed off Marega's foot and flew to the top right corner of the Inter Milan goal.

Handanovic, the Inter Milan talisman who had led his team's ranking of the most clean sheets in the season, immediately unleashed his full leaping ability as he jumped for the ball, intending to deny the Porto team, but this time, luck was finally on the Porto team's side as he couldn't reach and the ball settled into the back of the net.