

LEGENDS 29

Chapter 29: Porto Juniors vs Familicao U-19

In the stands around a more sparsely located area sat three men who looked to be in their fifties and weren't cheering for their teams like the other fans but rather seemed to be looking at the players with scrutinizing eyes.

Or to be more specific, they all had their eyes on a particular player with a headful of curly hair tied up in a bun juggling the ball with near-perfect flicks of the ball while paying no attention to anything else going on around him.

"Do you think he will start the game?" Luis Pinto asked, not taking his eyes off Jason as he spoke.

"Not likely," Rafael Hernandez and Sergio Conceicao replied together.

"Even though I told Antonio to add him to the team and give him some playtime, Antonio can't add him in the starting line-up yet as he has only had one training session with the team," Sergio explained while pulling his baseball cap farther down to cover his face since he was trying to avoid being recognized.

Rafael and Luis nodded their heads in acknowledgment of his words and watched as the players walked back into the tunnels with the pre-match warm-up over.

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Jason walked back into the tunnel with the rest of the team and they headed back to their dressing room that now had various jerseys hanging on the lockers.

"Yo Jay, your jersey's over here," Jeremy who was also a Nigerian like Jason called for Jason when he saw him looking around for his jersey.

He was also starting on the bench along with Jason, so he didn't have anything against showing Jason the ropes.

Due to Jason's sudden and hasty addition to the team, he was given a numberless jersey, but many of the youth team players wore numberless jerseys so he didn't look like the odd one out.

He quickly put on his jersey before pulling on a tracksuit as well as he would be sitting on the bench.

While the team changed, Antonio came into the dressing room once again and began speaking,

"We've already decided on our starting line-up and game plan so I don't have much to say,"

"All that remains for you guys is to get out there and win it,"

"Vamos!!!" he gave a motivational speech to encourage the team as they began to march out of the dressing room.

The players in the starting line-up went ahead of the other players while Jason and the other substitutes followed shortly after them.

As Jason was walking along with the other substitutes to the bench, he saw Antonio beckoning to him, and he quickly walked up to him.

"Watch how your teammates follow the game plan and hopefully you can come on sometime in the second half, "Antonio whispered in Jason's ear with his arm wrapped around Jason's shoulder.

Jason's face visibly brightened up upon hearing what the coach had just told him and he had to do his best to keep a spring out of his step as he walked to the bench and waited eagerly for the match to begin.

The players marched onto the field and the commentator began calling out the players of both teams.

{The Familicao side seem to be playing what looks like a 3-4-3 formation}

{In goal, they have Tomas Pereira standing between the sticks}

{Duarte Oliveira, Hugo Oliveira and Nemanja Perovic are playing as the three centerbacks for the Familicao team}

{Jose Macedo and Toki Yukutomo are playing as the two center midfielders with Rodrigo Ribeiro on the right while Joa Santos is the left midfielder}

{Sebastian Girado plays as the lone striker with the support of Leonardo de Oliveira on the left wing as well as Mauro Ribeiro on the right wing}

The commentator rattled off and called out each team's players as they arranged themselves onto the pitch.

Finally, at 2:00 pm, the referee blew the whistle for the match to start.

Familicao was the team that kicked off the match.

The cheering of fans of the Porto team spread loudly in the stadium right after the kickoff.

They cheered, sang a few anthems, and shouted the names of a few of the more famous players in the youth team.

The first few minutes of the game were a scuffle in the middle of the pitch as each team passed the ball around and tried to find space to begin an attack only to lose the ball to the other team.

This situation repeated itself continuously in the very early minutes of the game.

The Porto midfield that consisted of four players in their blue and white striped jerseys were evenly matched by Familicao's four midfield players in their white jerseys.

The U-19 Familicao team's unconventional 3-4-3 formation was proving to be a tough nut for the FC Porto Juniors to crack so far, but the Porto team soon began having longer spells of possession than the opposing team.

Following their coach's game plan, the Porto team began holding onto the ball for longer and moving deeper into the opponent's half and before long an opportunity opened up for them.

Joao Santos, the right midfielder of the Familicao team took a poor touch on a ball that was passed to him by his teammate and Andre Oliveira the left-back of Porto Juniors quickly took advantage.

He quickly lunged forward and stole the ball before passing the ball infield to Mariano while his team's attackers started making runs toward the opposing box.

Mariano quickly found Umaro Cande on the right side of the field with a lobbed pass.

Umaro trapped the ball deftly and did a few step-overs to get rid of his marker before sending a high cross at Mylo in the penalty area.

Mylo jumped for the ball, trying to connect his head with the ball and send it towards the goal, but Hugo, a center-back from the Familicao team got to the ball before him and sent the ball back out of the box.

The ball headed outside of the penalty area and somehow ended up back at Umaro's feet, who quickly sent the ball back at the right wing where he saw his team's right back, Fabio Amaral making a forward run at the wings.

Fabio received the pass mid-stride and took off down the wing with the ball.

A player from the opposing team was hot on his heels and tried hard to push him off the ball, but Fabio held on until he sent a high cross back into the box.

This time the ball was headed towards Porto's second striker, Goncalo Sousa, who quickly pushed himself off the ground with a powerful leap and connected with the ball in a powerful header that sent the ball past a stunned goalkeeper and into the back of the net.

GOAL!!!!