

Legends 641

Chapter 641: The Match or The Tie IX

#85 minute...

After finally getting one goal back in the game, the Juventus players played with a renewed fervor and none of their previous defeated mood was anywhere to be found.

The Madrid players realizing the danger tried to take back the momentum, but they were unable to and settled for trying to disrupt the momentum by slowing the game down whenever they had possession, but all they succeeded in doing was slowing down the Juventus player's efforts.

In the end, they couldn't completely stop them and once again, Juventus had stolen the ball deep in the Madrid half of the pitch and had immediately launched the ball forward, trying to get the ball to the forwards.

Sergio Ramos and Nacho stayed directly in front of the goalkeeper, trying to make themselves a wall in the path of the forwards, but Ronaldo merely ran slightly wide before receiving the ball from Chiesa.

Just as he entered from the right side of the penalty box, Ronaldo immediately swung at the ball before he was closed down, unleashing a powerful shot at goal.

{Ronaldoooooo!} the commentator shouted as the ball flew at goal, but Courtois was not going to let the ball past him a second time, especially when it was coming right at him.

Putting his hands to block the ball that was too powerful to grasp, Courtois deflected the ball into the air.

{Oh! Saved!}

With the ball flying into the air and back into play, Ronaldo ran at it again, wanting to catch it on the header, but he wasn't the only one running at the ball.

Seeing Ramos, Nacho, and Courtois also rushing at the ball to contest for it, Ronaldo gave up on heading the ball directly at goal and jumped early, heading the ball back out of the penalty box towards the nearest player in black.

The ball flew at Dybala, who caught the ball with the side of his right foot, flicking it over to his left side.

{Dybala. He's all alone!!!} The commentator shouted as he saw Dybala strike at the ball on the volley, sending it back at the goal that was empty thanks to Courtois running off his line earlier.

Courtois ran back to his goal as fast as his legs could carry him and leaped powerfully, stretching his hands at the incoming ball, but he couldn't reach, and the ball smashed past him into the back of the goal.

{It's in!!! Juventus have two now!}

{One more needed!!!!} The commentator screamed excitedly, his voice almost drowning out the noise of the few Juventus fans in the stands as they celebrated their team's goal.

Despite still being behind, the Juventus fans didn't stay silent and screamed at the top of their voices as they watched the Juventus players quickly pick up the ball and take it back to the middle of the field, sharing high-fives on the way.

After all, they already had two goals back and the difference between the two teams was no longer significant.

In fact, it was a score that they could even accept... they already had two away goals and as long as they could win at their own home stadium, the game would be a wrap.

How could they not be excited, moreover, it looked like their team wasn't going to settle for just this and would be looking to even equalize the game.

With all those factors added up, the fans could not resist cheering excitedly and singing their player's praises as the game once again resumed.

#92nd minute...

{Two minutes of the additional four gone and Madrid have a free-kick} the commentator said, describing the events on the pitch to the viewers and listeners.

Earlier, Jason had tried to send a pass behind the defense into Chiesa's path, but Chiesa didn't properly time his run and had run into an offside position.

He was quickly noticed by the assistant referee, who's flag quickly went up, putting an end to the attack.

Marcelo jogged over to pick up the ball and put it down for the free kick, but he purposely put the ball down in a wrong place, prompting the referee to come over to adjust the ball's position and give him a warning, but Marcelo didn't care as he was trying to waste time.

The Juventus fans in the stands shouted out boos to the Madrid man, but their boos were quickly drowned out the Madrid fans who had begun singing.

"4 years ago, you lost 4:1,"

"3 years ago, you lost 3:0,"

"Today, you lose 3:2," the Madrid fans sang on repeat, not glancing at the clock as they expected the final whistle to blow at any time.

As annoying as it was to listen to the Madrid fans, the Juventus players gritted their teeth and tightly marked each player near Marcelo, forcing him to send a lobbed ball forward.

The ball flew towards the Juventus penalty box but after a mid-air contest with Jovic, De Ligt headed the ball back towards the midfield where Rabiot caught it on his chest and brought it under control.

The Juventus forwards had already begun springing forward, dragging their markers along as soon as De Ligt had headed the ball back into midfield.

Picking out Ronaldo making a run down the right flank, Rabiot sent a powerful grounded pass forward, sending the ball skidding over the green into Ronaldo's path, but Ronaldo wasn't alone.

Sergio Ramos was the one marking Ronaldo and seeing Ronaldo making a run forward down the right flank, he didn't hesitate to jump into a tackle, aiming to bring him down no matter the cost.

However, just as Ramos knew how dangerous Ronaldo could be if he could get within shooting distance of the goal, Ronaldo also knew how dangerous Ramos could be to opposing players who could prove a threat to the team, hence, Ronaldo had been keeping an eye on Ramos from the start.

When Ramos came sliding in, Ronaldo did his signature back chop, forcefully cutting back and stopping himself from entering the path of Sergio Ramos's tackle.

However, despite evading the tackle, Ronaldo didn't dawdle as Ramos was already picking himself back up.

Spotting Jason making a cutting run infield from the left flank, Ronaldo didn't hesitate and lifted the ball into Jason's path.

Chapter 642: The Match or The Tie X

Jason watched the rapidly approaching Nacho, who was rushing forward to insert himself between Jason and the goal, but shortly after, his eyes refocused on the ball that was flying at him and he positioned himself to catch the ball with his right foot, comfortably bringing it under control.

With the ball under control, Jason immediately pushed it forward, not wasting a single second debating his next move.

There was nothing to debate... after all, there was only one defender in his path.

Seeing Jason come closer, Nacho didn't dare to drop back any further as he was only a meter away from the edge of the penalty box and that was already a dangerous position.

But before he could rush forward, Jason suddenly put his left leg on the ball midstride, making it seem like he wanted to stop the ball, but the next moment, Jason flicked the ball forward to the right with his right foot, leaving Nacho unable to react in time.

With that singular move, Jason had managed to move himself into a position where there was enough space for him to make an attempt on goal.

Courtois watched with utmost attention, predicting that Jason would try sending a curler at the top right corner of the goal, and he began getting into position to make the save.

Perhaps it was because of the high adrenaline pumping through his veins at that moment, but Jason immediately noticed what Courtois was gearing up to do and instantly changed his mind.

Instead of trying to curl the ball to the top right corner, he instead hit the ball with power to the bottom left corner.

Courtois, who had been preparing to dive towards the right instantly changed his direction when he saw where Jason hit the ball to, but he wasn't nearly fast enough and the ball smashed into the back of the net.

{Oh, it's in!!!The commentator screamed, and in the stadium as well as everywhere around the world, Juventus fans jumped up from their seats in joy.

As the one who had scored the much-desired equalizer, Jason had already taken off down the sidelines with a finger from his right hand on his lips, shushing the Madrid fans while doing the 'calma' with his other hand.

He didn't end his celebration there and jumped into a knee slide at the last moment, doing the sign of the cross mid-slide.

{Look at his joy! Look at their joy!!!}

{They just wouldn't stay down!}

{From three goals down, they didn't stay down!}

{Three three, the scales are balanced again and this time, with a slight twist in their favor!} The loud and excited voice of the commentator accompanied the jubilating Juventus players and fans as they celebrated the goal.

{This is why we adore this game! Passion, Pinash, exhilaration! We never know what will happen next, but we can guarantee that it would be exciting!} the commentator shouted, not willing to stay silent for a moment.

In the luxury box, Temz and Selina Gomes had also been overtaken by an excitement and exhilaration they didn't understand and were jumping around excitedly on their feet as they watched the Juventus players celebrate the goal.

Some other people in the box couldn't resist pulling out their phones to take a sneaky picture or two... or even a video.

One guy nodded to himself while sneaking a video of the two girls, but his camera focused a lot more on the African beauty.

"Must be over 10000 jigglewatts. Gahdamn those jiggle physics," he muttered as he licked his lips.

Luckily, his voice was low enough, and there was too much noise in the stadium with no one paying attention to him, otherwise, his actions would have earned him scorn from the people around. rANOBE

On the field, the celebrations were coming to an end and the Juventus players were beginning to head back to their side of the field.

With a huge smile on his face, Jason was looking at the stands when he noticed a placard that a woman held up that said "Kiss me Jason!".

Normally, Jason would only smile wryly at such a poster, but due to his current over excitement, he blew a kiss at the crowd and winked before turning away.

The woman holding the poster gasped audibly before resuming her screaming... however, above her position was one of the luxury boxes in the stadium, and as luck would have it, it was the luxury box where Temz and Selina Gomes were.

With the two of them not knowing the reason behind the blown kiss and with Jason facing their direction and seemingly blowing the kiss at them, they now sat with red faces as their imagination took over, spinning extremely wild stories they would usually never dare to think about.

Ignorant of what he had just done, Jason jogged back to his half of the field, clapping to the fans every few steps.

The Madrid fans did not hide their outrage as Jason jogged back, but all they could let out were groans of annoyance and a few boos.

In actuality, they were also very excited at having been treated to a six-goal thriller, and considering that they were only on equal terms, they weren't too distraught.

It was still the first leg and anything could happen, however, Jason's celebration of shushing the crowd and the 'calma' had indeed slapped them across the face with an ironic situation, which some of the fans did not want to accept.

However, that wasn't for Jason to care about and he simply took his position on his team's side of the pitch and the game kicked off again.

The Madrid players, also pumped up from the exciting game, tried to launch an attack to try and get a fourth goal in the game, but the Juventus team, after having finally gotten back on level terms, were unwilling to let their lead slip.

Defending vehemently until the referee finally blew the final whistle, exhausted smiles appeared on their faces as the game came to a close.

{It's over. 3:3}

{Fans of both teams, as well as the neutrals cannot claim that this has not been an exciting watch!}

{Both teams started strong, and while Madrid took a three-goal lead later in the game, the Juventus side didn't back down and fought their way back}

{Fantastic team efforts, superb individual displays, unyielding team spirit. We saw that from both teams!} The commentator gave closing remarks.

{I feel like I have to mention this, but all of Madrid's goals happened within the penalty box while all of the Juventus team's goals came from beyond the edge of the box. That's an interesting point, isn't it?} The co-commentator added.

{Well, it's definitely a good point for the managers of both sides to notice. Pirlo would have to look at ways help his team be more effective from inside his box as well as work on the mistakes occurring continually within the back line}

{As for Zidane, he might have to remind his players to not let up pressure the way they did today, but it's hard to say since Juventus were phenomenal in those last few minutes and it's hard to say if a tighter defense could have stopped them} the commentator said, giving his own opinion to the co-commentator's questions.

{Well, that's all from us tonight. See you in Turin in two weeks} the commentator finally said.

{I don't know if I will be in the commentary box then, but one thing is for sure...}

{I will be there!}

Chapter 643: Expert Analysis

The reporters rushed around, setting things up for interviews with the players who were calmly conversing and moving around on the pitch.

After the match that they had just witnessed, anyone who called themselves a sports reporter could not keep themselves calm and were just itching to question the players about the happenings on the pitch, hence their urgency.

In a nearby studio, the Champions League Tonight was already underway with the hosts already talking about the match and a match analysis was about to begin.

“Okay, let’s talk about Juventus’s comeback,” Jamie began.

“Did you see it coming, Titi?” he asked Henry.

“I will say there were signs, yeah, there were signs,” Henry replied.

“Right from the beginning, we knew Juventus was a threat and they showed it with a few close calls in the early minutes,”

“They kept going too, but they were terribly unlucky in the early minutes,” he explained.

“And then Madrid scored three,” Micah chimed in.

“Yes, and then Madrid scored,” Kate repeated.

“Yes, things changed after Madrid scored three, but it wasn’t the turning point for the Juventus team,” Henry took up the lead of the conversation.

“After scoring three, I think Madrid tried to slow the game down, thinking they could relax and coast through, holding on to their three-goal lead,”

“They probably didn’t want to risk pushing forward too much while they were high off their goals,”

“Unfortunately for them, Juventus had this man,” Henry stated, pointing to Ronaldo’s picture on the screen behind them while getting up.

“Show his goal please,” Henry asked the media team as he walked up to the screen.

In response to his request, the picture on the screen changed and showed Ronaldo receiving the ball, putting his head down and unleashing a rocket of a shot at the goal from far out.

“Wow, just wow, look at how he hit that,” Micah said, his tone full of awe.

“I couldn’t hit a ball like that. If I did, I’d have to go pick the ball from outside the stadium,” he laughed as he spoke.

“Well, you might have the power, but the accuracy to keep it down while putting that much power behind the ball is something only a few people can do,” Kate said, chuckling with a hand over her mouth.

“Even Titi would find it hard to pull that off in a match like that,” Jamie said.

“That’s true. I have my strengths and that is not one of them,” Henry laughed a little as he replied honestly, not a hint of shame in his voice.

After all, what Ronaldo had done was something even Messi, who was placed on the same pedestal as Ronaldo would have a hard time doing, so there was no shame in admitting his limits.

Turning back to the screen, Henry called out to pause the video at the point where the attack began.

“Look at him. Even before receiving the ball, he was scanning the area,”

"In this situation, most other players would realize that there was no good passing options. Not that there aren't any options at all, but that everyone in a dangerous area was being tightly marked,"

"If he was to pass, then he could only pass the ball back and all that would achieve is them not losing the ball,"

"A bolder player would have thought to receive the ball and push it forward till he was at least near the edge of the penalty box, but him," Henry said and played the video.

"He didn't think too much. No one near, he could see the goal, no one was in the way, BAM, simple," Henry said.

"This is where things now get interesting," Henry continued, seeing he had everyone's attention.

"That goal had changed the flow of the game. Momentum had switched sides and the Juventus team that was already being drawn into Madrid's attempt to slow the game began to react. Unfortunately, the Madrid players weren't able to do anything about that,"

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"I think the manager saw that, that's why he made changes to bring in guys like Valverde and Nacho,"

"Fresh legs in defence to bolster the back line and youthful energy in midfield to shake things up a bit," Henry said.

"If you can't control them, distract them and stop them, hmmm," Jamie mumbled, thinking.

"Unfortunately, even that didn't work. You see, momentum is a very powerful tool and in the hands of a team like Juventus, it can truly shine,"

“Soon, bam, they had their second goal. There was a lot of luck involved, but then, momentum I guess,” Henry joked around a bit.

“With only one goal left between them, Madrid tried even harder to either stabilize the situation or get a goal to put them back in a comfortable position and a deadlock continued for a while, but then, this happened,” Henry said and on the screen the scene changed and began from the free kick in the dying minutes of the game.

As the ball began moving across the screen, Henry pointed at Jason’s figure, “Watch how he moves,”

“Due to the free kick, most of the players were in Juventus’s half of the field. Seeing that, see how he begins to move forward as soon as he realizes that an attack was about to happen,”

“Now he’s in a dangerous position, but seeing Ronaldo moving towards the right, see how he moves to the center,” Henry said, pointing at Jason on the screen.

“Coming closer to give Ronaldo a passing option as well as getting into the best position to continue the attack. He killed two birds with one stone,” Jamie added to Henry’s analysis.

“Exactly. The pass came in and everything else was a formality.” Henry said, dusting his hands harmlessly.

“We already know how dangerous he can be in one-on-one situations this near the goal, but this time, he didn’t get too close, knowing that his opponent probably wouldn’t mind fouling him there,” Kate added.

“Ingenious use of the stop-and-go too. He created enough space and sent a rocket of a shot to a place Courtois couldn’t reach. Kinda reminds me of myself back in the days,” Micah bragged, laughing boisterously.

“Yeah, you wish,” Kate slammed him.

“*Gasp!* You wound me with your words,” Micah said dramatically.

“And they call me a drama queen,” Kate rolled her eyes at this partner of hers and the studio erupted with laughter.

Chapter 644: Plan for Two? Or for Three?

Jason finally freed himself from the reporters who had been questioning him incessantly every chance they got.

Not that he didn't understand their excitement, but he was exhausted after the game and wanted nothing more than to jump into a cold bath to wash away his exhaustion, but interviews was one of the perks of the job and not something he could avoid.

Especially after what had happened in the earlier match with him scoring the dying minute equalizer.

Luckily, the reporters seemed to have gotten what they wanted and were slowly pulling away and collating the information they had.

As he began to walk down towards the tunnel, he noticed Marcelo standing on the sidelines in a conversation with Ronaldo and he didn't hesitate to jog up to the two of them, wanting to swap shirts with the Madrid left-back.

Marcelo was pretty accommodating and accepted Jason's request to swap shirts but while the two of them were taking off their shirts, Ronaldo called out to Jason.

“Isn't that the girl you went to meet before the game?” he asked, staring at a side of the field.

“And Selina Gomes?” his voice held a slight tone of shock as he noticed who was beside Temz.

Ronaldo had been too focused on preparing for the game before the match began so while he had noticed Jason going to meet up with Temz during the warm-up, he hadn't noticed Selina Gomes at that time.

Seeing her now beside Temz who was waving and calling out in Jason's direction thus came as a shock to the man.

"Oh, yeah. Forgot about them for a minute there," Jason muttered, glancing in their direction.

"Hey, are you like...?" Ronaldo didn't complete his sentence, but the meaningful look in his eyes spoke volumes.

"Young people these days definitely know how to play. She's a beauty too," Marcelo said with a sly grin, also joining the banter.

"Come on man, you know I got Adele," Jason chuckled wryly.

"Like that's supposed to mean anything," Ronaldo said, eyeing Jason suspiciously.

"Come on man, it's not even like that," Jason laughed again.

"Yeah... right," Ronaldo rolled his eyes at Jason.

"Man you need to quit," Jason retorted and began to move, heading towards where Temz and Selina were in the stands.

They had left the luxury box and had come as near to the field as possible, being tightly shielded from the crowd by their security guards.

"So you ladies enjoy the show?" Jason asked the two ladies as he got to the side of the stands.

"Definitely, but I can't say I understand it much," Temz replied with a smile.

"Well, everyone's gotta start somewhere," Jason grinned.

“Well, it was very exciting to say the least,” Selina chimed in.

“So, does that mean you’ll come for the second leg?” Jason asked jokingly.

“Second leg? What’s that? What’s a second leg?” Temz asked in confusion.

“Uh, these types of matches are usually played twice. Once at each opponent’s home ground, so since we’ve played one here at Madrid, we’ll be playing another one at Turin later,”

“There’s other stuff like the away goal rule, but you probably wouldn’t understand that,” Jason laughed a little as he explained.

“It sounds pretty complicated,” Selina said with a furrowed brow, looking especially cute at that moment.

“Well, everything has a pretty complicated side to it, you just have to search for something you’ve not lost,” Jason laughed.

“I can’t be sure of my schedule, so, I’m not sure about whether I’ll be able to come, Temz said.

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“Alright, cool. Hey, about the working together thing,” Jason asked.

“Oh, yeah, are you free anytime soon?” Temz asked, her eyes involuntarily wandering onto Jason chest that was bare since he had taken his shirt off.

“I mean, I’m free tomorrow, but I’ll be in Italy. I don’t know your schedule so...” Jason shook his head.

“Actually we’re done here actually so we can be in Italy tomorrow,” Selina cut in before Temz could say anything.

“Oh...” Jason muttered, a bit surprised as to why this had become something that involved Selina, after all, it was him and Temz who had plans.

“I guess I’ll see you ladies tomorrow then,” he finally said after weighing the situation internally.

“Yeah, I’ll call you,” Temz called out to Jason as he began walking away, waving goodbye.

“Alright, sure,” Jason replied, turning away and walking toward the tunnel, relieved to finally be able to go to the locker room.

A few camera lights still flashed at him as he walked down the field and began heading to the locker rooms, but he didn’t mind it and just kept walking to the locker room.

On his way to the locker room, he came across Ronaldo taking a picture with the MOTM award.

Smiling and giving him a thumbs up before stepping past, Jason continued walking.

Despite being the one to score the last minute equalizer against Madrid, Jason didn’t dare think that he deserved to be the man of the match for the last game because while his influence in the game and the last minute strike had been very important for the team, in terms of overall influence, he still felt a bit short.

Ronaldo not only scored, but also gave an assist and was involved in all the goals, not to mention that he was the one who kick-started a comeback when it was clear that the Juventus team was sinking.

Jason’s mind quickly shelved the matter and he could not help but think about the second leg of the semi-final tie.

Today's game had ended in a draw, but considering the away-goal rule, Juventus currently had the upper hand which made things easier for them.

As long as they didn't lose and ensured that Madrid couldn't score three goals at the Allianz stadium, then Juventus could earn themselves a place in the final, however as simple as it sounded, the second leg was definitely going to be a tough match.

'I guess I've come a pretty long way,' Jason couldn't help thinking to himself wryly.

Chapter 645: High on Life I

Dear diary, today I went with Selina Gomes to watch a football game and I won't lie, but for something I know next to nothing about, it was very exciting.

I still don't know much about football after watching today's game, but Jason scored a goal and nobody won the game... apparently.

Somebody called it a half-remontada, but I don't know what that means.

Maybe I'll ask Jason about it tomorrow.

Speaking of Jason... he looked so cool while running up and down the field, and handsome too, especially when he dribbled the players and when he scored.

He blew a kiss at me too...

Does he like me?

Ding!

The sudden notification sound from her phone brought Temz out of her thoughts and she glanced up from her diary to look at her phone's screen.

{Flights to Italy have been arranged. Tomorrow morning}

“Oh,” she muttered and picked up her phone, sent a quick thanks, and placed it back down, turning back to her diary.

In this day and age, it would be considered outdated for a woman her age to own and use a diary, but she didn't care... though, since no one really knew that she did it, it didn't really matter whether it was an outdated habit or not.

Continuing to write in her diary, time slowly passed...

****29th April 2021****

11:29am

Phlunk

The hood of the Ferrari sounded as Jason pulled it open and threw his bag into it, yawning a little. After the match the previous day, there had been a bit of a celebratory party held by the players at the hotel's bar.

Normally, a draw was nothing that would warrant such a celebration, but after coming back from three goals behind to equalize in the dying minutes of a champion's league game against Madrid, a legend of the competition, they were feeling pretty upbeat.

As the one who scored the equalizing goal, there was no way for Jason to escape the party and he was dragged along to the celebration.

The manager even allowed the players to have one bottle of light beer... if they wished to.

Most players didn't take up that offer, but they stayed up pretty late and since they had to get back to Turin early, Jason didn't get much sleep, hence his sleepiness.

On another day, it wouldn't matter, as today was a day off and he could catch a few hours of sleep to balance out the deficit, but unfortunately, he had an appointment.

'Guess I'll just try to finish up quickly and get some sleep later,' he thought to himself and got in his car.

Checking the location he was given, Jason got into the car and ignited the engine.

A minute later, his phone was connected to the car speakers and the location of his destination was inputted into the GPS.

Vrooomm Vrooomm!

Jason revved the engine as the intro for the song he chose began playing.

"Ante up, get that fool,"

"Ante up, kidnap that fool," he sang as he put the car into gear and began driving out of the parking lot.

It would take him an hour to reach his destination... assuming he drove responsibly, but Jason was in the mood for pushing his limits a little that morning.

Driving through the city at the speed limit quickly began to feel boring, after all, who would have a Ferrari and want to drive it at barely 50km/h.

He swiftly re-routed to the main roads and began to tear down the track, his car's engine roaring loudly.

He still couldn't go more than 100mph, but this was already good enough; he wasn't in that much of a rush.

Any more than this and one would think he was in a hurry to die rather than in a hurry to get some work done.

“I wonder what type of song we’ll be doing,” he wondered and as soon as that thought came up in his mind, he couldn’t think of much else, after all, he was a footballer first and foremost.

Sure, he had a penchant for making freestyles every now and then, but that was something just about everybody could do every once in a while.

Okay, maybe not everybody, but still, Jason didn’t think of himself as a musical talent or anything of that kind.

With that worry in mind, he could not help trying to think of some lines that could make people go, “Ooooh, bars,”.

He couldn’t come up with too many, but by the time he reached the studio, he had thought of a few lines that should be impressive enough... hopefully.

As he drove into the parking space of the location he was given, he saw some cars arriving from an entrance at the other side.

Not thinking much of it, his boyish heart took over, and he stepped on the brakes for a second and threw the steering wheel sideways, slamming on the accelerator to pull the car into a drifting turn that he used to put the car in a parking spot.

“You’re the first person I’ve ever seen to drift a Ferrari,” Jason heard as he pushed open the door of his car to get down.

“Well, that’s probably because you’ve not seen a lot of Ferraris,” he replied, glancing over.

Only then did he realize that the people in the cars that were arriving included Temz and... Selina Gomes.

'Why is she still here tho?' Jason wondered internally as he had only made an appointment with Temz and hadn't expected Selina to tag along.

Things had changed now.

Jason didn't care to impress anyone, but there was a huge difference between a situation when it was only Temz and the producer on the other side of the glass in the studio than a situation where someone like Selina Gomes was added to that cast.

'Well, fu*k,' he thought, but that feeling soon disappeared, after all, he had made mistakes like terrible touches and terrible shots on fields in front of tens of thousands of people so this much was something he could deal with.

"Anyway, let's get this show going," he said after a bit of exchange of pleasantries.

"Sure sure," Temz replied.

Chapter 646: High on Life II

"Hey, how much does a studio sesh cost... like this place?" Jason suddenly thought to ask as they entered the place and noticed that it was especially lavish looking, both on the inside and the outside.

"Just about ten thousand," Temz replied easily as it had only been a day since she heard the price and it hadn't been in her head long enough for her to forget.

"Ten Gs?" Jason asked, only a slight amount of his shock and alarm at the price he was hearing.

"It better be Naira," he muttered.

Forget about whether he was musically inclined or not. If they were paying that much, the producer better make him sound like an angel Tupac singing from above.

“Haha, what do you mean it better be Naira. I paid ten thousand Euros,” Temz laughed.

“... You wanna be my sugar mommy?” Jason asked, chuckling.

“Coming from the guy driving a Ferrari?” Selina Gomes butted in, laughing.

“Y’all didn’t come here with your Leggedes Benz either. You came with five G-class Mercedes for Christ’s sake!”

“There are only two of you!” Jason retorted.

“Sorry, Leggedes what?” Selina asked, confused.

“Oh, you mean legs?” she realized after a second.

“Good that you figured it out. I’ll never have explained it,” Jason said before their conversation was interrupted as they arrived at the studio.

From then on, things got busy quickly.

Temz had a few beat samples ready and had them played so Jason could hear them and make a choice.

“If you don’t like any of them, we can work on creating something you want,” the producer said, wanting to display his skills, however it was not needed as Jason soon heard something he liked from the samples Temz had brought.

Of course, it wouldn’t be as good as when a beat he liked was created, but figuring that the samples Temz had brought along were things she could work with, he picked the one he liked best.

If he had a beat created to his tastes, it could be something that Temz couldn’t work with and that would only end up wasting time.

“Isn’t that the one we’re using?” Selina suddenly interjected.

“Yeah, that’s the one. I didn’t actually think he’d pick this one,” Temz replied.

“Guess we can’t use this one then,” Jason said, ready to move on, but Selina interjected.

“Actually, we can, it’s not done yet. There’s still a missing piece, you can be that piece,” She said.

“... If we were not in a studio right now, I’d think you were flirting with me,” Jason said after a thoughtful pause.

“Who... who said I wasn’t flirting? Wait, how old are you again?”

With an eyebrow raised as the answer to his first question, he replied, “19” to the second question.

“Well, I guess that puts me completely out of the race,” Selina laughed, waving her hands in defeat.

“... Uh, no, it doesn’t,” Jason replied ambiguously.

All of a sudden, it felt like the heat in the studio had been turned up.

“You two should just stop playing around,” Temz rolled her eyes at them.

“Alright, alright,” Jason laughed, putting his hands up in defeat.

“Anyway, I was joking about earlier, I have a girlfriend,” he said to Selina before turning back to Temz.

“How do we start?” he asked Temz, not noticing the flash of difficult emotions in Selina’s eyes.

'I wasn't joking,' Selina thought to herself, but quickly put her thoughts aside.

"Since we already have it half complete, we can try to perform it with you here so you can get a feel of the song. That way you can, like you know," Temz shrugged, finishing her explanation with hand gestures.

"Oh, I feel you, I feel you," Jason replied, nodding.

"Can we get started now then?" Temz asked, nodding to the producer.

"Okay sure. You guys can get in the booth," the producer said, beginning to do his thing with the buttons.

Jason, Temz, and Selina got into the studio, which was pretty big compared to the single-person booth most producers used in the current day.

'Probably because most Europeans are more of performers than modern-day artists,' Jason thought to himself.

Most performers didn't work alone, hence the studio design... but then again, he was just guessing, and the reason the studio was that big could be because of something else.

"Actually, the parts of the song we are still working on includes the start, so we'll sing from like the middle, well, the parts we already have down," Temz explained.

"Oh," Jason muttered, taking his headphones and putting them on his ears as the beat began playing.

After the smooth and catchy intro of the song, the beat began, but Temz and Selina just hummed along as they hadn't done that part yet. But midway through the song, they began singing and finished the song.

"I'm pretty impressed, but how does one write a song starting from the middle?" Jason asked, intrigued.

"Actually, we had done the beginning before, but when we got to the middle, what we came up with didn't match the first verse, and we liked this part better, so we scratched off the first verse," Selina replied to Jason, taking off her headphones.

"Oh," Jason replied again.

"So what do you think, can you come up with something?" Temz asked, but it was something she asked as a formality, and she was ready to spend a few hours writing down lyrics and putting their thoughts together.

"Uh, well, I think I have something, but let's see how well it goes together," Jason replied, his brain rapidly putting words together and seeing if they fit or not.

"Oh, let's see it then," Temz nodded.

"Again," Selina called out to the producer and a second later the beat began again.

The intro played out again and after the intro was over, Jason opened his mouth to sing, but his first line immediately had the two girls thinking, 'bold!'

"I like sex on the beach, but I don't drink,

Got my toes in the sand, let me breathe, let me think,

Body on fire, but my mind stays clean,

I'm the wildest one you've ever seen,"

Jason sang out the first verse he had hurriedly come up with, reaching the point where Selina and Temz had started singing on in the previous run.

“No shots, no chaser, just a moonlight kiss,

No haze in my head, still I live like this,

Smooth talk, real walk, I don’t need no buzz,

To feel that rush from the touch, just because,” Selina sang her part of the song, which was the pre-chorus.

At this point, they had forgotten that this was supposed to be a freestyle for Jason to push out his ideas. They just kept singing and Tems was up next.

“I’m high on life, not a drop in sight,

Still I party like I just might lose the night,

I like vibes that don’t sink,

He said let me blow your mind, don’t blink,”

Hey guys, I’m back... Kinda.

I was supposed to be back from yesterday after submitting my project report, since it’s what I’ve been writing all these weeks, added with final exams.

Unfortunately, there were huge problems with it... apparently, so, I’m still not done, but I’ll be working on it today and tomorrow so that I can be done by Monday.

All in all, that means, consistent updates will be back by next week latest.

Thanks for all your support till now and no, I'm not dropping the book anytime soon.

Chapter 647: Stunning Udinese I

****2nd May 2021****

{It's evening in Udine and here at the Stadio Friuli, we have two sides lining up to go against each other for the second time this season. It's Udinese versus Juventus} The commentator gave opening remarks as the players began marching out of the tunnels.

{These two teams have just five games left and they will be putting their all out on the field to ensure that they end the season with better results than they have now}

{Juventus will be looking to take all three points from this game and stay abreast with Inter Milan on the league table, while Udinese will be doing all they can to stop them and secure a better position for themselves mid-table}

{Juventus look to be stronger on paper, but can that translate into the match in the ninety minutes to come? We'll see}

While the commentator was giving the opening remarks and discussing each team's line-ups with the co-commentator/pundit in the box with him, the players completed all the pre-match formalities and had spread themselves across the field, waiting for the whistle from the referee.

Fweeeeeeeee!

{And we're off!}

{Udinese kick off the game with a pass back into their own half. Clearly, they're opting for a patient approach to start the game}

{Get a few passes around, let the players feel the ball, and set the tempo before you start looking for a way forward. Doing this eases up many mistakes at the start of the game-

But the Juventus players are not giving them any time to get used to the ball. They're hunting in packs and pressing hard!}

Like the commentator said, the Juventus players weren't just standing around and instead burst forward on the press with amazing intensity that had the officials scheduling a urine test for the Juventus players immediately after the game.

The Udinese players were forced all the way back into their own half and at some point, the ball made it all the way to the Udinese goalkeeper due to the high press and closure of passing lanes for the Udinese players.

Despite the game just kicking off, the goalkeeper panicked when the ball came all the way to him, especially with the Juventus players rushing at him without pause.

If he lost the ball or made a misplaced pass at this point, he would never live out his mistake, thus, as soon as the ball made it to him, he kicked it back up the field powerfully.

The ball flew powerfully over the center of the field and landed in Juventus's half of the field where it was smoothly collected by Cuadrado who controlled it deftly and lay the ball off to De Ligt on his left.

Thus, barely a minute into the game, the Udinese team had lost the ball and the attack was turned on them.

On the sidelines, the Udinese manager began pacing anxiously, doing his best to hide his unease.

Before the match, he had emphasized to his players that they had to be in control of the game for the first ten minutes at the very least.

Doing that would help them slow down Juventus players from building any momentum and waste their energy since they would be chasing the ball around. By doing this, they would have bought themselves

ten minutes of time and a slow start to the game, allowing them to contest on the same level with Juventus for longer.

But now, that plan had gone down the drain.

The Udinese manager could not help wondering if the Juventus players had known that this was their plan and thus had immediately burst out on the press to counter this move.

'Pretty ingenious... It trades away some stamina for quicker control of the game,' the manager analysed internally as he watched the match calmly.

'To ensure that the stamina they waste away at the start doesn't come back to bite them, then what they would want to do is to... oh sh*t,' his eyes widened as he realised something.

"Stay on your man!" he shouted at his players, but right at that moment, Ronaldo who had come deep to receive the ball from the Juventus midfielders, chipped the ball forward up and over the Udinese defense line into the space behind.

Like a ghost racing forward, Jason appeared behind the ball catching it on his thigh and pushing it forward, but before he could completely disengage from his marker who was hot on his heels, he was slammed into from behind.

With his full focus on bringing the ball under control, Jason wasn't able to bear the shock and went down.

{Oh, he's gone down! Is that a direct obstruction of a goal-scoring opportunity!??}

Like thunderous waves, the commentator's words slammed into the Udinese manager who now involuntarily had his hands on his head.

Not caring for the Udinese manager's mental dilemma, the referee ran up to the Udinese, fiddling with his pocket and smoothly pulled out a card and held it in the air.

Without surprise, it was a red card and the Udinese crowd burst out in groans when they realized that the player would be sent off.

"I barely touched him!" The fouling player tried to reason with the referee and his team captain arriving behind him backed him up.

"That wasn't even a goal-scoring opportunity, we had him locked up," the Udinese captain bullshitted confidently, but all that earned him was a scoff from the referee who wasn't even bothered to check with the VAR.

He had seen the situation clearly and without a doubt, the grounds for his decision were clear.

After realizing they couldn't change the referee's mind, the fouling player had no choice but to grumpily leave the field, his annoyance shooting through the roof.

With blazing fury in his eyes, the Udinese manager watched the approaching player and clenched his fists tightly in annoyance.

It hadn't even been five minutes, yet his team was already playing with one man down.

However, as annoying as the situation was, there was still over eighty minutes of match time to play, so he ignored the player and started making arrangements to deal with the hole in his team's defense.

Calling out to a player on the bench to begin warming up, he watched as the players arranged themselves for the free kick.

Seeing Ronaldo standing behind the ball less than two meters away from the penalty box, the manager's heart leaped into his throat for a second, but a second later, he calmed down.

'Most of the free kicks he's taken these days either end up in the stands or hitting the wall,' the manager thought and turned to his assistant to talk about how the players would arrange themselves with one man down.

Fweeeeeeeeeee!

{Ronaldo runs up and hits it!?!}

{Under the wall and in!!!}

Chapter 648: Stunning Udinese II

{GOAL! Juventus!!!}

At the sudden shout from the commentator, the Udinese manager turned back at the field in shock to see Ronaldo running towards the sidelines and doing his signature celebration.

This time, he couldn't keep his annoyance bottled up and kicked away a nearby bottle in anger.

What the hell was even happening here!?

He had arrived full of confidence with his players and they had plans to counter their opponents.

He knew that it would be difficult to stop the opponents from scoring, but he had set up plans to ensure that the game didn't get too far away from them too quickly.

However, everything was going wrong and without a doubt, if things continued in this vein, at the end of the game, quite a few fingers would be pointed in his direction.

"Ugh, let's just get this over with," he groaned as he turned back to the assistant manager and continued his discussion, leaving the motivation of the players to the team captain on the field.

He was here to manage the team, not to babysit them and if the people with roles didn't fulfil them at times like this, then hell would freeze over in the dressing room later that night.

Unlike the dampened mood of every Udinese supporter and player at the stadium, the Juventus players were filled with joy and were now looking forward to the rest of the game.

After the celebrations, they swiftly headed back to their half of the field, very giddy and upbeat now that they were in the lead.

The referee soon blew his whistle again and the Udinese players resumed the game with a kick-off less than five minutes after they kicked off to start the match.

The Juventus players once again prepared themselves to rush forward and throw their opponents off guards, but to their utmost surprise, the Udinese players didn't shy away and started pushing into the Juventus team's half right after the kickoff.

However, other than amusing the Juventus players with their desperate but senseless attempt, they didn't make any waves and the ball was soon stolen from them.

{It's Juventus pushing forward. McKennie down the middle, is he looking to pass the ball in-behind?}

{No, the space is quickly closed down and he passes it down to the left flank} the commentator said, giving a play-by-play of what was going on the field.

{Jason on the ball, he's moving the ball down the flanks, but not without interruption}

Facing off against two defenders who blocked his path forward and seemed ready to do whatever it took to stop him from getting through, Jason seemed to give up and turned around, but just when the players were beginning to lower their guard, Jason made a no-look pass to Ronaldo, who was nearby.

On releasing the ball, Jason immediately turned and ran forward, making a run behind the Udinese defense line.

Ronaldo didn't betray Jason's trust and the ball was soon slotted between the defenders into Jason's running path and Jason caught it with the tip of his foot as he cut into the penalty box, but as he caught the ball, he saw a Udinese player flying at him in a tackle.

Using his toe to raise the ball just slightly up and over the player, Jason also tried to jump over the tackle, but he was too late and was swept away by the Udinese defender's tackle.

"Argh!" he groaned in pain as he tumbled to the ground, grabbing his shin in pain.

{He's been brought down again, and this time, it's inside the box! Will there be a price to pay?} the commentator shouted as the referee walked towards the players, his hand pointing to the penalty spot.

He didn't stop there and pulled out a yellow card to show the Udinese player who tackled while the Juventus players who were nearby went to check on Jason who was slowly getting back up on his feet.

"You good bro?" Mckennie asked Jason, helping him up.

"... Urgh, yeah," Jason wheezed, bending to rub his sore shin.

"You sure? The medic can come check," Ronaldo interjected, wanting to be sure.

"It's okay, I'll walk it off," Jason said firmly.

"These guys are not playing around with those tackles. It's like they're targeting you," Mckennie noted, glancing at the Udinese players.

"I doubt it, I just happened to be in a pretty dangerous area and they seem generally aggressive. You're not safe either," Jason snickered as the two of them walked out of the penalty box.

"Hey, make sure you score," Jason called out to Ronaldo as they walked away.

"Who do you think I am," Ronaldo replied confidently, sounding almost offended that Jason would think he would miss.

"Right, I forgot. Penaldo, do your thing," Jason joked and stepped out of the box.

Turning his attention to the goal, Ronaldo put the ball down on the spot and started stepping back, but before he stopped, the referee's whistle already went off, letting him know that he could take the penalty anytime.

Still, he did not rush and calmly stepped back, took a deep breath, ran up to the ball and hit it powerfully down the center while the Udinese goalkeeper jumped towards the right.

{Well taken penalty!}

{Two minutes ago, he scored one, now he makes it two!}

{This game is quickly shaping up into something none of the home fans want to watch!}

Ronaldo didn't bother running to the sidelines and just stood there with a smile on his face while his teammates ran up to him in celebration.

On the sidelines, Pirlo pumped his fist, a rare smile breaking out on his face. It seemed like today would be an easy day with no rollercoaster of emotions on schedule for him as long as his players kept doing what they were already doing.

The Udinese manager on the other hand, was flabbergasted at what was going on and was lost on how to react.

He was still trying to figure out how to cope with one of his centerbacks being sent off, but the second one was busy giving away a penalty and getting booked, not caring for his efforts to save the situation.

The manager would have thrown a fit if not for the slight hope that his team could still make something out of the game, after all, it was barely more than five minutes into the game.

However, when he saw his players once again lose the ball after kicking off for the third time and the Juventus team immediately bursting forward on the attack, he could not believe his eyes and doubts about the professionalism of his players could not help but pop into his mind.

Chapter 649: Stunning Udinese III

#7th minute...

After kicking off once again, the Udinese team tried to calmly exchange the ball among themselves while the Juventus team once again burst forward on the press, which was uncharacteristic of a Serie A team.

Teams in the Serie A prided themselves on strategic defense. If a goal was scored, the team that scored usually had no qualms about defending for the rest of the game.

In that regard, Juventus had tweaked that setup a bit due to having players who were good at breaking forward, as well as Ronaldo, the world's top scorer.

Hence they were more attack minded than most other Serie A teams, however, even they had times when they were just pressing for show and were actually consolidating their lead by strategic pressing, passing and defending, instead of all players except the strikers staying behind the ball.

At this moment, that was what they planned to do, but due to them rushing about with lesser energy, the Udinese players seemed to notice some space between the Juventus players and they tried to send the ball forward and break through.

However, the ball was quickly intercepted and once again, possession fell to Juventus.

After intercepting the ball, Alex Sandro passed the ball to De Ligt in the center, and the Udinese player who had just lost the ball immediately gave chase.

On receiving the ball, De Ligt initially wanted to pass the ball to Sczesny, but feeling a bit playful tried to dribble the rushing player. His goal was to waist time, and not actually dribble the player.

The moment it seemed like he would lose the ball, he would easily pass the ball away, but surprisingly, due to the Udinese player rushing forward, the small feint De Ligt did fooled him and sent him running the wrong way, opening space for De Ligt to pass the ball to a teammate in the center.

Without hesitation, De Ligt passed the ball to Bentacur, who in turn burst past an Udinese midfielder and sent the ball to Jason on the left flank.

As Jason neared the ball that was rolling towards him, he heard approaching footsteps behind him.

Not losing his cool, Jason let the ball roll into his leg while he turned, but as he saw a foot stretching towards the ball, he sharply pulled the ball away to dodge the tackle and then kicked the ball forward, darting past the player down the flank.

{Oh, he's away!}

Since Jason was sitting pretty deep and was in his own half when the ball came to him, the player he had just dribbled was only the Udinese right winger and Jason's actual marker, the right back was still in his path.

Like always, Jason didn't plan to let that stop him and he calmly faced off against the player, but despite doing a few stepovers to try to confuse the defender, he noticed the man wasn't budging.

With how hard the defender was staring directly at him, it became clear to Jason that the defender's intent wasn't to stop him from getting past with the ball, but rather to stop him from getting past at all.

Despite realizing this, Jason still moved to dribble past the marker, starting an infield run and then faking out and cutting back outside, but the Udinese defender stuck to him like glue and continuously tried to insert himself between Jason and the ball.

It was almost like he was saying, the ball can go, but you cannot.

After somehow managing to hold off the player till he was almost at the side of the penalty box, Jason gave up on pushing any further forward and forced a cross into the Udinese penalty box, yet even while he was kicking the ball, his marker elbowed his midsection, sending Jason to the floor.

Despite the pain in his abdomen, Jason instantly sat up to complain to the referee, but the referee gestured for advantage as the ball was still in the air.

{Cross to Morata! Header!} the commentator shouted excitedly, his voice increasing by a notch after every word.

The Udinese goalkeeper jumped at the ball and just barely managed to get a tip of his fingers to it, deflecting it slightly.

Clang!

The ball bounced off the bar and flew back into play, bouncing directly onto Ronaldo's swinging foot.

{This one for the hat-trick!!!}

{Goal!}

{He's done it!}

{Just four minutes since his first goal and eight minutes since the start of the game! They're leaving no way out for their opponents here!} the commentator shouted excitedly as the Juventus players once again began another wave of celebrations.

Every Juventus fan watching the match could not help but feel like they were walking on clouds at that moment and even the Ronaldo fans could not help taking to their social media platforms to go and profess the greatness of their favorite player.

On the sidelines, the Udinese manager's face had turned red and one could almost smoke coming off his head as his eyes blazed with righteous fury.

Unlike his silence up till this point, this time, he was about to let his players have it, but his assistant manager caught on quickly and quickly reminded the manager of where they were, helping him to regain control of his tongue and suspend the tongue lashing he was about to unleash till later.

Reminding himself that adding a scandal to the current sandwich of annoyance he was facing would only be worse for him, he opted to give orders to the substitute coming on and further gave directives to his players to go full defensive.

No matter what, they must not concede any other goals.

Luckily for the Udinese players, the Juventus players were content with stealing three goals in the first ten minutes of the game and also went on the defensive as well.

This gave the Udinese manager some boldness and he soon started calling out to his players to move the ball forward and go on the attack.

The chances for a fairytale comeback from three goals down and with one man less were probably less than 5% for his side, however, even that was enough.

Even if they could not manage a comeback, they could at least reduce the goal difference if they could get one or two goals back.

Chapter 650: Weakness I

The game soon settled into a back-and-forth of the ball.

The Juventus team made goal-scoring attempts every so-often to keep their opposition on their toes, but it was clear that there wasn't much energy behind their efforts, after all, as far as they concerned, the game was as good as over.

However, for the Udinese team who wanted to reduce their goal difference, their efforts were more strenuous, especially since they were a man down.

Time and again, their every attack met the iron wall of the Juventus defense line and they could hardly threaten Szczesny with any of their attempts.

Despite managing to squeeze out five shots in the first half, only two were on target and neither of those two shots had even forced Szczesny to make a diving save.

After the second half began, the Udinese players who had faced a severe tongue lashing from their manager and made adjustments to their tactics became a bit more threatening on their attacks, but they still couldn't score any goals up till the 70th minute.

At this point, the managers had started making substitutions. For the Juventus side, Pirlo started taking off his important players and started bringing on young players and other players who hadn't been able to get much game time lately.

The Udinese manager tried to increase his team's firepower by bringing on more attackers so that he could at least get one goal back, but the Juventus team still held strong against their efforts.

Jason was among the players who had been subbed off and after being subbed off, he was no longer paying attention to the ongoing game and was instead thinking about something else.

Today had been a good day in the office for Juventus despite the match not being over yet, however, for him, it had not been a good day.

He had been vastly ineffective going forward and that was a problem.

He had noticed since a few weeks ago that it was getting harder to keep pushing out the level of performances that had brought him this far.

'Is this as far as I go?' he thought to himself with a deep sigh, closing his eyes.

His advantages after rebirth were, a younger body that had not been plagued by injuries, a mind filled with experiences and knowledge of a twenty year career, and time to merge those two things together.

From the start, he knew that he wasn't some overly talented person who lived and breathed football despite his passion, hence he had focused on working hard instead.

It took him years to meld his experiences and knowledge into what he was today.

It didn't just happen in one day, but rather, it was a collective increase. The problem was that it was slow... very slow.

This was exactly why he had avoided being a part of any academies early on.

Academies would constantly evaluate their wards' performances and make evaluations on their talents with their information.

During the years he spent training, he tried to become the ideal winger who had amazing dribbling skills, top-notch passing skills, high game intelligence, and electrifying agility, however to anyone watching, he either came off as a showboating youth who was doing things that were way over his head.

And all this was because his talent was that low.

If he had joined an academy, he would have either ended up kicked out, written off, or forced to change his playing style because it would take him too long to learn what he wanted to learn... according to their standards.

If not for his passion for football, the consistent repeated training with very little improvements would have driven him crazy, or forced him to give up anyway.

However, he had steeled himself and kept going.

In the end, he was able to become something similar to the ideal player he had in mind.

He had good dribbling skills that were backed up by millions of repeated dribbling drills.

He had electrifying agility, which was his natural talent backed by countless agility-increasing drills.

His shooting ability was also very good and his lack of a weak foot made him a very versatile player, however, that was it.

His passing skills were not all that good. They were definitely passable, but they were nowhere near the level of a maestro.

His game intelligence was even worse and his spatial awareness was terrible. What he had been using to cover for it was his experience of watching countless matches and being part of many of them, along with a good memory to memorize players positions, however, this had a small weakness.

He could only work with what was in front of him or with what he knew to be behind him.

It didn't sound like a weakness, but in reality, that was the trademark of an average player.

Football players who were called the greatest always seemed to have eyes in the back of their head.

This was why they could always be in the right places at the right time and they make maneuvers that no one ever saw coming.

Jason didn't have a high spatial awareness ability and he instead covered it up by keeping the ball at his feet, which was why he usually preferred to dribble past an opponent by himself instead of bringing his teammates into play, making him sometimes seem like a selfish player.

Speaking from a general point of view, Jason's current advantages and abilities were enough to sustain an above-average footballer, however Jason hadn't been placed in a totally different timeline, undergoing the horrors of formal education a second time only to become an average footballer who had top level performances occasionally.

He wanted to become so good that people would think he was cheating.

So good that the occasional dope test became something he had to do after almost every game.

However, that was beginning to look less likely with what was beginning to happen.

When he burst onto the football scene the previous year, his style of play had stunned his opponents and they had been at a loss on how to defend against him.

His snake-like agility and positional versatility had kept him out of opposition grasp and left them stumbling at his heels, but this was professional football, not Sunday League Football.

Professional teams had data analysts whose jobs all year round were to analyze opponents and find their weaknesses, and now, it seemed his weaknesses had been exposed.