

Legends 691

Chapter 691: Super Coppa Finals

The days that followed were filled with overly excessive media promotion for the Uventus team. Not only was the club doing its fair share of showing off their title, the players and the fans were also very much willing to join in the showing off.

The fans were especially adamant about displaying their third Serie A title in a row and they made sure to make the online space annoying for the fans of the other big teams that were title contenders.

The other teams' fanbases at first stayed silent, but they could only take so much before they started lashing out, trying to win back some pride for themselves, but what followed was even further showing off and tongue lashing from the Uventus fans.

The Uventus players were not to be left out either and also joined in on the online promotion, each coming up with different ideas to show off their medals.

Jason also joined in, posting a picture of himself sleeping in a bed while holding the league trophy. The caption he added, "2 of 4", caused a media explosion immediately, especially since the Uventus official account re-posted it.

The Uventus fans, Jason's fans and many neutral female fans liked the bold statement, but the other Serie A teams' fans were not having it.

Instantly going on the internet to rebuke Jason, saying he was too young and inexperienced in the world of football to be making such wild statements just because his team made it to the finals.

The ones who supported Jason's claims immediately fought back, supporting Jason's claim, after all, who were their opponents?

Atalanta in the Coppa Italia finals and Bayern Munich in the Champions League finals.

Atalanta was a strong team, anybody would admit, but the probability of them beating Uventus was less than forty percent and that was being generous to the Atalanta team.

As for Bayern who Uventus would be up against in the Champions League finals... they were indeed a very strong team, but the question as to who would defeat who was still very much up in the air as both teams had fantastic players and many players who were world-class or bordering that.

However, there was still a good chance that Uventus would win as they had Cristiano Ronaldo who had in layman's terms "made Bayern his bit*h", so the Uventus fans were fairly confident in their chances... as long as he was back in time for the game.

Luckily, further examination had been done and Ronaldo was confirmed to be not seriously injured and though there was a chance he might miss the finals against Atalanta, he would be definitely be available for the match against Bayern... as long as he didn't get injured again.

Despite the cacophonous situation online, Jason remained dutiful at training... mostly because he didn't even know what was going on.

He was primarily focused on preparing for the next game against Atalanta and didn't have time to bother with his social media. As far as he was concerned, he had won the league trophy and posted a few pictures... nothing more, nothing less.

Even if he did know about the situation, there was nothing he could do about it, not that he would do anything if there was.

The days quickly rolled by and the night of the Super Coppa Italia finals arrived.

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****19th May 2021****

{Tonight is the night, the night we know who is the best team in all of Italy... or at least, the best team for this season}

{It's the Super Coppa Italia and we have here the final game between Atalanta and Uventus}

{Two very big clubs. Household names in all of Italy, coming out here to battle it out for who gets to lift the famous old trophy} the commentator said as the players of the two teams started marching out of the tunnel.

{It is a very old trophy. Not a very famous one outside of Italy, but to us Italians it definitely means a lot. It gives a lot of young players the chance to be seen, to perform on the big stage and maybe... to earn some silverware} the co-commentator pitched in.

{That it does and speaking of young talents, here is the line-up for Uventus. For today, they are using a 4-3-3 attacking formation}

{Wojciech Szczęsny starts in goal with Merih Demiral and Dragusin starting as center backs}

{Gianluca Frabotta starts as the left back and Danilo is the right back for today}

{In midfield, we have a Nicolo Fagioli and Arthur partnership with Dybala starting as an attacking midfielder}

{On the right wing is Federico Bernadeschi, and on the left is Jason. Felix Correia is the main striker for today}

{What do you think about this starting eleven, Tony?} the commentator asked his co-commentator/pundit.

{Well, like I said, it has become the trend for the bigger clubs to give their youths and reserve squads some game time and Pirlo is fielding a mix of experienced and youthful players here}

{The youthful players have probably been performing very well in training and some of the reserve players live for moments like this. There is also the additional experienced players who will work well to cover the blunders for the less experienced players}

{Over all, I think it is a pretty good line-up} Tony replied, saying his thoughts.

{Well, compared to the Atalanta side that is playing a more experienced line-up today, we just might see a shock today}

{Which reminds me, Jason who is starting for the Uventus side, will you classify him as a youthful player or a more experienced player for the Uventus squad?} the commentator threw another question at his partner.

{Well... he has been fielded a lot since joining Uventus on loan and his impact for the team has not been little}

{Goals, assists, play-making efforts for the team, and even defensively, he has been very instrumental for the team and despite having been at the team for only half a season, he has become the second highest goal scorer for the Uventus in all competitions and the fans are already clamoring for a permanent transfer}

{Despite his age, I can say without a doubt that he should not be classified at the same level as a reserve player} Tony chuckled.

{Well, his bold claims have gotten the attention of football fans from around the world. Now they're waiting for whether he can put on a show or not} the commentator also laughed a little and then went on to say the lineup of the Atalanta team.

Listening to the commentator's words about his claims, Jason smiled wryly and shook his head a little. He had finally realized what his caption had caused just the day before and by then it was already too late for him to explain that he hadn't meant what a lot of the fans were insinuating that he said.

As a matter of fact, there were a lot of insinuations and made by different fans and Jason did not even know where to start to defend himself.

In the end, he decided to just stay silent... it was not like he was doubtful of his team's chances to win those finals anyway.

Waiting for the opponents to kick off the game, he began doing a few warm up exercises, but before long he had to stop as the referee put his whistle to his mouth.

Fweeeeeeeeeeeeeee!

With a sharp whistle kicking off the game, the Uventus team immediately surged into Atalanta's half of the field on a heavy press, Jason leading the charge as he rushed forward after the ball.

In response, the Atalanta team began increasing the pace at which they moved the ball around among themselves, trying to escape the heavy press.

In the end, they weren't able to cope with the heavy pressure and the ball was passed all the way back to the goalkeeper. At which point, the Uventus players began to reduce the pressure and began to fall back, not willing to expend any further on chasing the ball unless it was near them.

With the pressure being reduced, the Atalanta players once again began moving the ball up the field, trying to look for attacking options.

At first, it looked like the Uventus players were falling back, allowing the Atalanta team to move the ball further up the field, but once they were midway into the Uventus half of the field, the attacking three players moved further up the field, surrounding the Atalanta players and they swiftly stole possession of the ball.

The Uventus team instantly began pushing up the field, trying to turn a defensive situation into an attacking one with a lightning-paced counter attack.

Correia pushed the ball past the midfield line before sending it down the right flank into the path of Bernadeschi who caught the ball on the tip of his foot while on a run cutting into the field.

His marker immediately showed up to try to block his path, but not wasting any time trying to dribble past him, Bernadeschi swiftly pushed the ball back out wide with his right foot and sprinting as hard as he could after it, using his pace to escape his marker.

Hateboer tried as hard as he could to catch up to Bernadeschi, but his agility wasn't enough and he could only watch as Bernadeschi stepped into the penalty box from the right and raise his foot to send the ball across into the path of the other two Uventus forwards.

Chapter 692: Super Coppa Finals II

Hateboer made a last-ditch tackle to try to block the cross as soon as he saw Bernadeschi angling his body to cross the ball, but when he jumped into Bernadeschi's path he only saw the Uventus man's leg stop before it hit the ball, faking the cross.

Pushing the ball forward again, Bernadeschi cut inside, running past Hateboer who was struggling to get up and hit the ball at the goal.

{Bernadeschi!!!}

The ball flew speedily at the Atalanta goal, but Radunovic unfurled himself speedily, dropping to the ground to stop the ball, managing to get a hand to the ball and pushing it toward the left.

{Saved! But it's not out of danger yet!} the commentator screamed as he saw the ball bounce in front of Uventus's center forward.

Running at the ball and hitting it, Correia intended to blast the ball into the back of the net, but Rafael Tolo, the Atalanta captain, jumped quickly, inserting himself in between the ball and the goal and the ball bounced powerfully off him and flew up and over the goal.

{Blocked by the captain! Clear example of how to lead with example!}

{Atalanta escape this dangerous situation, but they're not completely out of danger yet. Uventus have a corner} the commentator said as the Uventus players rushed into the penalty box, fighting for the optimal position to head the ball home if it came their way.

Jason jogged over to the left corner and took the ball. He was the one in charge of corner kicks from the left side for today's game since Cuadrado wasn't starting.

Dybala was in charge of corners from the right side, while Danilo was in charge of long free kicks.

Fweeeeeeeeeee!

Jason ran up to the ball and swung it into the penalty box, curling it inside and the players in the box jumped to the air, commencing an aerial battle for the ball.

In the end, Demiral got his head to the ball first, heading it at the Atalanta goal, but the ball clipped the top of the bar and flew out of play.

{Saved by the cross bar! Uventus come very close to taking the lead again, and Radunovic can heave a sigh of relief because he knows there was no way he was getting to that ball} The commentator's words weren't wrong as Radunovic had been rooted to the spot when the ball came at his goal.

The ball had been too far away for him to reach even if he had been able to move so he was thankful it wasn't on target.

Collecting a ball from a ball boy, he set it down for a goalkick.

#19th minute...

Malinovskyi had just intercepted a pass meant for Bernadeschi on the right flank and he immediately took off running down the flank, dodging between Uventus players in a fantastic display of electrifying agility, until he reached the left side of the Uventus penalty box and sent a low cross to Muriel who immediately swung his foot at it.

{Muriel hits it first time!}

The ball flew at the Uventus goal, but wasn't able to make it past Szczesny who dived spectacularly and punched the ball away with his two hands, sending it out for a corner kick.

{Fantastic shot! Magnificent save!}

{Sczesny knew he had to get to that, he just knew! And his instinct didn't deceive him}

{What a wondrous display of goalkeeping ability. With him in such fantastic form, Atalanta may be in for a tough game tonight!} The commentator shouted Sczesny's praises while the goalkeeper's teammates hyped him up on the pitch.

The Atalanta players quickly rushed into the penalty box for the corner kick, but the ball was powerfully cleared away from the penalty box by Dragusin, sending it outside the penalty box where Jason was waiting.

Catching the ball on his chest, and bringing it down, Jason feinted a turn to his left, before turning back to his right, smoothly dodging the Atalanta player behind him.

Instantly taking off down the left side of his field, he began darting forward with the ball for all he was worth.

The player he had just dribbled past and the last defender gave chase, trying to keep up with him, but all they managed to do was keep him pressed to the flank for a while, but as he entered the final third, he was beginning to leave them behind.

With the Atalanta defenders no longer pressing him, Jason began cutting in and rushing into the penalty box.

Radunovic had begun coming off his line when he saw Jason, but on the right, Correia and Bernadeschi had appeared and were clear targets to receive the ball.

Not sure what to do, his movement seized for a moment and Jason instantly flicked the ball over to Correia.

{He's squared the ball! It's an open goal!} the commentator shouted, but the screams that followed filled the stadium with ease.

Correia tried to hit the ball with his left foot despite being a primarily right-footed player and he somehow missed the perfect timing to hit the ball, causing the ball to bounce harmlessly off his leg and roll all the way to the throwing line.

{Ohhhhhhhh!!!}

{I can't believe that! The crowd can't believe that! Even the player himself can't believe that!}

{That was a wide open goal and he's missed it. In fact, missing it is an understatement by how wide that shot went off} The commentator's aggrieved voice was followed by the groans of aggravation from the Uventus fans.

{With finishing like that, I hope the Uventus manager's decision to field him doesn't come back to bite the team!}

Listening to the commentator's words and the aggrieved shouts from the fans, Correia depressingly covered his face with his shirt, but he was quickly comforted by his teammates.

Atrocious misses were part of football after all, and no one was going to get too angry over just one miss. They had all been there before.

Bernadeschi went over to pick the ball for a throwing and the Atalanta defenders used that time to quickly get behind the ball and rearrange their defense line.

The ball was soon back in play with Danilo receiving the ball from the throwing. Sending a long crossfield ball to the left side, Frabotta received the ball on the left flank, catching it on his chest and sending it upward.

Illicic rushed at him, trying to steal the ball, but Frabotta pushed the ball forward with his head, pushing it past the Atalanta man, and holding him off, he began to push the ball forward.

Jason who had been farther up the field, quickly tried to rush back to open up a passing option as he didn't want the guy to lose the ball in such a dangerous position, but Frabotta soon began cutting

infield, still uninterrupted as the Atalanta players had rushed too far back, leaving a space in the center of the field.

Seeing that Frabotta was somehow still going, Jason was going to slow down his run, but changed his mind and also began cutting into the field, staying a couple of meters away from the edge of the penalty box.

Suddenly, Frabotta stopped, put his leg under the ball and spun around on his left side, pulling Illicic from his right side to his left while he once again faced the goal.

Spotting Jason who had almost run all the way to the right flank, he passed the ball to him.

Receiving the ball with a deft touch taking out all the power behind it, Jason turned to face the Atalanta goal and instantly, Mario Pasalic jumped into his path, blocking his path toward goal.

Flicking the ball slightly to the left, he pulled Pasalic along before stopping, spinning on the ball like he would go back to the right, but as soon as Pasalic stopped, Jason who had stopped spinning once again pulled the ball to the left forcing Pasalic who was still recovering from his stop to try to follow him again, but this time, a clear distance could be noticed as Jason pulled away to the left .

Pushing the ball forward a bit more, Jason swung his leg at it as if he intended to kick it, forcing Pasalic to try to jump in his way to block it, but while Pasalic was trying to block the shot, Jason had merely faked a shot, once again pulling the ball to the left.

Once again Pasalic tried to follow, but at this point, he was merely following Jason's movements and was no longer able to stop Jason who finally swung his left foot at the ball from the edge of the box, sending a powerful shot at the top left corner of the goal.

Radunovic who had been doing his best to follow Jason's movements outside the penalty box was a bit slow to react as there were a few players blocking his view and by the time he was able to dive, hoping to reach the ball, it was already too late, the ball smashing past his gloved hand before it could reach the ball's path.

Chapter 693: Coppa Italia Finals III

Jason took off down to the sidelines with his hands stretched out wide, a huge smile on his face.

{And Ohhhhhhhhhh!}

{What a goal! What_A_GOAL!!!}

{He had his say before the game and he's had his say in the game!}

{What a flyer!}

{Uventus are one up!}

The commentator's words followed him as he ran till he reached the sidelines and standing in front of the Uventus fans, he put his left hand on his chest and did an old-school bow.

Raising his head, he held an imaginary flower to his lips, kissed it and blew a kiss at the fans just like he did in the previous game against Inter Milan, but this time he winked as well.

The Uventus fans cheers went up another notch when Jason did that and it was very clear that it was mostly the women in the crowd screaming their heads off.

Jason didn't get to think much of it as his Dybala soon jumped almost onto his shoulders while ruffling his hair. The other Uventus players joined shortly after and hugs, daps, and smiles were shared with each other.

{Smiles and hugs are being shared all around and the Uventus players will be hoping to build off this good start to further their lead, however, it's still early in the game and things could just as quickly turn around}

{Don't write off this Atalanta side just yet, they have a great team and just might have it in them to pull off a fantastic comeback} The commentator's words followed the Uventus players as they went to their half of the field, reminding them that they could not afford to relax.

With determined minds, they waited for the Atalanta team to resume the game and they once again surged into their opponents' half of the field with renewed vigor.

#33rd minute...

The Atalanta team had tried their best to react sharply to going behind. They had become tighter defensively, moved the ball around with more precision and direction, trying their best to penetrate, and they had tried to make more of their attacking efforts.

But just as they were doing their best, the Uventus team was also putting out just as much effort, maintaining a strong defensive coverage to keep out the Atalanta players, pressing heavily when they were off the ball and attacking quickly as soon as they stole possession, trying to catch the Atalanta defense off guard.

This time it worked as Jason managed to snatch the ball off Pasalic who had wasted a bit too much time looking for a good passing option to steal the ball.

Lobbing the ball across the field to Bernadeschi on the right flank, Jason began racing forward up the field.

Running into the ball's landing path, Bernadeschi headed the ball toward Correia and also began running forward, trying to make it past his marker and get a clear path into the penalty box.

Correia received the ball with his chest, holding off Rafael Tolo with his arm and then passing the ball behind the Atalanta defense, where Bernadeschi had begun running into.

Catching up to the ball, Bernadeschi raced into the penalty box and coolly slotted the ball past Radunovic.

{Round the keeper and in, Uventus hit a quickfire double! They are two up!}

{This match is quickly slipping away from this Atalanta side! One was already bad enough and now they are down by two!}

{Where do we go from here}

{Oh! We have the assistant referee's flag up for a possible offside!The commentator's final words put an immediate pause on the Uventus team's celebration.

Bernadeschi was about to go up to the referee, but the referee was already jogging off the field to check the goal with the aid of the VAR system.

A minute later, the referee came back onto the field, blowing his whistle in favor of the Uventus team. The goal would stand.

The replay showing on the screens of people watching the game away from the stadium showed that while it was close, Bernadeschi had been onside when the ball was sent his way the second time, after which he went on to calmly dispatch the ball into the back of the net.

{The goal will stand! Atalanta receive no aid from the goddess of luck!}

{They will have to dig themselves out of this hole they find themselves in!} the commentator said as the Atalanta players got ready to resume the game with a kick-off again.

#41st minute...

Malinovskyi passed back to Pasalic after trying without result to get past Frabotta on the right flanks and scanning the field, Pasalic noticed Muriel making a run forward into the Uventus box and calling for the pass.

Not hesitating, he waited for the perfect moment and chipped the ball over into the penalty box, sending it flying into the path of the Atalanta center forward.

Demiral was the one marking Muriel and was right behind the Atalanta man as Muriel caught the ball with a perfect touch, raising it upward slightly so he could volley it at goal.

Right at that moment, Demiral inserted his leg in front of Muriel in a dangerous attempt to clear the ball, but he barely managed to tip it away to the right.

It was enough to cause Muriel to miss, swinging at nothing, but the ball fell into the path of Malinovskyi who had darted into the penalty box after giving the ball to Pasalic earlier.

His leg shooting forward, he caught the ball, stopping it from rolling away and then hit it powerfully at the goal.

From that close, there was no way he could miss and the net was sent flying.

{And they begin digging! 2:1!}

{Just before halftime, Atalanta get one back!}

{That's going to change the halftime talks of the two managers and If Atalanta manage to surprise us once more before halftime, we will be in for a spectacular second half!} the commentator exclaimed loudly, watching as the Atalanta players quickly begin rushing back to the halfway line, not willing to waste anytime celebrating a goal when they were still behind.

The commentator had mostly meant what he said about the Atalanta scoring an equalizer before halftime as a joke, but the Atalanta players actually intended to do so, after all, the earlier they equalized, the better it was for them.

However, try as they might, they couldn't penetrate past the Uventus team who had doubled down defensively after conceding one goal.

Just as much as the Atalanta team wanted an equalizer, so was the Uventus team not willing to give up their lead and they did their best defensively, managing to hold out till the half-time whistle.

Chapter 694: Coppa Italia Finals IV

#68th minute...

{Uventus have a corner and Jason is standing behind it}

{Uventus have been quite dangerous from their set-pieces today and they've been a few centimeters from furthering their lead a few times already today}

{The set-pieces allow them to have more men come up the field, allowing them to match up to their opponents almost man to man and this has allowed the more physically dominant players to show off their talents}

{The corner kick taker's hand is up, signaling to his teammates in the center}

Fweeeeeeeeeee

Jason ran up to the ball, swinging it into the Atalanta penalty box.

The ball soared high, curling inwardly and flying towards the far post area where quite a few players were.

The Atalanta defenders were more concentrated in the near post area, so it was easier for the Uventus players in the far post area to take to the air, contesting for the ball aerially.

At the far post, Dragusin rose powerfully to the air to meet the ball with his head, sending it at the goal, but Radunovic was alert and managed to reach the ball in time, intercepting it, but unable to hold onto it and the ball bounced back into play.

The Atalanta players instantly began falling over themselves, trying to reach it quickly and clear it, and Maehle reached it first, trying to clear it quickly, but Bernadeschi was too close and he couldn't kick it as it was in the air.

Opting to try to head outside the penalty box instead, he managed to send the ball a fair distance away, but before it made it outside the penalty box, it was caught by Chiesa who volleyed it right back at the Atalanta goal.

Radunovic had no luck in his attempt to get to the ball this time as it thundered past him before he was halfway into his diving attempt, smashing into the back of the net.

{Goal!!!}

{Uventus extend their lead!}

{With not much time left in the game, this could be the final nail in the coffin. The goal that settles the game!}

The defiant cheers of the Uventus fans in the stadium who were already celebrating their trophy win filled the stadium as the Uventus team celebrated their goal in front of their fans.

The Atalanta players tried not to look down, but though they could hide the looks of desperation and aggravation, their body language couldn't hide the truth as well.

Despite how hard they had tried to crack the Uventus defense line, they hadn't been able to get a goal after their first goal in the first half.

Even though they had seemingly outplayed their opponents for most of the game with the Uventus side doing more of the ball chasing in the match, it was the Uventus side that was winning three goals to one.

Of course, the Atalanta players knew that this was only the case because the Uventus team was fielding a not-so-experienced line-up, otherwise, they might not even have had that much.

It was a bitter pill to swallow, but reminding themselves that the game wasn't over yet, they tried to motivate themselves.

As the Uventus players headed back to their half of the field after celebrating their goal, the board went up, calling for a Uventus substitution and there in red was Jason's jersey number.

The Uventus fans quickly began another round of cheers and applause, applauding Jason as he began heading toward the sidelines.

{He's coming off now, the man wearing number 17}

{There had been a lot of heat on him because of some seemingly controversial comments, but he has come out onto the pitch and proven that he's not just got a mouth}

{The manager is giving him the chance to get applauded by the fans and they are applauding. His performance today has been one to watch}

The Atalanta fans and players almost joined the Uventus fans in applauding the fact that Jason was leaving the field... Not because they were impressed by his performance, which honestly they were, but because they had been on the receiving end of his good performance.

He had been one of the more annoying opponents in the game and though they managed to shut him down most times, just his incessant running up and down the field as well as his daring runs down the flanks were very annoying.

That said, they would have been happy by the fact that Jason was being taken off, but looking at the number 7 in green, their happiness was instantly washed away by a heavy dose of depression.

The student had already done his bit, wounding them terribly, and now that they were exhausted, the master came on?

There should be rules against such wickedness.

There was no way this was fair play. In fact, it should be against the fair play regulations.

This was what most of the Atalanta players and fans were thinking as they watched Jason high five Ronaldo and watched Ronaldo run onto the field, taking his position on the left wing.

#80th minute...

Marten de Roon passed the ball to Pasalic after pushing speedily past Fagioli. Time was running down and the Atalanta players were getting more desperate to get at least a goal back.

If they wanted to equalize, they had to at least get a foot in the door. Unfortunately, for them, time was quickly running out and the game would soon be out of their hands.

Receiving the ball, Pasalic, feinted a move to the left before turning back to the right, faking out Rabiot and darting into the penalty box, seeing a path to goal open up.

Not wasting any time pondering, he decided to quickly send the ball at goal before the path closed again and with haste, he hit the ball hard at the Uventus goal.

Dragusin who had been moving to block Pasalic suddenly had the ball fly at him. Trying to block the shot, he didn't get out of the way, but he failed to put his hands away in time and the ball hit his hand while it was still in front of his chest.

Pasalic and other Atalanta players who witnessed the contact instantly shouted out to the referee calling for a handball.

Fweeeeeeeee

In response, the referee quickly blew his whistle, having also seen the contact. The Uventus players immediately rushed up to the referee trying to argue that the Dragusin hadn't intentionally handballed and that the ball had flown at him instead, but the referee's argument was that his hands shouldn't have been in such an area in the first place.

In the end, the Uventus players weren't able to dissuade the referee and Muriel soon put the ball down on the penalty spot, stepped back and waited for the referee's whistle.

Fweeeeeeeeeeeee!!!

Chapter 695: Coppa Italia Finals V

At the referee's whistle, Muriel ran up to the ball and smashed it towards the upper right corner while Sczesny dived down the left.

{Well taken penalty! Sczesny was nowhere near the ball there and the ball comfortably stops at the back of the net!}

{Atalanta are once again within a shout!}

{Only one goal between them now and Atalanta will be looking at how they can take even that away!}

{It's not too late to get that one goal that will turn things around and Uventus will have to face an Atalanta team that will throw all their players forward desperately!} the commentator said while Muriel and the Atalanta players quickly escorted the ball back to the center of the field, sharing some high fives and decisive nods among each other.

The game resumed shortly after despite the Uventus players dragging their feet to waste some of the remaining time left.

Like the commentator had said, the next few minutes after the kickoff was played in the Uventus half of the field.

Almost every player on the Atalanta team pushed up the field, locking up the game within the Uventus half and the few attempts to send the ball over into the Atalanta's half of the team was quickly thwarted by the few defenders staying behind.

However try as they might, the Atalanta side was unable to neither score or keep their opponents locked up for too long and Uventus finally managed to break out of the encirclement.

Beginning to push the ball up the field with clever passing and exciting runs, the Uventus team fought back just as hard as the Atalanta side pushed and in the 87th minute, the ball found Kulusevski on the right wing.

Holding off his marker, he sent a cross into the penalty box.

{Into the box to the awaiting head of Ronaldo}

Leaping to meet the ball perfectly as it came in, Ronaldo headed the ball goalward and Radunovic scrambled off his feet, diving at the ball and trying to stop it getting past him, but he wasn't able to reach.

{Ohhhhhhhhhh!!!}

{We thought they'd score at one end, but they've gone ahead and scored at the other end!}

{Christiano Ronaldo, coming off the bench and putting the game to bed, it is what he does and he has done it again!}

{SIUUUUUUUUU!!!} the commentator joined the Uventus fans to shout SIU as Ronaldo did his signature celebration.

{Honestly over the years, we've watched this man develop in all aspects of goal scoring and personally, I have to say, his dominance in the air is one of his best abilities}

{He seems to be able to perfectly time his jump to meet the ball perfectly and at times it almost feels like he hangs in the air, waiting for the ball to reach him, only for him to send it into the back of the net!}

{With little to no time left, he's gone and done what he does best and now Uventus are once again, firmly in the driver's seat. Their position was shaky a few minutes ago, but now, I think I we can admit that Uventus have this one in the bag}

{If nothing surprising happens today, the Uventus fans will erupt in ecstasy for the second time this week, celebrating their third silverware of the season, also knowing that tonight, the Champions League Final draw will be held}

{They just may get to see their team win it all this season}

The commentator's words brought more and more joy to the Uventus fans who began cheering and singing even louder, beginning their celebrations before the whistle even blew.

Play soon resumed and on the sidelines, an assistant referee held up the board, showing that there would be three minutes of extra time.

Seeing the little time they had left, the Atalanta players and their fans felt their hearts drop. Still pushing as hard as they could, the Atalanta players continued sending their players and overloading the Uventus penalty box before bombarding the area with aerial balls, but the Uventus team continued heading the ball clear, making sure the Atalanta team couldn't score.

After the end of three long minutes, the referee put his whistle to his mouth for the last time that night and blew hard.

Fweeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!

The Uventus erupted in especially loud cheers as the referee's whistle went off, screaming their heads off as the Uventus players began jumping around in joy on the field.

Getting off the bench, Jason, and the other players on the bench joined their teammates on the pitch in the celebrations while the fans jumped around in their seats, waving posters, flares and all sorts of things.

{And it's over, the final whistle has gone off and Uventus win the Super Coppa Italia just days after being crowned the Serie A Champions!}

{Atalanta pushed and persevered, but they were swept away by the better side, then more dominant side, Uventus!}

{It's been a long journey, but they've reached the end of it and like they say, at the end of a rainbow is a pot of gold, but in this case, it's a cup of silver and this Uventus side will happily claim it}

Just like after the last game where they won the league title, the Uventus players waited a bit for the trophy awarding stage to be set up and they danced, jumped and made small talk in the meantime.

It didn't take too long for everything to be set up and it was soon time for the awarding ceremony.

Unlike at the last game where they won the league title, today's awarding ceremony began with awarding silver medals to the runner-ups, Atalanta.

The Atalanta players stepped up with dejected faces to receive their medals, and right after receiving it, most of them took it off, not having the face to wear the medal that announced that they were only second best.

The silver medal was almost like a certificate to remind them that they had lost one of the most important football games they had ever played and would ever play in their lives.

Right after awarding the Atalanta players their medals, it was the turn of the champions to be awarded their medals.

Each member of the Uventus team eligible for the medal stepped up to receive their medal, but the trophy wasn't awarded to them immediately after as there were individual awards to get to.

Luis Muriel received the award for the highest goal scorer of the tournament.

Sczesny was awarded the Golden Gloves of the tournament as the best goalkeeper while Ronaldo was the overall best player of the tournament.

The players and the fans clapped loudly as the players received their awards, but after that was set aside, the trophy was finally awarded to the Uventus team and with loud cheers, they raised the trophy to the skies, shouting joyously for all they were worth.

Chapter 696: Last Serie A Game

With two trophies being added to their cabinet within a week, the Uventus training ground had an air of ease and confidence as the players came to training.

There was still one Serie A game left, but the results didn't matter too much, though the manager wanted the Uventus team to end the season on a strong note, however, he would not compromise for the Champions League finals, which was a few days away.

With that in mind, Pirlo selected a lineup with mostly youth and reserve players for the game.

The first team players had to be rested after playing game after game for week after week, and it was finally time for the reserve players to shine.

The reserve and youth players didn't take this chance lightly either, as they knew that their future could depend on this match.

If they performed well enough to catch the manager's eye, then they could become a part of the manager's plan for the upcoming season.

It was said that opportunity comes but once, and the Uventus reserve and youth players believed every single letter from this phrase.

With heavy determination to play as best as they could, the Uventus players went out on the field against Bologna in the last game of the season.

The starting eleven and the other players were watching from the bench, ready to be called up by the manager in case things went sideways, but the players who were finally getting a run out were intent on keeping the starters on the bench.

Just six minutes into the game, Correia found the back of the net with a thunderous effort from range.

With the game having such an exciting start, the game quickly became an interesting watch with the Bologna team doing all they could to put up a splendid display for all the fans who had come out to watch the last game of the season.

However, the Uventus players who were fighting for their futures soon gave them a run for their money when Fagioli scored another goal off a rebound after a corner kick in the 29th minute.

The situation had become worse for the Bologna players who were doing their best to avoid being thrashed in front of their home fans.

The Bologna tried their best to find a way back, but in the 45th minute of the game, right before half time, Fagioli found the back of the net again, this time with a powerful, low drive from the edge of the penalty box.

With Uventus leading with three goals, the game was very quickly slipping away from the Bologna team, but doing their best to stay determined, they came back out after the half-time break intent on fighting back to the best of their abilities.

The Bologna manager had told his players that if Uventus could score three goals in the first half, then it wasn't impossible for them to do the same thing, but two minutes after the second half began, Chiesa who had been subbed on at the halftime break, received a pass in the penalty box.

Holding off his marker, he turned with the ball and tucked it away into the back of the Bologna goal.

At this point, the Bologna fans had given up on the game, but other than the mood dampening down a little, nothing much changed.

They were there at the stadium to be entertained, but they also loved and supported their home team, and though it never felt good to lose, the Bologna fans were diehards who wouldn't start hating their home team just because they lost one game.

They had already lost many games. This one was just another one on the pile.

In fact, the Bologna fans began singing a chant about "Losing since 09" which amused the Uventus fans so much that they joined in on the singing with the Uventus fans and everyone had a good laugh.

Just as everyone was getting comfortable, the Bologna team's striker found some space between Uventus's center backs and came face to face with Perin, hitting the ball first time and sending it past the goalkeeper.

With that, Bologna had one goal back in the 60th minute of the game and the Bologna fans jumped up to cheer for their players.

Despite getting one goal back, the Bologna fans did not get all riled up as they felt like the game was well and truly beyond them and they were right as though the Bologna team managed to get another goal in the 85th minute, they still lost the game.

At the end of the ninety minutes, what was on the scoreboard was Bologna 2 : 4 Uventus.

With the match over, the rest of the players of the two teams got onto the pitch to appreciate the fans.

The Bologna players and their manager were the main people since it was their home stadium and their fans were the majority.

While they were giving speeches to their fans to thank them for showing up for them all season, in the good and the bad times and all other things, the Uventus players were appreciating the travelling fans who had come all the way to Bologna from Turin to watch them play.

Already happy that they had not travelled to watch a disappointing showing, the fans happiness shot through the roof when the players began to hand out some jerseys and boots to some of the fans.

Some of the players signed on the kits, while some did not, but most of the fans were already happy to receive a jersey from the players and didn't really care whether they were signed or not.

Jason also took off his jersey, signed it with a borrowed pen and then looked around for someone to hand his shirt to.

Spotting a young boy wearing a Uventus jersey that looked a bit old and was clearly not one of the current season, Jason walked up to him.

Waving at the boy and smiling at the woman who was obviously his mother, Jason asked the kid,

"Wanna swap shirts with me?"

"Yes, definitely," the boy nodded repeatedly and quickly took off his jersey that he wore over another shirt.

"Haha," laughing, Jason handed him the signed jersey and took his own.

"It's a nice jersey," Jason smiled, looking at the old design that looked almost vintage.

"Yeah, it's my dad's. He wanted to come, but he's on a business trip right now," The boy smiled wildly, happy with his new gift.

"Well, he's definitely working hard to pay for them match tickets," Jason laughed.

"He definitely is," the boy's mum cut in laughing.

"Well I definitely need to give him something. Tell you what, what's your address, I'll mail you guys a pair of boots,"

"Really? Really?" the boy asked repeatedly, almost doing a flip, but one glance from his mum calmed him down.

"Whoa whoa, chill, the boots are for your dad..." Jason chuckled.

"... they wouldn't fit you," he added, glancing at the boy's feet.

"Don't worry, I'll grow into it," the boy replied quickly, causing Jason to almost burst into a bout of laughter.

Before Jason could turn away, someone asked,

"Will you be here next season?"

Chapter 697: Recruitment Focus Meeting I

****24th May 2021****

The season was over for most football teams in the world, except for the leagues with a different calendar, however, for Uventus and Bayern Munich, the season was not yet over.

Uventus had won every title available to them so far this year while Bayern, coming off a sextuple in the previous calendar year, had won all but two trophies so far this year.

At the Uventus training ground, the players were already hard at training. The day doubled as a recovery day for the players who had played in the last game, as well as an intensive training day for the more energized players.

The manager had set up the previous day's lineup with this in mind, keeping in mind that his players had to keep training intensively for the upcoming Champions League finals.

However, though the players could be seen all over the training ground, either doing intensive training, pumping iron at the gym, or doing light exercises to help with the recovery, the manager and his assistant coaches were nowhere to be seen.

Pirlo and the assistant coaches had another engagement for the day, namely the club's recruitment focus meeting for the upcoming season.

At the head office at the Allianz stadium, the meeting room was full with the heavyweights of the club as this was no ordinary recruitment meeting.

Since the season was over, the club had to begin preparing for the upcoming season and the transfer window before the season began was a very big part of it.

The budget had to be decided and the club had to decide on how best to use their already accumulated funds or incoming funds they had yet to receive.

Seated at the head of a long polished table that gleamed in the light was the club's chairman and seated at other seats were the manager, the assistant coaches, sporting director, chief scout, head of recruitment, finance director, communications director, a legal department representative, and some data analysts.

The meeting had begun with the declaration of all the prize money the club was to receive, but despite it being good news, it was but a prelude to the chaos that was about to happen in the room.

"Moving on to players leaving the club," the sporting director who was chairing the meeting began.

"Like we already decided, we will not be offering Buffon a new contract. His current contract period runs out at the end of this month, freeing up some space in our wage budget,"

"Bentacur and Kulusevski have gained the attention of other clubs and we may be losing them in the coming transfer window," he continued.

"That's fine, we can use the funds gained from their transfer to invest back into the team," Pirlo muttered, but no one responded to his words as it was something they all agreed on.

"Mckennie's loan will be ending, but as already decided, we will be paying the agreed fee to retain him. He's been very instrumental for us," the sporting director began again, his words eliciting a nod from Pirlo.

"For Morata, we'll be renewing his loan as we need a striker of his caliber in front and we don't have the excess funds to make any big transfers yet," this time, a slight frown appeared on Pirlo's face as he began to get a bad feeling.

"Finally, we will be sending out promising players from the youth squad and the other under-squads on loans to ensure they get more first-team experience,"

Taking a deep breath, the sporting director sipped from his glass of water, about to move onto the next topic.

"Before we continue to other issues, Pirlo," the sporting director said, glancing at the chairman at the head of the table before his eyes refocused on Pirlo.

"We will be looking to arrange a transfer out of the club for Ronaldo," the sporting director's words were like a bomb in Pirlo's ear.

"What!? Why!?" Pirlo asked in confusion.

"It's simple, finances," the finance director said before the sporting director could reply.

"But we have the prize money from all those competitions, don't we?" Pirlo argued, slamming a fist onto the table.

"It doesn't cut it," the finance director retorted immediately.

"I don't have to spell out to you how the lockdown period affected us, do I?"

"After taking loans to bring Ronaldo to the club, we had barely begun breaking even and began paying back the loan when we had to go on a lockdown period,"

"Even after making the players take pay cuts and postponing some of their wages, we took loans to pay the wages"

"We barely began making some money from ticket sales at the beginning of this year, but we still have those loans,"

"Luckily for us, we've won a lot this year, thanks to your efforts so we can offset some of those loans, but then we still owe the players quite a bit,"

"Ronaldo's wages is about 31 million euros per season and we are currently owing him 16 million euros. That's more than half our prize money as winners of the Serie A this season!" the finance director exclaimed.

"If we want to ensure that we have enough funds to improve the squads, then he may have to go," the sporting director added.

"But he's the best player we have! If we don't have him next season, our attack takes a huge dent and we will struggle," Pirlo countered.

"Not if we invest the funds into bringing in other attackers... who demand a much lower wage. We already have a few options to consider," the sporting director retorted.

"But this-! Mr. Chairman, surely we can't just let him go like this. He is not only useful on the pitch, I'm sure he brings in a lot of revenue for the club," Pirlo turned to the chairman, hoping he could stop this.

"... He does bring in a lot of revenue for the club... but other high-profile players could do just as well. If we didn't have that lockdown period which threw our finances into a mess, I would consider keeping him, but as it is, we stand more to lose than we stand to gain," the chairman said slowly.

"But we don't! WE stand a lot to gain! There aren't many players out there who can bring us this much results and the few that are out there would demand a lot from us to bring them to the club,"

"We already have Ronaldo, we can recover in other areas," Pirlo still refused to give up.

"I didn't agree a hundred percent to sell him, but you have to think about these things, Pirlo. We brought him to the club to help us win the Champions League and as you can see, we are in the finals. It's not a failed investment as far as I am concerned,"

"If he wins the trophy, then good for him, we get more prize money and he can stick around if we find a way to manage our finances, but if he doesn't win it this season, I doubt if he can keep playing at this level for long, he's old now,"

"Better to get rid of him quicker, rather than later," the chairman delivered his final judgement.

Chapter 698: Recruitment Focus Meeting II

Pirlo slumped in his chair, feeling a headache coming on, but there was nothing he could do about it. The chairman had already acquiesced to the sale of Ronaldo... or maybe he was the one who started the motion in the first place.

Pirlo understood that despite Uventus being a football club, it was still a business and a business was inherently to make profit.

Right now, the chairman only saw Ronaldo as a hole in his pocket, not realizing that even though money was falling out from this hole, the benefits the hole brought outweighed the money it caused him to lose.

To Pirlo, it seemed like nobody understood, but as a former football player, Pirlo knew what it was like for a club that lost its main man, especially when this main man was an attacker who scored most of the team's goals.

The Uventus players had gotten in tune with getting the ball to Ronaldo, and Ronaldo being the monster that he was could convert those passes into goals, even in unexpected situations.

If he was not there to work his magic like usual, the whole team would become discombobulated.

'Madrid is still recovering for Christ's sake!' he raged internally, but stayed silent and controlled his breathing.

The worst part was that if the club couldn't maintain the peak they were at right now, he would be shown the door, and quickly too. In fact, people were already eyeing his job when the team was in a slump earlier in the season, but luckily he overcame that and was able to hold on to his job, but now he could see the job security he had spent his time building fly out the window.

Gritting his teeth, he sat back up. He couldn't stop the sale, but he could try to ensure that the team didn't fall apart and the only way to do that now was to secure good transfers.

Listening to the sport director explain that he had already mentioned the matter with Ronaldo in a meeting and Ronaldo had not been strongly against it had readily accepted it, saying he didn't mind a new challenge.

"What about Jason's issue?" Pirlo said immediately the sport director stopped talking.

"That was the next topic actually. His stint with us has shown his quality and though we know there is a lot for him to improve, there is no doubt that he would be a good signing for us... but his situation is probably the most complicated one," the sporting director began.

"As we know, he has six months left on his current contract with Oporto, but I've spoken with his agent and his demands are for an immediate transfer rather than waiting for the next six months," the sporting director said.

"That's to be expected. His relationship with his home team is not very good," Pirlo muttered, rubbing his chin.

"That constitutes a problem for us actually. With the potential he has shown, he is not likely to go for a price less than 80 million euros, and considering his age or that those Portuguese teams like to sell talented players for inflated prices, we are looking at at least a hundred million..." audible gasps swept through the room immediately, but if they were being honest, this was to be expected.

"Clearly, we cannot afford to pay that much," the finance director said, almost in a scoff.

"Right. The only other way to get him for cheaper is to sign him on a free contract once the transfer window opens, after which we can then pay a smaller transfer fee to have him join us earlier, right?" the sporting director said, looking at the legal representative who nodded.

"Since he's younger than 23, we'll have to pay a training compensation fee and all that, but even if they inflate the prices, we still wouldn't have to pay that much... probably about 10 to 15 million, but it could reach anywhere from 20 to 30 million if they're being greedy,"

'Which they definitely are,' the sporting director thought but didn't say out loud.

"Can't we do that then?" the chairman asked, he considered Jason a player who could be a good replacement for Ronaldo as long as he could be gotten for cheap.

"It's definitely a good plan... there's just one other problem. We're not the only ones who want him," the sporting director said.

"Wait, you're saying, if we don't do a bidding war over his transfer fee, there will be a bidding war on his wages instead?" Pirlo asked immediately, feeling his gut sink deeper.

"Exactly. We could end up having to make a terribly overpriced offer and if he does end up signing for us, his wages would probably only get higher and higher," the finance director replied this time.

"That's not necessarily a bad thing, right? He's worth a high wage," Pirlo said, trying to reason.

"... Hmmm... Which teams did you say are interested in him?" the chairman asked, looking up at the ceiling thoughtfully.

"Uh, well..." the sporting director began, swiping quickly at his computer.

"Well, Milan and Barcelona for one are considering it, but they are in even worse financial situations than we are so I doubt they would end up making an offer,"

"Clubs that could potentially get into the bidding battle with us include Chelsea, Manchester United, Inter Milan, Real Madrid, Manchester City, Dortmund, Atletico Madrid, and some others,"

"There are a few other teams that have shown some interest at some point in time, but even now, we'll have to wait to know which teams would actually make offers. Some of those teams already have transfers arranged for winger positions and don't need another one," the sporting director was explaining but a dry cough from the chairman stopped him.

"Send me the list of those clubs," the chairman said, ideas brewing in his head.

'Player transfers isn't always about which teams has more money after all,' the chairman thought to himself with a sly grin.

On the training grounds, Jason ran around the field, shuttling up and down and hitting the ball when he had to, not knowing that talks to determine his future was going on somewhere not too far away.

Chapter 699: Road to Porto 2021 I

25th May 2021

"Serie A is done. All eyes on Porto."

The manager's words to them before they began the video analysis session still rang in all the players' heads.

Preparations for the champions league finals had begun in full stretch with the players mostly working on their physical fitness the previous day.

With all fitness checks and physical conditioning done the previous day, the training switched to the tactical aspect.

Starting with the video analysis, Pirlo played clip after clip of Bayern's last few games and pointed out various points that the players needed to take note of.

Both big and small points were pointed out by the manager and the players did well to listen. They had as much desire to win the game as did their manager.

After pointing out the tactical disposition of their opponents, Pirlo moved on to players and their characteristics and began pointing out ways to counter individual players and tactical changes.

Pirlo didn't mention any player's name when giving out instructions since he hadn't selected his team for the match, but each player in the appropriate position took note of the manager's instructions, intending to be fully ready if the manager decided to call on them.

Spending most of the morning and part of the noon in tactical analysis, the players finally got back out on the field after a quick lunch and began practicing, incorporating the new tactical changes.

Pirlo quickly called for a scrimmage and put the most likely starting lineup on one team (Team A). He then selected another team that he made to adopt the Bayern Munich playing style (Team B), doing his best to create the scenario his players were likely to face off in the finals.

The scrimmage quickly began and Pirlo watched closely from the sidelines how the most likely starting players performed against a replica of their future opponents.

The team A was playing like how the Uventus team normally played. They defended deep but pressed hard whenever an opponent looked like he would lose the ball, and attacked fast, sending long balls forward or depending on the forwards or wingers to run forward with the ball.

The Team B on the other hand tried to adopt Bayern's playstyle which was a classic high pressure playing style.

When not in possession, they did not hesitate to press high up the pitch relentlessly and aggressively. When they stole the ball, they burst forward on the counter immediately, favoring rapid transitions from defense to attack.

They were also particularly vertical and did not hesitate with vertical passes to move the ball around swiftly and escape tight situations.

Compared with the original Bayern team, the Team B had a bit more agility since the forwards Pirlo was fielding were pretty fast

Jason was the left winger, Chiesa was the main striker, Dybala was behind him playing as a second striker and Bernadeshi was on the left.

Compared to Bayern's usual lineup of Sane on the left, Lewandowski as the striker, Muller as the second striker and Gnabry on the right, the Uventus Team B for the scrimmage had a bit more pace, but Pirlo didn't mind that.

What troubled him was how the Team B's adoption of the Bayern team's tactics enabled them to slice through the Team A's defense and it was terribly effective too.

Jason, Dybala, Chiesa, and Bernadeshi were all pacey players who could dribble and had above average shooting abilities.

Whenever they caught onto the ball and launched a counterattack on Team A's defense, it almost always ended in them getting a shot away and if for some reason, the defenders were out of place, then there was a greater chance for the shot to be on target.

That rang alarming bells in Pirlo's head immediately even though the training match had barely been on for twenty minutes.

The Team B was definitely not as strong a team as Bayern's starting eleven, not to mention that the team chemistry of the Bayern players was on a completely different level.

German teams tended to hold onto their players for longer periods of time and Bayern was one of the teams particularly famous for this.

Their starting lineups hardly ever changed unless a player retired, was injured, or received an offer the Bayern team couldn't refuse and those were very few and far between.

They were strict adopters of the "if it's not broke, don't fix it" mentality.

There was a reason Bayern was able to play such beautiful counterattacking football despite most of their players not being pacey.

"Hmmm..." Rubbing his chin, Pirlo tried to think of how best to approach the problem.

The partnership of Chiellini and Bonucci was a solid defense wall in the center, but the flanks were a problem.

All the wide defenders he had were wingbacks who were more adept at attacking than defending. That was not to say they weren't good defenders or didn't pull their weight, but they were nowhere near defensive-minded enough to keep up with the Bayern team's tactics.

This wasn't the first time this had been brought to his attention either. He had long known that the defensive flanks were the weakest parts of the team, but luckily, any attempts to send the ball to the center was usually blocked by the exceptional center backs.

Pirlo even remembered mentioning this matter to the sporting director, but the man had waved it off and said there was no need to make a major investment in that position as they weren't losing games due to the issue.

'They never think to fix a problem before it arises unless it's about money, but when things go south, it's me who'll be shown the door,' the annoying thought flew across his mind and his mood soured slightly, but he shook his head lightly and refocused.

"Dejan! Weston! Fall back and help the wingbacks!" Pirlo shouted to the players on the field.

Glancing at the direction of the shout, Kulusevski and McKennie quickly began falling back to help with defending.

With them falling back to support, it allowed the Team A defenders to have more passing options, and they were able hold off against the heavy pressure for longer periods of time.

"Hmmm... what to do, what to do?" Pirlo rubbed his chin as he thought.

Should he go for a tactic that would help them control the ball for longer periods of time, or should he opt for the opposite and try to outscore his opponents instead?

Chapter 700: Road to Porto 2021 II

****26th May 2021****

8:21 am

At the entrance to the J Village, a black Ferrari smoothly turned onto the road that led into the Uventus training grounds.

Stopping in front of the gate that noticeably had more guards stationed there than on other days, Jason nodded at the guards who let him drive past and he continued down the track.

It didn't take long to begin seeing media buses and satellite trucks unloading in the lots, a faint hum of different languages filling the air.

Despite the music from his speakers, Jason could still make out quite a few conversations from the multitude of people unloading, yet some among them managed to grab a camera in time to take a few shots of his car as he drove by.

Maybe they had the camera already prepared.

'That's a lot...' he could not help thinking as he drove to the separate parking lot for the players.

Luckily, this one was bereft of all media coverage despite the cacophony going on outside, but Jason wouldn't have a hard time believing it if someone told him that there was a camera secretly trained on him from somewhere he couldn't see.

Calmly getting down and grabbing his bag before he went in through the player entrance, he reached the locker room where quite a few other players were already dressing up.

"I know today is the media day, but is it always that crazy?" Jason asked Buffon as he sat on a bench beside the experienced goalie.

"I was shocked too, it's like we're having a finals game and we're hardly going to be spending that much time on the training grounds today," McKennie added as well.

"And good morning to you too," Buffon said back.

"Right, sorry, good morning," Jason greeted with a wry smile.

"It usually is like that. The champions league final is a pretty big event. It's probably second only to the world cup so eyes from all around the world are on it,"

"Today is official so it's sanctioned by UEFA and is mandatory so it's a pretty big deal," Buffon explained with a warm smile.

"Oh, right," Jason nodded and began changing into his sports suit.

More players arrived and the ones who had been selected for media duty put on their sleek, black, slim-fit Uve tracksuits.

A few minutes later, a staff arrived to tell the players that the manager was waiting for them so that they could make their entrance, get the media day over and put it behind them.

Pirlo still wanted his players to do a lot more training as he felt there was still some areas that needed covering.

The players met up with the manager and filed into the main hall that had been transformed into a sort of media room for the event.

Tucked into the line with some of the younger players selected, Jason watched curiously as the event started with a press conference.

Pirlo and Chiellini, the team captain sat behind the desk and were bombarded with questions as soon as the conference began.

From questions about their inconsistency at the beginning of the season to questions about their personal feelings for the game... all sorts of questions were thrown at the men behind the desk, but Pirlo and Chiellini knew how to pick the right questions to answer, leaving a lot of undeserving questions unanswered.

After the general press conference, the hall was divided into pods with sponsor backdrops and players began to take turns to go into the booths to be questioned by the reporters regarding the upcoming finals.

Jason was among the first set of players to get into a booth and be questioned by reporters and his booth had almost as many reporters as Ronaldo's booth which would have been a pretty big flex for Jason if he wasn't too busy dealing with questions from the reporters to notice it.

Before the interview began, Jason thought he was ready, but he soon found out that these guys had done their homework and were here with the intent to catch attractive responses from him whether they were controversial or not.

The questions the reporters started with were questions about how it felt to reach the champions league finals and how the journey was.

Jason easily provided responses to those questions, but then the questions began getting spicy.

The next reporter asked whether he thought he would reach the champions league finals just five months after being pushed out by his own team on loan.

Not knowing how to answer that, Jason simply replied, "The lord works in mysterious ways," with a smug smile, after all, one could never go with leaving God to deal with the accountability.

If the reporters weren't satisfied, let them go ask the man in the skies.

"Now that you are going back to Porto, which is a very familiar ground for you, how do you feel, thinking you can claim the trophy in front of your team and the Oporto crowd who doubted your abilities?" another reporter threw another question at Jason before he could catch his breath.

"Who said that?" Jason asked, an eyebrow raised.

"I did," a cheeky looking woman holding a mic replied.

"... If you're a qualified reporter, then I'm sure you know that me leaving Oporto on loan to Uventus wasn't because of performance issues,"

"I love the Oporto fans and did my best for the team every time I was on the pitch,"

"Winning the champions league in Porto is just about that... Winning the champions league. I'm not going to Porto to rub my success in anyone's face, should we win the champions league," Jason replied.

The next question immediately came after that, this one more focused on Jason's preparation for the match and how confident he was in Uventus's chances of winning the trophy.

Time passed by quickly and the interview was coming to an end when a reporter asked a question that had every other reporter's ears perk up.

"What are your plans for the upcoming. Are you going to be extending your stay with Uventus by signing a more permanent deal with them, or are there other clubs you will be penning down your signature for?"

"Well, It's not the transfer season yet so I am just as curious as you are, but we'll see I guess," Jason replied ambiguously, and the reporters nodded, not expecting a direct answer anyway.

"One last question!" one reporter shouted as he saw Jason moving to get off his seat.

"With six months left on your contract, will you be open to signing a new contract with your home team... if your relationship with the club can be repaired," the reporter asked.

"You're asking if I'll play for Oporto again?" Jason repeated the question with more clarity, an amused smile at the corner of his lips.