

LEGENDS 72

Chapter 72 Europa League round of 32 first leg II

Since the Porto players were currently in control of the flow of the game, they continually tried to break through the Bayer Leverkusen defense, trying various passing maneuvers and trying to dribble past them, but the three center-backs were proving to be a very tough nut to crack.

Luckily, hard to crack didn't mean impossible to crack, and the Porto attack soon broke through the Bayer Leverkusen defense.

Luiz Diaz had been incessantly trying various tricks to get past his marker since the game started and the moment he received the ball from Mattheus Uribe, he quickly ran down the field while hugging the sidelines.

Sven Bender had quickly noted him as a threat and ran at him to block his path, but this time Luiz Diaz quickly passed the ball back infield, not trying to do any tricks.

Sven, who had charged at him was stunned to see him pass the ball infield and he used his eyes to follow the ball, but in that split second, Luiz Diaz skipped past him to receive the ball back from Mattheus Uribe who had received his earlier pass and sent it back immediately, quickly executing a one-two routine and executing Sven Bender from the defensive equation.

With Sven Bender out of his way, Luiz Diaz quickly tried to cut into the box but was soon met with the intimidating visage of Jonathan Tah rushing towards him and he quickly sent a pass across the penalty area instead of trying to dribble past the scary center-back.

Luckily, the ball managed to find Tiquinho Soares who despite being tightly marked, managed to hold his defender long enough to trap the ball and get a shot away.

The ball flew at the Bayer Leverkusen goal, seemingly goal-bound until it was met by the outstretched hand of Hradecky who had lunged at the ball the moment it left Tiquinho's foot.

With well-trained reflexes and skill, he managed to deflect the ball with a punch, sending it against the crossbar and out of the field.

{What a shot and what a save! We haven't gotten a goal, but we have an exciting start in this Europa League round of 32 match that holds much in the balance} The commentator's skill set at hyping up the crowd reeked from his inciting words that shook the crowd, most of who were cheering that their team hadn't conceded from such a sudden, yet almost devastating attack.

The Porto team had a corner kick from their attempt so despite their efforts not paying off, they still had a chance to do something with this attack.

Alex Telles as the team's no.1 dead ball specialist was the one who stood over the corner-kick and held up his left hand as a signal for the team to ready themselves for the ball.

With a short run up and quick swing, Alex Telles sent the ball flying into the penalty box prompting players of both teams to jump for the ball.

Mattheus Uribe was the one who got his head to it and sent it flying at the Leverkusen goal, but somehow the Bayer Leverkusen goalkeeper Lukas Hradecky managed to unleash a spectacular dive and got his hand to it, preventing it from getting past him.

Despite managing to prevent stop the ball from going into the net, Hradecky wasn't able to hold onto the ball and the ball didn't bounce out of play, but rather towards Moussa Marega who couldn't believe his luck and quickly unleashed a powerful shot, trying to slam the ball into the back of the net, yet somehow Hradecky managed to get off the ground and jump for the ball again to prevent his team from going behind.

Just managing to get the tip of his finger to the ball, Hradecky managed to deflect the ball towards the left crossbar and the ball slammed against it heavily before bouncing back and this time getting cleared by Lars Bender, quickly putting an end to the Porto attack.

The Porto players couldn't believe that they hadn't been able to score in that situation and stared at Hradecky in surprise for a few seconds.

This man had proved why he was able to be a professional goalkeeper in a top-flight team like Bayer Leverkusen despite being below the average height one would expect of a goalkeeper.

Anyway, the match wasn't over and they would have more opportunities to get the ball past him in the match, so they quickly got over their shock and ran after the ball.

The match continued and immediately after this scare, it was easily noticed that the Bayer Leverkusen had increased the ferocity of their attacks, showing a determination that they were not willing to wait till they were behind until they started trying to score.

Barely a few minutes later, it could be seen that the Porto side was having a harder time dealing with this surge of attacks and was under immense pressure.

Eventually, the Porto defense couldn't keep up anymore and they cracked under the pressure thanks to a well-executed attack routine from Bayer Leverkusen in the 29th minute.

Bayer Leverkusen had been smoothly passing the ball around in the middle of the pitch while the Porto players were doing their best to dispossess them.

Suddenly Lars Bender sent a ball over the defensive line and towards the right side of the Porto penalty area.

Ivan Marcano who was the closest Porto defender to where the ball was heading quickly ran for the ball but somehow Volland ran past him and got his leg to the ball, but instead of trying to cut into the penalty area with the ball, he did an unexpected back pass to the approaching feet of Demirbay.

Demirbay controlled the ball deftly with his first touch and sent a curling high cross into the penalty area.

The sudden switch from control to attack had stunned the Porto defensive line and most of them could not react on time.

Pepe was the only one who managed to notice Alario sneaking into the penalty box, approaching the ball that was curling into the penalty area. The team captain quickly tried to jump for the ball, his intention to clear it and not let it reach Alario, but despite managing to react on time, the ball curled past his head before he could clear it and was met with a header from Alario who directed the ball downwards.

The ball bounced on the ground just before Augustin Marchesin's outstretched arm and over it before nestling itself in the back of the net, giving the home team the lead.

{GOAL!!!}

{Bayer Leverkusen have brought the game to life and struck in first this Europa League knockout tie, much to the delight of their home fans}

{The captain began a devastatingly quick attack with his lobbed pass and his teammates executed the attack to perfection, making sure to bring back their returns} The commentator prattled on as the Bayer Leverkusen players and their fans celebrated their goal.