

## Godfather Of Champions

### Chapter 24: The Manager Seated On The Viewing Platform Part 2

The remainder of the match went rather smoothly for Nottingham Forest. Coventry City's offense was rendered useless before the defense led by Dawson. McAllister could only give his best performance for himself, but was unable to make adjustment to the team's tactics on the whole. This was the most critical weakness of having a player assume the role of a manager at the same time: the team was unable to assess the situation of the field as a whole, did not have time to calmly think about countermeasures, and was unable to make adjustments on the spot. However, the field was ever-changing. A slight delay could cause the moment to be seized by the enemy.

When Tang En first saw McAllister's role, he already thought of how he could make use of this during the match. Now that his own team was leading by one ball, he wanted like to see what kinds of tricks McAllister had hidden up his sleeves.

The two managers were watching from different places, in different situations, which therefore resulted in different perspectives. This, in turn, caused their way of thinking to differ, as well, which could ultimately decide the outcome of the match.

The first half had just ended, and Nottingham Forest, the away team, was temporarily leading Coventry City by one goal. The fans on the viewing platform gradually dispersed, as they had to make full use of this 15 minutes to replenish their energy, as well as make a trip to the bathroom, in preparation for the second half's battle.

Tang En also decided to return to the changing room to arrange the second half's tactics. After observing the first half, he more or less had some idea of what he wanted to do. However, before he left, he had to find some stuff for the two people beside him to do, as he could not just let them follow him back to the changing room.

"Erm, you two gentlemen. Don't you think that our environment for the first half was very terrible?"

The two of them looked at each other, unsure of what Tang En was driving at.

Seeing that they did not understand his words, Tang En illustrated it for them. "These fans are loud and boisterous, perhaps from consuming quite a lot of alcohol before the match. Each one of them is energetic and loud. They only support their own team, but unfortunately, their team is currently losing by one ball. In that case, their temper is not going to be good. Emphasized by the effects of alcohol... I think that during these 15 minutes, they will have drunk a few more cans of beer, right? And should their team

continue to be unable to catch up, their blood will most likely start boiling and rush to their head. If they were to discover that there were three spectators who were not fans of the home team... what do you think they will do?"

The two of them frantically tried to defend themselves. "I'm not a Nottingham Forest fan. Actually the one that I support is Man City..."

"I am a fan of Oxford United, but that is a Division Three team..."

Tang En shook his head. "It's useless, even if you used the stadium's broadcast system to tell. You have to know that a raging fan is irrational. You don't believe? How about we put it to the test?"

One of them frantically stopped Tang En. "There's no need for that. I also feel that it's not a good thing for us to be seated among a group of hot-blooded, home team fans."

"I think the two of you should raise your objections to the Coventry staff. At least change us to an area where it is more neutral—somewhere closer to the Nottingham Forest's area."

Hearing Tang En say this, the two of them suddenly put up their guard. Tang En had no choice but to explain, "You two may relax. Don't tell me you really think that I will direct the match using the fans? That is too ridiculous."

The two of them glanced at each other, before nodding their heads. "Alright, we will approach the Coventry staff."

"Much thanks. You both have made the right decision." Tang En turned around and walked toward the passageway. Before he walked away, he asked, "By the way, just asking, does the Football Association allow me to enter my team's changing room during halftime?"

"There are no specific instructions given for this, so go ahead."

"Thank you very much. You may find me at the changing room door in 15 minutes. Goodbye." Tang En waved his hand as he walked into the passageway.

There was a very huge lounge inside the stadium, which sold various drinks and food. Fans could rest there for a short while, drink a few cans of beer, eat some grilled sausages, or chat with their friends. However, one had to be careful not to get into any form of conflict with those who were obviously drunk, because those kind of people were very dangerous, especially when the team they supported was in a terrible situation.

Tang En lowered his head and quickly passed through. He did not want anyone to identify him, since his team was currently in the lead, and Coventry City's fans were in an irritated state.

After crossing the crowded lounge, he found a small, rarely used hallway, which was another way to get to the changing room. However, on his way, Tang En noticed a security guard stationed there, as well as a sign that read: No passing through this area.

"What's going on?" Tang En asked the security guard who was standing in front of him.

The security guard pointed to the sign, as if telling Tang En, "Don't you know how to read?" His attitude was evidently not very friendly.

"Very well." Tang En nodded his head before kicking the sign down. Then, he stepped over the sign and tried to pass.

The security guard became anxious. He tried to pull Tang En back, but was gently subdued by Tang En. "Bro, I have a few years training." When Tang En was very young, he used to study martial arts from the street performers in his home town. At that time, the movie Shaolin Temple was extremely popular throughout the country. Tang En dreamed of becoming a martial arts star like Jet Lee, who made a lot of money and was respected by tens of thousands of people. Later, he discovered he was not cut out for it and gave up. Although he did not become the second Jet Lee, his skills were more than sufficient to deal with this kind of paper tiger, who was all bark and no bite.

Ignoring the security guard, who was sprawled on the floor, Tang En walked toward his team's changing room, after which he pushed open the door and entered.

It was obvious that the players were all waiting for him. Seeing Tang En enter, everyone raised their heads, their eyes were filled with anticipation.

Those eyes... Tang En knew what kind of burden he was shouldering at the moment.

"You guys played magnificently in the first half. But be careful of their counterattack in the second half. Let's analyze it in detail."

The two people from the Football Association Disciplinary Committee found Coventry's chairman. Upon stating their identities, the problem of the seats was resolved very quickly. The chairman promised to let them sit with Nottingham Forest's fans, and also promised their individual safety.

The two people who had already completed their task saw that it was still early, so they decided to wait at the entrance of the changing room. They were still slightly worried that the shady manager would play some tricks. Tony Twain made them feel a strong sense of uneasiness, as if he was not a football manager, but an MI6 special agent in disguise.

As they walked past that corridor, they looked at the sign on the floor which read “No passing through this area” and thought it was strange. They did not understand the situation at all. However, since it was already on the ground, the sign was most probably not in use anymore. So, they stepped over the sign and walked past it.

“... if they are unable to improve their situation 15 minutes into the second half, I think McAllister will definitely make his assistant manager put Gary McSheffrey in, even though he still has some light injuries. As for who will be substituted off the court, that will be depend on the performance of the players on the field.” Tang En put aside the tactics board, as he continued talking non-stop. Walker, who was listening by the side, was full of respect for him, while Bowyer was full of smiles.

“As for all of you...,” Tang En said as he pointed toward the players, “no matter what, all of you must always remember that 1:0 is the world’s most precarious score. A one ball lead will give your opponents boundless dreams and impulse. If you want to completely kill off their motivation, then you just have to score even more goals, more and more goals! For the second half, we will play defensive and counterattack, and force them on the offensive. More long passes. Eoin?”

Jess stood up.

“Can you tell me what the condition of the grass on the field is?”

“The soil is very loose, and feels like I’m unable to fully exert my strength. It is also very slippery.” Jess explained, as he thought that the manager was blaming him for not positioning a few of the balls well in the first half.

Tang En nodded his head. “The entire team should do more long passes, and at the same time, be on guard for the enemy’s long passes.” After which, he turned around and said to Walker, “Des, let the players do their warm-up every ten minutes. If they manage to score a goal in the first 15 minutes of the second half, then we won’t make any changes and continue our defensive counterattack. Let everyone play slightly more patiently. This is their home ground, and they will definitely not be content with drawing with us. As the match goes on, they will definitely continue to force their offenses. And that will be our chance. You have to grab every opportunity that appears. If you waste and squander away those opportunities, you will be punished for it.”

Tang En looked at the players in the changing room and felt a slight headache. That was because English football’s requirements were different from other places. Only five substitute players are allowed to be brought onto the field in each match. Not counting the substitute goalkeeper that had to be replaced, there was not much choice left to choose from. That was one aspect of English football that Tang En disliked. Both the Serie A and the La Liga allowed for up to seven substitute players, so why was England’s one so special?

“Ian, if there are any unforeseen circumstances, you and Des may discuss and act accordingly. We played well for the first half, so just continue to play like this for the rest of the match.”

He lowered his head and looked at the time. It was almost time for him to go. He left the remaining time for the assistant managers as he had to go.

“That’s all. I hope that 45 minutes later, we can bag home three goals.”

After bidding farewell to everyone, Tang En turned around and exited the room. After that, he walked with the two people who were waiting for him outside, to the viewing platform.

“They agreed to our request for a change of seats?” Realizing that they were not walking in the direction where they were previously seated, Tang En asked.

“Yes, we will be sitting with the Nottingham Forest fans.”

“You guys are really trustworthy partners.” They were unable to tell whether Tang En was really praising them or if he was being sarcastic. But they paid it little heed. They had only interacted with him for a mere hour or so, but they had already gotten used to this person’s sharp tongue and his way of speaking.

Speaking of which, Tang En’s sharp tongue was one of the reasons why he was not liked back when he was still in China. He was always speaking the truth and made rational comments, but the truth and rational comments tend to be displeasing to the ears.

When the three of them came to the Nottingham Forest fans viewing platform, most of the fans were already seated. The stadium’s awning was very limited in size and was unable to cover the whole of the viewing platform. The first few rows were directly in the rain. Tang En looked at those fans who shrunk their necks and persisted in the cold rain, and cursed, “B\*stards. Coventry has to count themselves lucky that they are no longer going to a match with Nottingham Forest as the home ground. At least in this season.”

He walked straight for the front row, and stood with the other fans in the rain. The two bodyguards, however, were miserable. They shrunk their necks and hopped about. “I say, Mr. Twain. The seats they allocated us are not here.” One of them pointed upwards, to somewhere that was sheltered by the awning.

Tang En shot the two of them a look and said, “If you wish to go, just go. I want to stay with my fans.”

“I’m afraid that’s not possible. We cannot let you stay too far away from us,” the two of them said as they appeared to be in a tight spot.

“Then you two may stay here with me.” Tang En pointed to a spot on the ground, and was extremely happy on the inside. He had finally found a suitable chance to get back at these two people.

The two of them looked up at the sky which was still drizzling and sighed as they could only accept the result.

The conversation between the three of them attracted the attention of the surrounding fans. Nottingham Forest fans managed to quickly discover that the person over there was their manager, Tony Twain.

“Mr. Twain?” A burly fan walked toward him and asked with some uncertainty in his tone. When he saw Twain’s face, he cried out in surprise, “So it’s really you! Is there any trouble?” He shot a hostile look at the two people beside Tang En.

This fan, who had a threatening appearance, made the two FA disciplinary committee guys feel slightly nervous. Luckily, Tang En got them out of their predicament. “No, there’s no trouble. I was just discussing with my two friends over here, where we should watch the match. Is there anyone seated here?”

“There was, but now there isn’t.”

“That’s good, we’ll watch the match from here, then.”

Catching wind that Nottingham Forest’s manager was there, the fans from all over the viewing platform rushed forward. They either shouted Twain’s name respectfully, or his nickname, in order to express their heartfelt respect toward the substitute manager. This was because his team played a soul-stirring second half in the previous match. Tang En’s conversation with the fans was also mostly centered around that match. Although the head referee ultimately stopped Nottingham Forest’s advance, in the fan’s eyes, the manager, Tony Twain, who led the team to score four goals against West Ham, was still the hero.

Tang En was elated to know that he was viewed by the fans as such, once again proving that he was suitable to walk the path of a football manager. He did not put on the airs of a manager who was distant. Instead, he chatted with the fans in the loud and noisy stadium, joked with them without any restraints, and enjoyed himself thoroughly. Those two pitiful chumps from the Football Association however, were squeezed out of the crowd and shrunk their necks in an attempt to endure the assault of the cold rain. No one seemed to care about them at that point.

Once the match began, Tang En was completely surrounded by Nottingham Forest fans. The two disciplinary committee members were squeezed two rows back and spent the rest of their time keeping watch on Tang En’s every move. Before coming to Coventry, they had been specifically instructed by Palios to be wary of that Tony Twain, for he was a cunning person.

That's right, extremely cunning!

At that moment, the two of them nodded their heads at the same time in agreement.