

1

The goalkeeper is the loner, the eccentric, standing apart from everyone else. Like the contrarian you are, you dislike proving the stereotype right, but that's how it is. You play a whole other game, on the field and in life. In the locker room, you like to question people's belief, to open their eyes, to play devil's advocate. Who's going to stop you? You play alone.

TACTICS

2

The right back runs tirelessly up and down the wing. You make sacrifices for the team, but fumble a cross 'cause you're not lucid when you get there and everyone's yelling at you. It hurts. You're more than a runner, you have skill and good feet. You feel unappreciated. You don't like it when blame falls on individuals and you're loyal to your wing partner, Number 7.

TACTICS

3

The left back is an artist of defence, with a sweet left foot and a licence to kill. Minding your markings and holding the line are just necessary nuisances to you. But you're no complainer, so you make jokes. About your mistakes, about everyone else's, about life in general. At least you've got one mate to laugh at your jokes: Your partner on the left wing, Number 11.

TACTICS

4

The defensive midfielder is the soul of the team, always working hard and never giving up. There are many ways to make a difference, and running isn't the least of them. To you, surrender is not an option, and you won't let your teammates give in. On the field, in the locker room, in life. You're Number 8's squire and you run for them too, to give them room to think.

TACTICS

5

The stopper is the last bastion of defence, ready to close in on the opponent and boot the ball away. You like it simple, you've got nothing to prove to the people who go on about circus acts and beautiful games. Football is a team sport and you tackle it like you tackle life, with brutal realism. You can always count on Number 6: Like you, they don't get lost in chitchat.

TACTICS

6

The sweeper isn't just a defender, they direct the game from the rear. In your position, any mistake can be fatal. You've learned to live with the burden of responsibility and you take everything seriously, on the field and outside of it. Football is only nominally a game: To you, it's a matter of life and death. Number 5 gets it, they never take stuff for granted either.

TACTICS

7

The right winger plays by the touch-lines, away from the centre of the match, but they can turn it around in a second. You don't need to be there all the time to make a difference, whether in a play or in an argument. Timing is everything and you always know the best time to shoot. Number 2 covers for your absences, they know it's worth it. Not everyone thinks like that.

TACTICS

8

The playmaker controls the midfield, that means they control the team. You don't work to get a solo, you work to direct the ensemble. Everyone wants to be a star: Getting eleven heads on board for the same plan is a challenge you can only win by keeping them engaged and forcing them to think when needed. Number 4 is your opposite, it's why you complete each other.

TACTICS

9

The centre forward is the finisher and they live to score. Nobody cares if you did your best or played for the team, you've only ever been judged for what you bring home and you always will be. There's nobody you can hide behind. You're not selfish, but you're no good at explaining it. Number 10 is the only one who gets it, though they should really assist you more.

TACTICS

10

The striker is the wild card, an unruly genius dancing with the ball. Winning isn't everything, there's so much more in life. You consider yourself an artist and you're proud of that, you refuse to hold back your ideas and you don't care if anyone agrees with them. You think Number 9 should rediscover this sense of beauty and you're ready to teach them everything.

TACTICS

11

The left winger is the unstoppable speedster, ready to dribble and strike out with a sweet left peg. You're always craving to keep the ball, to show off, to get the last word. Nothing wrong with teamwork, but it's personal initiative that makes a difference. You and Number 3 always end up stealing the ball off each other's feet, but you laugh it off without too much whining.

TACTICS

1

Corner kick for the opposing team. The ball is on the ground, the kicker approaches the flag and prepares to strike. There it goes, a cross to the far post. The goalie moves to exit, but wisely keeps to the goalposts seeing the scuffle in the penalty box. The opposing striker emerges victorious and shoots! A powerful shot, but it goes straight into Number 1's arms.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

2

The opposing attacker runs for the goal, but the right back is ready to cut them off again. Number 2 is as dutiful as ever today, though lacking in the offensive department. They've been running all over the wing while barely going past the centre spot. And once again our right back retreats instead of trying to set up a cross, preferring to put up a thorough defence.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

3

The left back advances on the wing, gaining ground. Looks like they could make it to the penalty box. They stop, bring the ball to their right. Maybe to cut towards the centre? But no, back it goes to their left foot as they push forward, meet resistance and get the ball to the centre. Yet another cross from Number 3. They're relentless today, but never daring enough to shoot.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

4

The opposing team is keeping the ball in midfield. These are some beautiful one-touch passes, they're practically immune to pressing. But our midfielder plays it smart and manoeuvres to intercept the next pass. They get a hold on the ball and gets our team back in play. A clever and careful move, but it's strange seeing Number 4 display so little aggression in a derby.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

5

The opposing team intercepts a pass and goes on a breakaway. It's three against two, trying to outsmart our defence. The stopper pulls back and gets ready. There it is, Number 5 side by side with the ball carrier, putting on pressure until they're over the goal line. Number 5 concedes a corner kick, but proves they're a veritable wall. Could've tried to steal the ball, though.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

6

The sweeper steals the ball and resists a comeback from the opposing attacker. Look at their confidence as they gain ground. They could try to serve the forwards a long ball, it's certainly up their alley. But no, they pass to the nearest teammate and give the team room to breathe. Simple, elegant, Number 6 is a guarantee. One wonders why they're so coy with long passes.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

7

The right wing receives and plays the ball forward, the field is wide open. A nice give-and-go with the centre forward and they're all the way downfield. Number 7 feigns dribbling towards the goal, then switches smoothly to a cross. And... Damn, intercepted. The opposing team breaks away. A nice play from Number 7, but maybe they should've just shot for the goal.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

8

Once again the ball goes to the playmaker and gets dealt back to another team-mate. They've got no fear of pressing. Never one touch too much from Number 8. A living metronome, setting a tempo for the team without stealing the spotlight. Of course, one expects a player with such technique to bring the ball home, but you don't play a derby for the photo-op.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

9

Long pass to the centre forward, who puts it down with their back to goal. They duel with the opposing defender and find an opening to pass to the nearest team-mate. There's the return pass, and Number 9 attempts a quick shot to the far post... But misses! What a fighter, but maybe all this struggling isn't helping them keep a head clear and finish the job.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

10

The striker comes get the ball past the halfway line, takes on the enemy and dribbles away. They gain ground, get rid of a second opponent with a quick feint, and get to the penalty line. Number 10 attempts to shoot... Wait, that's a pass! Nice cross to the left winger, but the ball gets intercepted. That was altruistic of our striker, they could've tried their signature curve shot.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

11

The left winger calls for a pass and receives it running. A quick dribble, then they drill a powerful cross across the whole penalty box... But there's no team-mate there to turn it into a goal. A beautiful show of skill from Number 11, who really doesn't get enough support in these incursions. Maybe they should strike out on their own and try to bring it home alone.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

1

The action develops out of left wing. The opposing attacker converges to the centre, as their full-back prepares for a cross. The ball flies high, and the box erupts into the usual tussle. The goalkeeper hesitates between the posts, seems to misjudge the trajectory, but they leap back at the last moment and swat the ball off to the corner. That was a close call for Number 1.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

2

Number 2 takes advantage of the opponent's hesitation to steal the ball and press on. They're gaining ground towards the box, going a mile a minute as the defence tries to regroup. But our right back slows down and opts for a pass to their wing partner. The play doesn't stop, though it's slower and more deliberate now. Pity, they had room to go for the kill.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

3

The left back isn't fooled by the opposing winger's feints, marks them tight and drives out the ball. Great defensive play from Number 3, as ready and responsive as ever. What's surprising is their lack of initiative, they're not up to their full offensive potential today. Even before the match, it was obvious how limiting this game plan is to their play style.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

4

The ball is travelling horizontally. At this point in the game, neither team wants to risk it. The opponents go on another series of passes, but here's Number 4 sliding in with a tackle to get possession of the ball. They could launch a counter-attack with a through pass... But they opt to go slow and steady instead, entrusting the ball to the playmaker to keep it safe.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

5

A long pass from the opposing defence crosses over the centre spot, the ball bounces and goes flying again. Number 5 rushes to catch it with a header, getting it back in play. But the action is messy, there's a long back-and-forth... Finally the threat is staved off. The stopper is gesturing wildly at their team-mates, furious over being left alone with the wandering ball.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

6

Number 6 keeps up the defence, ready to spring the offside trap. Long pass, the opposing forward receives it and the referee signals to play on: No offside, the left back failed to hold the line. The opposing attacker presses on, but the sweeper steps in to save the day. Great timing, but Number 6 should spend more time leading their team-mates instead of saving their hides.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

7

There's action in right field. Some back-and-forth, the opposing team emerges victorious and brings the ball downfield. A pass on the wings... And intercepted! Number 7 gets in there with good timing, wins back the ball and turns the tide. Great play from the right winger. But they're not going to be any threat to the opposing goalie if they keep standing so far back.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

8

Number 8 is tireless. Left and right they go to lay down the law in midfield, like we've seen them do in so many games. But today it's really no easy task. Indeed, the playmaker is doing great with defensive coverage, but they're not focused enough to set up a coherent offensive. And you can't win a game by defending, you actually need to score.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

9

The team launches into a flanking manoeuvre as the centre forward looks for an opening. There's the pass: Our forward stops the ball, waits for a team-mate to get there, no, wait, they're shooting. It hits the woodwork! The goalie barely grazed it, and yet... Number 9 should've shot on the first touch instead of waiting around. Attackers ought to know when to be selfish.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

10

Number 10 takes advantage of an oversight in defence to get to the penalty line. Running past an opponent, then another, lots of dribbling to leave them confused. Then with a mighty dash, our striker finds an opening and shoots to score. Powerful, but predictable. Goalie is quick to block it. A beautiful play, but serving their unmarked team-mate could've been a better choice.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

11

Corner kick, the defence intercepts it. The left winger goes on the counter-offensive, the field's clear before them. Runs up to an opponent and past them, leaps around a second, but now they're off-centre. They can aim for the goalposts, but our forward calls for a pass in the box: A fatal pause for Number 11, who gets tackled by the defence. Nice play, could use more aggression.

TACTICAL PLACEMENT

CAPTAIN

Nobody knows the meaning of this jersey better than you. Football gave you everything, but it demanded just as much and your family is tired of sacrifices: You've got a generous offer from a foreign club on the plate. It'd mean more money and less stress. But you've always dreamed of ending your story where it started: In your city. This team is like a second family to you.

TECHNIQUE

ROOKIE

You've just debuted in the first team from the junior league: It's a whole other sport, a lot more intense on the pitch and off of it. Your dad didn't think you had it in you, he never accepted your choice to leave school, but football is everything to you. This is your first derby, you're surrounded by legends and the Veteran has you under their wing. Your future is at play here.

TECHNIQUE

VETERAN

This is your last season. You're tired of suffering, after all these years. You said you wanted to go out with a bang, before your decline really began, and your body's speaking loud and clear. You just need to work up the nerve to call it quits. But then a Rookie enters the locker room, and the kid can't even tie their own shoes, and how can you leave them like this?

TECHNIQUE

INJURED

This is your first match after a terrible knee injury. It wasn't the first time and you fear it won't be the last. The medical staff advised against playing so soon, but it's a derby, you live for games like these, so Coach left the decision up to you. It's hard to stand back and watch, the Unwanted gets it too: You've made friends, sitting in the bleachers together all this time.

TECHNIQUE

UNWANTED

You've burned bridges with the coach and now you feel like an outsider to the team. You don't know what to make of your sudden return to the main roster in time for the derby, but your time here is almost over, you've already spoken with your agent about it. The only one who had your back during these hellish months was the Injured. You'll miss them when you're gone.

TECHNIQUE

RESERVE

You were positive that Coach just didn't get you, but you're the one who doesn't understand. Months on the bench and now Coach decides to field you, for the derby of all things. You want to prove your worth, to Coach, to the team, to the president that invested on you. There must be something to you, else you wouldn't have the Star Player's respect.

TECHNIQUE

STAR PLAYER

You're the team's rising star and you wouldn't have it any other way. You're the chosen one, the prodigy, whatever else the press says. But you haven't made an impact in the national team yet, and the head coach there seems to think you're not the same player outside of the context of your club. All team-mates are important, even the Reserve, but you don't rely on them.

TECHNIQUE**FOREIGNER**

Football has brought you far away from home, granting you a better life. This isn't your city, so you feel the derby rivalry without really knowing the reasons for it. Football is war in your country as well, but at least it takes your mind off the actual war. When you see those hooligans do their worst to give the Traitor hell, you really doubt their heart's in the right place.

TECHNIQUE**TRAITOR**

Your first derby on the other side of the barricade, wearing the jersey of your lifelong enemies. Football is weird, so is life. But some things are easy to predict, like your former fans jeering whenever you touch the ball today. You were their idol. You wonder whether you made the wrong choice. The Foreigner puts you at ease, the only outsider to this petty city feud.

TECHNIQUE**FIGHTER**

You're the darling of the fans. You were one of them, before you gave up everything to make your dream come true and play in a derby. Every time is like the first, and you'll always be a hooligan at heart. You want another triumph for the boys in the bleachers who live for a match, just like you. You find nothing weird in the Pragmatist's fixation on winning.

TECHNIQUE**PRAGMATIST**

The only thing you don't care about winning is the fair play award. Football is also mind games, trash talking, and borderline ploys. You wouldn't stand for a loss in a friendly match either, but this derby is special: Your son is in the hospital and asked you to win for him. You won't let him down, no matter what. Everyone should play like the Fighter today.

TECHNIQUE

CAPTAIN

With a mighty dash, our captain goes into a sliding tackle and takes back the ball; then turns to lead the audience into a cheer! Number [] really is the soul of this team, someone who knows what it means to wear this jersey and never hold back. That play took serious guts: Mess up the timing on that tackle and the other team would've got a penalty kick.

TECHNICAL FEAT

ROOKIE

What a debut for that kid! A rookie just out of the junior league and already so willing to take risks. There they go with another long pass! This is a textbook example of youthful boldness: One has got to hope they're not going to break down once the other team manages to size them up. There's one thing we can be sure of, though, and it's that Number [] is full of talent.

TECHNICAL FEAT

VETERAN

The opposing forward is sowing terror in the penalty box. They get forced to the wing, but keep possession of the ball... Then Number [] steps in to take 'em to school. Bodily cuts off the opponent and presto, the ball rolls past the goal line. It's not even a corner. Experience matters, folks: Sometimes you need a cool-headed veteran to get things sorted out.

TECHNICAL FEAT

INJURED

Oof. Number [] is down, another hard tackle for a player that's just back on the pitch after a bad injury. But they're standing up again, like it was nothing. This is a derby and nobody's expected to use the kid gloves, but I wonder what ghosts're going through their head right now. But they refuse to stand back, taking every risk they can. It's a pleasure seeing them play again.

TECHNICAL FEAT

UNWANTED

Hard tackle on Number [], who resists admirably and kicks the ball away before falling down. Danger averted. Nobody expected to see them on the pitch for the derby, in fact the rumour is they're being transferred at the end of the season. And yet here they are, in less than ideal shape after being benched for so long, but ready to sing their swan song for this team.

TECHNICAL FEAT

RESERVE

Number [] conquers the ball and shrugs off the opposition. It can't be easy to find yourself on the first team right for the derby after such a long time on the bench. But they've proven ready. They're milking this chance for all it's worth: The only thing our former reserve should keep an eye on is the danger of overdoing it. For now, they're putting up a good show.

TECHNICAL FEAT

STAR PLAYER

What risk! And what courage. The crowd goes wild over Number []'s back-heel. This kind of move is hard to even imagine, but sometimes the most complex solution is also the best one. Coach's face must've been a sight to behold: This is not a move you practice in training! But genius goes hand in hand with insanity, though apparently without fear of consequences.

TECHNICAL FEAT

FOREIGNER

Number [] looks like they're tangoing with the ball. Right, then left, with all the grace of a dancer. They've adjusted well to our league, even though the inner workings of a derby, its meaning to the city, the vitriol of it, these things aren't easy for outsiders to grasp. One mistake and you get harassed just for smiling in front of the press. But if you make a difference...

TECHNICAL FEAT

TRAITOR

A nice pass from Number [] is met with the usual barrage of jeers. Fans never forget, much less forgive people for switching sides. Not in a derby. "Traitor" is the only insult we can report on, but the recipient doesn't seem bothered. It must be hard to stand on the other side of the barricade, trying to conquer a new fanbase with the old one still grieving for you.

TECHNICAL FEAT

FIGHTER

The ball goes in the mixer, the opposing centre forward falls to the ground... The referee gestures to play on. Number [] unceremoniously grabs them by the arm to pull them up. The two are bickering, standing face to face. Their teammates pull them apart, but our fighter keeps trying to get a rise out of them. Gutsy! But they're dangerously close to a yellow card.

TECHNICAL FEAT

PRAGMATIST

Impact in the box, Number [] is down and clutching their face. Looks like that was a bad hit. The opponent shakes their head, the referee exchanges words with an assistant. He looks uncertain, but he lets it run. Was that a foul or a simulation? Sure, there was contact, but Number [] took a bit of a dive there. It could've been enough to win a penalty... Or to get cautioned.

TECHNICAL FEAT



CAPTAIN

Contact on the penalty line, two players in different jerseys are down. There's a fight brewing, but the captain steps in to lead their team-mates away and give the referee a piece of their mind. They're yelling and gesturing. Referee finally signals to play on. Anyone with less charisma than Number [] would've certainly been awarded a yellow card for that.

TECHNICAL FEAT

ROOKIE

The new arrival from the junior team might be green, but they're full of character! Always first on the ball, both generous and gutsy. Also clinical with their passes: This kid is showing off all their training and it's a sight to behold. Let's just hope this eagerness doesn't make Number [] do something rash. Recklessness must be an asset, not an hindrance.

TECHNICAL FEAT

VETERAN

This is the kind of game where players like Number [] are invaluable. If a derby is Inferno, then the veteran is our Virgil. Knows every opponent and team-mate to the core, knows exactly what to do. Let's hope they won't sleep on their laurels and take such an unpredictable game for granted. Never get too comfy: Nothing like a derby to throw you off-kilter.

TECHNICAL FEAT

INJURED

Even though they're visibly limping, Number [] has already turned down two calls for substitution coming from the bench. They really want to leave their mark on this derby. Another aerial duel: Number [] comes out on top and luckily doesn't land on their injured knee, but it's yet another close call. Where's the border between bravery and sheer recklessness?

TECHNICAL FEAT

UNWANTED

We expected to see Number [] on the bleachers, where they've been kept for the rest of the season. But no, they're wearing their cleats and playing the field. Sure, the audience isn't cheering for them like they do for the others, but though the future is still uncertain, the present's here, with our team. Eleven warriors on the field, fighting for victory against old enemies.

TECHNICAL FEAT

RESERVE

Number [] untangles another messy situation. No doubt they're doing their part for the team; but it's clear they can't play from memory like their peers. Not a lot of games played this season, but they're certainly eager to get in there. They just need to be careful and keep their head clear enough to play with their team-mates instead of trying to show off.

TECHNICAL FEAT



STAR PLAYER

Our star dares an opponent to bring it on, dupes them with a clever feint and gets free rein for a long shot. What brava-do, and what a sweet foot! But the opposition is not impressed and they're not being shy about it. Number [] just smirks. That was a beautiful play, but a derby isn't the place for subtleties and you ought to be careful about who you mess with.

TECHNICAL FEAT

FOREIGNER

We're used to the idea that our league is the best in the world, both for athletic performance and tactical know-how, but Number [] is holding up well. Derbies are a hot mess in their native country as well, and they've really stepped up to the challenge here. But they look a bit winded: It's vital to learn to dose your strength if you want to survive a match like this.

TECHNICAL FEAT

TRAITOR

Number [] carries the ball downfield, looking for room to send it flying, then bravely faces off against two players to leap past them. But they're knocked down by the opposing captain. Their former captain. They're shaking hands now, but glaring daggers at each other! A nice try, but you need to be careful: A derby is the perfect place to dredge up an old grudge.

TECHNICAL FEAT

FIGHTER

Well, this is a match inside the match! Number [] and their direct opponent are holding nothing back. It's a flurry of showboating and aggressive plays that border on unlawful. They're playing like gladiators, and we expected nothing else. Let's only hope this duel doesn't distract our Number [] too much, because the rest of the team needs them focused today.

TECHNICAL FEAT

PRAGMATIST

The opposing striker looks really tense today. And that smug smile on Number []'s face! They've clearly been trying to work up the opposition. The two have been taking stabs at each other for the whole match, a real battle of endurance. Mind games are a part of the derby like any other tactic, but it's too easy to cross the line and the referee is clearly getting fed up.

TECHNICAL FEAT

STARTING WHISTLE

The city gathers around the stadium, split in two by today's derby. On the pitch, twenty-two players prepare to yet again rekindle their eternal rivalry. This is no simple match. It's a kind of ritual, a sacred space that will only exist until the referee's final blow on the whistle. And in between, a few sublime instants and many shades of grotesque. In a word, football.

WHISTLE

END OF FIRST HALF

The first half ends on a score of [] to []. A show-down full of goals and opportunities for both teams, and fans on either side have been quite loud about their support. People say football is the most important of unimportant things, but when you watch a game like this you can't help but think it's an understatement. I wonder what the second half will bring us!

WHISTLE

SECOND HALF

After our intermission, the teams are back on the field and the ball is already on the centre spot. The score is still [] to []. Who knows if either Coach has found the right words in to get their players to give it their all? The bleachers are on fire with excitement, the game is still very much open-ended and we'll see who has what it takes come out on top. Here we go!

WHISTLE

FINAL WHISTLE

The referee signals the end of the match. And what a match! A whirlwind of goals and emotions like this isn't something you see every day. But this wasn't just spectacle for football enthusiasts: More than anything else, it was a battle for true supporters. Those loudly celebrating their victory and those holding back the tears of defeat. That's all from the stadium.

WHISTLE

CONCEDED GOAL

The opposing striker receives a forward pass from midfield and goes on the offensive. Shaking off their marker, they're in the box now, shooting... Oh, good save! The opposing right winger catches the ball on the rebound, shoots again... It's a goal! Poor goalie couldn't recover fast enough. But our defence was clumsy. You can't give attackers that much space!

GOAL

CONCEDED GOAL

Chain of passes between the opposing midfielders. Looking for an opportunity, but there's none. Here comes the opposing playmaker, hiding the ball, creating some space... And suddenly they shoot. Unbelievable, it's a goal! A daring finish, but our goalkeeper was obviously complicit. Wholly unprepared to stop a long shot. A real howler on our part.

GOAL

CONCEDED GOAL

The opposing left winger enters the box, checks, prepares to shoot... Our stopper comes in from behind and knocks them down. The referee approaches, while our defender loudly claims they only touched the ball. Nope, referee's pointing to the spot: It's a penalty kick. The opposing striker takes charge, here it goes... Goal! Goalie dove left, ball went right.

GOAL**CONCEDED GOAL**

Our striker enters the box, attempts a dribble, but loses possession. The opposition goes on a breakaway, our team is caught off balance. The offensive spreads out on the right, two passes and they're in the goal area. Our goalkeeper is ready, waiting to leap at the last second... But the goal is wide open and the opposing forward doesn't miss! A low shot in the corner of the net. Goal.

GOAL**SCORED GOAL**

The sweeper crosses the midfield line and passes to the left wing. Left back switches the play with a cross to the opposite wing. Right winger springs into action: Nice catch, lets the team move up. Cross to midfield, striker dummies and lets it through to the centre forward, who passes back to the incoming midfielder. A shot and a goal! Impressive teamplay!

GOAL**SCORED GOAL**

Corner kick, taken by our playmaker. Cross to mid-goal. The opposing goalie tries to clear, but the ball falls to the right back who gets it to the playmaker again. Another cross, the stopper swoops in to shoot and scores! The crowd roars and the whole team converges on the astonished stopper for a celebratory hug. This is their first goal in a derby!

GOAL**SCORED GOAL**

The striker goes on yet another dribble towards the penalty area, but the defence is marking them tight. Striker won't give up, slips to the right, resists one tackle too many, pivots around an opponent and moves on. Lets loose a curve shot... Straight in the roof of the net! A clinical finish from our striker's sweet spot. Truly a great goal, a football masterpiece.

GOAL**SCORED GOAL**

The left back is in the final third, passes to the playmaker and gets it back. Nice give and go, but our left back is cut off by two opponents. No use trying to get through, they attempt a cross. The centre forward is besieged by the opposing team's centre backs, but manages to get half a step away, catches the ball and immediately lets it loose. Goal! What a blast!

GOAL

CAPTAIN

There's a row of empty seats in the sky box. No one in the Captain's family has showed up. They've never missed a match before, let alone a derby.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

ROOKIE

The Rookie's father is in the stands with the rest of their family. This is the first time they've ever agreed to follow the team and watch a game.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

VETERAN

Two of the managers were chatting in the locker room tunnel and clearly stated that this is the Veteran's last derby. They're already scouting for a substitute.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

INJURED

The medical staff has made one last ditch attempt to convince the Coach not to field the Injured. If their knee gives out again, they might never recover at all.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

UNWANTED

The Unwanted's agent is sitting in the stands, next to the manager of the rival team. They're smiling and shaking hands. Are they really going to switch sides?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

RESERVE

The club's president is sitting in the stands, his eyes glued to the Reserve, whispering to the manager that sits next to them. What could they be talking about?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM



STAR PLAYER

Someone unexpected in the stands: the head coach of the national team. The only one who seems to doubt the Star player. Is today going to change his mind?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

FOREIGNER

There's been a coup in the Foreigner's country. TVs are tuned in on the derby and only mentioned it in passing, but there's talk of dead and wounded civilians.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

TRAITOR

Ever since the formation was announced, the Traitor has been booed left and right. By their former fans, and by our side. Too much pressure could crush them.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

FIGHTER

There was a scuffle between supporters and a few hooligans have been arrested. One is a close friend of the Fighter's and apparently stabbed someone.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

PRAGMATIST

The Pragmatist took off a locket with a picture of their kid and stood there staring at it for a long time. The surgery is today, after a long hospital stay.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

COACH

The derby is our last chance of redemption for this season: If we're defeated, the Coach is going to be sacked. It would be the end of an era for the team.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

CAPTAIN

Our supporter club is out there with a banner saying: "There's only one Captain". They're worried by the rumours about the heart of the team being traded off.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

ROOKIE

The Rookie's hazing has ended up on the newspapers. It was just a bit of camaraderie, of course, even if it sounds embarrassing... Who snitched to the press?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

VETERAN

In the last heated talk between the team and Coach, the Veteran sided with the gaffer. Have they really been offered a role in Coach's staff when they retire?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

INJURED

During the last training session, the Injured blew up at a team-mate for a tackle they felt was too hard. Are they good or is there still some bad blood there?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

UNWANTED

The Unwanted stated to the press that they miss the former Coach, and that the current one prefers less talented players. Who were they badmouthing?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

RESERVE

Despite their minor role, the Reserve was called to a retreat with the national team and made a good impression. Why did they perform so much better there?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM



STAR PLAYER

Talk about genius and insanity. The Star player skipped training twice and they were still fielded. Tabloids say they've been at it with their new flame.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

FOREIGNER

Rumour is the Foreigner is thinking of giving up football to return to their country and become some sort of preacher. Would they really leave all this?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

TRAITOR

A few days ago the Traitor spent the night out with their former team-mates. Nothing wrong with that, except it was right in the middle of derby week.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

FIGHTER

The Fighter recently released a very controversial interview, openly insulting the opposing team and its fans. That was unprofessional, true hooligan talk.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

PRAGMATIST

The press is going on about a football betting scandal. The Pragmatist's love of gambling is no mystery. If they're involved, the whole team is going to pay for it.

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

COACH

The Coach ended up venting during a press release, where "some players" were accused of not loving the team enough. No names were given. Was that wise?

The player who draws this card must introduce this topic to the discussion.

TEAM

YELLOW CARD

Hard tackle from Number [], hits both the ball and the foot behind it. Referee throws out a yellow card.

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 2.
If the player was cautioned before, they get a Red card. It must be announced. The opponents' value raises by 3 more.*

DERBY

YELLOW CARD

Number [] is down, clutching their face. But the referee cautions them. Simulation!

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 2.
If the player was cautioned before, they get a Red card. It must be announced. The opponents' value raises by 3 more.*

DERBY

YELLOW CARD

An opponent and Number [] crash into each other. The latter gets a yellow card. Is the referee insane?

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 2.
If the player was cautioned before, they get a Red card. It must be announced. The opponents' value raises by 3 more.*

DERBY

YELLOW CARD

Cross to the centre... Oof, handball by Number [], just outside the area. Of course it's a yellow card.

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 2.
If the player was cautioned before, they get a Red card. It must be announced. The opponents' value raises by 3 more.*

DERBY

RED CARD

An angry scuffle, an opponent falls to the ground. Elbowed in the face! Red card for Number [].

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 5.
Players who get a Red card in the First half can't play cards during Halftime and become Supporters in the Second half.*

DERBY

RED CARD

Number [] makes a desperate tackle on the opponent. A professional foul and an inevitable red card!

*The Commentator notes the player's Number on the Commentator's table and increases the opponents' value by 5.
Players who get a Red card in the First half can't play cards during Halftime and become Supporters in the Second half.*

DERBY

SUBSTITUTION

The coach calls Number [] back to the bench. They hug their replacement and sit down: That's all from them for this derby.

At the end of the Field phase, the Commentator reminds the player of the substitution. Players who get substituted in the First half can't play cards during Halftime and can't be Footballers in the Second half.

DERBY

SUBSTITUTION

The coach calls Number [] back to the bench. They refuse to hug their replacement and stomp angrily towards the locker room.

At the end of the Field phase, the Commentator reminds the player of the substitution. Players who get substituted in the First half can't play cards during Halftime and can't be Footballers in the Second half.

DERBY

INJURY

Oh, that's a bad foul against Number [], who fails to stand up as the referee cautions the opponent. They're getting out the stretcher.

At the end of the Field phase, the Commentator reminds the victim of the injury. A player injured in the First half can't play cards during Halftime and becomes Commentator in the Second half.

DERBY

CONCEDED PENALTY

The opposing striker attempts to break through the middle: Past the defenders, then swerving to evade the goalkeeper... And falling! The referee whistles a penalty kick. The same striker takes it. Goal! Chipped it and fooled the keeper.

The Commentator must add one extra goal to the opponents' score.

DERBY GOAL

DISALLOWED GOAL

The playmaker sees the centre forward dash downfield and serves them with surgical precision. Shot and goal! The opposing team protests and the referee disallows it: Offside by an inch, it seems.

The Commentator must take a Scored goal from the deck, swap it with this, and take one goal out of the team's score.

DERBY GOAL

OWN GOAL

The opposing winger advances and crosses to the centre. The opposing striker is on the ball, but Number [] rushes in to clear it away and... No! It lands in our own net. An own goal!

The Commentator must take a Scored goal from the deck, swap it with this, and add one extra goal to the opponents' score.

DERBY GOAL

PRESSURE

The team is really putting the pressure on the ball, pushing up the line of defence and marking attackers tight. The opposing team is clearly having a hard time passing the ball around.

The Commentator must decrease the value of the opponents by 2.

DERBY

OFFSIDE

The opposing centre forward is once again caught past the line of defence! Our team's offside trap is truly a well-oiled machine. They're moving like a ballet troupe.

The Commentator must decrease the value of the opponents by 2.

DERBY

ONE-TOUCH

The team is showing off with a series of one-touch passes and lightning-quick give and go. The opposing team is getting winded trying to keep up, leaving breaches in the defence.

The Commentator must decrease the value of the opponents by 2.

DERBY

TWELFTH MAN

The stands are truly packed with our team's supporters for this derby, outnumbering the opposition and out-cheering them too! This can only be described as the proverbial twelfth man.

The Commentator must remove and ignore one Derby card of their choice.

DERBY

FAIR PLAY

The opposing forward is on the ground, in pain. Number [] kicks out the ball and approaches to make sure they're okay. Helping a rival stand back up: a kind gesture in a tense match.

The Commentator must take out a Derby Red card (or absent that a Yellow card) from the deck. If there are no such cards, this has no effect.

DERBY

FAIR PLAY

An opponent collapses, even though there was no contact... Oh, there's why: a cramp! Number [] runs up to help them stretch out their leg. The two share a smile. How kind.

The Commentator must take out a Derby Red card (or absent that a Yellow card) from the deck. If there are no such cards, this has no effect.

DERBY

COACH ON THE FIELD

After a back-and-forth, the ball rolls out of play. Some confusion on the field. The gaffer on the bench yells out instructions to Number [], who immediately begins gesturing to the team and restores order. Looks like we have a true coach on the field.

The upper limit to the team's value increases from 21 to 30.

DERBY

SHOE CHANGE

Unbelievable, Number [] has slipped again! Looks like someone chose the wrong pair of cleats. The ball rolls out of play and they take that chance to go change their shoes.

The Commentator enters the field and picks a Footballer to bring out. The Footballer swaps places with a Supporter for the rest of the phase.

DERBY

PITCH INVASION

The referee whistles to stop play. Was there a foul? No, there's a supporter on the pitch! They got past security and are running around the pitch. Some people really go wild for a derby!

The Commentator pushes one of the Supporter on the field. They're free to interact with Footballers until the Commentator drags them back out.

DERBY

AWARDED PENALTY

Long pass by Number [], landing right in the box. A team-mate receives it, turns around... And gets tripped by an opponent! That's a penalty. The author of the pass takes the kick. There it goes... And goal! Blasted right under the crossbar.

The Commentator must add one extra goal to the team's score.

DERBY GOAL

FREE KICK

The striker attempts a dummy and falls down after a hard tackle. It's a free kick from the edge of the box. Number [] takes it, maybe to serve a team-mate. But no, they shoot and they score! The ball flies over the wall in a perfect arc.

The Commentator must add one extra goal to the team's score.

DERBY GOAL

BREAKAWAY

A pass from the opposing playmaker is intercepted, their team is thrown off-balance. The ball goes to Number [], who launches on a breakaway. The ball flies down the left wing, our forward is face to face with the keeper. And it's a goal!

The Commentator must add one extra goal to the team's score.

DERBY GOAL