Match Report - Holland vs West Germany (1-2) 1974

The 1974 World Cup final was hosted in the Munich Olympic Stadium. Hence, there was unanimous support for Germany, which you might think would intimidate the Dutch. Despite this, Holland were in control from kick off and calmly played the ball along the defence. Germany did not press nearly enough and sat back; the Dutch were humiliating them with total football.

Johan Cruyff, the Dutch striker, sat so deep that he became the playmaker, zipping the ball around the field. However, the Germans were not prepared for the rapid change of pace of Cruyff after he received a pass from the Left. He breezed past defenders and was about to surely score, before a last-ditch tackle from Vogts caused a penalty to be given. The fans were stunned to silence as Neeskens slotted the penalty down the middle, because their team had not yet even touched the ball!

The Germans were demoralized and stood off the Dutch even more. Nobody wanted to tackle or intercept, and seemingly nobody wanted to win the World Cup! However, Holland were becoming a little too full of themselves; rather than scoring simple chances, they kept the ball. They wanted to taunt and tease the Germans, but were losing their shape in the process.

The Dutch line was very high, and, at one point, four players went to press only one German on the ball! A pass was played over these four, which left a 5 against 4 attack. Holzenbein drove quickly into the area, using his close touch to twist and turn past defenders. However, Rijsbergen dived in and gave away a penalty! Breitener passed the ball calmly into the Left corner as the fans erupted with cheers. The Germans had regained their character, and were back in the game.

Now, the Germans were in control, having attack after attack. They managed to get lots of through balls in behind the poorly organised Dutch

defence by drawing in a man, and then playing a pass behind him. This used Germany's speed and width well. Eventually, the Germans broke through again. Bonhof drove down the wing and squared the ball to Muller, who superbly controlled the lightning fast pass and fired it into the net, performing an impressive turn in the process. The first half ended with Germany in the lead; the crowd was buzzing with apprehension.

The second half began with wave after wave of Dutch attack. Germany sat deep and invited pressure; nevertheless, they gave everything possible to defend and Holland could never get their passing flow going as a consequence of 27 fouls given away. The Dutch never managed to score due to the good shape of Germany- if somebody committed, another defender was always covering. Holland were camped in the Germans' half and wore them down with never-ending shots. However, the Germans stood strong.

After what seemed like millenia to the Germans but seconds to Holland, the final whistle blew and West Germany had won the World Cup on home soil.