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Delhi hold Goa in ISL tie



Panjim (Goa), Feb 21 (IANS) FC Goa were held to a 1-1 draw by Delhi Dynamos FC in an Indian Super League (ISL) match here on Wednesday.

Hugo Boumous' 53rd minute goal for Goa was cancelled out by a late strike from Kalu Uche (81st minute) as the hosts failed to hold onto their lead after they squandered multiple scoring chances.

Goa, who needed to win this match in order to maintain their chances of reaching the semi-finals, remain at the sixth spot in the 10-team league ladder with 21 points from 15 games.

Delhi meanwhile, rose a rung to the second lowest spot with 12 points from 15 outings.

When Boumous collected the ball near the half-line, no one expected him to go all the way. But he kept going past defenders before finding a yard to shoot. Delhi defender Gabriel Cichero was in the way, but only to wickedly deflect it into the net.

And just when it looked like Goa would make sure of collecting full points, Delhi created two quick chances late in the game.

The first one was missed by Lallianzuala Chhangte but his next one, an assist to Kalu Uche, was a beauty.

His run down the left flank and then the measured cross found Uche at the right place to get his first touch past the wrong-footed FC Goa goalkeeper Naveen.

The two players were involved in a solid tussle throughout the match, with Boumous coming in for Manuel Lanzarote.

The first battle between the two was won by Cichero in the first half, when he made an incredible tackle to stop the Moroccan who was through on goal after a delightful ball from Feran Corominas.

Corominas could have scored minutes later but Delhi goalie Xabier made a fine save to stop him from close range. Shockingly, he missed another chance in the 74th minute when he tried to be too exuberant in a one-on-one situation with Arnab Das and made a mess of it.

He will surely be regretting not keeping it simple to give his side a better lead.

Boumous was probably the most active Goan attacker - in the opening period, he had bombed down the right after a mazy run and set up Mandar Rao Dessai, but the winger couldn't get enough power on his shot and had better options available.

Former Goa player Manuel Arana made a hash of the first chance in the game - he could hardly bother the goalkeeper after Kalu Uche's pass and after that, Goa slowly gained ascendancy.

Brandon Fernandes saw a freekick soar just over and a shot off target. The only other opportunity for Delhi was when Narayan Das' miss-hit pass almost fell to Romeo Fernandes.

Mandar scuffed a chance late with Corominas seeing his effort saved at the death.