

2022 MLS Cup: LAFC vs Philadelphia

Saturday, November 5, 2022

Los Angeles, California, USA

Banc of California Stadium

Los Angeles FC

Ilie Sanchez

Postgame Press Conference

LAFC 3, Philadelphia Union 3

3-0 Penalties

Q. Having come back the way you did to force the shootout, how confident were you guys going into the shootout?

ILIE SANCHEZ: We felt confident throughout the 130 minutes and of course in the shootout. We knew how good John is on goal, and also we've been practicing the picks in the past week.

Of course it could have gone to their side, that's the shootout. But I think that at home, we deserved to be champions, and that's what happened.

Q. If you remember after the America match, I asked you about penalties and how that moment may prepare you for later in the season. Any thought of that match going into your opportunity, and what did it mean for you to seal the deal coming over as a free agent from Sporting Kansas City?

ILIE SANCHEZ: That game, it gave us the idea that John was really good in PKs. He was unlucky against America, but today, being really good at PKs and also being lucky, he got three penalties out.

Yeah, everything we did this season prepared us for this moment. Being a man down, playing extra time, being up into the results twice and giving up that third goal prepared us for this moment.

We have a fantastic coaching staff that created a methodology of training, and it's not just about the exercises that we do on a regular basis but the mentality that they try to put in our heads.



So, again, being at home, that was the extra for us, and we could have not done it without being here in front of our fans; that's a fact, and that's why we became champions.

Personally, I'm just happy to be part of this group and very grateful for the opportunity. John, Will, Steve, Marco, the whole management of the organization, and the others for sure.

But this is something that we did together as a team, and I'm so happy and proud to be part of this group.

Q. You were on the field in 2018 when Sporting Kansas City lost to the Portland Timbers in the conference final. Thinking about how much you've been through in your career since then, what does this moment mean to you?

ILIE SANCHEZ: Well, I'm sad it could not have been with the Sporting, too. I had first -- sorry, five great seasons with them with great teams and of course a fantastic coach, too.

We put ourselves in that position of becoming champion and having the final at home. We just couldn't do it.

But I think that this group and this team and this organization has been built for these moments, in five years becoming MLS Cup Champions, Supporters' Shield Champions twice. It tells you the thought process behind what we've built so far, and we are very happy for becoming champions.

But I want to believe that this doesn't start here.

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