

Los Angeles Football Club

Media Conference

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Bob Bradley

Press Conference



LAFC 3, San Jose 1

BOB BRADLEY: I thought a big effort from a lot of guys, and so as you head down this stretch, we talked about how important this home game was to get us going, get some momentum and then now carry that into these next two away games.

So I liked the overall control part of the first half. Honestly I didn't like the way we started the second half. Part of that maybe has to do with the fact that Poncho has to come out at halftime. But we didn't change the way we play.

We just, I think in a few too many moments, when we got to loose balls instead of finding a quick way to get a good pass to the next guy and maintaining some control, we got caught up in more kind of wrestling matches, and then we committed some fouls and that led to set pieces.

We hung in through that period. I think on a hot day, our substitutes were important and obviously we got some really big plays including in some really good individual efforts going forward from Chiqui to help push us forward and then a very good play from Brian to set up Chicho for the third goal.

Q. What did you see from the first half getting ahead early, the pressing, just the intensity in generally?

BOB BRADLEY: Early goal, yes, of course, that part, excellent. In moments where we got up around the box, our ideas against their man-to-man marking were very good. At times, the ability to -- when a ball went forward, for the third man to be on the move so that now we could quickly take advantage of the moment and get into the box and be dangerous. Of course we created some other good chances that we just didn't finish.

I mentioned that I thought we did a very good job in the first half of picking the moments to press, but in other moments making more of a mid-block. The understanding, especially on our left side between Marco and Raheem was important. It was really good. Because there were situations when Espinoza, who for us is really their best

player, would stay wide, and when Raheem would release to Abecasis, Marco did a very good job of sliding out and playing up against Espinoza.

So there are little things based upon the way they play that we had to -- that we knew about but we had to be able to execute and so I thought those things were very good in the first half.

Q. There had been some changes before; how important was it to getting that third goal to secure the result when San Jose was pushing for the equalizer in terms of the mentality the team showed to close the game?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, very important, because obviously San Jose, like all teams at this point in the year, when every game counts so much, you're just throwing everything you have. And so when we finally get to 3-1, certainly that takes a little bit out of them. So that was a key moment in the game.

Q. We've talked about it before, but just seeing what Chicho does and the impact he's had on the team since his arrival and getting the two goals, the assists today, how crucial has it been for the team?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, Chicho has a real presence on the field. I think he's starting to understand better some of our ideas; the way that -- we don't want our attackers to feel like defensively that they are running back all the time. But the starting point of our defending, they begin the defending. They are the ones that in certain moments are close to the ball and allow us to press.

And then there's some other moments where if the ball comes past our attackers, we've got to continue to develop the understanding with Brian and Chicho so that they don't stand up next to their central defenders; that they follow and close the space, and that we have more moments that when we get a piece of a ball, that they are close enough to recover and turn it into transition.

But his presence just on the field the way he carries himself, his ability to go by people in key moments, score goals, yeah, he's been excellent.

Q. Chicho said something a few weeks ago about how

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he wanted his teammates to enjoy the game like when they were kids on the field. What have you seen besides the personality in terms of leadership that he has just made people better and made the energy better and made people a little more loose?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, it's not like he makes the energy better but he's a good example. When you steps on the field, you know you're playing with a guy who cares and has a real presence. I've said that over and over.

And his comment about enjoying a game is just that when a team is going through a stretch and things aren't going the way everyone expects when there's some injuries, there's still got to be a part where showing up every day and accepting the challenges that are in front of you and not being afraid; so this gets repeated over and over.

You've got to be a team that you never blink, you know, when something -- you're up against something, you know what, you don't miss a beat, and so we talk about that a lot. But I think he can be an example to everyone about what that looks like.

Q. You mentioned Poncho coming off the half. Did him and Mamadou come off with injury concerns at all?

BOB BRADLEY: Yes, Poncho on the play in the first half where he got taken down from behind, I think it was by Ebobisse (ph), so we have to check his knee.

And Fall, got kicked or stepped funny, so we'll look at his ankle.

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