

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Wednesday, July 21, 2021

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Frank Klopas

Press Conference

Chicago Fire 2, D.C. United 2

Q. I guess just how disappointing is that result after how things went for the first 80 minutes or so?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, look, there are games where you come out of moments like that and you feel, you know, you feel positive when you come back -- when you're down 2-0, not when you're up. When you're at home, everything was going well, and then, you know, it's the next play, always, in a 2-0 lead.

And I think 2-0, 3-0, really doesn't matter, it's the next play. We had some opportunities to make the next play. I felt I made some subs plate in the game and I think that we had an initial push and then we dropped a little bit too deep and we INVITED too much pressure on ourselves.

Yeah, I mean, then we gave up the two goals. So definitely disappointed, you know, because again, I feel like we dropped some points at home and the way the game ended.

Q. Similar to that, D.C. is another team that's currently below the playoff line. I know it's a long season, but how big of a missed opportunity is that and what do you say to the guys after that's how the game ends versus what you might have expected to say a few minutes earlier?

FRANK KLOPAS: No, I think, look, I'm proud of the guys, at the effort that they put. It doesn't change. I think when we're playing at home and you drop points, it's always a missed opportunity because we know the amount of home games that we have in the in front of the season and we have to take advantage of that. And you know, we came into this game, I felt really good with the preparation with the guys after the setback in Nashville, and things were going great.

But you know, you have to play to the end, 90 minutes. That's not to say -- we have to keep our heads up and we



have to go back tomorrow and start focusing on Toronto coming in in a couple days, and that's all you can do. You know, try to learn from this, and then move forward and obviously plan ahead and have a good game plan, select the right guys on the field and give them the confidence and hopefully go Saturday and get the three points.

Q. In sports, obviously there are backup players that sort of need to stay ready just in case the starter gets injured. That doesn't happen a whole lot for managers, but you've had to step up into a quote unquote starting role. Interested in your malt taking over the reins here the last week?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, like I said, I've been in this situation before, but this doesn't happen in one or two days or three days. For me it's the preparation that's taken place from when the season started.

Rapha, our head coach, has done an excellent job preparing the team, preparing different scenarios. We know exactly if we change something tactically, it's something we do on the training pitch and the guys are prepared.

For me to step in this role, really, it's very easy. It's very easy in the sense that it's all in the preparation that the head coach has done beforehand. So you know, I've been there. I've done that before, and obviously we miss Rapha being here and our thoughts and prayers are with him and his family again obviously.

But the team doesn't really miss a beat because we've been together, I've been together with Rapha now for a year and a half and with this group of guys. It's all in the preparation that you do, and you go, you prepare well, you go through "what if" scenarios what might occur, and then you go out and you compete and you may.

Q. Do you speak to Rapha? How is he doing?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I talk to him every day. He just texted me even now after the game. They are watching the game.

Look in, moments like this, the most important thing is family. Our thoughts and prayers; again, the game is finished, and we're disappointed. But looking at the bigger

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

picture, nothing can compare. This is a game we all love to do and play and tomorrow is another day and Saturday is another game.

Look, he's doing as well as he can. It's important that he's there with his family in these moments and things are improving and getting better with his dad, which is a positive, and that's the most important thing. Wishes he was here.

Obviously he texted before and called and wished the guys all the best. So he's with them even though he's not here physically.

Q. Was it always the plan for Stanislav to play 15 minutes tonight and do you wish Frankowski had still been out there with how well he played leading up to the two-goal lead?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, that's the thing, it's after the game. I'm like the best in analyst in the world; I make the best decisions.

Yeah, going into the game, I thought that Stani has been training now for over a month, a month and a half with the team, and if there's want aunt to get him it, you know, 15, 20 minutes, not stretching more would have been more would have been the goal to get it done.

Frankie, coming back since the Euros has been fantastic, no doubt about that. But now you're managing, also, three games in a week, he's traveled a lot, he's played a lot of games.

So it's a decision where you feel you bring some fresh legs, you're in control of the game, but that's how quickly things can go. For me, those subs are totally on me, my responsibility. I take that.

But the plan all along for Stani was the most, no more than 20 minutes. If the opportunity was there to get a minute, in the end, it's all about doing what's best for the team to win the games.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...