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Frank Klopas

Press Conference



Q. How is Fabian coming long after the hamstring issue he had the previous match?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I mean I think with Fabian, it's day-to-day. I think he was able to do some things today in training a little bit more than the warm up. I think his situation is still day-to-day. I think we pushed him a little bit today and then it's just we have to see how he reacts to that tomorrow. So I would still feel with him it's a question mark for this weekend.

Q. And then Stanislav missed the first half of the season with a knee injury and has not started in a little while and has not gotten a ton of minutes. Why hasn't he played? Is there a health issue or is there something else going on?

FRANK KLOPAS: No, no, there's nothing going on. I think you said it. I think when you -- he missed a big part of the season and a lot of it was in the beginning in preseason which for me, the preseason is a big key to guys as far as getting strong and a good base of fitness that carries you through the year.

I think he missed a lot of time and it's finding his rhythm, finding minutes for him to play and get some sharpness, so it's not easy, when you're out three or four months, it takes some time, but look, I wouldn't be surprised if you see him towards the end getting starts because I think at the end of the day, it's not giving up starts because you have to give up starts. He has to earn that. He's been training really well and looking sharp in training. I think a big part of it is just the time off and he missed and it's not so easy to get that sharpness back without games.

Q. Wondering, obviously you want to win games but what other goals do you have for the last games of the season? What do you hope to accomplish?

FRANK KLOPAS: I talked about after the Toronto match, it's important that, look, these guys are professionals. We have to do our I won't be and try to be competitive all the

way to the end and every game we go into it with the belief and the confidence to get three points.

So that's never going to change. You know, the way I think and the way the players think and the way we approach every game and what we do in training, the standards are very high and the players know that and the expectations are high all the way to the end and there should be no other way.

Also, like I said, be a competitor but I'm looking at the club and the future of the club. I have to see, you know, how is this club going to move forward and who the players are important as the club moves forward and if I have to give those guys minutes to play, then I will do so. But it's -- the main and most important thing is to win games and be competitive till the end. But having said that, I'm also thinking about the future of the club, also.

Q. You talked about the future of the club and everything. Recently, the team just signed Rodríguez the academy are you looking at the last five or six games as a good opportunity for these guys to not only get minutes but get minutes on the road?

FRANK KLOPAS: Like I said, we are going to try to put the best team on the field to play that's going to give us an opportunity to win games, and I think the homegrown players that you've seen, Guti, you've seen Slonina, Casas. He played some minutes in the game in D.C. He hasn't gotten maybe more opportunities, but they have to earn that.

You know, regardless for me, age really doesn't matter if the kid is 17 or 18. It's regardless; if the kid has quality and deserves to be on the field, he's going to be on the field. Still with the homegrown players, they have to earn that right by the way they train every day and the way they compete, that's where we make decisions as coaches. So that's not going to change and they know that going into it from the beginning.

Having said that, some of the home grown players like Guti and Slonina and even Monis, they are pushing hard and looking good in training.

Q. Speaking of Guti, how is that foot, ankle he was dealing with? How is he coming long with that?

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FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, much better. Much better. I think he's been pushing every day and like I said, I think the last couple days, he's looked really sharp, and it was good to -- it's been good to see him play with confidence and stuff like that. He's a player that has a lot of quality, especially in the final third.

He's got big potential and it's good to see him healthy and being aggressive out there in training today and so the last couple days, he's really just seems like he's -- maybe the foot thing is behind him, I'm not saying he's 100 percent but he's feeling much better and I think he's had some really -- a couple good days of training.

But the rest of the team, I think the mentality of the team has really been good and sharp, you know, leading up the last couple training sections, even the last week and as we approach this game.

Q. Looking at the next season, how are you as coach approaching the games, knowing you have one eye on the future and one eye on the last few games with players coming up for contract options, how are you approaching it and talking to those guys in the last few games to have an impact?

FRANK KLOPAS: What I said to the team, those decisions, I think, those talks are going to take place with other people. What I've told the players is, how important finishing the season strong is, because you really can change, you know, the perception of someone. Sometimes, really, people don't -- don't forget, really don't -- what happened in the beginning of the season, you know, when you go back, when you look at the first game that we played against New England at home, we had the 2-0, great start at home and then we gave up those -- we gave up two goals and there were so many missed opportunities and moments where we could have gotten three points.

And like I said to the players, no one sometimes really remembers that far back, but they do remember how you finished the season and it's an opportunity for all of us to finish strong, whether that future might be here with the team, I think they continue to show the good mentality and good work ethic and fight in every game that they step in. But even if it's not here, you know, there are other teams that are looking, there are other people that will call to try to get information on players and you want to leave on a positive note and you want to be a guy that, you know, that you've left everything on the field with a good mentality and good character. I feel that's the kind of guys that we have here. So you know, that's what I've said to the players. We don't know what's going to happen. I think those

decisions will be made pretty soon, but regardless, I think just have to stay focused, be professionals and really put their best foot toward till the end of the season.

Q. Bears or Packers: What's your final?

FRANK KLOPAS: That's an easy one. I take the Bears but I don't know what the final -- it would be crazy to take the Packers if you're in Chicago. The Bears all the way.

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