

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Frank Klopas

Press Conference

Charlotte 2, Chicago Fire FC 1

Q. You guys for about 55, 60 minutes, I thought you played an almost perfect road game, and then things changed around that point. What did change in the game from your perspective?

FRANK KLOPAS: Look, I think that they were trying to pull us apart with their movement, and then for the most part, I think we handled it well. It's just a couple actions, those two actions in the end, where we let crosses come in. I think we over-slide in the box, and then we get caught pretty similar goals, I think both of them, both situations.

But you're right, I felt like the first half, I felt that there were really good moments that we had, maybe not as sharp, certain moments with our passing ability, I think there were quite a few passes that I think that we would have made and connected but I think that the turf, being wet, I think in moments, the weight of the passes, I think the adjustment took a little bit longer and we weren't as sharp.

But we adjusted a couple things at halftime defensively to try to stay more compact, and not get pulled out with their movement because I had a lot of rotations that wanted to pull you out but still be very direct and go in the middle. And then in the end, it's just two plays that I think we need to look and address and learn from so they don't happen again.

The thing is, like I told the guys, we have to -- it hurts, obviously. But we have to start preparing now for the game Saturday from now and we have an opportunity pretty quickly to get back at home and get the three points.

Q. You mentioned how some of those goals from Charlotte at the end might have been preventable in those individual moments but at the end of the day it's another loss from a winning position. Do you draw a connection between this and some of the previous times it's happened this season, and if so, what's missing? What's missing for this team to hold onto



those leads?

FRANK KLOPAS: No, I don't -- I think for me, every game is different. I don't think the guys go into the game and they feel like, oh, here is the 60th-minute mark.

I think goals and momentum in the game changes a lot of things. They got the one goal. They had momentum. Those are moments where, you know, then we need to hold the ball at times a little bit better and take some pressure off, and you know, there were moments where I know that we weren't as sharp when we had the ball and in position, and then you're defending a lot. So I don't think for me that there's a connection from the pass. I just I feel like there are moments in the game where momentum changes and goals to change momentum, and they had it.

And you know, we have to look again and try to correct things. That's why you play the game. I think we'll address a couple things, learn from it and move on.

Q. One shot in the second half, it doesn't test the keeper. From your vantage point, what broke down in the second half and what do you think your team can do in the immediate future to fix that?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I think our ability to, when you're defending at times, and then you get the ball, you still need the ability and movement off the ball to be able to connect passes. You know, we tried, and then some of those passes, our ability to hold the ball in certain moments could have been better. So and then you're defending again.

So it's not so easy from being in the mid block to now winning the ball and getting into the final third. It's about movement and it's about being sharp with the ball. I think those are areas we could have been better late into the game. You try to freshen up the team can the subs. I felt that the subs were right because we wanted to bring some fresh legs in, and guys not looking to get behind and hold the ball and be fresh, and that's why we did that. In the end, you give up the goals, and it obviously changed the game, definitely.

Q. Just to kind of follow up on what I asked, and then what Alex asked, this has been an issue a lot this year and it was an issue last year. Is there some sort of mental block with the team that just has to power

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through when it comes to holding late leads in your opinion with the mentality?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, the mentality is just -- it's just, look, I think it's just things that, you know, if you bring it up all the time, I think maybe it's in the player's mind and stuff like that and things occur. I think the most important thing you can do is get doubt out of your mind. When you do stuff in your training, you're well-prepared.

I think that's the thing. I think obviously the guys get fatigued. You rely on the team. You bring certain guys in and you can just see in certain moments, some guys need more under their legs to maintain that sharpness.

But overall, I don't think that there's a mental block within the players because I think most important thing is that we go through situations in training where they are able to get confidence, but then the ability in the game when things are going fast, things are moving. These are the moments where they have to stick together. We definitely have a lot of leaders out there where they can communicate. It's not always easy from the bench to address certain things. I think that's why the preparation is the key and training. Once they do that, I think that's what gives the players confidence.

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