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Frank Klopas

Press Conference



and making some points for you on the field?

FRANK KLOPAS: If I made changes into this game -- I'm sorry, I didn't understand.

I think, yeah, when you have a team that's playing well and winning, I feel that continuity is important if that's what you mean. But you kind of answered that questioned because things that happen with yellow cards and injuries that are unexpected and we always rely on the team.

I feel if there's moments where we have, you know, played one game Saturday, one game Wednesday, one game Saturday, stuff like that, there's no travel, there's no injuries, there's no yellow cards, there's opportunity for continuity to occur and the team is playing well.

But like I said, there's always things that happen where you have to make adjustments, whether it's injuries, yellow cards, and you know, then also the form of the players, and then the opponent. You know, I think those are all key questions that we look at before we make, you know, final decisions.

Q. Chicago has not traveled to place L.A. in several years and not won since 2010. How can the team use this to bounce back after the result over the weekend?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, we always talk about setbacks and how you deal with them as a team and I think that this team and club has showed a lot of character in the past in my opinion, and I have no doubt that, you know, we're travel to go L.A., and I think that the guys will be ready to go and understand that really, the margin of error with the amount of games that are left is very thin. We all know that dropping points at home, we have to try to get those points back on the road, and the next opponent, we are focused on L.A. and the guys will be ready to go. I think it's all about character and obviously they are responding well.

Setbacks can happen throughout the year. I think we stayed even keel. We continue to focus on the process and preparing the players the right way. I've always said as a player, that's what gives players confidence on the field.

Q. What does the team to do when they travel to L.A. to be successful in this fixture?

Q. Curious, I know we had some words about this at training yesterday but curious if you could maybe give more of your thoughts about the performance we saw this weekend, I know you certainly had some feelings about the goals that were conceded by the team.

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, no, I mean obviously I think that when you look at the game as a whole, I'm not -- a lot of times you look at the result and -- and yeah, I mean, it's disappointing, a big opportunity at home and I get that. But a team that really when I look at overall 90 minutes, they had under run of play one opportunity where Richie makes a big save on the top corner and then we create three or four really good opportunities, not, you know, having said that, it's not that we were playing, you know, our best soccer or stuff like that, but we did create in a run of play against a really good team three or four chances and we should have been up into that game in the first half, if not one or two goals.

We come up the second half, we get the one goal by Murray and then you know, it just seems like in two or three minutes, we gave up some really soft goals and it's just things that, you know, we had talked about and unfortunately we gave up some crucial goals and bad goals, I would say, in a difficult moment there when we had the lead, and momentum, and to give it away, really fast, you know, was disappointing but more than anything, it's just, you know, it was a chance at home to continue to gain some momentum. We knew how important these home matches are now towards the end of the season, and we kind of feel we let one slip away.

Now we just have to regroup and you know, find -- go on the road in difficult places, not just this one, and pick up points on the road.

Q. Gastón Giménez says sometimes it's good to change, but you have, in terms of an actual 11, a team that you put on the field but of course there's red cards or yellow cards or even there's injuries from players. So I want to know your opinion about putting the team

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FRANK KLOPAS: Score goals and don't concede any (chuckling).

Q. Coming to L.A., first game since the Leagues Cup is over, what are you expecting with a team with a new attitude and reinforcements?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I'm sure those guys are going to be looking for an opportunity to impress, that's for sure. You know, we know that they have quality players on the field but you know, it's always interesting to see how the new guys will bring fit in and what they bring forward to the team.

We have focused a lot on their past games and some tendencies and areas where we can be effective with the ball and against them. And I think without the ball we have to be really organized defensively, and then that structure, the organization has to be really spot on from us, and a pitch that's a big pitch, and especially on a pitch that's a big pitch. I think when we do things there without the ball, you have to do everything together. When we go, we have to all go together and we all have to be on the same page, and obviously with the ball, we did talk a lot about the areas where we can look to take advantage once we have the ball. Then, you know, you're on the road. I think the opportunities that we get, and it's the same like even playing at home, the last game against Orlando, you create chances, you've got to put them in the net, and I think that's going to be important on the road. The chances we get, it's important to put the ball in the back of the net to give us confidence and then really be focused and organized and disciplined and concentrated over 90 minutes there.

Q. Looking at the teams and some of the statistics over the last month or two months, the teams that have sometimes less possession have more shots on target, more danger, than a team that is in possession 60 percent of the time. Do you guys take a big factor into that or do you worry about 40 percent, make sure we are aggressive when we have the ball and push the pace forward?

FRANK KLOPAS: We always talk about certain principles we have. Once we win the ball, first option for us is always can we play vertical, can we play forward. That's the most important thing.

I think if we are organized, you know, when we win the ball back, I think we should always have options to play forward right away. Because those are moments, and you know, I'm sure that every coach said says the same thing; where you get a team that's a little bit disorganized in those

transition moments.

So that's always the first thought in our minds. You know, can we get forward right away and not that it's just about securing the ball. I think it's important if we can't go forward, then options to go back and then look to build and organize attack from the back.

It's just, again, you're playing against the Galaxy and it's just about, okay, what are two or three things that we've talked about and how to break them down, and you know, the one thing with them is that we constantly need to have runs behind. Once we are facing forward, you definitely need to get behind the back line or we need guys that are willing to make runs behind the back line. I think that's one of the things we've stressed on a lot.

But I think, again, to answer it, first in our mind is once we win it, the first option is look to play forward right away. And not, then it's about securing the ball, and then you know, trying to build something through an organized attack.

Look, we have players on the field with Shaqiri, Gutierrez, guys that can really out of nothing make things happen. I think we work a lot on build-up and patterns that you can get from Point A to B, we give them ideas, and at some point, the creativity, you know, yourself, man, we have been around some special players. You've got to give them the freedom to express themselves in those moments.

Q. Last night you watched the Colorado-LAFC game. L.A. does a not job of pressing, and Colorado is at all costs is trying to play out of the back, two balls in transition and there come the goals. Is there a point when you play away from home where that long ball over the top into your forward is a first option instead of a second or third option?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, and I think it's -- that still comes to, you know, I think certain principles with our team and then in the end, it's all about decision-making. I think that you are playing on the road, you know, I mean, I think that when he need also to be smart and when invite pressure, we are still playing with a very young goalkeeper. He's going to be back, with Brady. I think the important thing is that you've got to really strike a good balance. I think you're on the road, you know, maybe you're a little bit more direct and when teams do drop off -- and look, I've seen moments where they are not very aggressive and we're pressing. You really have to -- and maybe in the beginning, they are going to be really high and that's the thing. We have talked about maybe being a little bit more vertical.

And then once they drop off, maybe you look to play, too. So always finding the right balance. It's not always easy because if you say certain things, you don't want guys to be exactly like this is not American football, I call a play. No. I think we have certain ideas but then it's about decision-making for players, but then we have to stick true to our identity and our principles the way -- what we want to do with the ball.

Q. Wondering what you took from the Orlando game and what you can bring into it against the Galaxy?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I felt there was a stretch -- we had moments where we scored a couple goals, and then I think we got on the board and then the focus, the concentration, the next five minutes, you know, goals normally follow goals and unfortunately we didn't follow with a second one and we gave up a goal. The things that we worked through, the set piece, even on a run of play where they play a ball to the back post, our back is defending, we get stretched out, both our center backs get pulled out of position, and that's always a no-no in a low block. And we didn't handle those situations right.

I think, look, the important thing is every game is a reference point. For us, we got back, we had a couple clips that we needed to correct. We did that. We put that game past us and it was an opportunity you know for us as a team to, you know, sometimes when we had a couple wins and stuff like that, you know, maybe there's a tendency where the players maybe they relaxed a little bit. I didn't think that was the case, but for me it's always been a reminder that we haven't really done anything yet these last 10, 11 games before the Orlando game are going to be the hardest we face and that's going to be the same for every team.

I think you have to limit -- we have to focus and stay concentrated and disciplined with the game plan and then really be focused over 90 minutes. You can't take one second off because now, you know, everything just means so much more. You're running out of games and time, and even points.

So you know, we've got to find a way to pick up those points somewhere on the road.

Q. Just one more from me, just quickly, obviously Kamara is on the cusp of Major League Soccer history. I think it will be quite fitting if he were to at the very least tie that record at the Galaxy given his connections to the football club before. He said he watched them as a kid and worked in the operations department at the stadium. Is that something you're

speaking to him about regularly, the record? Is that on his mindset?

FRANK KLOPAS: No, because look -- we know it's there, and I think if Kei, when he's on the field, we have guys that I think that we need to play to his strengths. Obviously his strength when he's in the box, you know, if we can get quality crosses in there, he's still incredible to beat in the air. I think maybe this game is one of the games where when I've looked at the Galaxy and I think that it's a team that they have really had at moments difficult times dealing with a lot of crosses, box defending at times has been a question mark.

A game like this can play well but he's also got to put himself in the right spot because we have guys that can deliver those passes to him.

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