

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Frank Klopas

Press Conference



Montreal 0, Chicago Fire FC 0

Q. Snapping a losing streak, how do you think your guys feared today?

FRANK KLOPAS: Obviously going into the match, we had given up 11 goals in four games, and I think our main focus was really just our defensive organization. I think our ability to stay compact and make it really difficult for them. We had the opportunity really to work on a lot of concepts and movements that they kind of created in the match, and I thought on the whole, we had a really good performance.

Obviously the guys really put an incredible effort in, because we had a lot of opportunities in transition moments that just really, the final pass was lacking tonight.

But we had opportunities, that's for sure, and then I think the game in the last 20 minutes is typical in MLS. I think the game got stretched a little bit. They had some good chances in the end. Brady made some great saves.

Overall, we got a point. We got four points in two matches against them. We really wanted to get the three tonight, but it keeps us alive, and we have to regroup. We know it's going to be a battle all the way to the end. There's no easy games. But the important thing is that we worked really hard to put ourselves in a spot where it really is up to us. But the effort tonight was great from the players.

So taking a point on the road is good. We wanted the three, but we'll take it, and get ready for Columbus now.

Q. I wanted to ask about Chris Brady because four saved, right at the end, but how important is it to have a presence like that at the back?

FRANK KLOPAS: It was huge. I think when you get a point on the road, two teams that are battling for the playoff spot, it's never easy, and you need everyone to be at their game.

I think Chris made the key saves that he needed to make,

and you know, that was important. That's why we walked away with a point tonight. If you look on the whole, you take Alonso, Rafa the back four, they had excellent games.

For me, this is one of the best games that I've seen Gastón Giménez play. Doumbia covered a lot of ground, and I think Selassie, Fabi, again, both of them worked extremely hard. I felt one maybe got a little bit tired. I took Fabi out in the end because he had a yellow card, and then, you know, hopefully that Guti we have to assess tomorrow.

But Brady was huge, and he's just maturing and improving with every game. The one thing I like about him, when you look at goalkeepers, the one thing you look from the outside is a presence. He really has presence. He's growing. He's really young but he's really maturing. And I tell you, he's got a really bright future and he's got a really level-head and does a great job. He was huge tonight but overall the team played tonight, from a collective standpoint, we had a great performance. Just couldn't score.

Q. I wanted to ask about Arnaud going forward tonight. When he seems to do it, it seems to really work identity but we don't necessarily get it in volume. Just him going forward and producing at that position really seems to provide something new for you guys, too.

FRANK KLOPAS: They play with a back three which really becomes a back five once you move the ball into spaces, we knew they were going on outside. So we had a lot of rotation, especially building out with three but bringing Doumbia as a third on the outside and pushing Souquet high up the field, and I think they were very vulnerable.

Once we were able to switch the point of attack and get Souquet forward, and you know, we got some good opportunities. He's got great ability to get stored, that's one of his strengths for sure but you have to find a good balance. I think when he gets forward, it's very important for Alonso to tuck in and really be compact, especially when we lose the ball in preventive coverage. I think the guys did that extremely well tonight, and Souquet did it when Alonso got forward.

That's his strength. Late in the game he wanted to push forward, and the plan is make sure now we don't give



anything away in transition. They bought some fast guys with Kyoto late in the game, and the left wingback.

You know, he did a really good job and picked his moments really well, and I think that was the key with him. But overall, the discipline with both fullbacks, the other one tucking in, it was extremely important for us today staying compact.

Q. Last four games, 11 goals conceded but the clean sheet tonight. Does that give you covered going into the last six games that you can tighten things up and push for the playoff spot?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, for sure. I think the team showed really incredible mentality. They were focused, and I think that was important. You see how they competed right from the start, and so we know we can do it, and I think it's important defensively for to us have a chance.

I always tell the guys, one of the things is never give up a second goal. Don't give up a first one if you can, but if you do, don't give a second one. The balls haven't been going in the back of the net right now, but we are there and we are creating opportunities, and now maybe a killer instinct, the final pass has to improve.

But we definitely know that we have a keeper that can make big saves and we can rely, when everyone puts an effort like we did tonight, that at the end of the day, has to remain to the end.

And I told the players, I think the important thing is to finish strong no matter what happens. I think it's important to leave a good impression in the end and for our fans to make sure that we leave everything on the field, no matter what happens. So I think that was important. They did that tonight, and I think that was important for us and huge for us to get the point.

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