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Frank Klopas

Press Conference



Q. Just going against New England, is there an urgency after the results earlier this year along with just it's a team in a similar part of the table as you guys right now?

FRANK KLOPAS: I just think we need to get results at home. I think that's the important thing. You know, we know it's not going to be an easy game. You look at the team that on the table, they are in the bottom. But we know that it's a team with quality. You know, the league here, there's so much parity. There's no easy games.

I think for us, it's trying to prepare. Be ready. We know we need to start getting results and points and stuff like that. We know it's not going to be easy.

We just have to prepare and be ready for a difficult match. That's the most important thing. That's the only thing that's going to give us confidence. It's good preparation and you know, and then you know we are hopeful day-by-day we can get some guys healthy and guys that can be available to help the team.

Q. So with this three-game home stand here, first two games, you dropped points. I know you're not happy with that and you want to win all the games at home. How do you think the group has reacted after the results of the first two games?

FRANK KLOPAS: I think the last game, I thought the mentality was really good from the group. I think they put a lot of energy. I thought the first half, we were very good. We created chances. There was a lot of energy; I think it dropped a little bit. And then the circumstances going into the game, and the way the game ended with our situations with the injuries and stuff like that. We take the point. You know, I think it's a clean sheet, so it's something to build on.

You know, we have to look at the positives. I thought that was a step in the right direction. You know, there are things now that we have to do much better at. You know,

how can we create more clear opportunities in the final third, work on our final pass and our movement into the box and stuff. That's very important, and the mentality has to be the same. You know, the attitude and the work rate of the guys, how we competed in that match, I thought was very good.

We need clean sheets. We need to continue to be a tough team without the ball to break down. It all starts from there, and I think with the ball that -- I think we will continue to get opportunities. We didn't get as many. We did get in good spots and now we just have to continue be working and giving the players confidence with the quality of the service in the box, the movement and stuff like that.

Big picture, three points out of the playoff line right now. You know, next four out of six at home, difficult matches, because you're playing teams now that are below us or teams that are trying to make the playoffs.

So you know, we have to -- you know where we are and we have to start getting results and getting points and not dropping points, especially at home.

Q. It's an interesting schedule that the team's had this year, so many Western Conference teams early on in the season. How do you approach now this month because you're facing Eastern Conference teams, aside from St. Louis, but teams close to you in the table. Is there a specific emphasis on the first half of this month to get back in a groove more so that you are now facing Eastern Conference opponents close to the standings? And also want to ask you, PSG v. Dortmund.

FRANK KLOPAS: Well, the first one, look, I think like I said, when you look at it big picture for us, I think the amount, we've dropped points at home. Even though the last one for me, we start with being better defensively and getting the clean sheet, which was really huge. Chris Brady had a fantastic match. I think he needs that for his confidence.

And now we have to build from there, and the next four out of six, you're right, they are at home, more Eastern Conference teams which the importance and our moments where you drop in points against the East I think for me becomes even much harder because it's almost like

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two-game swings when you get results.

So it's an opportunity for us now with teams that are also fighting like us to be in the playoff picture, and you know, we just have to be prepared really well, expect really difficult matches and find ways to get a result at home.

It's not always going to be the perfect goal and the perfect situation but we've got to find a way to get three points and start getting some momentum and building confidence with the group here.

And it's not going to be easy because you're also playing a teams that's also desperate now with the start that they have had. We cannot underestimate the fact that it's still a team with quality players, and so we know that.

The focus, the concentration, the injury, the mentality we have going into the game, it's got to be a match that we all have to do whatever it takes to get a result for the team, and that's the kind of mentality we need.

Q. PSG v. Dortmund?

FRANK KLOPAS: PSG v. Dortmund. PSG v. Dortmund. Wow. It's a tough one because all my teams, PSG -- I'll take PSG.

Q. Thanks, Coach.

FRANK KLOPAS: But not in the final. I just said today.

Q. Yes, today.

FRANK KLOPAS: Okay.

Q. You mentioned confidence a couple of times already. The team has not been able to find the back of the net four times in the past five games. How do you keep everybody's confidence up when goals have not been going in in matches?

FRANK KLOPAS: I know it sounds like a cliché and I'm repeating myself all the time. It's just trying to do repetitions and a lot of finishing and training, which should give the strikers and players the confidence, and it's the one element, and I think the biggest thing that can take doubt away from player. Because if you're having doubt as a striker, and maybe any things are not going in, and the best thing you can do is just here at the training pitch, and just repetition and getting from the confidence back from scoring goals here. That's the only thing we can do is just continue to work, make sure that we are putting players in the right spot. We are delivering quality crosses; they are making the runs.

And for me, I tell the striker, you have to have the mentality, the next play, no matter what happens, the most important thing in soccer is the next play because the game, you know, just keeps -- the ball keeps moving. It's the next opportunity to be there, and that's the kind of mentality.

But you only get confidence here training, preparing well, and going through the actions here in training and repetition and scoring goals. I think that for me takes any doubt away, good reparations and training.

Q. Curious just an update injury-wise with Toby, Maren and Shaq.

FRANK KLOPAS: Yes, with Toby, Toby's going to be out for a while, guys, four to six weeks, if not longer. All the details, I know that he had a medial collateral. He doesn't need, I think at this moment, no surgery needed, but it's going to take time for everything to heal.

Maren is progressing well. He's still doing stuff inside. He has not been outside yet. So I think for this weekend, you know, it will be very difficult for him to be ready.

So for those two players -- and who is the third one that you said?

Q. Shaqiri.

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, Shaq has been doing stuff. Today he took part in the first phase of training and then he did some stuff with the trainers on the side opening up more and more, and then, you know, the question with that, with any tissue, muscle tissue that he had, is just to see what the reaction is tomorrow, and if it's okay, we can progress.

You know, we are staying optimistic that he'll be available, at least to help the team on the weekend. But I think it's day-to-day with him and just see how when we push him and see how he reacts the next day.

Q. Building off from the last question, obviously we don't know what role Shaqiri is going to be able to play this weekend. Last weekend when he was not able to play there was the switch in the formation to the 4-4-2. How much does the way you want the team to play get impacted on whether or not you have a guy like Shaqiri there?

FRANK KLOPAS: I just think for me, it's like you look at formation, obviously you are playing with two strikers, your ability to play more direct at times, that comes into play.

But just the principles of play. You know, with the ball, how we are trying to break the opponent down, regardless of -- there are moments when you play with Shaqiri as the ten and you press in a 4-4-2.

So I think just for me, it's just the principles and our ideas with the ball. You know, how do we want to break the opponent down. How do we see the movements with -- it changes a little bit with the personalities and characteristics of players. But you know, for me, that's what it all comes down to. We've played with three in the back, 3-4-3 at times. Really, it really doesn't change. It's your ideas and principles with the ball, how are we trying to break the opponent down. Maybe what kind of different maybe runs and movements with the front two that we can have to create opportunity to get behind them.

You know, you're always working with the principles, with the ball and without the ball, and then your game idea that you have, and we've been clear with the group from the beginning.

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