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Kellyn Acosta

Press Conference



Q. Are you've been here a couple of months now and we are about a third of the way through the season. Overall, how do you feel, and how do you think that your time so far has compared to your expectations for where you are at and where the team is at?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, I mean, I knew coming in with the number of additions that we had, and getting everyone adjusted and acclimated to the playing style of the team, building relationships, it's going to take some time.

Obviously given the results, we definitely expected to be higher up on the point table because I think we dropped some points that I wished we could have back and I think just on a personal note, I think from my standpoint, I came in with high energy to come into the side. I feel like I haven't been performing at my best level. So it's important for me to kind of get back on track and helping the team in that regard.

But it's also about being patient and being consistent and doing the hard work, and you know, we will get rewarded in the end, but it's about -- like I said, sticking together and I think it's important down this stretch of games.

Q. We've talked about the team needing to prove on service. From your midfield perspective, what do you think this team could be doing better? Is it a volume thing? Is it a quality thing? Is it an all-of-the-above thing?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Talking about service as in service star forwards, you're saying?

Q. Yeah, sorry for not clarifying?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, I think it's a combination of moving the ball back to front and finding our forward. I feel like we've got to get them the ball in dangerous areas where they are bringing out their qualities, and I think we have not done a good job of progressing the ball in situations to them.

I think you look statistically-wise, possession-based in our stats, and just collectively in the game, we have moments where I think we have been a little bit loose on the ball, myself in particular, not connecting passes, and that goes a long way. So I think having spells without the ball is very difficult.

And in the transition game, I think there's times where we can definitely be a little bit cleaner and be a little more clinical in front of goal. I think sometimes it's the final pass, and also sometimes it's just progress into the final third.

I think there's times where we've got to pick our moments where we need to hold on to the ball and there's times where we need to go and go with speed.

You know, it's about the little details in those moments, finding the right foot, turning in certain spaces, spaces, body, positioning, and runs in behind.

I think as we've been working on a lot in training, it's about executing and putting those practice routines in the game. I think if we just keep dialing away, I think we can have the positive results that we want.

Q. So you said the team is not where they expected to be in the table and not gotten the results that you guys deserve or that you wanted. What's the attitude like in the locker room right now given that the results have not necessarily been what you would have hoped for?

KELLYN ACOSTA: I think it's still positive. We have a great group of guys and we are able to decompartmentalize of just like what's on the field and just hanging out and building relationships. I think there's been a lot of banter within the locker room, so I think the positive vibes are there and the head space is there, and on the field, it just needs to be better on the field.

I think for us as a standpoint collectively it starts in training, having that mentality, being clean on the ball, working on transitioning with the ball and without the ball, and being clean defensively.

But I think for the most part, I think everyone is positive. Everyone is excited to come in, and we had a good group here that enjoys playing and enjoys being around each

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other.

Q. You mentioned earlier about not playing up to your expectations. What do you feel you haven't done well that you need to improve on, and also, what you feel you have done well that you're kind of proud of and that you want to continue? And then on a lighter note, are you watching the Champions League game today, and who do you got?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, I think just from my standpoint, just the midfielders, it's just about connecting passes and being that piece to connect the defense to the forward line. I think playing as a six and eight, I think just be cleaner on the ball and be in good spots and positionally to make plays on and off the ball and defensively be more sound.

You know, that's just my opinion. I just feel that in the game that hasn't been sharp enough, and that's something I'm fine-tuning and trying to get right.

Yeah, it's about just bringing my qualities into -- there's been instances where I have been making plays, trying to be a vocal leader within the team to help the team around me and put guys in good positions and be positive and bring a lot of energy. I'm proud of that.

Of course, Champions League, of course everyone is going to watch. Who do I have winning?

Q. Today. Today's game, PSG vs. Dortmund.

KELLYN ACOSTA: It's in PSG, right? I think PSG will probably take this one 2-0. I watched the game yesterday, the Real Madrid vs. Bayern game. What a game.

But I think PSG will probably take this one at moment.

Q. I have a question. The coach has put you in to different positions so far in this season. I want to know how you feel, what's your original position that you are more comfortable with? Are you a midfielder creator or a midfielder defensive guy, or do you ever play as a winger, too?

KELLYN ACOSTA: No. I think I'm more -- there's, you know, six, eight and ten. In terms of how we play, we play usually in a 4-3-2-1. Play a double pivot. I can play more of a six or an eight role. I'm not necessarily a ten. I kind of leave those for more of the creative guys, like the Gutis and Shaqs and maybe Fabis, and some other guys can play in those positions. I would say I'm more of an in-betweenener. I guess more defensively than offensively but it's the position that I can play.

I don't necessarily play winger. I could play there if the coach asked me, but I prefer to have a central role.

Q. Last time we spoke, it was in March. You had kind of just got to Chicago and it was new. How does everything in the team, the environment, the locker room, the staff, everything, how has that compared to the previous teams you've been in around MLS?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, it's all different. I think every team has different personalities, different characters. I mean, there's different ways that teams gel.

I think here, we have a good group of guys. Like I mentioned before, I think there's a lot of banter. Got some jokesters on the team, so it's fun coming in and seeing what people are up to every day. We have one touch game that we like to play and it's fun, you know, to hang around the guys and listen to music and just hanging out. I think it's important for us to find ways to connect off the field as well. I think building relationships off the field translates on the field.

Now that the weather is better, I think people are more inclined to be outside and hang out more. Looking forward to the sunnier days, and just getting to know my teammates and their families more. So off the field, as well.

Q. Curious, you're playing New England, second time this year. Obviously rainy, wet conditions that first game. Bit of a sloppy match. What makes that team -- I know the results have not gone their way but they have a lot of quality on that team. What makes them so tough to go against because they don't seem to go away?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, they have a good team. They know each other and have been around for some years now, the same core group of guys with their No. 10, Carlos Gil, he's a special player. He gets the team going. I think he's the catalyst for the team and he's a guy that you've definitely got to be keying on. And from the striking force to their outside backs, they are a team with a good system and a team that fights to the end.

It was a difficult game for us given the circumstances. I mean, rain and weather aside, but it was a difficult match for us. I think in the first half we created some opportunities. Second half we kind of dropped a little, and they were applying more pressure.

So it was important for us coming in to this weekend's game fully focused, concentrate on 90-plus minutes, and we want to be on the front foot and be more clinical in front

of goal and more sound defensively.

But like I said, they are a team, despite being on the bottom of the table, they are a good team, and it's a team that you shouldn't be taking lightly.

Q. So you mentioned off-pitch, like it being nicer weather. When you moved to Chicago, it was freezing and people bunkered in. Have you had a chance to enjoy the city are you getting to know the city better now that it's warmer and nicer out?

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, you said it's been warm but it's only been a few days of warmth.

Yeah, I'm starting to. I'm a little bit outside of the city. I love the suburbs. Yeah, I'm just excited to have my friends and family coming in so I can explore the city more, and just enjoy my teammates as well, go out to dinners and coffee and all that. So I'm excited to explore. Everyone always hypes up the summertime in Chicago, so I'm looking forward to having some more sunshine and more longer days.

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