

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

Frank Klopas Press Conference



Orlando City 4, Chicago Fire FC 2

Q. Tough result tonight. The team out-possessed Orlando, doubled their shots and still couldn't get a result. What do you take from tonight's performance?

FRANK KLOPAS: I mean, if you look at the numbers, I won't look too much into that because for me, when you're down 3-0 in the first half, and obviously you know, we need to be the ones pushing the game and taking the risk, and that's the thick. The team that's leading, it's natural; they are going to sit back a little bit. That's the one thing with the possessions. So the possession stuff, I don't look into that.

Chances, creating opportunities, they definitely were there for us. But the one thing is that we cannot be a team that comes out every game and we start from behind and being reactive. Always giving up the first goal, it's very difficult.

You know, I feel -- we missed an opportunity tonight as a team. Having said that, I think this is a setback. But we came in here, four games unbeaten, and we missed an opportunity. And it's difficult when the first half, when you're down 3-0. We made some adjustments. I think we gave them problems with the adjustments. We have to push the game. We got the next goal. But then, you know, we gave up the fourth one that really killed us because we had momentum into the game and then with the changes you make, you're pushing the game, obviously the game is going to open up. We took a lot of risk.

So it's a difficult one. I feel it's an opportunity that was missed for us tonight, and the learning moments in games like this, that cannot repeat. Because normally for me, if you score two goals in a match, you should be able to get a result. We can't start games or go on the road and be in a situation where we're 3-0 in the first half. It's extremely difficult to come back from results like that.

Q. Maren took a penalty, I believe his first for the Fire this year, but so far Cuypers has not taken a penalty

and Brian Gutierrez was on the pitch and didn't take a penalty. What's the thought process on giving it to Maren?

FRANK KLOPAS: Didn't give it. Normally these guys do it in training. You have guys -- if Hugo is there, if Guti is there, if Maren is there, and obviously there's an order. But at the end of the day, it's like, okay, if someone has a lot more confidence at that moment, he picked the ball and put it on the spot and scored.

There's no issue. Don't look at it anything like that. We have an order with guys who take them but on the field it's the players making those decisions also and see how they feel. There's an order 1, 2, 3, and they solve it themselves. At the end of the day, the ball was in the back of the net and that's all that matters.

Q. Switching away from tonight's game, since Shaqiri's turn to Europe, he's been pretty vocal and comments have spread around social media. He's expressed a desire to return to Europe. He questioned some of Heitz's signings, and more recently, he talked about specifically Turkey as being a place that he seems to like. Can you comment on what you think about his future with the club and what his comments have been?

FRANK KLOPAS: I saw some things. I'm not a social media guy. But Jhamie Chin always keeps me informed on things that are there.

Listen, when we talk about the team, the only thing for me, we are a team. And when we are in a situation like this, there's fault to go around from top to bottom with everyone. We are in a situation and everyone has their responsibility. That's the only thing I would say.

Now the future of Shaqiri, you know, it's a question mark. That's definitely for sure. It's something that the club has to discuss, and look, at the end of the day, what's always best for the club? The club is the most important thing. And at the end of the day, if players are not happy, then bring solutions to the club and then the club can make the best decision, but always keep in mind that the most important thing is every decision we make, has to be the best for the club. This is from my side.

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But the comments that he makes, you know, when you're in tough moments, man, we're all in this together. That's the only thing I would say.

Q. Looking forward to next week's match against Seattle, the team was on a roll going into Orlando, hit a bump in the road against Orlando last year and found its form again. What's the message to the team to try to get back on track with another road game next week?

FRANK KLOPAS: That's a good point. Because I remember last year we had a really good run, and we came to Orlando. But I don't know if you remember, but we had that injury to Fede who is injured again.

So going into that Orlando match, we missed it, because at that point last year he was one of the most important players. He was really in top form. He's still out.

Then in every game, it's how do we learn and become better as a team. That's the most important thing. Right off the bat, giving up four goals in starts like that will get us nowhere.

So it all starts from there. Our mentality, the attitude, how we start games, we have to be ready mentally, and that's going to be the mentality. The preparation going into this game was excellent, and we let ourselves down with the start that we had. That's what I feel because I know how hard this group has worked. I know the work that they put forth. I know the quality of the players. You know, we are much better, but I can say that.

But it's all in the results and where we are in the standings. So you can't hide from that. That's why I think for me, every game, it's what can we learn. But this is not the first game. It's moments where we need to have better starts. We need to be proactive. We need to have better starts in matches and to be mentally and physically ready when the whistle blows, not getting a hit and waking up.

Q. What do you think the team did wrong today? Because it seems like in the second half, it was a totally different team. More opportunities for goal in the second half than the first.

FRANK KLOPAS: The second half, I think that we made some tactical adjustments with bringing the way we built a play out of the back with the 3 plus 2 with the two pivots. We had Maren in the pocket on one side and Guti on the other with our fullbacks really high up the field to pin their fullbacks back and create space on either side of the field, and especially one pivot with Hugo, did a good job.

And the second half, moving the ball quicker, finding No. 6, or our center backs and finding a switch to a point of attack and getting it forward. The first half, I thought that our inability to progress the ball on one side, we were never able to switch it. We were very slow to get the ball from one side to the other.

When we got to the final third, we didn't get enough crosses. We didn't get enough shots. A little too much standing around. And a lot more fluidity and mobility and speed of play in the second half, and then obviously the tactical adjustments help.

At the end of the day we won the second half, but it wasn't good enough because we lost the game. So we just have to move on, learn from the game and prepare well and get back into the winning streaks again, and continue to get results now. And we're going to have to do it.

It's not going to get easier. The next six games, we have two and four on the road. So we have to be much better on the road.

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