

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Saturday, July 20, 2024
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Frank Klopas Press Conference



Inter Miami 2, Chicago 1

Q. That feels like one you guys should have at least gotten a point from; right?

FRANK KLOPAS: 100 percent. It's really frustrating at this moment here because I think that you know when we were down 1-0, obviously we pushed the game. The second half was a totally different picture from the first half. I thought the first half we weren't as sharp. I think this is the kind of game that, yes, the moments are there to be direct. We should have gone direct at times but then this was the game that we needed to hold the ball more, and be more patient and we didn't have that in the first half. We forced the ball a lot of times. We kept fighting through the middle, especially when we were in the attacking third and they were on a low block.

But then that changed the second half. We fell behind. We pushed the game, and obviously when you push the game, you have to take some risk, which we did. We found the equalizer. There was good energy with the guys that came in.

And then, you know, to give up a goal like that right after we scored, it's different if you get beat by a guy getting a ball, hitting a shop, upper 90 and stuff, but that really hurts. Because it's not the first time. It's just we find ways to beat ourselves, and it's really difficult because the energy that we put in, you know, we created chances. And it definitely feels like, again, we are walking away empty-handed, and it hurts the way we gave up the goal, no doubt about it.

Q. So the team had been playing well with a three center back formation, whether it's a 5-3-2 or whatever you want to call it. It switched to a four-man back line for this game. Can you walk me through the decision to do that? Was it mirroring Miami?

FRANK KLOPAS: I think you've seen without the ball we are in a 4-4-2 because we wanted to have an ability with the two strikers to work together and protect the nine and

the ten, picking up the six. But then once we had the ball, we went to a 3-4-2-1 because Souquet stays there and then Allan pushed up on one side and Fabi was on the other side.

So without the ball, we was defending in a 4-4-2 but with the ball, we built in a 3-4-3 and really tried to put two players on inside channels to the left and to the right of the six and push our wingbacks really high up and create opportunities and put them in difficult spots. You know, who comes into those pockets to pick up the wide players; is it the fullback, and I think, you know, that was a tactical change. We did the same with Cincy.

Q. So it seemed like the team was struggling to create offense in the first half but for a while in the second half was able to control the terms of the game. That was because of the substitutions. Do you attribute that to the substitutions that were made like the players on the pitch or was it something that was discussed in the locker room? What do you think the difference was?

FRANK KLOPAS: For sure. Because the first half we forced the ball. When you force the ball, I mean, you know -- I think we were more patient and making better decisions. When we had the ball, we can't progress on one side, then you can't just force the ball centrally without the numbers. Find our pivots, go back, switch the point of attack.

And you know, we discussed a couple things at halftime. You know, obviously the changes came in and it brought energy. But it was just decision-making, moving the ball quicker, being more patient with the ball.

This is what this game needed to open them up and be more patient and shift them a little bit when the opportunity was not there to be direct. So when we force the ball and decision-making is not great and we turn the ball in easy ways, then you know, you're defending. And then once you have the ball, you know, it's not so easy to keep it.

I think the first half, that was one of the main reasons why we weren't -- we weren't as sharp. Second half was different. We talked about it, a couple things but then also the changes we made that I think did help.

Q. Curious if you had any update on Wyatt after he had to leave the match?

FRANK KLOPAS: I think it's either abdominal, groin area that was strained. You know, obviously he couldn't continue. That's frustrating because we're close now to getting Tobias back. Think obviously he got hurt way too early, and I think Tobias still needs a little bit more time. We weren't comfortable putting him in with that much time left in the game.

So Mauri came in, but it seems like, you know, we are close to getting somebody back and then we have another injury, and that's frustrating because Wyatt has been playing really well.

Q. You gave Justin his MLS debut tonight. What made him earn that opportunity?

FRANK KLOPAS: Just training. He's looked in training and he's worked hard. At the end of the day, I think that's a main reason, also. And look, we're obviously struggling with some injuries but the way he's been training and the confidence we've gotten from him, we had no problem to throw him in there.

Now he just has to build from this. It's what I tell the younger players; you have to take opportunities that come. But also, you know, I think it's important that you train extremely hard, and take advantage of this opportunity, not only here; the moment that you have to be on this team because the time goes by fast, and you don't want to waste it. I hope that he builds on this and he continues to work hard.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...