

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Sunday, July 28, 2024
Chicago, Illinois, USA

Frank Klopas Press Conference



Sporting Kansas City 2, Chicago Fire 1

Q. It's getting tough with the four guys who got the illness and everything, do you feel like you might have to suit up yourself? It's been tough, obviously, to see the lack of players available, but the performance by Koutsias tonight and some of the younger guys, Koffi, Omari, do you feel like there are some starts going in there, especially Koutsias, you're been trying to insert him into the lineup. Were you proud of the performances of the young guys?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, obviously, look I think things happen with every team. Before the game, our preparation was good, and then you know, coming in here, you're in a tough situation because we have like seven guys that are out. Obviously with Hugo and Allan, it was planned from the beginning when they came to have given them this week off, which they needed.

And it's difficult a little bit because we had to move pieces around and put guys in positions where they are not as comfortable because there was obviously nothing we could do.

I felt the first half, I think the rhythm for us, the way we wanted to build out from the back, I think we didn't have the discipline in our positional play the right way. We adjusted the second half, and you know, I think the guys put everything out there. They tried.

KC created a lot of chances obviously. But I felt the goals, we could have done much better, the ones that we gave up.

And look, we brought Koffi and Omari, and it was good to see Koutsias score. It's all about performance, these games, I think they are very important because when you get an opportunity, you have to take advantage of it, and there were definitely some bright spots.

We just have to regroup, see where we are the next couple

days and see how guys are and hopefully we get some guys back and have a good showing on Thursday.

But I think it's important to play good quality games like we did tonight against good teams. It's just going to make us even stronger and learn from games like this.

Q. Just curious with this kind of performance, how are you feeling with the way the offense worked? I know that Koutsias got his goal, you get Christian and Maren kind of going up forward at the end. Curious what you saw from the attack throughout this game.

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I felt that -- I think our build up, there were moments that our decision-making could have been better. We forced the ball at times, and I think that's something that I think that we need to improve.

You know, we had chances. I think the chances we had, we could have been more dangerous and more decisive, and I think the quality of shots or the execution of final balls could have been better.

But you know, I think that the effort was there. The guys tried. You're on the road. We got the first goal and then obviously giving up that goal right before the half was disappointing.

But I think we adjusted some things. We came out the second half and I think, look, we can all improve on all aspects. I think our decision-making and our ability in the final third to finish off plays better, I think it's important though play these games and quality games like we did tonight against good opponents. It's only going to make us sharper and better.

Q. Tough loss but a couple of debuts tonight. Can you talk about the play of Cristian Koffi and Jaylen Shannon making their first team debuts, what you saw from them?

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, look, I think it's the speed of play in games at this level, I think it's much higher. The pressure is quicker. I think all those players, I think they need to be put in situations like this. It's only going to make them better, and I think it all starts from training and the environment you create, especially for them in the second team.



I think there are moments they handled it well and I think there are moments that I think they learn from this game. I thought Koffi coming in, he's a player that really doesn't hesitate to run the defenders and put them under pressure, which I like. He was aggressive. He got in good spots and he beat a lot of times his opponent, which either created opportunities for a cross or shots for himself.

I thought given this opportunity for him, I think he made the best of it.

Q. I know the game didn't go the way you wanted it but you have a lot of ties to this city in the early MLS days. Was it a fond memory seeing the jerseys out there?

FRANK KLOPAS: I loved it. I told Peter before when I saw him coming out that I want a jersey because it reminded me of the old days. Being here, I love coming here. Obviously we didn't have this; we played at Arrowhead back in the day.

But Kansas City, I lived in Leawood, Kansas when I came. I spent two years here. I love the place, and still, a lot of friends here. And then obviously Peter and I, we go way back, and now them bringing Michael Burns in, there's a connection, obviously with the national team.

It brought a lot of good memories but it's also great to remember the past. But it's incredible to see where this club and the organization is today from the day where it started. It's incredible to see.

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