

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Michael Bradley

Media Conference



Cruz Azul 1, Toronto FC 0

CONCACAF Champions League

Quarterfinal - Leg 2 of 2

Aggregate: 4 - 1

Q. I know you and your team have taken the no-excuses approach this year, or so far this season, but a lot was going against this team in the last few weeks. What do you take away from this quarterfinal series against a very good Cruz Azul team?

MICHAEL BRADLEY: The games in this competition are high level, and you understand that you have to be at your best to give yourself a chance. You have to make plays in key moments and so we'll take away the experience of four really, really good games early in the season. As much as it's still a lot of the same -- a lot of the same players, it's still a new team. Chris has come in and has new ideas and ways that he wants to tweak things and improve things, and so look, I think we're going in a good direction. It's not paid off in as big a way as we would have liked just yet, but everybody's confident that it will.

So we've got to now reset and get ready for a really big MLS portion of the season.

Q. Chris Mavinga was back in the lineup today for the first time this season. I wanted to get your opinion on how he looked and how big of a return is it for the club with Chris back in the lineup knowing he's been such a consistent performer since he's been here?

MICHAEL BRADLEY: Yeah, Chris is a really important guy for us. That's no two ways about. It obviously we've missed having him on the field and to get him his first 45 minutes of the season tonight was great. Great for him, great for us. We're really excited that he's fit and healthy and we know that he's a guy that we're going to need to count on in a big way going forward.

Q. Obviously your team has come the closest of any MLS team to winning this tournament back in 2017.

Considering you guys were down 3-0, can you tell us overall how much of an appreciation, even though you were down 3-0 in the first game, you see the effort of today's game --

MICHAEL BRADLEY: It was 3-1 after the first game. So what was your question?

Q. In terms of the overall performance of the team considering you were in the backseat losing 3-1 in the first game, did you appreciate the effort that you guys gave even though you missed some chances at the beginning?

MICHAEL BRADLEY: Yeah, look, like I said at the beginning, you know that to be successful in this competition, you have to be at your best. You have to take care of big moments in games at both ends of the field, and obviously you know, let's be honest, we let ourselves down in the first leg. You know, you give away a goal after two or three minutes, you know, it's a bad way to start the home leg. Get back to 1-1, and yeah, on the night, struggled with dealing with set pieces, and obviously that's the difference in the first leg.

And it means that now we come in for the second leg, your backs are up against the wall and you have to push things a little bit. I felt we pushed things in a good way in the first half. I thought we did a lot of the things that we wanted to, couldn't quite put together the right plan to get the goal, and they scored another great goal. So that's, for me, the story of the two legs.

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