

# Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Chris Armas

Media Conference



New York Red Bulls 2, Toronto FC 0

**Q. You're missing some big pieces today which obviously doesn't help in attack, scoring chances but I'm wondering about the goals conceded today. Seemed to be issues on both of them. What are you seeing from your team out there?**

CHRIS ARMAS: Look, it's even at halftime, we talk about rewarding ourselves for some of the good actions defensively, some of the pressing moment, some of the counter pressing moments, and it was there for us. We think in the balance in the first ten.

You know, when you think about some of the goals that we've given up on the year that we've tried to really address, we've talked about set pieces and the other one is just some bad giveaways that lead to transition. So in the first half, this is the case and then it becomes about putting out that fire, let's say.

But yeah, look, second half, it's another transition moment that we get caught a little bit. So you think so much structurally after you arrange a team, but round, we have little situations we have to do better with. Individually and then ultimately collectively. So yeah, on the day, in the second half, they come strong. We faded a bit but man, you know, in the first half we thought we had -- it was in the balance. It was going to be there for us.

**Q. Hope you got to spend some quality time with your family while you were in New York. With yards to Yeferson, only a second half appearance as a substitute but what did you make of him in that short period of time and that was always the plan just to give him about 35 minutes or so?**

CHRIS ARMAS: Yes, that was the plan going in, because physically, he's only had two light training sessions with us so far. So we used the max, if you will, of what we had in our minds coming in. But we'll get him going and he's going to get going in a big way. You can see that he's an exciting player. He's an exciting attacker. He can make things happen and this is important for us round; that -- the pitch, in terms of creating chances and finishing off

chances.

On the day, yeah, he has a couple of one-B-one situations, a decent cross that he creates. It's fairly difficult, you know, when he comes in and it's -- he's trying to make some things happen but as they have a lead, they are depending deep, they have a couple of guys that are double-teaming him and it becomes a little tougher.

So we're very happy with him, given the short time we had him and then obviously he's going to be dangerous and we can use him especially in those wide areas.

**Q. You told us on Thursday that Jozy and Jonathan would be available for today. What went into the decision for them not to play a role today or did something else happen?**

CHRIS ARMAS: Yes, something did happen, right. Jozy from the previous match has just had, you know, a little illness. We've had a few players with, you know, is it because of the México trip. We've had a couple of guys battling and staff members. That's No. 1, which is yesterday in training -- upper leg, let's say. So yeah, so when I tell you guys are available, it's straight and overnight, sometimes things change. But that's how it's gone with those guys.

**Q. A pretty short turnaround before the next game. What's the message to the team after today's match? What are the conversations going on in the dressing room?**

CHRIS ARMAS: There's not a lot to say but of course we talk about it quickly. The main message that in a time when there's a lot to make excuses about, that's not the time. And from coaches to players in, moments like this, you've got to take a hard look. You have to take a hard look and say, hey, can I do better, in what ways, and we can help as coaches help that along. And now individually, just to not so much look outwardly, right. It's not the time. It's to say, hey, how can I do better, what more can I do, where am I doing really well, where can I improve, and that's really the message.

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The other one is that, you know, TFC 2021, this is a new team. This is a new team with a different chemistry and different players and we are not sneaking up on anyone. We're not. When teams play TFC, they are playing the champions. They know this team is built on success and they are not sneaking up. So in a league that margins are thin, we have to be at our best and we have to carry our weight and we have to be up for it every single time no, matter what, altitude, heat, short rest, whatever it is.

There's a feeling on the inside that we're giving away some games. We're a real team and becoming closer all the time and as the guys say, it will bring us closer together. Disappointment but we are on to the next one. No one helps teams in tough times more than the team and each guy, all of us, together. That's what was talked about.

**Q. Just how frustrating is it getting for you that you're just unable to start your best 11 in a game because of all these injuries.**

CHRIS ARMAS: I would say what's more frustrating, that, for me, is -- I don't come in with frustration. I don't operate and live with frustration. This doesn't enter my being. But what I would say is what becomes -- the word -- bother some -- when some of these games are in the balance, right, like the first half, before they have their chance, we created a few really good moments of transition or a couple of pressing moments and now here we go. We're thin. We don't score on all of those.

But then to have a moment where, you know, not necessarily against the run of play, but where we don't do well enough in a certain moment and then we're down 1-0. It's psychologically hits the team a certain way and then you have to -- you know, so like what I say is the frustration as a coach, I want the boys to be rewarded for the work. I want them to feel validated for what we are asking every day. And when you think we're in some spots and like here we go, we're off to a good start and then it goes the other way, that's frustrating and that, I would say is, in general. Not today, I feel frustrated; in general, you feel like you're doing it right and it's a set piece goal. Or the first goal, the first goal against Cruz Azul in the series. We win a ball, we go the other way and go the other way -- it's like, come on, Chris Armas, come on. I have to find ways to help the team in these moments. That's the reality and, yeah, but I don't live in frustration. Back to work. Back to work tomorrow and we're going to ramp it up for Wednesday.

**Q. Just wondering what positives, when you look at this sort of performance today and this result, I mean, is there anything here that gives you sort of hope going into the game on Wednesday?**

CHRIS ARMAS: Well, I mean, these guys give me the hope. It's not -- I don't -- I'm not hoping around here every day. I keep my feelings around what's real. I see realness every day around here, even the way they speak in the locker room. That's where I put my -- let's call it comfort.

Going into Wednesday, yeah, I think if you just rook at today against, you know, a red bull team that they play with intensity and they have added some pieces and they are a pretty good team, right. They know what they are about round and what you'd say is that if they are a pressing team, we were able to do much of that to them in the first half.

But you say, as we are trying to get on the same page, get guys going, some of the younger players, we see some positives there. So for me I feel really good about the first half if you remove the goal and what I would call too many unforced errors, just too many give aways. This is a big part of it, right. But the first half the way we executed, let's call it a game, we attacked wide areas, we created transition moments. That's what gives me, yeah, we're heading in the right direction. Just got to clean up some of the stuff on the field.

**Q. Seven games in, you haven't kept a clean sheet yet. The starter for the last two seasons, what does he have to get a look here in goal?**

CHRIS ARMAS: Yeah, it's a good question and coming into this year, I knew that after speaking to, you know, some of the personnel here that things were tight in that position and Quentin clearly was the starter last year and then circumstance has it where Alex is given an opportunity and where Quentin wasn't with us for the first part of the Champions League, first series.

And then if we -- if we really go through it quickly, we beat a Mexican team. We beat Leon. We weren't given much chance to do what we did and we thought that Alex was a really big part of that. You think about leg two, he makes a big save at the very end and then since then, you know, there's some set pieces and things in there where even today, I don't think we give him much of a chance.

We're evaluating all the time and we think he's done -- we think he's done well to be fair because -- and we have given up goals, and like our defenders and our strikers, he is part of that. So listen, to answer your question, what does he -- what does -- Quentin is -- he's a top professional and top teammate. He's a pro. He shows up every day. He's playing well. This is a position on our team that is very competitive round. What Quentin has to do is keep doing what he's doing, he's doing well and we'll make decisions. It's a constant evaluation.

