

# Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Javier Perez

Media Conference



Philadelphia Union 3, Toronto FC 0

**Q. That was a pretty disappointing performance. The club seemed to revert to some of its bad habits early in the season and frankly it looked like Philadelphia wanted it more at some points in the evening. What went wrong?**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I think we came, and this is a big red flag that we were expecting at some point, right. You make some steps forward and at one point, you make one step backwards and it was tonight, we came flat in the first half. The team was sending some signs that it was going to be the case, but it was one of these games that you just have to go through and the only positive thing I think is it was an exercise to stay in the game.

In another moment of the season, probably this would be a much larger scoreboard, right. We have that chance we get penalty in the second half in the beginning, and I think that would probably help us a little bit to get back in the game. But we didn't convert that one, and at least the second half, we didn't -- we didn't concede any more goals.

I think I don't want to read more than this is just a step backwards from all the step forwards we did in the last weeks. We just have to gather our forces, I would probably use the term -- that's in the locker room, but we just have to gather our forces and think about our next opponent is going to come very fast, which is going to be Saturday in a few days.

**Q. You sat Chris Mavinga after 45 minutes. Just curious as to what your evaluation as of his performance this evening.**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I think Chris, like everybody else, right, the team, was flat. I don't think you have to read more into that. The team didn't come with the right mentality. We are all responsible for that. It's not a matter of two points, one player or one single player or a couple of players.

I think we have -- like we said in the locker room, we are together on this. When we succeed, we succeed together.

When we fail, we fail together. And tonight wasn't a good night for Chris or any of the players on field or even for us.

**Q. What goes into the notebook on a night like today? What do you see to address with the guys going forward?**

JAVIER PEREZ: On a night like tonight, there is no notebook. There is just I think -- it's as I said before in the previous three questions. We came flat. It doesn't matter which formation or how you plan the game. We need to get into the right mentality, right energy to play and compete, especially against a team like Philadelphia that we know they are all energy.

**Q. It was nice seeing Achara make his first appearance performance the team in over a year. What did you make of that and how was his performance on the pitch tonight?**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I'm glad you asked this question because when you find yourself 3-0 at halftime, obviously you try to get back in the game. You try to start the second half stronger to see if you can get an early goal. That's what we tried to do. If the early goal doesn't come, you have to start to take whatever positives you can take out of a game like tonight.

So we at least -- in the second half and the other part was to see half was to see Achara back in the team. I think he had a decent performance in the circumstances, taking into account that he has been for so long out of the field. So yeah, we are happy to see that he was able to play, to get some minutes in his back, and that is a big contribution for him and his reintegration to the group.

**Q. Is there any update on Richie Laryea and do you expect to have Pozuelo back for the weekend?**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, I think Richie and Chris, we have to look at them once we go back tomorrow, back home. So I cannot pronounce right now what is the situation with any of the two. Alejandro, we will have to see. I don't know today how he will go. He is training, and my focus was on the game today. And tomorrow I see Alejandro, in which

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condition he is to get back on to the team.

**Q. You mentioned there were signs that something like this was a possibility heading into. What were some of those signs that you saw and is this just something that sort of happens every once in a while when you get a schedule like this and taking in so many lessons?**

JAVIER PEREZ: It's experience. It's the sense; you sense these things. Because when you come from six straight losses, whoever thinks that we are going to make four straight wins or six straight wins doesn't know anything about football, about soccer.

So we know that it's never a straight line going up. It's always some ups and some downs. I think by now we have a few signs to go up, and a sign down. It was due. Now what is important is just like I said, we gather our forces. We have a very strong opponent to play on Saturday, NYC FC we. Are going to play them at home, and the important part will be that we are ready for that game and show that at home with our fans from the very first minute.

**Q. On a similar note, one note change I noticed you made at halftime was reverting to something like a 4-2-3-1 formation. Can you tell us why you decided to go with the 5-3-2 today and make the change at halftime?**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, I think as I said before, we came flat. We were not doing what we were supposed to do at the beginning of the game. This is not blaming anyone. This is my fault as much as everybody else's right, but probably more my fault.

But the reality that things were not clicking, we have to take a step back just to regain the control of the game, or at least to match up the game and that was a step, meaning that we were more able to be positioned more solidly, organize, not concede so many mistakes in midfield.

Because the problem, the problem we have in the beginning of the game, it was just too easy for them to play through the middle. We try to get that organized and solved at the beginning of game, but we didn't -- we didn't do a great job as you can see.

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