

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Quentin Westberg

Media Conference



Atlanta 1, Toronto FC 1

Q. Just your thoughts on how that one sort of played out. It was a tough one.

QUENTIN WESTBERG: Yes, it was tough considering the first 20, 25 minutes. You know, I think we were focused but not taking the game to them. Yeah, ultimately, it came down to one deflection and we lose the game 1-0.

But as soon as we were a bit braver on the ball, that we wanted to influence our game, it started to be a more level game. They started the game really strong. They were finding good pockets. Creating a bit of chaos, coming our way, but I think once more, once we actually took more responsibility of building out of the back a little bit and frustrating them defensively, we were able to find the corridors and then take the game to them.

So yes, frustrating overall but I think if we are less spectator in the first 20, 30 minutes then we see the real quality and the real TFC game that we can offer.

Q. From your perspective, how much of a deflection was there? Do you feel you had it covered before it went off Eriq?

QUENTIN WESTBERG: Yeah, it changes everything. I think it was going to be a mid-range at best shot curler around me and then it changed the pace of the trajectory. So yes, it was a deflection that changed everything in the sight.

Q. I know this is very much not your department, but what does this team do to turn having possession in dangerous areas into a goals? There were a couple today that should have found the back of the net.

QUENTIN WESTBERG: Sorry, can you say that again, because it's interesting.

Q. It's not your department, per se, but how does this team turn good possessions into balls into the back of the net? There were a couple real good chances today?

QUENTIN WESTBERG: Yes, well, I think it's my domain still. I like to think the goalkeeper can have a big influence on possession and on breaking down teams and I think actually as soon as we started to release the pressure from up top that they are putting on us, then we were getting better sequences of possession, and then we had more space moving forward.

As soon as we broke down they are first line of press, then we realized we had a lot of pockets and we knew about these pockets. We knew about these empty spaces their system was going to create for us. As soon as we put that together, yes, of course when you're able to have midfielders moving forward and having higher numbers on the ball and opponents behind you, then yes, you're able to create plus ones all over the field and create chances.

So yes, I'm the goalkeeper. It's not my domain but I think it's really interesting that I still have a role in assessing that and stop hitting the long balls that I did in the first couple of goal kicks, force a bit more courage into our back line to play under this pressure so that our midfielders and then consequently our forwards and offensive players have more time on the ball and more space.

Q. It seems like the bounces are just not going your way. How frustrated are you feeling about the run of luck and that there's just no good luck going newer way right now?

QUENTIN WESTBERG: I think we can hide behind luck but ultimately if we had started the game like we ended it, maybe that deflection doesn't happen or goes above or wide. There's a staying in France, that it always rains on the poor.

I think yes maybe we weren't active enough in the first 20 minutes and gave them the opportunity to broadcast the football that they are able to do with a lot of skills on the ball. I know Araujo from watching a lot of French football and he's a top-quality player. When you add him to Martinez, Moreno, they are really comfortable guys on the ball and tactically sound, very good one-on-one.

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So yes, when you get that feeling that you're not bringing the game to them in, their stadium on their turf, it feels like you're overwhelmed a bit by waves. As soon as we were able to stop these and show more diligence on the ball, more patience and more courage, then it was a game. Unfortunately we were down 1-0 at that moment and we weren't able to come back but I think it's very promising. Yes, we need to be -- to be brave and turn this luck, if you want to call it luck. I trust that, you know, the braver we're going to be, the luckier we're going to be and it's going to go our way.

Q. Javi has been methodical in building up the performances from stabilizing the defense to taking more and more control of the game plan. Are you seeing this as the path forward? Are you seeing those signs of growth?

QUENTIN WESTBERG: Yes, yes because psychology of a soccer player is tricky. Sometimes you enter the game with the best spirit and you want to do well and you don't necessarily do well and when you have -- everybody else in the league and you feel like things aren't turning your way.

And as I was told earlier, you feel unlucky a little bit but I think it all goes down to the starters being grateful to be on the soccer field and play for this club and know we have the responsibility to show more skills and show more control and Javi is totally right. I think having more control over the course of a game, and really taking more responsibility over the field will turn things around and it doesn't happen in a second. It takes time to build or rebuild but yes it's all with taking responsibility also and knowing the direction we are going towards.

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