

# Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Javier Perez

Media Conference



Inter Miami 3, Toronto FC 1

**Q. The past couple games, you guys have played well, but have fallen short of collecting the points. How would you rate the performance tonight?**

JAVIER PEREZ: It was a really, really poor game. It was a really poor game from the beginning when we give away a couple of goals, the goals they come like that. And we can read between the lines but I take the blame on this one. I think it's my fault from player selection and I think some of the players were just not ready for this game.

I can make excuses. I can say that players were injured, but the reality is I have to point the finger at me and take the blame for the game tonight.

**Q. Can you legitimately compete with the center back group that you've got right now?**

JAVIER PEREZ: When we are all on the team, I think we can. It wasn't in the cards today. I think it was difficult. It was a difficult game from the beginning, but I don't think it was just the center back situation.

As you know, Chris couldn't join us, and then Eriq was limited with a hamstring that he was taking care of from the previous game. Even the previous game he was playing limited. But I think it is more than the certainty backs. When we give away the ball easy as we did tonight, and it put us in a very vulnerable position, and we concede goals early on, then everything gets disorganized, right.

So it's not always the certainty backs. It's more things.

**Q. I know you've been working hard to work on the defensive side of your game, but are you surprised that the attacking part of your game hasn't really clicked as well as maybe it should be, particularly with your dps out there and that kind of thing?**

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, I think once you start the game, at the very beginning of the game, it wasn't bad really. We were in between lines. The question is, once you concede the goal, once you make a mistake or two mistakes, I think

if we look at the beginning of the game, we start to have possession early on, but then when we start making mistakes, losing balls that we don't have to lose and we have to run back, is when we are in trouble.

So it's not only the front players that they didn't keep tonight. I think if we are solid and we are settled like we were in the last couple of games, we would find a way to score in this game. But it's just very distracting for the team to concede two goals the way we did, the first two goals.

**Q. By my count, the team is winless in 12 games when you concede the first goal. Can you pinpoint what is it that is about this team that just has a hard time coming from behind to get results?**

JAVIER PEREZ: I think once you concede a goal like that, it's extremely difficult to pull the team together. Especially a day like today, we are playing way from home, everything is against us, and obviously the whole season that we are having is taking a toll on the players. It depends on the character, the personalities. Sometimes some players they can go through and fight through the difficulties and some others, mentally they don't have that character.

I think it's just a matter of how the season has been progressing, and when you get a strong setback like every goal in the game, after it's more difficult to get composure and get the team going.

**Q. Can you take us in that locker room, what's the mood of the group and what do you say after a night like that?**

JAVIER PEREZ: I think the group, they acknowledge that we are in a difficult situation. And it's a hard one to take. We have to look at ourselves in the mirror and see if we are doing everything we can, starting with me. But again, you take the blame for this one. I think it's a good learning curve tonight for us, and all that we want is to focus on the next game. It's going to be the Classic. Everybody is going to be motivated for that game on Friday.

**Q. A lot of changes to the lineup tonight from the**

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**lineup that you had in Atlanta, obviously a short turnaround for a mid week game to a weekend game, but there have been a lot of changes in the lineup lately. Are you feeling like a chemist just trying to find the right formula with this team to be able to get the group over the line and get some good results?**

JAVIER PEREZ: I don't. Personally, I don't. I think today we have enough legs on the feel. As you point out, we had enough players that they were rested. And therefore, some players was not there, really.

But I think this is going to be a necessary evaluation on the way we address the starting lineup, and again, I take blame on that. I think we have to learn from the experience tonight starting with myself and avoid these kind of situations going forward because time is ticking and we cannot make any more mistakes.

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