

Toronto FC Media Conference

Friday, August 27, 2021

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Javier Perez

Media Conference



Montréal 3, Toronto FC 1

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Q. Is winning a match against another club that is fighting for a playoff spot when you're down a man five minutes into the match a bit too much to ask for? Is that what happened in this game?

JAVIER PEREZ: I think what happened in this game is we find ourselves with a red card with a player down very early in the game. We know exactly what happened in this kind of situations; that it's just a matter of time that you concede a goal.

We go 1-0 at halftime, which I think is a decent result, and then the plan in the second half was to play tight with 4-4-1, have Yeferson at top, keeping away two defenders at least and then playing 98, 98 with our goalkeeper from the back I think is the only way to play these kind of games.

I think we play well, given the circumstances. And they only scored that goal. But the moment you leave a space in between lines and especially against a team like Montréal that they live off the quick transitions, it's a risk to concede goals, and then we conceded a couple of goals.

Overall, I think the situation is that red card that we concede very early in the game, I think is nothing else to read in in the game.

Q. I'm just wondering if you had a chance to review the play and if you thought it was deserving of a red card or not?

JAVIER PEREZ: I think it's hard. I don't like to talk about referees. I don't think we have the best refereeing this year. I mean, the game against Orlando, I can't review seven other games, but you know that I don't talk about referees. I don't like to talk about refereeing. I think it's a hard red card, but any ways, it's a red card and it's out and we are with ten players pretty much for 90 minutes.

Q. You inserted Michael back into the starting lineup.

What was your assessment of his performance tonight?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, Michael always brings personality. Brings the leadership on the field that I expect and that the team expects and I think he's the backbone to keep together the team. So his performance, I think I rate it very highly and I think he did a great job tonight.

Q. It seemed like after the red card the team managed to find a bit of stability and a moment of inattention and Montréal grabs that first one and I think it's the same on the second. Those little moments and details seem to be killing this side. What did you see on those two goals and what do you do to address that?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, again I think there's not much to say when these goals come when you are playing with a player down because I think it's the same thing. When you make a review or you are scouting an opponent, you never make the analysis on the opponent when they have a player down. The game changes completely.

The goals, we can just see that it's a consequence of playing with one player down. I don't think we can read more in between lines.

Q. With the team now sitting 12 points out of a playoff spot, it looks like that might be too much of a hill to climb. Do you shift your focus now from chasing a playoff spot to more trying to assess and develop the young talent that you've got in the team and find out what you've got with some of these young players?

JAVIER PEREZ: I think there are different objectives. I think we cannot rule out that player because we carry still on the run but we have different tasks. Obviously this is a very experienced group and we were very happy with the week that we had behind. We felt confident going into this game, and I think now we have different opportunities in front of us. One is keep trying to climb to the playoff spot.

But that's why we have the cap ahead of us. It's going to come very fast and we are going to have to build the team for that competition because that's always one title that we



can fight for.

And as you mentioned, the younger players I think it's something that we cannot dismiss. Noble was today on the field but as well, five other players they were playing with the FC, too, and these players they are the future of the club and we have to keep looking at them and develop them.

Q. Tsubasa and Dom, after missing the last couple games, they came back into the game and they saw a little bit of action in the second half. Just wondering, I know it was relatively about a 25 -- well, a 15-minute performance from each of them but did you see from them?

JAVIER PEREZ: I see players that they contribute. I see dynamic players that they make our group stronger and this is basically the time that unfortunately we could give them because they come out of injury, both of them, and we just have to be cautious about the time that we provide them. I would probably give them a little bit more time tonight. But that's something we have to be careful just to bring them into the game. And I think they are going to be a very positive addition to the squad going forward.

Q. You've got a bit of time now before the next match. Curious how you're going to utilize that long break and get ready for the next part of the season.

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, I think we have work to do the next couple of days. The players, they are going to be off for the weekend. They are going to come Monday, and from Monday, we are going to work again. So I think we have a number of players that they are going now to have a break. We have some time to work together and I think with a little bit more time, we can get a fresher look to the performances that we have and give a final push for the end of the season.

As I said, I think this is a strong group. This is an experienced group, and I believe, I firmly believe, that this is going to make us stronger. This is going to be -- this is going to be an experience that we have to go through as a team individually together, and as a club.

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