

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Javier Perez

Media Conference



Toronto 2, Nashville 1

Q. It looks like your team finally got rewarded for its hard work and efforts on the pitch tonight. What did you think of the performance?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I think what I mentioned in the locker room, I think it's been a very, very tough year for us. I think at the end, we can see how the team click and the team is making a huge effort. I'm very, very happy for them. We don't have a lot of players injured, we didn't have any DP (ph) to start the game tonight.

But the players we got on the field, we have 11 warriors and everybody, we were behind them, supporting them in whatever way they could, and they did a terrific performance against one of the hottest teams in the League, second place; they only lost one game in the last ten, and I think it was a really good performance. I think it's the first game we win here in BMO Field this year and it's an important milestone for us, especially heading into the Cup game.

Q. Can you give us an indication of how much of a weight lifted off the shoulders for the team and for you is this victory?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I think when you go for so long without a win, it's not easy to keep working. I have to congratulate the players because they never stop working. They never stop believing. And even if we go -- we go to work and I mentioned this last week, I think heading into the Miami game, we felt the same way as today. We felt really confident and we felt ready to grab the three points.

But it's never easy because as the game approaches, you can see that there is a little bit of anxiety in the team because we were not getting the results. It's a big weight that we take off the shoulders and hopefully from now on we can just start playing a little bit more free and get the results that we deserve because I think the team is playing -- is working really hard. It's training really well, and now it's time to get rewarded on the field.

Q. Nashville came into this game with the fourth-best

attack in the east and with players the caliber of Mukhtar and Sapong. Wondering from your perspective how were you able to really sort of frustrate them on the defensive end?

JAVIER PEREZ: It was the players that was winning the games and I think they stayed very organized on the field. I think every time that Mukhtar was getting the ball, they were double-down the help when they were trying to play at the back, as well, double-down the help with Sapong. I think they were very disciplined, the players. And I think at the end, thankfully we get all rewarded with the performance on the field. It was their effort and it was the way they conducted themselves on the field, and I think going forward, if we keep with this work ethic and this organization, we will get pore wins.

Q. Jacob was rewarded with a strong performance in the last match with a start tonight and we saw tonight, his ability to get behind the defenders. Can you tell us what you saw in his goal and what you liked about his performance tonight?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, I think it was a class goal. I think he's excellent running behind. He knows how to do that very well. His timing is excellent, and then obviously the way he controls the ball and the finish. By the way, I think it's with his right foot, which is not his strongest foot, but the finish was excellent.

So it's a class performance again for him in a second consecutive game, and because even he didn't start the last game, he pretty much was in at the beginning of the game and he played pretty much 90 minutes. So tonight, again, he played a really strong game, and he's put us in an advantage in the game. So he was -- it was a really good performance.

Q. In your halftime TV interview, you mentioned that Soteldo had been ill this week. You got about 30 minutes out of him. Did you go into the game thinking you would be able to get that kind of time from him off the bench?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, we knew that he was going to be

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able to come in the second half and he will provide some resting time for Achara, because we have to remember Achara has been out for many months, and now suddenly he's playing pretty much every minute, so we have to give him a little bit of rest.

And then Yeferson, has I mentioned before, he was sick during the week, but we knew that he could contribute at some point in the game, and he did it, and we are very happy with the result.

Q. On Nashville's goal, it looked like Randall was off-side if the build up to the play. Did you happen to see a replay and what did you think? Was this another case of a call going against your club?

JAVIER PEREZ: I think I saw briefly the image. I thought it was off-side, but I assume from upstairs they have a better view and they probably have different angles and they saw he wasn't off-side. From the angle I have, he was off-side. Once again, it's a very, very close call and they have three or four different angles and they decide he was on.

Q. With the way everything has gone this season, it would have been easy for the team to let their heads hang when Nashville scored the equalizer. What do you take from this game going into the rest of the games?

JAVIER PEREZ: I think the team is giving everything. Me personally, I cannot drop my arms or I cannot stop working hard every day because I see them how hard they work and how responsive they are, and I have to keep going and I have to try to provide them with the best resources and platform we can.

I think the team tonight showed the character; this is a team that is ready to fight and this is a team that is going to give everything to the end, and as you mentioned before, it would be very easy at that point just to give up. But it's not in the nature of this team, so I really appreciate the effort and I think we get all rewarded at the end.

Q. Omar Gonzalez is a big man but he was surrounded by a lot of Nashville defenders. You've seen a lot of football in your career. What would you say about Gonzalez's ability to cause havoc on set pieces?

JAVIER PEREZ: It's remarkable. It's a really good finish. I think both goals, they are very good goals and I hope the fans are happy with that. It's a tremendous effort on the side of Omar but as well very good delivery on the whole team. It's a goal for the whole team. You can see how they are celebrating when Omar scores. It's almost like

you are winning a title and you can see how much that means for the team, how much it means for everybody at the club. I think this club is resilient, the players are resilient and I think we are going to come back stronger with this win.

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