

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Javier Perez

Media Conference



Colorado 0, Toronto FC 0

Q. A clean sheet tonight against a team that has not lost in a long time. Did you like what you saw?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, definitely. I think I like many things of the team. I like the energy, the intensity. I like, like you said, a clean sheet here is very important for us. It was the last game they have a zero for the visitors here, it was on August the 7th against Sporting Kansas City, that was nine games ago, and an opponent I think similar to Nashville and an opponent that is hot now in the Western Conference.

I like the way that the team -- I like the things I start to see, how we organized defensively, how we can be organized, how we can interact with each other. But I think we have some chances, as well. I think by the end of the game, the game could go either way for them or for us, and I think the 0-0 is a fair result.

But it's at a very difficult place to get a result, as I said before for the good moment that they are having right now, Colorado. But as well, the altitude, the time difference, a lot of components, so a big congratulations to the team.

Q. You guys managed a clean sheet, despite losing two center backs tonight to injury, how happy or how satisfied are you with just the way your team defended tonight overall and can you give us an update on how Chris and Eriq are doing? Do you have any information?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, it's a little bit too soon to know what they are doing. I think they are both fine. Let's see what is the extent of Chris, it looks like it was his right calf. He had some issues during the week on his left Achilles tendon and I think he was just -- his right calf was compensating that. He couldn't go any longer.

And then Eriq had a hit, so one of the core operators (ph) hit him from the back, but it looks like he is okay.

I'm happy with the team. I'm happy the way we defended. I think as I said before, they did a great job pretty much

taking out the wingbacks that they created so much danger in previous games for them, and then the three in the middle, they were spot on. Kemar, Chris, Eriq and then Omar and Justin when he came on, and that's what is a team; that is what a team is about. When one teammate goes down, we spoke about that at the beginning of the game before the game, when a teammate goes down, the next one is going to do the job at the same level it not better. That was a clear example today. The three in the middle, as well, they were very good covering ground, sacrificing everything for the team, two and the two up front, Yeferson and Patryk, they gave everything, and then obviously Achara and Jacob, they created a few chances towards the end of the game.

Q. It was Noble's first MLS game since he got the red card against Montréal. Obviously he played against York but this was a very tricky rode game. How do you think he rebounded off the disappointment of that red card, and starting a big game like this, what was your overall evaluation of him?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, he knew that he had to have a good game tonight. He had to have a good performance; that he couldn't go away with an average performance, and I think he did the job that we ask him. He was in that position in the middle of the field, and he was doing a great job when Mark-Anthony Kaye was trying to get the ball in the middle. He was trying to get inside, and as well, trying to balance when Mark -- and they were doing the same job in other parts of the field.

Overall I think he was really good. He completed passes, as well, so I'm very happy with his performance tonight.

Q. You touched on this a little bit but how much of the game time was just keep things in front of you and was that the rationale behind the formation change?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yeah, the formation change, it was just to adjust -- you have to adjust to the position, as well. It's not only how you play but as well how the opponent is playing. And in this case, we needed to make some adjustments but I think we didn't lose the sense, or we just tweak it a little bit, the formation, just to have a little bit

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more control.

We knew that the outside backs or wingbacks, they were creating a lot of disruption in the teams, especially we watch the game against Kansas City where they played 4-3-3 and when they played the wingbacks, the whole formation of the position gets a little bit disrupted or modified.

So we knew that we have to adjust a little bit with our shape without changing the essence. The good thing is that the players stayed faithful to the style of play and we a bit more defensive, but at the end we were solid. So that was the important part.

Q. In your previous answers, you kind of mentioned about it just kind of clicking; that it's starting to click for the team. Defensively, why do you think that is? The team has had problems keeping clean sheets but now it's two in a row. What is it specifically that you see the team is clicking at the back?

JAVIER PEREZ: Yes, I think I said it at the before, it's at the back but it's not only at the back. I think I said it the other day in the press conference. It's as well the work that the players do in the midfield.

I think, also, Noble tonight, as well as Michael, they do a tremendous job in the midfield, up front when we put pressure, when we do the job. It's just everybody's engaged and everybody's doing the job. It makes easier the job for the defensive line, and I think we start to get rewarded because it's a collective effort, it's a team effort.

So the players are the same, but now, we have a much better understanding of each other and how we can help each other. We know that if a guy is not having a very good game or is maybe out of play, it's not a problem because the player next to him is going to do the job and he's going to help him and he's going to cover him and he's going to watch his back. In the end that's what it's about to be in a team, and this team is changing from being an underdog (ph) to be that, to be a team.

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