

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Bob Bradley

Media Conference



Cincinnati 2, Toronto 1

Q. Of the two goals today I'm sure your team wishes they had back, do you think your team made it difficult for itself today?

BOB BRADLEY: We did for sure. When we started the game, the tempo was too slow which played to Cincinnati's game plan. Didn't move the ball fast enough. Didn't get forward quickly enough. And then two of the battles, we gave away a corner with an error, and then it's the second phase where we move off but we don't do a good enough job of moving up and keeping the middle compact and staying with -- staying with players. We can't just move out and leave guys on side right in the middle.

Then the second one is just a second ball off a throw-in. So those are two poor goals to give up today.

A push late in the game, it's a little bit too crazy the way we are trying to get the next ball. Yeah, there's a lot of things to look at.

Q. With regards to Chris Mavinga, was that an injury or looked like he came off limping?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, I haven't been updated yet on what was but he needed to come off with some type of injury.

Q. With that, was there -- seemed like there was a tactical switch, too. What was the sort of rationale?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, going into the game, we weren't certain. They played most of their games 3-4-1-2. Today they played 4-2-3-1. The way they lined up, we felt at that point we could go to a 4-3-3 or a 4-2-3-1, take advantage of situation where is we could push higher off the field, maybe press a little bit more, so that was the tactical thoughts.

Q. Is it unnatural for there to be issues with the energy level to start the game?

BOB BRADLEY: It's a good question. Part of it is still

when the other team does certain things to try to slow down your build up or they have got numbers back. Unlocking them early in the game, the mix between patience, control and still tempo, we haven't found the right blend of all that. So, yeah, the game for me early on, I thought our tempo was too slow.

Q. That mistake you said that led to Cincinnati's first goal, Saucedo, everybody saw. Are you disappointed with his inconsistency in his play this season so far?

BOB BRADLEY: As a team I feel we have to be more consistent. Finding the right way to get our best guys playing at their best levels, that's one of the most important aspects of building a good team. And I think we have had moments this year where that's been going in a good direction.

But I still think overall that's our biggest challenge and got to keep trying to find the right way. We at times changed tactically with thoughts that might not only help us engage the other team better but also help guys in terms of how we use them and get them into spots where they can be most effective.

Yeah, that's still on the coaching staff. That's on me to find the right mix of those ideas and make sure that we go on the field and have the football ideas, but together with the intensity and the mentality.

We spent a lot of time this week talking about the fact that there were moments in the NYC FC game just in terms of running hard or just in terms of getting people forward, getting in on a tackle or counter-pressing, they raise the bar in that game. We felt that in previous games, we had been making some progress but that -- you know, NYC FC is a good team. We tried to look at, this year are the things that we now -- in that regard today, it's disappointing that we didn't have a stronger response right from the start.

Q. I thought Nelson might have been one of the bright spots for you this afternoon. Do you feel like he's playing with a little bit more confidence out there?

BOB BRADLEY: I would disagree with your assessment. I



think Jayden catches your eye on a day like today with some ability and some -- the things we see that we are trying to develop but still in the final moments today when he needed to get at the right play, the right pass to create an advantage, that's our area when we talk about him being better and more consistent, that needs to go up.

So I thought he did some things in terms of, you know, exciting energy, quickness, speed, but I still feel we've got to get more of the final moments right for him.

Q. Ayo Akinola made his first competitive appearance in a year today. Can we get your assessment on his performance and will there be a partnership with Jesús?

BOB BRADLEY: Not enough to go on today, but training has gotten better. When we were pushing the game late, we tried to have a combination of Jesús and Jordan and Ayo, use it to push Achara higher on the right side. So there's things that we are doing at that point to try to push the game.

But the big picture is Ayo has shown confidence. There's been more moments in training where you really see him take the ball, go quickly, make hard runs to get into the box, and those are all things that are really important for him going forward.

Q. We would be remiss if we didn't talk about Jesús Jiménez adding another goal today. Is it nice to have a guy who's that automatic, give him a chance, he's going to bury one for you?

BOB BRADLEY: Yes, Jesús has shown that when you get him chances around the goal, he's an excellent finisher. He's got good movement, and I say all the time, and I still think there's more in there for us. I think one of the things on a day like today when we talk about tempo is also making sure that we can step up on teams; that our ability to put more pressure on them higher up the field, win some more balls to get into transition.

So I think there's more there that Jesús can do to help the team, but I know for sure that when we get him into good spots, his ability to finish out chances has been very good, and we've got to keep that and keep adding some other things to go with it.

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