

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Ayo Akinola

Media Conference



AYO AKINOLA: I felt fine, the enjoyment, excitement after being out nine months, getting my first couple minutes back to playing, I felt good. I felt physically fine. The knee felt fine. Obviously would have been better if we got the win but overall I was happy.

Q. When you finally get into a game after all that time, how does it feel in terms of confidence, because Bob kept saying over the last couple weeks that once you get into the game and you make some plays and that kind of thing, you really feel better about yourself. Does it all come back to you after you played a few minutes?

AYO AKINOLA: Yeah, definitely but just more in training. As the weeks went on, the more confident and comfortable I got, being able to trust my knee and being able to put it under different situations that would occur in game situations. But for me just having the confidence more and more and for me, I felt really comfortable out there.

Q. Given ought the hard work you had to put in to get back, is it possible to say what you learned from this whole experience, what you learned about yourself maybe after going through this?

AYO AKINOLA: Definitely life experiences, just being able to -- knowing what it really is to be a professional. Knowing what it's like to really take care of your body and knowing that your body is your temple.

For me personally, I think the biggest experience that I had throughout this journey was probably just more patience, more accepting, knowing that this is the new me with the knee. But also, having that determination factor, knowing that this is not a setback for me. You know, this is definitely a comeback and knowing that I don't want this injury to not be a flop. I want it to make me even better; makes me a better athlete, makes me better on the pitch.

Q. How does today's result sort of fit into how you have seen your team develop over the last couple weeks?

AYO AKINOLA: Can you elaborate.

Q. Since you've been back, you've been back in the squad and you've had a good view of the team, navigating tough matches against Philly and New York and when you come home it's a tough defeat against a Cincinnati team.

AYO AKINOLA: Like how do I see myself?

Q. For the team, how the team is sort of navigating this part of the season.

AYO AKINOLA: I mean, not everything is in -- it's just the start of the season. This is just the first part of the season, so not everything is going to be on all cylinders to begin with. And you know, still, we have a new coaching system. We have new players. So everything is not -- everything is not -- we don't expect everything to be yelling quickly. Obviously there will be ups and downs. Right now we're down with back-to-back losses but I expect things to turn around. The players expect things to turn around and same thing with the coaching staff. But we still keep our heads-up.

But the last three matches, Philly, New York and now this one, the last two not going in our favor but I think the team has a good mentality and we are in the right spirits. Our head is right. For me personally, I don't think nothing to worry about because so early in the season but we should be focused on the details of why we had back-to-back losses.

Q. Just wanted to know what it's like training and playing alongside Jesus Jimenez, a man in form, what have you learned from him since your return to training?

AYO AKINOLA: I think what I've been watching or following from him is just more patience. He's very calm. Very collected. You know, I think he just goes at his own tempo. He just goes at his own pace which sometimes plays in his favor which you can see that. Already has seven goals on the season and just adding that to my game I think will be helpful and beneficial.



Q. You guys have a chance to get right back at it against Cincinnati coming up. How eager are you to get on the road?

AYO AKINOLA: For us, we are looking to win. We want nothing less than three points. Our team is going to be ready and we are going to come out firing and we are going to be coming back at Cincinnati they beat us at our place and I'm more than confident that we can beat them at their place.

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