

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Bob Bradley

Media Conference



Toronto FC 2, Halifax 1

Q. Can we start with your overall thoughts, especially how you thought the tempo changed at halftime with the substitution?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, it's a hard match and Halifax was obviously well prepared. They were really motivated. The crowd was great.

And I thought in the first half our tempo was too slow. I think too many guys were getting stuck with the ball. There was too many times where the extra touches that were only getting us into trouble and look, we are fortunate that in that situation, we've got guys that football-wise, can help those things. So that made a big difference. Still goes to the end.

And so credit to Halifax. Stephen does a good job, and they have a good group of players. Tonight, you could tell, they were ready.

Q. You mentioned halftime there. Wanted to get your opinion on the difference between playing a team in the CPL and maybe playing an MLS side.

BOB BRADLEY: Every place I've been, when you first enter the Cup and you play away games against teams like Halifax, it's the same around the world. Those games just take on a whole different feeling. You've got to be at your best, you've got to be sharp.

And oftentimes, if you are just a little bit off in certain moments, the other team starts to believe and they hang in there and then the game becomes a real fight. That's what tonight is -- is all about. It's like cup matches that I've seen in a lot of different places.

Q. Oso in the game -- as a coach, when he's been scoring two goals -- what's your take on that?

BOB BRADLEY: Jonathan is a good player, and he's had some injuries lately. And when he's not in our midfield, it makes it really easy for every team to just focus on Michael. Daniel's job at the beginning of the game was to

follow Michael.

When Oso is there, there are moments when the team is trying to -- Michael moves a little bit, the first past goes to Oso. And those two have a really good understanding, and then Oso also has really good time to go get into the box. So for us he's a really important player.

Q. Some injuries -- they have had a lot of injuries the last few weeks. Why is it that you think --

BOB BRADLEY: Soft tissue -- of guys that weren't that much. So we look hard at our training loads. We would like to continue trying to be a team that presses a little bit more and plays at a little higher tempo.

You have to train them in those ways. We got through preseason, five weeks where that part, the foundation was built in a very good way. There were no soft tissue injuries and then we've had some since, and they are all different. And they are all different. They are all strange.

Most of them have not been acute injuries where they are all running and they feel something. It's something where they come out of the game and something feels a little fatigue. We look hard at all that. I'm not short.

There are times I know when other teams in the world are in the process of trying to change the way they play. And then in those early days, maybe because the game model and training is different. Some of that takes time, so that's stuff that we work with our performance staff and our medical staff to see if we can keep trying to find answers and better ways to do things.

Q. On Jacob, he's had injuries, how much did he want to get back for this game and how much does it mean to him just to be able to play here?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, he was really excited. Jacob is a really good kid. He's still growing as a professional. He's still learning every day. But I think anybody who has spent time around him knows that he's a lot of -- he's a really good guy. And so growing up around here to come and play, and he came on to help, so I was happy for him.



Q. About Jacob, if you can give more of an evaluation of his performance off the bench. I think he made a really smart play when he played that ball across the box that led to Oso's goal, and what did you make of the way he played over last 20 minutes?

BOB BRADLEY: He was excited. So the part that you always have from Jacob is his willingness to run, his willingness to try to get on the end of a ball and you know, one of the things that he has is that when he does get down the left side, he's got a good ability to get balls across.

At that point in the game, you know, we switched a little bit more to a 4-4-2 so that he can be in that left midfield spot. Jayden pushed out a little wider on right and then obviously Jesús played around or underneath Ayo, and we thought that was a good way to finish the game. Part of it was we thought it put Jacob in the best possible situation to make a play like the one he made.

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