

# Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Mark-Anthony Kaye

Media Conference



Chicago Fire 2, Toronto FC 0

**Q. 62 minutes, of course you told us earlier in the week that you were dealing with that sort of glute injury, how did it feel? Was there some tightness? How do you feel about that performance?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: Yeah, there's definitely some soreness overall. Obviously if you don't train as consistently as you have been.

The game was always going to be a little intense, and I felt like it did pretty well and it's a good step in the right direction for Saturday. But just being cautious, my minutes were managed tonight.

**Q. It's been quite a journey from -- for you from the academy to starting for your hometown club tonight. What were your emotions taking the field this evening for Toronto FC?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: Yeah, my emotions were in check. We had to go in here and try and take care of business. Put the team first obviously and tried to make sure I was tuned in every moment of the game. I'm happy to obviously be playing for TFC and I feel like maybe the first home game, it's going to maybe hit me a little bit more but tonight, you know, I just tried to go out there and focus on what I needed to do to help the team. But again, I'm very excited, and I'm very competitive and I want to win, and I know that's what the club wants, too, so that comes first.

**Q. Could we get your thoughts on the performance today from the team, how that owl sort of played out and maybe where that game went wrong for you guys?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: Yeah, any time you go to an away game, it's important to start the game with the right mentality and right structure to make sure you keep yourself in the game and I think if you go down early in the game, it makes it very difficult on the road. So we didn't help ourselves by letting in those two easy goals. I think we could have done a better job overall collectively.

But you know, kudos to the guys. This is a team that is very possession-based and keeps the ball and wants to create chances. I think we can be more aggressive in the final third having more runs and behind and stretching our position, I felt like we were just a little bit safe in the way we were playing. But you know, it's my first game with the team and I'm just trying to get an understanding for all the guys and build the right chemistry. It's unfortunate that we didn't get a win tonight but I just see some positives and I'm excited about my debut and I want to continue moving in the right direction.

**Q. Tonight was the first time playing that midfield trio with Oso and Michael. What are your thoughts on how you played as a collective unit and what adjustments do you feel you have to make going into a rivalry match with Montréal?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: We already kind of have an understanding of how Oso and Mike play. Both players love to get on the ball and move the ball forward and I like to find spaces to be able to turn it and play forward, too. I think we complement each other. You can see throughout the game, we are really working to try and find each other, which is important when you're playing in this system.

But I don't think we need to change anything. You've got to keep hammering at the same things consistently that you do week-in and week-out at training. Yeah, I don't see the need to change anything going into Montréal. Obviously we can continue to be more aggressive when we are stepping up and really need to be a threat in behind. We need to test the opposition's back line and make them feel a little bit of pressure.

Yeah, the midfield, I'm comfortable with Mike and Oso.

**Q. No doubt you kind of understood that the team was struggling before you came here for results on the pitch, and I know it was only 60 minutes tonight but do you have a better understanding of why the team is in the position it's in based on that performance tonight?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: I think, you know, there's a lot of quality on this team. The team is also very young. Part of



the team is young kids that are still trying to develop in their own way and understand what it takes to be competitive and successful in this league. That just takes time with experience. I remember when I was their age, I think they were already a step ahead of me. So there's some good things to take from that but it's at the point now where they need to start pushing themselves a little bit more and trying to understand how to expand their mind when it comes to tactical awareness on the field, when they need to run it behind, when they need to turn, when they need to keep possession, how to step up and be aggressive. I just think it's a learning curve for them. They have good starting points but it's very tough to be real competitive in a game when you have a lot of young kids who are still learning, which is not a bad thing, they are getting experience every game, but hopefully they turn a page and they can be real assets to this club going forward.

**Q. You're going to have to wait a couple days more for your debut at BMO Field, but it's a pretty tasty fixture going up against Montréal. This was always going to be one of the bigger games on the calendar. Your thoughts going into the derby on the weekend?**

MARK-ANTHONY KAYE: Yeah, any rivalry at any club is a big deal. And I obviously know how important it is to our fans and the club, this game. I'm excited to be a part of it for the first time in my career, but I've been a part of some big rivalries and I understand what it takes mentally to get prepared for it. I'm sure the coaching staff and the club will get all the guys ready to go, so I'm excited to play in that game on Saturday.

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