

Toronto FC Media Conference

Sunday, September 4, 2022

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Bob Bradley

Media Conference



Montreal 4, Toronto FC 3

Q. Changing the outcome of the match, a game where there were MLS Cup moments?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, for sure but the two that come, we have such a good start. We have momentum. We have a crowd and then the back-to-back goals where the first one, we clear the header and Jayden is not in good position, not alert, and Piette comes, and when we have to deal with a little 1-2 outside the box, we don't close it off and leave a rebound, outside, and then very quickly a long shot.

And so you know, the feeling of starting really well, getting two good -- having good energy, good tempo, moving up the field, closing them down and not allowing much, and immediately 2-2; and then obviously top that off by the mistake to be down at halftime.

But that double hit took all the life of the good start right out of us, out of the crowd, out of every part of the stadium.

Q. Did that have to do with the team going up by two goals? Because they took their foot off the gas pedal for a little bit?

BOB BRADLEY: No. I think it's just two plays. They got a corner. We moved Lorenzo and Jayden high. We cleared the corner.

But Jayden, when he's standing out there on that side now when that ball gets cleared, that's got to be where he's in position to now take that ball. Piette just ran in front of him and took the ball, and then outside the box, yeah, it's a little 1-2 and we don't deal with the 1-2, and then we leave a rebound, and yes.

And then before anything really happens, there's a foul at midfield and a touch and Mihailovic shoots from a good distance and Alex can't make a save from outside the box.

I don't think in that little stretch there's any part of like actively taking the foot off the gas. I think it's just now we have allowed two moments where we just between -- you know, if you mention one thing, sometimes then it could be

something else.

But there's a bigger part of how you -- to how you make sure as a team that you grow; that you know how to win, and that's making plays. That's not giving things away. That's not having little lapses; that if all of the sudden it does get to 2-1, can you immediately respond.

But the double-hit today was just us not managing two plays back-to-back and then allowing them to have the momentum and then not having a way to get back into it for the rest of the first half and then the second half obviously when you go down 4-2.

Q. There were other mistakes ahead of Alex, but are you getting the type of goalkeeping you need?

BOB BRADLEY: Not in that last week.

Q. What did you learn today in terms of not responding in the second half, and what will you learn today about the team?

BOB BRADLEY: You don't learn anything on a day like that. You know your team. When we have to push a game, we're still not all the way there. I know that going in.

It's great that we can get Mark-Anthony Kaye for 45 minutes but he's not played a long time. So when he steps on the field we think it's a step in the right direction and we think he can make a play or two.

But obviously when we need to be ready as a team to step up a little higher, still put more pressure on them, play in their end a little bit more, the combination of what we put into the first half and then the combination of frustration for allowing a two-goal lead to turn into a 3-2 deficit.

So yes, and in the second half, I know that we're not there yet in terms of when things don't go our way. But that's got to be somewhere along the way, that's got to be a next step but we are not there yet. That I know already.

Q. What do you say to the guys? This really puts you up against the wall; how do you see this?

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BOB BRADLEY: Some of what I just said here, I said to them; that we have moments of good football and moments where we are close to being a good team.

But that next step where, again, at some moment, and it happens in the 88th minute of the last game, right. It starts, again, a series of plays, a ball to Fede's, show try to go by the guy, show hold onto it. Now we step up as they start to play. Should Jesús run over toward the center back; show drop back and we don't close off a little passing lane. They play forward pass to Bruben (ph), Michael closes them down and other guys are around him; they don't step in.

All of this leads to now the ball going out on the side, and we have, again, a chance, very early to close things down, certainly take an angle on Pooch, and now we allow him to come in and we've got guys that don't step aggressively. Like that's one, two, three, four, five, six; so the idea that now we have got more guys that are engaged in the game for every second thinking faster, being more alert, making more of the plays that make a difference, that's where we're still coming up short.

I mean, look, Jayden -- the last thing I'm doing tonight is throwing Jayden under the bus. Jayden has made a lot of progress this year and as a young player we are all excited for his development. But now in a certain moment what happens like where in his case, the light just goes out at a key moment where he's responsible for a situation that you move up, but now any ball that comes into that area, you have to be there first.

So, yeah, talk to them. But we're still hurting ourselves with plays like that too many times, and yeah, I mean, if you go back through -- in so many ways, it starts the second part of the season started with Charlie, right. And that would still mean that you end up with two ties with New England.

Again, details in each game. Missed penalty in the first. You know, the second game, still having a lead and then -- and then, okay, they are back and giving up a poor goal right at the start of the second half. These kind of things keep repeating themselves.

Miami, similar. Go down, okay, back into the game, goal right before half. You know, the Galaxy late; tonight.

What a difference -- I mean, that's a lot of points in those games. So again, architecture going into that last stretch of the season and you're talking about how many points do we need from 13 games, all right. And now, nine of them played, and in a bunch of those games, we do enough to

take full points, all right, but now we leave points on the table.

And it's not one thing but it's moments in a game where we don't have the way to be ready for a situation and make a play, make a save, score a goal, stop a transition, whatever -- I can't go through the list of everything, but that's where we are as a team right now.

That's why when you say, what have I learned, yeah, I know that. We're trying to make that next step. Yes, we are all frustrated that we have not been able to leave with some better results to really make that next stem.

Q. Was Chris Mavinga's withdrawal injury related?

BOB BRADLEY: He said felt something. Said he needed come back at halftime and look at him.

Q. Is that a player personnel issue or the fact that some of these guys came in halfway through the year and didn't have enough time to correct the mistakes?

BOB BRADLEY: No, look, this is how you become a good team. It's a process. It's not like guys come in halfway through the year and just because now our football level goes up that just having them here solves everything else.

You know, you still have in certain cases guys that are learning on the job, guys that are growing, guys that unfortunately still in certain moments physically, mentally, aren't quite where we need to be to be a top team. And so how do you get to the next step? You have guys that learn or in certain cases you continue to add some more players.

So yeah, look, I think we are going in a better direction. If you look at everything that's happened on the field since the Charlotte game, there's a lot of positives.

But no, we are not a complete team yet that now never moment of the game is on top of things; knows how to sustain good play for 90 minutes; knows how to finish games. No, we still have too many things that we have to improve.

Q. Is he close to coming back?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, look, you guys know that I have not said much, and you just have to respect that he's not feeling right, okay.

In everything that goes on, there are times when a guy is not feeling right, you just have to try and figure out. You know, everybody is trying to figure out how to help him so that now day-in and day-out, he'll feel better. He'll have a

day or two he'll feel better, train a little bit and then all of the sudden not feel as good.

So, yeah, it's not that you try to -- you hold back. It's just that out of respect, when a guy is for some reason just not feeling himself, you've got to let time happen and then little by little hope that he starts to feel better in all ways, or that we can help him with a solution.

We fully support him, and he just -- yeah, he's had a stretch where he just has been up and down a little bit and not felt himself.

Q. Without belaboring the point, does your medical staff know what the problem?

BOB BRADLEY: No, everybody is trying to understand why he's not feeling it. It's not that this is a -- so I just asked that you respect in this case, you know.

If you think about things a little bit, you'll have some ideas and you'll realize why it's just not an area that we can go deep into until we have more time and see how he's doing.

Q. I guess I was just asking because I wanted to know if it's a problem that he's still working through or there was no diagnosis.

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, there are times when people don't feel well, and exactly why they don't feel well isn't easy to put a finger on. And you hope that as you go through different steps and whatever, that now you start to make progress, and so far, yes, we thought maybe today he was going to be able to play. But he wasn't feeling great today, and we're not going to put him in a situation.

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