

# Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

## Bob Bradley

Media Conference



Toronto FC 1, New York City 0

### **Q. C.J. will probably get the heed lines but seemed like your whole team stifled in the beginning --**

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, like a lot of other days. I think we didn't give much away. I think we were solid. I think our ideas in terms of how to defend and when to step up and when to be more compact, I thought those things were good.

And then we got a bunch of good performances. A bunch of guys played well. Yeah, C.J. gives you us something a little different. Alonso played well. He continues to play better. Kobe played well. Kobe came in and did a really good job. That's a credit to those guys. Kobe has trained really well lately and as it turnout, his chance to start the game when Raoul pulled out of the warmup but we've seen and told Kobe lately that he continues to get better and better, so happy for him.

### **Q. Lorenzo as captain -- how did you think was he on the pitch?**

BOB BRADLEY: Lorenzo brings leadership qualities all the time. So it's not like when he doesn't wear the armband that all of the sudden he's not trying to be a leader or he's not trying to make the right plays. You know, it's a weird situation that you have a night where Michael doesn't play and now Oso. We have a lot of guys that are leaders and we have a lot of guys that actually have experience wearing the armband.

So it's not easy to decide who gets it tonight but I think the feeling was that we continue to tell Lorenzo and tell Fede, look, for us to be a good team, we count on you guys. Tonight it seemed like a good way to do it and yeah, like I said -- give him credit but I see leadership with Sean and I see it with Matt. I see it with a bunch of guys. That part's positive, Richie, Marc.

### **Q. Despite a few chances in the first half it seemed a bit capably. What was your message to the team going out before the second half?**

BOB BRADLEY: I actually thought the first 35 minutes tactically, in everything we were good. I don't think we're still sharp enough in moments of attack situations. But rather than focus on that at halftime, the focus was a little bit more I thought in the last ten minutes of the first half. We run were on the back foot a little bit and we talked a little bit about why and then felt like from that point on, we could go back and push the game. We talked a little bit about ways that as it turns out that we can get Richie forward a little more, so immediately that happened. We know that when we get Richie forward in the right moments, he's such a threat, and so the move to get him there and then of course the ball put across, that changed the game.

### **Q. You mentioned Kobe. His first start, can you go deeper into what you liked about his performance today?**

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, I mean, his reading the situation around him, his timing, his ideas with the ball, because he has real football in him and I think that his -- some of the things that needed to improve from last year to this year, some of them is defensive positioning, at times defensively his recovery and his decisions about how to go to the ball and close people down, I think those things have improved but there's football in him. He's got -- he sees situations where he can step in and intercept quite well. He's got a football brain. I thought he did really well.

### **Q. It was a strange opening with Raoul coming out and then the Fire alarm. Did you get an explanation for what was going on with the delay?**

BOB BRADLEY: Just that it was a fire alarm and that they needed to do something with the fire code, so they said both teams go back inside.

### **Q. With Raoul, is it serious?**

BOB BRADLEY: I don't think it's serious. I don't have great read on it yet but just didn't feel right.

### **Q. You mentioned this week about -- C.J., holding up the ball, maybe things the average person doesn't see.**



**Fair to say you saw a lot of those intangibles?**

BOB BRADLEY: It's not just holding the ball. He's smart defensively, so he's not pressing all the time but he's taking away passing lanes. When he does need to come top down and put a little pressure on the midfielder, he does that. He's got good timing not only to hold the ball but to come away from the defenders in certain moments; the quality of some of them -- little soft passes when they come to him. And then he's unselfish with his running in the box. Tonight he got the goal but when you have a striker who runs hard in the box, it oftentimes does a lot to create chances for others. He brings a lot of good quality.

**Q. You mentioned Alonso playing very well today. What did you like specifically about him? Do you think his position as a number five --**

BOB BRADLEY: I think you can play him with a double. I think you can still play him in other spots in the midfield. In the long run, the idea of playing there, I think he continues to grow in that part of the field. You know, the big thing I mentioned always is that when you're in that part of the field, your ability to handle the ball in tight spots and still make good decisions and good passes.

Beginning of the year, things went fast for him and when it went fast, his way of arranging himself and knowing what he wanted to do sometimes wasn't right. For the most part tonight that was pretty good. You see that getting better every day. He wants to learn. He picks up from the things that we do in training, ideas.

**Q. It's the team first win -- how do you build on this moving forward?**

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, I mean, we had that weird stretch of just draws where you felt like on so many occasions, we had opportunities and that if we had been better or sharper, and we left points on the table.

Then all of a sudden we go to Philadelphia and in a different kind of game, we didn't start well and we didn't have enough guys that were as committed as they needed to be. We talk about intensity. We are talking about a lot of things. So it was hard, when you look at a game like that, and challenge the group and everything, but the response was really good.

And tonight is more along the lines of what we saw for a bunch of games but how do you build on it, actually, you build on it by getting better. You build on it that we can still when we create advantages, make more big chances. You build on it by when you lose balls, reacting a little bit faster, so you shut down a few more transitions. I mentioned the

last ten minutes of the first half, yeah, we had situations where they have got some very skillful guys -- been doing a good job closing and controlling. Too often the dribbler got by, went five yards, ten yards, 15 yards before the next guy came and all of a sudden that pushes us deeper.

So you get -- you have momentum when you keep doing all these things better and they understand that, look, we have a good team and they trust the way we play and the things we do every day, they realize why we do them, and then they keep working to do them better. That's the most important part of how you build things and keep going.

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