

Toronto FC Media Conference

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Bob Bradley

Media Conference



Toronto FC 0, New York Red Bulls 0

BOB BRADLEY: I think we also had some good chances, so we weren't able to take advantage of that. I do think that, yeah, guys came in tonight. You could tell when they walked in that they understand where we are and there was a focus. There was a sense of everybody pushing each other for the whole game, which I think is important and positive when you are going through a tough stretch, you need everybody to absolutely like pull together and understand that, come on, you can't look for magic anywhere.

You've got to keep going and you've got to show it when you step on the field, and look, there are still many plays in a night like tonight where the quality of a play needs to be better, and that includes build-up situations. That includes playing out of the back at times and for sure it included some of the moments where we created advantages.

Q. Two more injuries before the game?

BOB BRADLEY: Deandre, check him out to see if it's a potential concussion. So that is the way you treat those things these days. That's important.

I think Marc, just with all the games, he's had a little tightness in his hip flexor. He's done a great job of continuing minutes, and then with the short turnaround, just didn't respond great, and we were doing a lot of things for him, and today, when he came in early in the morning for the training, felt like it had not come back at all after the last game, and then we did a little bit more and couldn't get him ready for tonight.

Q. Subbing out C.J., was that tactical?

BOB BRADLEY: He was running on empty. He was running on empty.

Q. And what did you make of Ayo coming in?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, he had a big chance early; maybe if that chance had come after he had been on the field a little longer.

Yeah, Ayo needs to keep going in all of this. There's little things in training every day that get worked on, sharpen up certain things. I mean, I've said before that his finishing needs to get better. I mean, now, as a striker, a young striker, who has some explosiveness and some power now, he gets in certain situations, and now we've got to keep trying to help him when he's finishing because his finishing needs to be better.

Q. Were Roberto and Federico creating enough?

BOB BRADLEY: Are they creating enough? Look, as a team, I think we create a fair number of advantages. I've said that after many games so far this year. How sharp are we when we get those advantages, I think that has to improve. I think in some moments that includes them. I think there were some moments tonight where they did create some good opportunities. Didn't Fede get the ball to the back post for Lorenzo's header, I believe, right? So that's a good chance created. Later in the game, Fede got into the box in the right and tried to play the ball across on the outside and it was left. That one didn't come off. Would I like to see him in that moment to find a way to slow down, pause, decide what foot to play on and slip the ball across to Lorenzo and we take the lead? Yeah.

So when a team goes through a tough stretch, then you're trying to keep everybody going, not just mentally, but so that when plays come their way, they are sharp. Yes, they are having days lately where you can tell they are frustrated and we are trying to help them, understand the league, understand the moment. Neither of those guys have been around a situation where when you have some injuries, you know, you're digging as far down into a roster as you have to do in MLS. That's new for them. And in some moment, you can see the frustration on their faces. But I thought, by and large, I thought -- can we still do more, and that's something I think about every day and in training and how we play and ideas, work on that, so we are going to see.

Q. So what are you going to tell them in those moments of frustration?



BOB BRADLEY: A lot of things. We tell them that we need them and that even if a game is not -- in some ways, you try to almost point out to them that like in all games, there's good plays and bad plays, and good balls and bad calls, and it's not just MLS, good bounces and bad bounces. So you try to refocus them on the fact that, come on, this is football. Now, doesn't always register. Sometimes in the moment they are frustrated, and you want them to know that we are committed to them. We are committed to trying to work on little things to put them in position to be more successful. We are committed to the fact that if we can hang in and get a few guys back on the field and whatnot, that, you know, there were some signs early in the year of more, right. So it's patience. It's that here are things we have to work on. It's understanding the league. It's all that kind of stuff, every day, over and over. Long days.

Q. Another start for Kobe, what do you see as his progression?

BOB BRADLEY: Yeah, I think I said it last game, I think he's grown on the job. He's more confident. Just the way he competes in games right now has gone up a bunch of notches. That's what you want to see. You want to see guys that between ideas that get worked on and getting in games and getting more comfortable and getting more confidence. I think that's been very good. What was it, New England, where I said that he had come in and had a good game against NYC FC, and I think I said against New England, he wasn't as sharp. He was hesitant. He didn't look as confident. We talked a little about that. We said, come on, you've shown that you're a good player, and he's responded really well. And I think tonight is another good night for him.

Q. Do you see the frustration brewing, or is it just in the immediate time after games where there's the frustration?

BOB BRADLEY: No, you have to work on that every day. I mean, look, if you were to go through a lot of leagues, and a lot of teams, you would find stretches where over ten games, 11 games, 12 games, 13 games, like, a team has more or less the number of points we have, right. And when teams go through stretches like that, it can be for a lot of reasons, okay. It can be injuries. It can be bud luck. It can be some key guys are not in great form. But this idea of how you deal with it and how you keep everybody going and looking, challenging your big players, that they have got to be the example and you challenge your young guys that when it's their time, they are ready to step up. You try to get everybody to tune out noise and not pay attention, because look, you know, I've been through this enough. I tell them, don't be afraid. I tell them, don't listen.

Don't read. Like, believe in the work we do every day. Come on. This is what it takes. This is football. Yeah, did they all get that? No, they don't. But that gets shown, repeated, over and over and over. So that's the work right now.

Q. And can I ask you about Richie?

BOB BRADLEY: Sure.

Q. Stepped up again, literally.

BOB BRADLEY: Richie has been amazing lately. You put him anywhere on the field and Richie says no problem. I'll play here, I'll play there. I'll do whatever for the team. His attitude, his mentality, the way competes. Richie has been amazing. Really, really proud of him, and what he's done for the team in this last stretch of games has been incredible.

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