



Toronto FC Media Conference

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Shane O'Neill

Media Conference

Orlando City 4, Toronto 0

Q. We'll just start with your thoughts on the match tonight.

SHANE O'NEILL: Yeah, it was a tough night. There's no question about it. I thought there was some good stretches in the game. There was some positive stretches for sure and there was a good energy and just in those critical moments, they were just more ruthless than us. They probably had a little bit more of an edge and bite and those are the margins. The margins are really thin, especially when it gets to this time of year because everybody is fighting for playoffs, so you don't really have that much room for error. Yeah, we got punished in those critical moments. So I suppose that's my overall thoughts because there was a decent stretch where it was a tight game and obviously it got away from us.

Q. Shane, I appreciate comments about there being decent stretches in the match tonight, but the overall standard, was it anywhere close to where it has to be from this team?

I guess in the crucial moments, defending our box in the final third trying to create chances, it's hard to answer that and say yes. Obviously we need to get better. But it's a process. This is the second game and it's been a week of new ideas and new style of play. Obviously this is also a hard place to play. So we can't, I think, dwell on the fact that yeah, okay, it wasn't good enough but we have to keep reinforcing the ideas that we are trying to play clean up those moments. It's like you talk about the game of inches. Obviously a deflection here, a deflection there and who knows how the game goes. The same you could say for Saturday against Salt Lake. We just have to stay committed to the way we're playing and keep the energy in the group.

Q. One of the things he touched on last game was how surprised he was at just how hard the team was on themselves after the Salt Lake loss, how would you describe sort of the mentality and overall mood of this group right now considering the rut that this club is in?

We've been saying it for a long time, actually. There's a lot of togetherness within the group in terms of enjoying being around one another, camaraderie and enjoying each other's company which I think is really important. I think the next September is obviously how does that translate into when you need to be a little bit more ruthless and get wins and make big plays at big moments of the game. That's what we've talked about a little bit as a group, finding that as the next piece because until you do that, there's always that missing piece because at the end of the day, this is a results-based business. We know that. Got to get wins. Got to get three points and obviously when you don't do that there's a little bit of a lake of that feeling so we're trying to piece it together to get a result to start to feel that feeling again.

Q. You were partnered with Stefanovic in the second half of tonight's game. What do you see in him as a young defender coming up, and does he have any promising qualities?



Of course. I believe he's 16 and it's amazing he's getting the opportunities he's getting and he's got a lot of quality on the ball and to be fair it's not just him. Adam was on the bench and he's also got a ton of quality on the ball. He's a young kid, I don't know how old he is, maybe 19 or something like that. But there's a really good pipeline of young players. It's exciting to see that. You had I think Jesús made his debut tonight. I don't know if there was anybody else but yeah, so that's really exciting but again, like for these young guys, you know, we want to be able to set a standard of results and winning to help them because when you have that, it's a lot easier for them to come in. It's hard for these kids to come in away against Orlando and take these kinds of beatings because it does, it's hard on the confidence. But Laz obviously has a ton of potential and it's great that he's getting some opportunities.

Q. You face another quick turnaround. Where do you find the resilience to dust off from this one and get ready for the game this weekend?

Yeah, said the same thing after the Salt Lake game, maybe the first 20 minutes down here, 15, there was a good feeling. It's just about trying to -- there's obviously been a change, a change in dynamic and atmosphere and whatnot. So I feel like we are trying to find ways to be positive and implement these new ideas. We just have topic going with that but yeah, with the understanding that Saturday is not going to be easy. It's not going to be easy. As simple as that. There has to be resilience and hopefully we get some guys back from injury and that always gives confidence to the group, and you know, you go from there.

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