



Toronto FC Media Conference

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CJ Sapong

Media Conference

Chicago Fire 1, Toronto FC 0

Q. Obviously it's a tough road result and tough way to lose. That aside, want to get your take on the team's overall performance tonight over the course of the 90 minutes.

C.J. SAPONG: Yeah, I mean, kind of the same tale, I think, of many games for us this season, the effort is definitely there. There's moments in the game where we have control and when it comes down to it, maybe it's just that final, final action. And then obviously as you get into the waning moments of the game, teams are adjusting, especially you see today at home, Chicago adjusts their formation, overload, and more guys on the attack for them and it's for us another tough one where the wheels fall off for a second and now we have another result that for me, I don't think is very indicative of the effort that was put in. But this is MLS, so these things happen, will continue to happen, we've just got to work hard to make sure we are on the other side of it.

Q. It's been a tough spell for the team. Seems like every week it's a different 11 guys coming back from tournaments and guys getting healthy against. Is it made that much more difficult by the constant rotation in the group?

I wouldn't say so. I think definitely these last four games where we're introducing new concepts and we feel clearer and clearer every game with what we are trying to accomplish, and I think the guys that are coming back from injury are coming back from other competitions, are understanding that. Ultimately, we are thin. We have been thin and we had a lot of injuries, and this is something that personally, you know, I understand will happen in bouts throughout the season. Unfortunately there's been a lot of other things, I guess, to talk about and that has gone by the wayside but you know, not having a team at full strength is always going to make things tougher and then you know having new concepts introduced, to be fair, I feel like the guys have been taking in all the information. Training has been really good. But thins just haven't been going our way. So I'm not really in a position to be able to give the answer as to why, just all I can really draw on is my experience in this league and understanding there is an ebb and a flow, and for this organization at this time, and yeah, it's a moment of reflection and understanding we want to get to the places where we want to go. That should take a little bit of work and should be stuff. We just hope that that pressure allows us to spring into the next game.

Q. The team has experienced a frustrating goal drought in the past few matches. Just from your perspective, what adjustments, if any, do you think need to be made tactically or strategically to just increase the team's scoring opportunities?

I wouldn't say anything tactically, strategically. It's purely mindset whether it the final ball or the finish. I personally as a forward, looking at four games without a goal, I blame myself, and sometimes that's a gift and sometimes that's a curse. Typically after a couple guys when I'm watching video and rewatching the areas and opportunities I have, we are putting ourselves in positions. It's just the mentality and the mindset, and then, this is MLS and it happens, and for forwards, we get



in those droughts where it just feels like nothing is going in and it just takes that one, just takes that one to open the floodgates, and this is where the cork is built. So you know, I would be more scared and nervous and what have you if strategically and tactically it didn't seem like there were those opportunities. However, I feel like it's coming and I've been saying that to myself for many games now. But that does not mean that you change that, right. Ultimately, it's going to take the mentality and the mindset for us to come out of that. That's what we push for every day.

Q. Is there something that you can point to with this team that gives you hope? Is there something that the team is doing, the mentality, anything, that you can sort of hang your head on in terms of you think that will sort of help turn things around during, you know, let's admit it, these are very trying times for the club?

Yeah, honestly, it's a good group of guy, guys that want to win and want to be successful. I think when you look at the youth core of this group, there's a lot of potential there. It's just on us vets to continue to lead by example and provide the right guidance for them in these type of tough moments. When you're young, there's a tendency to perhaps feel a little detached and it's just our job to try and keep them engaged and have them understand the value that they bring to this club. I think in my career, this is probably the most solid group of young players I've been around. They love the game and study the game and they need these moments. They need these moments to build their character and hopefully be able to elevate their careers in a way that will help elevate this club.

Q. Some new faces in the lineup, I know they just arrived, but what have Ibarra and Latif added to the group?

Yeah, I think they both bring something different to this group. Very tough for them. I was in their position a couple months ago, and you can't learn enough in two days. So for them to step on the field and still provide something for us is very big time and I am pretty positive they will continue to have an impact on this team as the season goes on. But I'm sure you guys see it's just different players, different types of players that give us different looks, and at this point in the season, that's something that I think is important. Moving into the League's Cup, there can be a little bit of resurgence of hope. We have another thing to play for, and I'd say the guys will be up for that.

Q. You pre-empted my next question. I was just going to ask you about a fresh slate with the League's Cup.

Exactly, yeah. That was my answer, previous answer there. Run the tape.

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