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Terry Dunfield

Media Conference

Toronto FC 3, Philadelphia 1

Q. You're obviously justifiably happy. How big of a win is this for the team?

TERRY DUNFIELD: Man, these guys can play. It's incredible. How much fun was it watching our boys play? With all due respect to Philly, I just thought it was amazing for our guys to show their quality and that third goal, I can't wait to watch that one back. Yeah, really proud of the team.

Q. This is the second-place team in the Eastern Conference. What was the swing?

It's nothing from me. It was the guys. Just before we went out, we spoke about bringing some intensity and that it's been coming, it's been coming for sure, the performances have been good and I know you're tired of me saying it but we're knocking on that door and we went against the opportunities and threats of Philly and we knew at any moment, we weren't safe; that they could hurt us in a second and it was a quick throw and all of a sudden it was 1-1 but at halftime we showed a bit of resilience and just added a bit of intensity to our play.

I don't think it just was one thing. I think it was the last ten weeks of work, and that the guys have put in. The team behind the team have been amazing. It was just really, really amazing to see it come together.

Q. It looked like John had a different role today.

Oso?

Q. Yeah, what did you see from him?

I thought at the bottom of the diamond, there would be a little bit of space either side of their six. I just, yeah, thought there would be nice spaces for Oso to get into. I thought he and DK managed the two deep centre-backs, and the bottom of the diamond really well defensively, and also so much quality around Oso now. I think he's our connector that brings it all together nicely. Yeah, it was cool to watch him play.

Q. Speaking of Deandre, goal and an assist.

Goal and an assist. I think it started two or three weeks ago with Jason Hernandez; that there was a very real conversation. He wasn't part of the squad for the next game, and then it was just two weeks of getting after it on the training and him being really clear of what we're looking for. I think after those difficult conversations, there needs to be an opportunity, and his opportunity was tonight. After a tough couple of -- tough nerve plays, I thought his performance was excellent. It was just too bad that went off the post, didn't go in.



Q. First time you guys had the lead and played with an advantage. I just wonder, how much do you think playing with that lead did that give you guys confidence?

I think we knew yesterday in training that the performance was coming. There was some excellent football yesterday. We showed them their good work ahead of the game, and nothing was stopping us tonight. Even went in went 1-1, was confident coming in at halftime, a couple moments we could tidy up and really amplify a couple moments as well. Yeah, the guys just go and enjoy their football. Regardless of the scenario, yeah, I just thought it was total football tonight.

Q. Would you go through Jahkeele's first --

Yeah, a little bit like the Arsenal ball where Saka comes inside and behind him. I was looking up in the stands, I wasn't taking it in. I was looking for our analyst who pointed out the size of the space down their centre-backs we were looking to get into. It was a really cool moment to see that come up, not only for Kobe and Fede, it was a really nice, hard run, but also for the team behind the team, too.

Q. Fede coming out -- and Lorenzo tonight --

Yeah, it's just a nice KPI; that the team is coming together. As broken as we were ten weeks ago, it takes time to become a united team. When you don't pick up a result earlier, it just becomes harder.

But we've tried to keep an even keel and trusting in the process and the work. When you're at the bottom of the table, you've almost got to live abnormal behaviors to get out of that situation, and crappy body language -- normally when you're at the bottom of the table, and looking after yourself and survival mode, and we just pushed the players as much as we can to come together and have one another's back and constructive communication and positive body language and just competing. We saw that at the end of the game, and yeah, I think we will see the best of Lorenzo against Vancouver. We've got another few weeks of training and yeah, there's so much to come.

Q. What stood out?

I think at times you see individual brilliance. I think we saw some leadership today at times, at 1-1, Lorenzo is getting the guys going. I think for Fede, you see some athleticism in transition for sure. And at times, too, with just going back to Lorenzo, he's so good in tight space, and I think he's learning how to be a superstar in the League and how to be a top teammate. I think today we saw a lot of that.

Yeah, we're very lucky to have a player of his calibre, and yeah, it's just been a pleasure working with him.

Q. Everybody loves the goal -- two big sliding blocks, new dad.

Yeah, I saw a team working together. I think it started at the front with Oso and DK and at times Fede and Lorenzo would tuck in and push Philly to we wanted them to get to. We knew early crosses would come in and we'd have to deal with that. We'd have to deal with direct play.

They are also good in transition but we knew that, like table tennis, you could whack it right back at them and there would be the double counter. But no, the back four were outstanding and the screen of Alonso and Franco just working together was top drawer. And then once we did pick them all, some of the football, their counter-press I thought was excellent and then the pitch started to open up, and could just sit back and enjoy.

Q. I asked you yesterday -- you said no, you wouldn't change any of that?

Of course it does. Day off tomorrow. Labor Day weekend. It's not just the win. It's the last ten weeks of hard work. From all of the departments, we've just all come together, and through a tough time, live all for one. We kept getting kicked in the balls and just kept going. It was just so cool to see it come together, and, yeah, I guess never really questioned our work. We just kept going. Yeah, just so proud.



Q. What's the plan for the time off?

I'm just going to enjoy a moment. But yeah, we'll have another kind of mini-preseason like we did leading into the Montréal game, and continue to top up our tanks and yeah, we'll be ready to go for Vancouver, go from there. Probably a few conversations with John, as well.

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