



Toronto FC Media Conference

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Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Terry Dunfield

Media Conference

Charlotte 3, Toronto FC 0

Q. How are you tonight?

TERRY DUNFIELD: I'm okay, thanks for asking.

Q. Obviously a difficult evening. You were up against a very motivated opponent who are tough to play on their home turf. I wonder, just your overall thoughts on the evening, and whether you had any thoughts about the two penalties that played a pretty big part in the first half.

Yeah, I thought Charlotte, I agree with you, and we knew it coming in, were a very motivated side. So I think that that's part of the story line for sure, and then they get a little bit of a lift with the early penalty. But I thought there was some nice spells of football from us where we created some big chances. Unfortunately we were not able to score. And then a second penalty, it's tough to -- tough for our guys to I think handle mentally, but we kept going, and I don't think anyone stopped working for our club in the second half. Yeah, there was some nice football in between.

Q. Maybe if not for the efforts of Luka, it probably would have been worse because he came up with some really fantastic saves. Just wanted to go ahead your sort of opinion on his performance tonight, and what made you sort of give him the start sort of three games ago? What gave you the faith that he could handle this run of games?

I think he's earned the opportunity with his performances with TFC II, how he's been training over the last three months. Yeah, he's been big over the last three games for sure. So yeah, amazing to see that nothing phases him. He's got a fantastic personality where he just sticks his chest out and gets after it. I thought his decision-making, too, was good; when to go back, when to go long.

But not just Luke,, I thought there was some big performances in a tough result a game where we had a tough result. I thought there was some nice individual performances.

Q. Not to dwell on it too much but did you get any explanation on that first kick, seemed like play carried on before they reviewed it. What does a setback like that do to a side so early in the game?

Yeah, it's definitely, mentally, for sure but I think the resilience we showed from Cincinnati coming back from two-nil down that we can do it, but that was important, and just how tough this year is, and coming back from those decisions. I think it's going to set us up for the rest of our careers. I don't think it's going to get harder than this, and the fact that we keep continuing to move forward is important.

But yeah, I haven't had a chance to review it post-game. I had a look on our monitor and it looked like Luka got some ball. I



was told by the fourth official that Luka dent get any ball and it was contact and that's why the penalty was given.

Q. I know you're in charge this week, so forgive me for having this but we weren't there tonight; John was. Did he have any interaction with the players, or was he a fly on the wall, so to speak?

John and his staff have been flies on the wall, Simon Eaddy, our new goalkeeping coach, worked with Dave tonight and was part of our staff on the bench.

Q. First career start for Hugo, which is a pretty good assignment for a 19 year owed. Just wanted to get your sort of general impression of how he performed over his 61 minutes.

Yeah, I thought he carried on from where he left off against Cincinnati. There's maybe a half chance right at the end of the first half where if he really commits to it, maybe he has a nice opportunity, he's on the rebound. I thought he adjusted well in-game with Charlotte, ran in high on their back line on numerous occasions. I think he can be proud of his performance. He keeps making it a hard job to take him off. It was the plan at 60 to bring Prince on and that's probably the biggest compliment I can give him. We just miss his presence up top when he's come off the last two games.

Q. Speaking of preplan, the Vazquez and Guti subs at halftime, was that them coming back on injury? And is there an update on Sigurd?

No update on Sigurd as yet. The plan for Victor and Guti I was to play 45 with three games in seven days. It was great to see them back out on the pitch, and I thought both helped us in possession.

Q. It looked like you started off with the back three to begin the match but then shifted to a back four after the opening few minutes. Can you kind of explain that decision?

Yeah, part of it was to get pressure on Charlotte's back line, and they adjust depending how many we pressed with, and I thought in the attacking half, too, it gives us a nice front four. We scored our goals in that structure, as well, against Cincinnati, kind of Oso underneath Hugo or Victor at times, those two kind of exchange. But it allows us to be a little bit more on the front foot but you do lose a number in the box. Our feel is that we can only stay in the 4-2-3-1 for a certain amount of time and then we go back to the five. I think the role really suits Michael well.

Q. You talked about how you were proud of the guys keeping going against a tough evening. But this is sort of one more body blow in a series of body blows. It must be hard for the team to be taking this. What is the mood right now?

Yeah, I think we're all human, and these tough results do build up and a body blow is a good way to say it. But we can't feel sorry for ourselves for too long. We've got a game in less than 72 hours and what we try to do is focus on positives. And I think it would be easy for us to go towards the two tough calls on the penalty, on the penalties that we gave up, and that would just feed to, from my side, just feeling sorry for ourselves. I think we have to remain positive, and there were some good individual performances in there that Herdman and his staff would have seen.

Q. Curious what the next two days look like. Will you guys return to Toronto or are you going to stay in Charlotte and then leave for New York and will you get a training session in before the weekend?

Yeah, our plan is to travel back tonight. We'll review the game, go over it with the guys tomorrow. The guys who didn't play a ton of minutes today, they will train tomorrow. The guys who played heavy minutes will regen and then we start to shift towards the Red Bulls.

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