



Toronto FC Media Conference

Wednesday, July 10, 2024

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

John Herdman

Prince Owusu

Media Conference

Forge 2, Toronto 1

Q. (In progress.)

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, I think the away goal was super important for us. Really happy with the second half. I was happy with how we started the game. Second half was probably how we would expect TFC to play in that sort of match, but at the same time, Forge are on a two-goal lead so they're going to adapt the.

Yeah, I thought we started the game well. First half we had a few good opportunities there. Think we scored a goal that was on side for sure. We were surprised at that one.

But, yeah getting that goal back was important for us. I think going into the next match we need another away goal.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

JOHN HERDMAN: I think when you're on a run like this, confidence is ebbing and flowing, so you're more susceptible to the moments. Luka gets caught on that goal. That's the fewest goals we've had. Brilliant; hell of a goal. You get caught with a good ball like that and you can see just confidence ebbs.

But then we've got back into it and we scored our goal in the first half. We had a few good chances there. But, again, I think what we've seen is just a commitment in that second half where there is desperation and there was absolute clarity when it's all on the line now. It was a different sort of fight and resilience. I thought the subs made a bi difference as well, obviously Prince coming on.

We were missing our threat in behind in the first half without having the big man in there. Just stretched them a bit more and gave us more space in between the lines and a bigger threat in the box.

Prince getting his goal, it's been a while. Pulled a big goal back for us, so, yeah, we'll take confidence from that. Second leg at home is going to look different, feel different. As I said, there is an opportunity to strengthen during that time.

Yeah, I mean, like I say, I thought they did well tonight. They did very well. I thought we weren't as physical as we needed to be in that game. I think they were really physical. They definitely won that battle.

But in terms of what the game looked like, we knew they were going to be dangerous in the transition. We knew that was going to be a threat. We didn't protect the goal they scored. That was a pretty special moment.



(Indiscernible).

Q. (Question for Prince Owusu.)

PRINCE OWUSU: No, we fixed some details and we knew exactly what we needed to do end of the second half to put more pressure on the opponent team, and, yeah, be more aggressive and play our style of football.

Yeah, put the pressure high. It was the only thing we talked about, and I was in front of the first man who defended attack, and I knew exactly what to do to get the pressure immediately high soon the ball is moving.

I think the second half you could see we had a lot the ball, and, yeah, had enough chances to tie this game, but we have a second game at home, and it will look different at home for sure.

Q. (Indiscernible.)

JOHN HERDMAN: No, there is no excuses. I mean, at the end of the day, you know, we know Forge was able to prep differently. Canadian Premier League allows their teams to get organized. They now how to schedule and they know how to prep for this.

And it's good. That's it. I've two Euro winners on the pitch, ex-Premier League players on the pitch. The gap gets closed in many ways, whether it's the home advantage, the day we kicked off, how many players they're able to rest prior because of their opposition. The run that they're on versus our run.

There is loads of things, but they're just not excuses. At the end of the day, this team should beat that team with the quality that we have. With the quality.

And there is a mindset, and you've seen the same with Montreal and on a bit of a run in MLS and you play back-to-back games and you rotate and backing up players, and you're always going to be at risk, always. Forge did a good job tonight exploiting that. Choiniere was outstanding; thought (indiscernible) and Borges had a wonderful connection. Didn't think we defended well against them two.

Thought we worked on some of those combinations prior to coming into the game. The second goal is something we worked on in training. Our lads, defensively we just are not really in the fight at the moment. We've seen that against Columbus as well. We look leggy, we look like it's easy for people to skip past us.

In terms of shape, the shape was okay. Shape is fine. We missed a little bit of running behind. But, yeah, again, I thought we just lost a lot of individual battles which give them their opportunities.

Again, tip my hat to their left back tonight. I thought it was brilliant. He's playing against Federico Bernardeschi. I thought he did a wonderful job in moments just to snuff out that threat. Then you see Fede's resilience on a night like this just to keep going. This is a Euro winner that's playing a level or two down and he just gets up and keeps going.

That's what I'm proud of. The guys will keep fighting. We lost a little bit of the fight in the first half. That upset us. Really upset us. You know, these guys promised not to do that, but we lost a (indiscernible.)

When that happens, Columbus, they decide to just loosen the structure a bit. They don't move at the same pace and tempo. When that happens, our team gets loose and starts to lose the connection, as Prince said.

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