



Toronto FC Media Conference

Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

John Herdman

Media Conference

Inter Miami 3, Toronto 1

Q. Maybe you just talk about your team's performance tonight. Obviously disappointing result. Pretty strong first half and things -- kind of a weird middle stretch there and then a strong 20 minutes. What did you think of the team's performance overall tonight?

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, I think how you described it. There was definitely -- first off I thought we missed some big opportunities, and I think that for us was the gap.

I think when I look at the stats overall, again, it's ten shots to eight, five shots on goal to our four. We had more possessions, more passes, more corners, but they post three goals and we post one. We have to take our chances. That's a big one.

And then on the other side, it's just energy. We just a lot that same sort of energy. Halftime sapped us a bit. I think the players come out after halftime and you can just see there was a level of heaviness in the legs, particularly of some players that have done some big minutes.

I just thought they caught us with their freshness. And, again, it's not like they had a period where it is shot after shot, cross after cross. I think it's a cheap set piece, really cheap set piece.

First goal was poor and then the second goal was poor again. So key goal in a key moment, that again, just sapped the energy of the players as they're trying to push.

I thought the lads that came in when we shifted to a 5-3-2 at the end there, we now it would be an open game because there was a few lads that didn't have anything left in the tank.

We had some chances to get even closer. So, again, that little period, 15-minute period, John, it cost us. It felt like we were there still. We felt like we were there and back in the fight.

Again, if you just look at the game from a box to box, they did better in their box with keeping the ball out of the back of the net and finishing and we didn't do well enough in those moments.

The game on paper was arguably quite even in a tough environment to come.

Q. John, the tempo in the first half was really slow, and I know it was hot down there in Miami today. You had warned prematch that you thought Miami might try to lull you guys into some security by the way they went about things. Did we see a little bit of that today?



JOHN HERDMAN: No. I thought we were able to sort of dominate the ball for long periods in the first half. I think we were able to set some problems for them tactically, which meant we could get some pitch control. We said that was going to be important.

Couldn't be a game that we played direct and then give them the opportunity to dominate the ball, because it would've just sapped us. So we needed to dominate the ball tonight in periods.

Again, first half and periods of the second the lads did well in that space. Just, again, stopped Miami getting into that rhythm they want to get in.

In terms of their low block defending, it wasn't really a game where they were killing us in transition.

As I say, set pieces, direct ball over the top, I mean, they're two disappointing goals. And then obviously that direct ball into the center forward who slips and is straight at you.

So just a tough -- James, I thought we were right there tonight. Again, it's a period of time. We've got to address with the lads to look at mentally how we stay stronger collectively, tactically how we adjust to manage the tougher periods.

So I think, yeah, we are all in this together and next tasks on to Montreal.

Q. John, the switch to a back four and playing Lorenzo more centrally at the start of the game, maybe just talk about that. Why did you decide to go that way?

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, couple of things. Played against Tata' a few times and he's often prepared for us playing in a back three. Similar to the Azteca we shifted to 4-4-2 to just change the rhythm. They'd had ten days off prior to this game to prepare, so we had a feeling a lot of their work would've been against our back three.

So given that we only had two days to turn this around, we wanted to create an advantage tactically coming into the game. Also with Richie Laryea back you get that flexibility of having an out and out right fullback that can play at this level, and with Raul Petretta.

We knew we had the flexibility to build in the back three if we needed and live that identity, defending in a 4-4-2, 4-1-3-2 pressing, I thought we had the players to do that tonight.

You know, I think while there was gas in the tank they executed it well.

Q. John, I thought the substitutions brought some life tonight. What did you see on the combination that led to Etienne's goal?

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, it was a wonderful goal. Again, we worked with the finishers tonight on coming in in a 5-3-2. We expected or hoped that the first half would've been better. We had taken some chances and put ourself in a position to adapt tactically to the back five to close the game.

I think, again, the shift into the back five could have been a bit quicker. Again, you just see Bernardeschi with that big chance right before he came off, so you always knew that that big chance of there with those quality players.

So the shift into that group, I mean, I thought tactically took them five minutes to adjust to get there. Once they adjusted to the pace of things I thought their pressing was good. Their commitment to get forward, Kosi, Jahkeele, Matty Longstaff, and obviously Prince. I thought they did really well coming into the game.

Obviously we were stretched. They got most of their shots and big chances in the last eight minutes of the game, but for us we had to throw caution to the wind in that moment.

Q. Just on that first goal, how galling was that for you? They hadn't had a shot on target. I think the XG was zero.

JOHN HERDMAN: I mean, it's football, isn't it? I mean, what can I do? What can you do? What can you do? I mean, it's just football.

I mean, you get caught like that. Again, we're in good momentum, so I think players are thinking one way and the mind is in a different space.

But all credit to the lads to play Highline and Miami. They're trying to live an identity where they were imposing themselves, so I've got to tip my hat to that.

You've got Longy, Nickseon, Richie, Raul Petretta playing in the back four for the first time this season. First time they've played together for weeks as a combination.

So, you know, I can't complain too much. I mean, they were able to keep that XG to next to nothing in the whole first half. As I say, we will fix some things. We will fix that.

We will fix our set pieces and move forward.

Q. John, when you look at the three goals, do you think any of them were somewhat preventable?

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, for sure. I mean, we'll analyze it after the game, John. I think the lads were good at halftime. They felt the first goal was cheap and the second goal was cheap. I think set pieces, we conceded against Philly in a set piece.

We worked on our wide free kicks this week to just try and button things down is and got caught again.

So I mean, it's something we got to work working at. The third goal, I mean, I can't even analyze it in my mind at the moment other than I thought we put ourself in a decent position with a centered fold coming off the front.

I think DK just slips as he gets hit from behind and that's it. They don't need much more opportunity than that.

Yeah, every goal is preventable and some are easier than others, and we will get to work this week. We will get to work this week. We got two days to get ready tore Montreal. Massive game. Six pointer. We'll get after it.

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