



Toronto FC Media Conference

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John Herdman

Media Conference

Toronto FC 1, CF Montreal 0

THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. A big road win. Talk about what you thought of the team's performance overall tonight.

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, thought there was a maturity in the performance tonight. Thought we had, particularly in the first half, spells where the team fell in a good rhythm. You can see with the depth we've got, we can manage games. I think that's the exciting thing.

Players knew coming in at halftime. They just lost a bit of tempo in the last five minutes of the first half. We addressed that. Then it was about doing whatever it took to get the result.

We thought we'd be able to hit them on the transition, play more of a transitional game the second half, towards the end.

Yeah, just thought collectively it was a real team performance. Not one man I could single out that I could say he was brilliant tonight. That's the tightest I've seen the group. They maintained I thought a clarity right till the end.

Q. Overall a professional performance.

JOHN HERDMAN: I think you hit the nail on the head. That was the maturity tonight. You're talking about a championship performance. We knew it was a tough place to come. We knew they had to win. We knew they wanted revenge, redemption, all of those things.

I felt we controlled that first 25, 30 minutes of the game. That was important for us. Then we didn't let it get away from us.

They had some good moments, no doubt. We had some good moments in transition. But we just didn't let the game get away from us I thought, even when they had spells of possession, we had good control.

Q. Richie scored his first goal in a long time. What did you make of his performance?

JOHN HERDMAN: I mean, he was a threat. He was a threat. Seeing him and Lorenzo on the left side. Richie similar there. What Tyrese Spicer was doing for Enzo, stretching the lines and opening spaces. That commitment. We talked about scoring on the back post. Really pushing. There's your DP. DP scored. That's what DPs do for teams.

Q. The Italians were really working together.



JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, that's been important. I mean, shift into that championship mode. Everyone has to put the same shift in. Everyone has to be disciplined, stick to the process. Keep the proximity tight. That was important. Then the last thing was just the personality, where those players can bring their personalities in key moments. I thought they did.

Q. Kind of a chippy day, physical affair at first. Did that surprise you?

JOHN HERDMAN: No, we expected that. We wanted that. It was important. Felt like the game in Miami, we were solid in that game, then we just lost the (indiscernible) for a period, which cost us the game.

The guys just stayed tight tonight. I'm proud of them. I'm proud and happy for the fans. The fans needed that. That's the double, which is a big step for us.

Q. The Petretta block before halftime, Fede header... Was tonight a little bit about more of those little moments that we talked about going in your favor today?

JOHN HERDMAN: Absolutely. It was an absolute commitment to do those little things that absolutely made the championship difference. That was what we worked on in training. That's what we discussed in the meetings, just that level of concentration, focus, discipline in our defending.

We were a little bit soft against Miami. We'd done so well in that game. Tonight there was a commitment. The lads made that commitment to do it in both boxes. Whatever chance we got, we were looking to take. Richie did that.

We denied with everything we had. That's going to happen in football. Even the miss at the end, Nicks never gave up with it. He was battling with him, making sure he couldn't get a good, clean contact.

John would say it was a workmanlike performance. It was a real professional performance there. It was solid.

Q. The Richie goal, the backside run from the opposite fullback, is that exactly how you guys draw it up?

JOHN HERDMAN: Yeah, I mean, we've been working on that. We've had moments like that with Jahkeele, Kobe Franklin, et cetera. Now Richie was able to convert that. That's one of our key patterns. Obviously the DPs combining, when they combine, you're expecting good things to happen.

As I said, the beauty was the work went in both ways, and everyone put a big shift in. When we do, we know we've got the quality to win matches.

Q. How does this set you up going into the Leagues Cup in the end of the season?

JOHN HERDMAN: Well, I think we've said this. We've got three trophies to play for. This team are confident. If we get on a run, they'll deliver. It's about getting on that run. This step tonight was a big one.

I think the beauty is we get a break. I don't mean a break as in we're going to take a holiday, but we've been back to back to back games. You can see a couple of lads tonight, they were on fumes sort of the last 10 minutes of the first half.

Yeah, we need this break. We need a physical break. We need a reset in terms of being able to get people back down off that redline for a minute. We were lucky tonight that we got no injuries. There were about four players right on the cusp of that. I'm happy about that.

The Leagues Cup is just something exciting to play for. Red Bull, had a tough match against, obviously the champions, they'll be in Toronto. Exciting for our fans.

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