



# Toronto FC Media Conference

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## John Herdman

Media Conference

D.C. United 3, Toronto FC 1

### Q. Disappointing results.

**JOHN HERDMAN:** Yeah, I mean, obviously we tried to go for it with some of the decisions on the lineup and yeah, we just got loose defensively. I mean, you don't want to be 1-0 with D.C. and celebrating a draw. We wanted to go for it and made some adjustments, and unfortunately it level us stretched. So -- managed -- I thought -- we were managing -- (audio break) -- thought the lads did a great job at that and start -- (audio break) -- certainly in a playoff run, you have to be disciplined through that last 30 minutes of the game, and we weren't.

Whether that's the decision-making, you know, to change and adapt with the players coming in and changing some positions, or just you know, the team allowing itself to get stretched from the back side-to-side, there was definitely too much stretch in there.

So that's the message, if you are going to make these playoffs, if you're going to push for a genuine playoff run, you have to respect that defending part of the game. You cannot allow yourself to get stretched again.

You know, my lesson is maybe too many changes in that last ten minutes, too many -- you know, you score a goal and you've got momentum and you can smell there's another one coming.

Yeah, so I think all in all, just disappointed for the fans. Big turnout tonight. Yeah, big opportunity missed.

### Q. What did you say to the guys?

**JOHN HERDMAN:** I mean, you know, I think they were devastated, as always. They know how big the moment was tonight to kill off D.C.'s hopes and to get closer to Orlando. Again I think sitting in the dressing room at halftime, they were happy with where we set the stall out. We wanted a bit more urgency in the attack.

I thought we were just lacking a bit of thrust in the first half but the second half, again what was said was we have to be ready to fight. There's 23 players going to be fit and available and healthy in the next week, for the next two weeks. We have to make sure that every man is ready for that fight, you know, from a training perspective, it will be again for two weeks back to basics to allow those tense sessions to allow people to compete for places.

For me, I just felt it was complacency in the second half and that -- it felt like we were just missing that urgency. Again, whether that was the tactical piece or whether that was just an emotional element from the players or players coming in and losing chemistry, I mean, either way, there wasn't enough urgency for that final phase, and that was reiterated in the dressing room.



**Q. D.C. had played three times in August including tonight. You obviously played three times in the past eight days. How big a factor was fatigue?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** We did look flat in the second half. I just don't want to give any excuses. You're no playoff run, people as a staff collectively as a player group we have to die on that pitch and put everything out there for the fans, for each other to reach our goal. And I think we just didn't feel it. I didn't feel that we were all there ready to die for that performance.

You know, you can make those excuses, maybe we were making them in the back of our minds, I don't know, but arguably you can say if we really want to reach what I think we are capable of, we've got to die for it. These games, we've been on a decent run and tonight again, it's that javelin, TFC, we have to fight. We have to fight every second, every minute and bring that level of desire and I just think I'm going to provoke that the next two weeks, provoke that in the group and bring that intensity.

**Q. You've played in six of your past eight matches, in all competitions, a nice form coming into this. Do you believe in momentum? Do you have to do something to recapture momentum after tonight's loss?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** It will be stinging. It will be stinging. And the momentum capture is lighting the Fire in every player, every staff member to bring to the next level. We are in a battle whether it's the people behind the scenes, the people on the pitch, the coaching staff, the players, it's a collective fight for this club. Everyone's got to bring their best. You know, we just get too comfortable at times over the summer in Toronto and we've got to get in this fight.

We have to get in this fight together and people finding their next best level and that's where I'll be pushing this week. It will be intense, the training. I'll be encouraging that fight and scrapping for places and what you might see in this next game is just a different look for guys who have been fighting and trying to show that they are ready to really push.

So I'll be provoking that for sure and I think they will be provoking that within us. We've got to bring our best now.

**Q. Tyrese, just wanted to get your --**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** You see the threat he brings. He brings that pace on that left-hand side. I thought he had a really promising first half, a little rusty. Normally he beat that man, get a shot or a cross off. You can just see he needs a few more reps but when you can bring that threat level into the game and missing Bernardeschi and Osorio tonight, you think of Tyrese starting off coming off the bench and that's where we needed them tonight, coming off the bench to bring that pace and energy I think that's a big part of what we've got.

We've got Servania who is fighting for a spot, Quajo (ph) back as of next week full training and competing and we need that now. We need that -- players like Tyrese and Deiby (ph), he showed that bit of fight and he showed that he's willing to fight for this spot in that playoff run. It's those players that need to push that next level and get the competition really high because I'm definitely going to provoke them.

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