



## Toronto FC Media Conference

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### Coach John Herdman

Media Conference

Vancouver 0(4) Toronto 0(2)

**JOHN HERDMAN:** A little bit of feeling bad for the lads, but a little bit of pride as well. Tough place to come and get a result.

But I thought we performed well enough to get a result in 90 minutes. Unfortunately weren't able to take the chances we had and we put ourself in that hole, which is penalties.

So proud of the lads, but at the same time, absolutely gutted. I felt like the trophy was closer to Toronto tonight. Fair play with Vancouver. They're very resilient. Boehmer did a hell of a job tonight. Took his moment.

Congrats to Vanni and his team.

**Q. What was going through your mind during the penalties?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** Well, you just hope the lads follow the practice. Been practicing the penalties. The last thing we said to them was stick to your process. Gets a bit noisy, but stick to your process. You rehearsed.

Again, someone is always going to lose a penalty shootout. Someone is always going to miss. Sean, credit to him 'made a great save; put us in a good position.

Couple of brave lads stood up and tried to take their moment. They missed. I think as a coach, again, you just suffer with your players. You just feel for them. The walk back to the halfway line is a tough one.

**Q. Besides the moment of the match, at least in the 90 minutes, was obviously the penalty miss from Bernardeschi. How do you think that affected the team afterwards?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** Yeah, I thought we had a lot of control. Again, it's a tough place to get control. I thought we had a lot have control. Probably about a 15 minute period in the second half where they built a bit of momentum. Outside of that it felt comfortable.

We are just not clinical at the moment. It's been a couple games where we're been right there knocking on the door but just haven't been able to find that killer moment or we found a keeper that's standing on his head.

That's the story of TFC at the moment. We get up tomorrow, we have a game in two days. We're in the playoff hunt. As I said in the dressing room, all I asked is the team showed up tonight. They did. They have to show up again on Saturday. That's their next task. They have 12:00 midnight tonight to suffer, and then we're onto next things, Chicago.



**Q. Considering the performance today, you mentioned a couple of fine margins there. How are you hoping to translate that to a good performance and secure the playoff spot?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** We've had good performances before 55, 60 minutes in games, particularly at home. We've been able to control games. We've been able to put teams -- you know, Columbus two weeks ago, just not being able to finish in the first half with key moments.

What we asked for tonight was a 90 minute performance, you know, to really show to the final whistle. That's what we got to put together. There is no doubt we have the quality when we are ticking and guys are fully dialed in, locked in it. We're a very good football team. We've shown that.

But we haven't been able to put that together consistently enough over 90 minutes up. Tonight is just a good foundation to carry into Chicago. We have to look at these gaps, which is the finishing and taking our moments.

**Q. John, you were facing a Whitecaps team that were, probably since the League's Cup group stage have played really well. You would've looked probably at a lot of those games. Seen at times a really flow from them particularly at home. You really stymied a lot of that. Just speak to the work that you felt you had to do to nullify what they're good at, especially here?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** Yeah, they're good at a lot of things. That's the beauty of the Caps. You have to stop Ryan Gauld. That's the starting point and the defending element. Then taking advantage of that into-out rhythm. Be able to be brave enough to play on the third man combination centrally which draws them central and really opens them up wide. I thought we did what well for spells.

As we fatigued they caught us on those central combos, but the lads still had the bravery to work it.

I think we played them earlier in the year here, and the performance, when you went back to it, there was a lot of good elements. We were just so naive in dealing with the Whitecaps' key threats, which are Ryan Gauld, the crossing, and I thought our lads did a really well dealing with the threat of White and Gauld underneath.

That was a good perform.

Tactically I thought we were sound tonight. No issues tactically. Again, proud of the lads for that. I think we fatigued mid-second half, but came back strong. I thought we could have won it in the last ten minutes as well.

Again, fair play to Vanni and his crew. Great team spirit. They've been together for two, three years now, and you can see there is a camaraderie in the team. They're hard to beat. He's got to be proud of his lads tonight. They dug in.

**Q. John, you guys' counterpress tonight, you were suffocating the Whitecaps'. What did you make of how the guys were able to shutdown and making sure they weren't getting behind?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** Yeah, again, it's clarity. They needed that clarity on some of the patterns for the Whitecaps, and think came into the game with that clarity and then it comes down to effort.

We've seen spurts of that effort from the team, the collective, the whole team throughout the season. When that effort is there and the intent and intention is there, we're a very good team. I've said that.

Tonight they maintained the effort. That's the key. No man took it down a gear. We've seen that too often, we're dropped down gears in games. If you're a TFC fan you would have seen that.

That kept that gear in fifth and pushed, so we got to take that forward now. We got to take that forward into the Chicago game. It's been a good lesson for this team to feel what it's like to play a game all the way through 90 minutes.

Tough loss. Stuff we can take forward for sure.

**Q. John, your team has now gone 330 minutes without a goal. How do you account for that? Why is it just not happening right now?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** I think there was an MVP performance from young Boehmer tonight. I thought he did really well. I think when these moments are coming, yeah, I mean, sometimes it's just the luck, players getting into the right positions.

If we're being critical, there is a couple moments we could have pulled the trigger on a cross or a shot outside of the box, and we tried to play that extra pass.

So there are little things we were talking about at halftime. Just making sure the runners are going to hit the box when for example Shane O'Neill makes that center back run. He is in a cross position and his head comes up and you see he's one player. Those elements are really important to push through.

Again, I think it'll come. The effort was there. If you watched the game XG-wise we should have registered tonight. We can talk about minutes and not scoring, but at the same time, the reality is we should have scored tonight.

We should have scored against Columbus. We should have scored against et cetera, et cetera. And it'll come. It's got to come very quick.

**Q. We saw the disappointment on the faces of the players. What did you say to the guys after that one?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** I mean, sad for the lads. No medals for the runners up, but the lads stayed out there to watch them collect the trophies.

Big respect. A lot of teams tend to walk off when you have to suffer through that.

For us, it was an important moment. I think they are a good team, Vancouver. You know, we respect what they achieved tonight. That's the first thing.

The disappointment obviously is clear. At halftime we knew we should have been up. By the end of the game we felt like we should have been in a better position and let it slip through our fingers.

It's going to sting now, James, for at least a day, but we haven't got time to lull on this one. We're sorry to our fans. They've been class all season and been starved of trophies.

We gave it our everything tonight. That's why you see that disappointment. They left it out there.

**Q. The rivalry between these two teams hasn't had the venom of previous years. Been described as friendly by some. Didn't seem very friendly tonight. What were your thoughts on the level in the game tonight?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** No, we wanted to win. It's 2019 since we last picked up a trophy and we were that close tonight and the lads knew it. They had to give everything. As I say, while I'm frustrated, there is a bit of pride about the effort and the commitment.

Yeah, I think we're all in against the Whitecaps. This is a good football team, well constructed. He's done a great job behind the scenes over a period of time to build a roster. That roster has been developed very carefully. You can see it.

Yeah, I think all in against them. I thought they came in all against us as well. It was healthy.

But fair play. They got the result.

**Q. What was your exchange like with Vanni after the game?**

**JOHN HERDMAN:** He's a good guy. He's just a top guy, top guy. No, he said you guys deserved it tonight. I mean, he was honest. I that's all you want from a coach, he was honest enough to say that.



But I said to him, look, at the end of the day you got a good team here, Vanni, resilient team. You deserve nothing unless you win, so you got to win to deserve it.

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