

New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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Troy Lesesne

Press Conference



New York Red Bulls 2, Montreal 1

Q. Now that you've taken over the club, you are three unbeaten in league play, four in all competitions. What do you say about this team right now that's going on a pretty good run at the moment?

TROY LESESNE: I think we continue to make a lot of positive strides in the last, you know, 12, 14 days. Most importantly, it's been the players.

I told them, you know, on Monday, whenever everything went down 12 days ago, we are responsible for the position, everyone in this room, for where we are. And by the way, we are going to be the ones responsible for getting ourselves out of it. Our players have taken on the accountability, and that's the difference, ultimately.

Q. Can you talk about the difference in performance and team mentality from this game compared to the last time you played Montréal a couple games ago?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, the Montréal match away, we started off extremely well. I think the first 20 minutes was some of our best pressing and transition moments but we just didn't capitalize. This game, I think we showed good pressing moments, good transition moments. Probably could be a little bit better in the final pass or the final action but I think the difference you see probably here is that it's more of a complete match with the ball.

I was so proud, especially the first half, there was some really, really good ideas, and again, they are not always perfect, but I like that they are trying it. The second goal we scored has a lot of good stuff in it. We are making steps. We are making progress.

Q. Can you comment on your ability, the team's ability to hold on or withstand or respond? They went level during the first half but were able to come back before halftime and hold that for the entire second half plus a substantial stoppage. Where do you see your advice

coming into play?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, again, I put it back on the players. I think that they had the accountability in this moment to be able to go up in the game, and then the game draws level, and then they continue to stay focused on what the game plan is, and we score a great second goal.

To your point, the second half is almost a completely different match. It's just kind of a battle at that point, and we were up for it, and again, that's the players saying that they are ready to do anything possible to see out the three points. So it's a great question.

Q. We saw a lot of stuff that in a match like this, it doesn't make the stats sheet. I saw a lot of hustle, I saw a lot of the composure and I saw a lot of organization. How does that feel to you as a head coach coming in and you're seeing this happening in fruition, how does that make you feel overall?

TROY LESESNE: I'm very happy about it, the result, and a lot of the characteristics you just pointed out, I think you're absolutely right. I think you can see a lot of these things happening in the match. I hate to sound like a broken record but the players are ultimately the ones that are accountable to go out and execute.

Points in the season this year, we just haven't done it fully. I think this is another complete performance for us tonight. So they are the ones that took ownership and took responsibility, and I'm really happy to see them take these moments in different ways during the game. So we've got to keep it going, though, because Tuesday is coming.

Q. A lot of your chances that you guys have been able to score on have been perfect set pieces this season. Can you talk about why you've been so effective on set pieces this year?

TROY LESESNE: Really good service from John Michael Tolkin, Cristian Cáceras, really good service from these two guys.



And then I think some of the most dynamic headers of the ball in the League, Andrés is an absolute monster, Sean Nealis, Tom Barlow. Dylan Nealis is someone that is really difficult to match up with because he's not as tall but he's very good in the air. Dante creates a problem. Cory Burke creates a problem. It's a combination of really good service and really good targets.

Q. You've now won three of your last four games. What's your message to the team as you prepare for a top team, Cincinnati?

TROY LESESNE: Enjoy it, and let's get to work tomorrow. We are coming in tomorrow, and we are going to make sure to take care of ourselves. We turn the page tomorrow. We are not going to stay in this moment for too long because Cincinnati is going to create a different picture for us, and they are -- I don't know what their result was tonight. I think, did they end up winning?

Q. 3-2.

TROY LESESNE: There you go. This is a top team right now in top form. So we have to prepare diligently for it.

Q. I think with the past few games, apart from the positive results, people have been really impressed with your team's ability to close games out towards the end. You said the second half was much more of a battle. How impressed were you by the team's mentality and just the culture and attitude, being able to close these games out?

TROY LESESNE: I think the way that the back line is able to close matches out, starting with Carlos, No. 1, but just how we battled for first and second balls I think is really impressive.

And then you have different players, also, coming into the game that add energy but also add some composure at times. When I think about Dante coming into the game, Cam coming into the game, Hassan and Don coming into the game. These three I think really allow us to just bring some calm, but also the right fight and energy.

Tom Barlow has done an incredible job over these four matches of virtually playing anywhere that we ask him.

Again, this is a positive, no doubt about it.

Q. So for the first time this year, you have a VAR call going towards you that allowed Cory Burke to score that goal because it was called off-side. How much of a relief was that that you finally get a VAR call towards you?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, it feels -- it's great. We have been on the other side of it. And some of that is -- you know, I tried to say this maybe a week ago, but we have to figure out ways to create our own luck, right, and not just blame it on decisions.

So I think we were knocking on the door and we were creating chances, and luckily we got the right call in our favor.

Q. Obviously back in 2017, you guys went into Cincinnati and got the win, but this year, you guys are at home, Cincinnati comes to Red Bull Arena. What's going to be the biggest challenge for you guys?

TROY LESESNE: Well, in 2017, my friend, I was in Charlotte, and I was in the same level as FC Cincinnati, and I watched that game. I watched that game because the atmosphere in Cincinnati that night was incredible.

I would say that that match and then the match we are going to see Tuesday may be two different matches but a very talented side as I said before in FC Cincinnati that's well-coached and at the top of the table right now.

We just need to recover. We need to see where we are physically and get ready to go again.

Q. To follow up on Dan's question, did you see enough of FC Cincinnati -

TROY LESESNE: Say that one more time.

Q. Did you and your staff see enough of FC Cincinnati to see your team into the next round --

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, I think that we started preparing for them actually tonight just before the match to say, hey, what are we going to get organized for tomorrow and Monday since it's a quick turnaround.

I think we have a good idea of the direction we are going to go but we have to play at our highest level. If we don't play, you know, at an 8, 9, 10 out of 10 -- they are very good. They are very good.

So we are going to be ready. We are going to be ready. We are going to give it everything we have.

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