

New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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Troy Lesesne

Press Conference



New York Red Bulls 2, Charlotte 2

Q. Down 0-2 at halftime you came out with a ton of energy, a ton of attacking, still you were able to even the match. Talk to us about what changed from first to second?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, look, No. 1, the first half I just said this to the group, is unacceptable from us. The energy, the mentality, the match plan, I think everything that we wanted to do in a really important game, the first game in this next six matches to kick everything off, again, we have to take accountability for that performance, and we put ourselves in a really bad position.

So before I can even talk about halftime, I have to say that first, and I was very direct with the group post-match; I was very direct with the group at halftime.

You know, we made a couple changes and I think that had something to do with giving a little bit more life and energy. But I also say that it's unfair to put that all on Frankie or Peter because I changed them. That's not right, either. It was a collective effort that wasn't good enough.

I give a lot of credit to the group in terms of the way we played in the second half. But that's what I expect. That's the standard that I expect us to have all the time, and it wasn't there in the first half.

So we -- I think we let a great opportunity slip away today, and we only came away with a point.

Q. Another match that Dante Vanzeir is yet to start. What's the deal; is he hurt? What's keeping him from playing all 90 minutes, especially after a lengthy break like you just had?

TROY LESESNE: It's a fair question. It was a little bit tactical in terms of how we wanted to start the match, and the type of system of play that we wanted to implement.

But I'll tell you, I said to the group after the match, Dante, I talked to him about this decision and he was very accepting and he understood what the direction was that I wanted to go for the team. But he also, he wants every minute as well, and I think the way that he performed in the second half, he's made a very, very strong case for himself moving forward.

So I hope he continues to be fit and be healthy because again, he was out for a long stretch of games. But when he's in a good way, you see the type of impact that he makes in the second half, and again, you talk about ownership.

I said to him after the match, I have to take ownership for that decision in the first half and him not starting.

Q. Talking about one of those changes you made at halftime was Daniel Edelman. He just came off a very successful World Cup, captained multiple games. Can you talk about the decision to not start him and starting Peter Stroud?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, again, it was in relationship to what we saw coming back after the break. It was in relationship to, you know, Peter getting into a really good run of form and respecting that.

But same thing I was saying with Dante, I had the same conversation with Daniel in a different capacity for the role for the match, and again, the way he performed in the second half shows that he's ready to make an impact in this group and he's hungry to do that for as many minutes as possible. I have big respect for the way he played in the second half for us.

Q. Can you walk us through the process of you getting a yellow card, and was it deserved?

TROY LESESNE: Man, I would say -- look, I think I've gone through a few of these press conferences and I haven't really said much about the referees. It's not really my style and approach, and I think the yellow card was deserved because I think that my emotions and a few of the decisions that were made probably got the best of me.



But it's very difficult to -- when we say that word, accountability and ownership, I take accountability and ownership for my reaction. I think there's decisions in this game that are really hard to swallow.

The foul that happens on Sean in the second goal, this one seems very clear to me. I've seen that same hand ball go against us this year, and it's frustrating that it doesn't go our way tonight. We've had the same call go against us in Orlando, penalty, and I think across the world, a handball call is ambiguous to -- at best.

But I'll go back to the beginning. I have to take accountability for my emotions, very difficult to keep that in check when you feel like the decisions are not going your way consistently.

Q. Any time you see teams match up, it seems to be pretty big affair, 37 fouls last game, it was 27 fouls this game. Can you talk about how difficult that is in trying to get an attacking flow because of those kind of fouls and that kind of play?

TROY LESESNE: I didn't really think our -- I think when you look at the second half, there's plenty of attacking flow and that's what we should have done from the beginning. The attacking flow that wasn't there in the first half was completely on us and not playing in our identity that we are trying to create both against the ball and with the ball.

So when it becomes physical like that, I think it's just two teams battling, and I don't think it has anything to do with Charlotte. I think we are going to see that this weekend again versus Atlanta, I would imagine.

Q. Cameron Harper has been a very productive player up and down, whether it be wide in the midfield or as a left sider that's at fullback and finally converts that goal for you guys equalize. How happy are you with his play so far, now converting the goal?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, Cam has but in -- the type of improvement and the type of development that Cam has had this year is monumental, he's really taken off and it started to happen toward the tail end of last year before he got injured.

I'm happy to see him rewarded with points on the board like that because a lot of the work sometimes that he does doesn't get rewarded in the same fashion as maybe a goal or an assist, right.

So really happy for him and hopefully it gives him confidence moving forward to continue to be a pivotal role

-- a player that's playing a big role for us at fullback or wing back or at the ten. Really happy for Cam.

Q. What did you see on the second goal, and what was the conversation?

TROY LESESNE: So they play a ball in behind. It was kind of a throw pass of sorts and Sean Nealis has very good positioning on the Charlotte attacker, and he goes to make a clearance on the play and when he makes the clearance or attempts to make the clearance, the Charlotte player obviously tries to impede that, and in doing so, because of Sean's positioning and the lack of positioning with the Charlotte player, it seems like a clear foul to me, right.

Wasn't called that way, and just to not even have it reviewed is, again, it's hard to understand that because we hear so many things are reviewed, and what I was told is that they both arrived at the ball at the same time, and maybe that's the case, but you have to take in the positioning and the contact that's there as well.

Q. After this match, what do you think the team needs to do to continue to improve?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, I would say the second half that we saw is what the expectation is and what the standard is, and so if we can continue to play that type of football against the ball, I think the energy was there.

With the ball, the energy was there. We played forward. We didn't settle for just playing around the back with no clear direction. This is what the first half looked like to me, and that's -- that has -- that's not the way that we want to keep the ball and try to create attacks.

So I hope that we replicate the second half over 90 minutes because that's what it's going to take to beat a very good Atlanta United side.

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