

New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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Troy Lesesne

Press Conference



Chicago Fire FC 1, New York Red Bulls 0

TROY LESESNE: A couple things I want to say, best of luck to tomorrow, the second team, they have a big match for Chicago in the playoffs. But really, I wish them the best of luck, and what they have done this year is really impressive. That group has really come a long way in terms of their development.

First half, really good first half. I felt like we were on top of the game. Created momentum, created chances but again needed a couple more clear-cut chances. I think the goal that we score is questionable, whether that's a foul or not, Frankie is clearly playing the ball down, and I think -- a little too early there.

The second half, you know, I think that we didn't really settle into the game. It's almost like we were playing the game in the middle of the field, and that's obviously not what the first half looked like. So we need to be able to create a little bit more sustained attacks higher up the field at the beginning of the second half, which kind of led to like a 50/50-type game, and that's clearly not what the intent was.

But I would say, though, even going down a man, I give so much credit to this group, I really do. They continue to fight. It's a little unlucky in some ways on the night but we have to keep saying, we make our own luck. I told the group now, again, some of the results go our way. So we're not there yet and they have to keep believing that we can get results, which we can. It's going to be difficult but we have three matches left, and the door is not shut yet.

Q. Yearwood in his career has ten goals in ten appearances against Chicago. Was there any consideration to start him or were you thinking of bringing him in --

TROY LESESNE: I'm really happy that, one, Cory got on in this game and was able to play more minutes in this game. He's been dealing with an injury since he came

back from international duty, and he featured versus Miami, and then he sat out just to get healthy again. He was able to come on -- trying to think of the last match he came on, maybe Austin, he came on for a few minutes there.

But we are trying to get him back into a way that he can build ten minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes. I was happy with seeing him be able to get 20 minutes in this game, even under a difficult circumstance. If he's fully fit, it's a different conversation all together.

Q. How frustrating is it that you basically dominate the entire first half, the stats work in your favor, you gave up nothing, and it's always that one goal that just snowballs the entire situation?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, I mean, extremely frustrating. I think you see the moment it happens with the red card and then what I said is by no means is that the difference in the game. It's a moment in the game, that's for sure but it's not the difference in the game.

We're going to support him as we always do. He's a big part of our group and he's had some really good performances this year.

But that moment, we need to control that moment on the set piece. Again, it's a little bit like us maybe not capitalizing on the opportunities. We're giving up too many set piece goals, regardless of being down a man, and it's really frustrating. It's really frustrating to see some of those opportunities at the end of the game to come off the way they do. The one to Frankie, I think everyone in the stadium is like, come on, this is ridiculous. This is almost comical.

But we have to continue to have the mentality and the belief that we are going to find that goal and that will make the difference, certainly versus Cincinnati on Wednesday.

Q. A few weeks ago, I asked about playing younger players this last stretch of the season, and today we saw Julian Hall make his MLS debut. What does that mean to see someone like him make his debut, and



can you also talk about the decision to bring him on? I know the team was down a man, but the decision to bring him on over another player?

TROY LESESNE: Thank you for that. Julian is someone that over the last year, in particular, part of me being head coach, and really more so whenever I was an assistant coach, I've been able to watch him and really work with him and that entire group of 15s that won the National Championship. There's so many good players coming from that group as they have progressed and developed through our academy system.

But Julian is one that we struck up a really good relationship. I think I earned his trust and clearly his progress has been from the 15s to now with the second team and playing a lot and scoring goals there, and it's just like any other player in a lot of ways, when you perform with the second team and you're able to produce, then the first team is going to look at you and if there's an opportunity there and he's earned it and you're going to give players a chance.

The signing of Julian, I've never been asked much about him but the signing of Julian is one of the biggest moments in this club's history in terms of the attention and the clubs that were after him are on the highest level, so for us to secure a young talent like that, and him to have the trust in us, is very important, and I think it sends a clear signal about what we're building now.

Julian is going to be a big part of what we build in the future. Tonight I told him before he got in, really difficult circumstance, don't worry about that. Go have fun. Go enjoy the moment. You've earned this moment, and I think he went and did that.

Now he's got to turn his focus towards the second team match tomorrow, and that's being a pro. But I'm really proud of that kid and I'm excited to work with him in the future and I'm glad he's entrusted us with his development pathway.

Q. How do you feel after this loss when the regular season is almost over?

TROY LESESNE: How do you feel is a really loaded question right now. So we need more than just a press conference to answer that and unpack that. I think Daniel mentioned my frustration earlier, and I'm a little frustrated right now.

But I'm the type of person that I'm ready to get tomorrow and prepare for Wednesday because the end of the regular season is coming but we have three major matches

coming. Bu we compete well with Cincinnati and they have gotten the best better of us, losing in penalties and losing in the regular season 2-1 but that's a match we can go and get a result. Toronto at home is a match we can get a result. Nashville on the road is pretty difficult, again, but we can do it still as a group. That's my mindset. A little frustrated but tomorrow we're going to wake up and we're going to go at it again.

Q. Despite the numbers, you guys were pretty dominant at some points, triple the crosses, five times the corners, they had zero. What do you think was the missing piece in the first half?

TROY LESESNE: Yeah, I actually think that there's more moments that we can create a really, really clear look at goal and we almost rush it a little bit. So like a good example would be in the first half, Omir gets into a great spot. It's really early in the second half. This is probably our best attack when we were 11-11 and Kyle is making a dynamic run and I think Omir can slip Kyle either finishes himself or plays it back across to where our numbers are.

I love his mindset to try to get a shot off because he's been so productive with goals. That's a good example, maybe if we had a few more of those in the first half where we almost were a rushing the play a little too much. So that's how I'd answer that, more production.

Q. Next match, you're disappointed now but you have to focus on Cincinnati. Is it any different now, knowing that you need three points out that have place and it's out of your hands -- what's the game plan? Will there be changes? How do you get that where it's going to be very difficult to play in a place against a team that's focused on the Shield?

TROY LESESNE: I think that's a hard question to answer in terms of -- that's been a question we have faced all year long, right. I think what you've seen, though, is we have continued to generate way better attacks, way more potential attacks, and I want to continue to have that group be in the mindset that we are arriving in good areas and that we can capitalize on this by maybe making an extra pass, maybe being selfish at the right moment. But I don't think it's any kind of, you know, magic formula that I'm going to be able to solve prior to going into Wednesday. This group is a group that is in every match and I think we are going to be in the match on Wednesday against the best side in the Eastern Conference. If we don't capitalize on our chances, there it's going to be a hard night. And like you said, we need three points. What differences will we see? It's hard to say right this second but we will probably have something going into Wednesday because we are going to need to shake it up a bit to get the result.



