

Florida Cup: Everton vs. Pumas UNAM

Wednesday, July 28, 2021

Orlando, Florida, USA

Camping World Stadium

Pumas UNAM

Manager Andres Lillini

Media Conference

Everton - 1, Pumas UNAM - 0

ANDRES LILLINI: And these were the (indiscernible) situations that we analyzed. And this is why I accepted, when they gave me the invitation, to come. It was an important thing.

The importance that they gave to us just by the mere fact of inviting us. We always wanted to play. We have a name to defend and we have to show that name in every event -- to show what Pumas really is and stands for.

Q. Despite all the absences, the injuries, working with these young people, and everything that you have said about the international atmosphere, are there any new details? And do you think that there's still little details that need to be pressed out or do you think that Pumas is already at the level of being the best?

ANDRES LILLINI: Not at all. I think we are far from what we need to do. Today we began with a system, a tactical system that was the first time we used it on the field. And we wanted to bet on that proposal to see how it worked. Of course knowing that it is not a training but an international competition.

We came out better than we expected. We began with a line of five with two contenders and three forwards. We liked the action because it was a good opportunity to train. So these are things that I would like to see if the team can do so that when the right time arrives we have them under our belts. That is the most important thing -- not to take unnecessary risks of this kind.

Nobody likes to lose even if it's a friendly lose. So if Pumas plays, Pumas has to win. Aside from that, having my sidelines, my defenses and three center liners, with Nico Freire, with good delivery and (indiscernible) on the right, this is something that was done a first time, but it can be repeated -- we're very happy -- and the second time we



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did what we know how to do best. We started little by little.

And then we got the youth involved. Within 12 or 15 minutes we started as we regularly do with our forward and outer field. So the players are seeing what we have is what we're going to present on the field. The most important thing. And that gives the incentive to the players.

To me this was something that was most valuable. It was opportunity for different things that were requested of our players.

There was a time where we were a little bit behind. It was a close game. But we need to know what our options are and what our strategies are going to be. This is what we need to fine tune. The definition that we're going to do, we need to go looking for that. Aside from that, we do many things right. But the most important thing is to do it perfect.

Q. I'd like to ask you what is it that you considered that this international event helps the most Everton to what Pumas is, aside from the experience evidently, and what you were looking with the reinforcements? And could you give me a status quo of the person that is already injured?

ANDRES LILLINI: Aside from what we have already explained, aside from technique, I believe that from a sports standpoint, this shows us that the Mexican player is a strong player, is something that I have upheld for the longest time. There are no other players in any other part of the world where the teams perform this way, the goals that they would like to score and we are looking for the perfect training.

So, what I want to show is the goals by the Pumas are the result of motivation. It shows that they have the capability. So once again they take risks. But because there are games that could be scandalous, sometimes they could be considered catastrophic if you take the risks in an unnecessary or a foolish fashion.

But this has been clearly proven. The other thing, the most important thing is to do the best that we could do.

One of our players suffered an injury in his foot. He's not

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able to step against his foot but it is something that he had reinjured from a previous game.

He is hurt. It's an injury that he had since Sunday when he arrived. So those are the only things that I can give you updates on as far as (indiscernible).

Q. In the second half, you had pressured Everton, recovered. That would be the technique that we're going to see in Pumas, is that what we can expect?

ANDRES LILLINI: Yes, this is what they did, what I like, this is what I like. Sometimes because of the situation we can do it under high pressure. And sometimes the team has to come midfield. Yes, we need to do the best that we can.

We have already planned for tomorrow, that we're going to be training as well. And that is what we tried to do to take the ball away from our competitor. So when we have open fields and directly with the center, with the midfielders, we have to have a great concentration.

There are many spaces that are left open behind. And this is the work that it is my responsibility to try to tell the players what we are attempting to do and for them to follow through.

Q. I'd like to ask you, now that you're talking about the Mexicans that they're showing that they're no less than anybody else, so what taste did this leave in your mouth? Mexicans can fight against any other team. Do you feel that is so?

ANDRES LILLINI: Yes, I believe so. I am convinced of that. We have been to many international competitions. And we have played finals. We have gotten to the semifinals, in training. And I have seen the strength in the Mexican teams. And the reason is because there seemed to be two championships, with the Olympic Games, and then in the first division, today they were missing four players. And these are players of the team that are just resting for various reasons. And we confronted them. And I never felt overwhelmed because we had, for example, 80 minutes.

So this talks a lot about character, about professionalism. And aside from the players we were working with 11 kids from the basics. And it is a process. Sometimes it is attained. Sometimes it is not. Sometimes it is criticized. Sometimes even there could be disrespect.

But we're going to defend this path and we are hoping to have positive results. It is a project in itself. And for the project to be successful it must have the desired results.

Everything has to be led by the facts in front of us.

We come here with the understanding that we are going to compete against a strong team that has a very well-renowned players of countries where they are very prominent. But we are on the right path, I am sure of this, that we are definitely on the right path. I have great respect for the Mexican team.

Q. Could you expand and what did you believe of the line of five that you started at the beginning? Could we see this in 2021 in the openings? And you talked about the physical situation of your players. Do you believe they're in optimal physical fitness?

ANDRES LILLINI: Yes, the line of five is something that we tried out to see if indeed we were ready to do it. I liked it. I even liked it more than I expected it to be. We had several days of training. We saw a lot of videos. And that helped a lot. It was mostly for reference.

Yes, it convinced me a lot, a lot. Coming to think of it, today we had a very good competition and we are perhaps thinking about repeating it because I did like it. I like what we did today. And then the function of every player, we saw what we need to improve, what we need to stick with.

I don't want a line of five just for the purpose of having it there. I want a line that is going to work its area, fight for its zone. These are things that we need to practice with our training. It did leave me a very good taste in my mouth. I say it and I say it again.

We are used to the game but, yes, we're going to continue seeing more of this. I think that this is going to continue because the player always wants the player. In Mexico, we saw this. At the end it was a good thing.

There's always an element of risk that needs to be understood and we already mentioned that before. But the most important thing is that they accepted coming here. It was not a unilateral decision by any means. And at the end of the game what does the player want to do? The player wants to play. And these kind of games gives that player the opportunity.

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