

Florida Cup: Charlotte FC vs. Chelsea FC

Wednesday, July 20, 2022
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
Bank of America Stadium

Chelsea FC

Thomas Tuchel

Media Conference

Q. Just a few general questions.

THOMAS TUCHEL: I knew. I knew. We knew. The players didn't know, but generally I would say we played a good first half, but, unfortunately, only 80 meters of the pitch, as 20 meters were not good enough, even in the first half because we found a lot of spaces to accelerate and to penetrate the box, but we struggled with our decision-making and position in the last 20 meters. This was simply not good enough for the effort and the quality we showed in the first 80 meters of the pitch and the amount of space we had and the amount of attacks we created. There were simply not enough chances and not enough clear chances and not enough deliveries in the last 20 meters.

At the same time we have to say we allowed two big chances from out of nothing, so this was like the point in the first half. Otherwise, I think we played a very good match in all the other aspects. Second half it took us, I think, half an hour to show some quality, and, of course, maybe for ten minutes. That was not good. Not good at all. Not offensively, not instruction-wise, not in effort, not in the hunger to be the dominant team. That was not a good thing at all.

Q. The first time we got to see Raheem playing in a Chelsea shirt. Can you kind of give us your assessment of how he got on, how he fit into the team, and is that the front three that you kind of see as being strongest right now?

THOMAS TUCHEL: I did see it today, so it doesn't matter what I have in my mind. All that matters is what I see on the pitch, and I saw full accelerations in the second half, and I think they all came from Raheem. This is what he delivers. There's no need for major doubts and for huge criticism, but we will always -- it is never important what the manager has in his head before preseason. Whatever. It's reality that counts, and every day in training and matches



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like these count. From there we go.

Q. Were you familiar at all with Christian Lattanzio and his coaching? I know he has worked with Patrick Vieira, a few other people. Were you familiar with him, and after the game what were your impressions of what he was able to bring to Charlotte in terms of organization and things like that?

THOMAS TUCHEL: I knew him as assistant coach, of course, because we played against Nice in France with PSG, but to be very honest, it's the moment in preseason to focus on ourselves, so we presented the team very, very briefly.

This morning we expected a back-four. We expected a narrow back-four, and we found the narrow back-four, and I think we had enough space. Found we had enough quality in the first half to dominate and to finish the game off in the first 15, 20 minutes. This is what I believe.

If we keep on struggling to not feel these things and to not finish these things off when they are, like, to finish, we will not be the first -- it will not be the first time that we get punished because this is what happens if you keep opponent alive, if you keep belief alive, if you keep the stadium alive. Anything can happen in football. That's why he with love the game. This is on us.

I had a feeling they played with more courage. They played man-on-man in almost man-on-man, man marking in the second half. We struggled to escape because we didn't move enough, and ball possession was not precise enough. Our movement with the ball was not balanced enough to escape the pressure. So it was a pretty even game in the second half, and it's not what we wanted, of course.

Q. Timo Werner wasn't in the squad tonight. Can you let us know how he is?

THOMAS TUCHEL: Hamstring problems, and he with didn't take the risk.

Q. I was wondering if you had seen his comments in

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the last few days about not being happy and --

THOMAS TUCHEL: No. Not being happy?

Q. -- being happier elsewhere? He was saying about finishing --

THOMAS TUCHEL: I'm surprised. I would be very happy as a young guy having a contract at Chelsea Football Club. I would be one of the happiest person on the planet.

Q. Because he said he hasn't got the game that he perhaps wants.

THOMAS TUCHEL: So he needs to get his game time.

Q. How does he do that?

THOMAS TUCHEL: Show quality and take your place and defend your place. I would be one of the happiest person on the planet having a contract with Chelsea. If he said that, I cannot understand.

Q. Is he fully in your plan for next season?

THOMAS TUCHEL: Sure, he is our player. Sure.

Q. (Off microphone) -- there was no Kepa or Azpi as well as Barkley. What's the issue with Kepa and Azpi?

THOMAS TUCHEL: Both of them also, like -- Kepa has some pain that disturbs him to feel free in the movements.

Azpi had a big knock on his knee or above the knee in his muscle in training. He ran into Edu. It's a training accident.

If it was a Premier League match, I think we would have taken the risk, but the risk was now too big that he gets another hit and then may be out for three, four days, and this was not worth it today.

Ross feels his hamstrings since some days, and same like Timo. The risk of having an injury is more discomfort, but it's more important that they stay in training than to risk it now in a game to have a longer period of injury that we didn't want.

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