

Florida Cup: Orlando City vs. Arsenal FC

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Orlando, Florida, USA

Exploria Stadium

Orlando City Mikel Arteta Media Conference

Arsenal 3, Orlando City 1

MIKEL ARTETA: There are still a few formalities to get everything concreted, but really happy to have another player really well. He's an exceptional footballer and is someone that is going to bring a competitive edge to that dressing room.

Q. There's been lots of talk about playing midfield or left back. Where do you envisage him?

MIKEL ARTETA: Both. He can play in both. He was a natural No. 10 early in his career, and we converted him into a left back, which can do a lot of things that we want in our way of playing, and that versatility is something that's going to be important for the team because we have other players in that position than more specific fullback, so really happy.

Q. More to come before the window closes?

MIKEL ARTETA: I don't know, it's what we have today, and as well we have a large squad, so we have to make some decisions on the players that we're not going to be using consistently and be fair and straight with them, and that's a process that's going to start very soon, as well.

Q. So you could be busy without (indiscernible)?

MIKEL ARTETA: We have to. We have a big squad, and now we have to make things happen.

Q. A lot of players you brought in this summer, you think of Fabio or Gabriel and now Zinchenko, as well, they can play multiple positions. How deliberate has that been, and do you think that the introduction of the five subs to the Premier League is going to make that really important, that kind of flexibility in game?

MIKEL ARTETA: That's one of the things, and where we



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can adapt structures, formations and rotations, we think this squad and playing with the same players in a different way to be more unpredictable is obviously that -- it's important and that's why we have recruited those players.

Q. Do you think it's going to have a big change in the Premier League, the five subs? Do you think it'll be more tactical, more chess-like, more changes?

MIKEL ARTETA: It will be much more unpredictable to try to figure out what the opponent is going to do, and it changes, so whatever you have planned at the beginning, it doesn't mean it's going to happen at the end.

Q. You've used Albert Sambi Lokonga as an 8 for most of the preseason, where you used him as a 6 in the past. Is there a position where you think he excels more?

MIKEL ARTETA: We are trying, where he feels comfortable, where he can develop in the best possible way. He's really comfortable playing in that position, and we want to try and see what he can bring in that position, as well.

It's true that now we are missing as well Emile and Fabiano there, so that position we're a little bit short, and he's done well.

Q. Is Lucas Torreira still with the camp?

MIKEL ARTETA: Lucas Torreira is our player, yes.

Q. Eddie and Jesus together, again, quite some chemistry tonight. How often do you anticipate seeing them play together, and will you deploy them in a different way than perhaps say Auba and Loka played in the past?

MIKEL ARTETA: We want to build those relationships, and they haven't played a lot of minutes together yet. The same with Martin and Gabi, for example, and we have to start to do that. We obviously do it in training, but to put it in practice in matches, it's important, and you can see that they are finding themselves with good timing, and it's

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important because there are two players with a big goal threat.

Q. I'm wondering if you could talk broadly about what these overseas tours bring to the side preparing for the preseason, facing against MLS teams and then just traveling together?

MIKEL ARTETA: Well, first of all, obviously the exposure of the club. We are a huge club and you can see every city that we are present, the reaction and the support that we get. So it's very important for our brand, for our supporters to be next to them, and the USA is a huge market. We have a lot of fan base, and we have to promote that and make them feel that we are ready to come here. And then those practices and those tours, it gives you a different level of competition against opponents that you don't really know. But they're in the middle of the season, so physically they are in better condition than you, and then to play in that heat, I think it brings a good adaptation after for when we have to go back to the UK.

Q. William Saliba has only got two years in his deal. He might be in the club already for two years. Is there a plan to extend his current deal?

MIKEL ARTETA: We always have a plan, and when we have to execute, that's a different story, and football is a really funny game, but we are really happy to have him. You can see the way he's adapted, the way he's matured, and he's playing well, and we are delighted to have him.

Q. With the season starting in a few weeks, is there a target -- obviously we just missed out on top 4 last season. Is there a target of top 4 and above next season?

MIKEL ARTETA: Our target at this club is to win competition. It cannot be anything else than that, and the way we are building the squad is to achieve that. Today we are feeling precision. The window is not closed. The squad is not closed. We will set our targets internally, but they won't be at the end of the season. It will be much shorter because that's still too far and a lot of things will happen.

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