

# St. Louis CITY SC Media Conference

Saturday, August 30, 2025

St. Louis, Missouri, USA

**David Critchley**

Postgame Press Conference



Houston Dynamo 3, St. Louis City SC 2

**Q. Quite the finish there, but did you need to do more in the first 80 or so minutes to get through this one?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yes. This weekend, we beat ourselves. We had three mistakes against the ball that led to three goals. And as much as I do appreciate the response and the effort, it took 75 minutes of a football game to get to that point. So I wanted the response and the effort to be much cleaner and sharper from the players.

But today, I think we probably beat ourselves. We had too many breakdowns, too many poor decisions, poor actions. And you know, teams at this level in the MLS, they are going to punish you. So we beat ourselves tonight.

**Q. Obviously it's been a hectic week around here. Do you see anything leading from that to the guys being out of sync tonight?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: I don't think so. Because the one thing I quickly or closely evaluated today was what the mood like when they all showed up to the facility and what was the mood like in the locker room. They actually seemed very focused. I speak to my technical staff after the warmup, they said it was a very good warmup from the group.

We had a couple of moments early in the game, I think they let us have the ball or let us start dictating the tempo early, but they were pretty organized in a mid-block. We were probably too slow in moving the ball around early in the game to really hurt them.

But then the momentum shifted and they had it and when they have the momentum, they score goals, other teams when they have the momentum, they score goals. When we are going to have a lot of control, a lot of momentum on our side and we don't score goals, then it's going to be hard to win football games.

**Q. Just with the change, you had so much possession in those first 75 minutes, seemed like in the final third that you couldn't make anything truly dangerous? Klauss had maybe one or two chances but for the most part not enough.**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, I think, again, they allowed us to have good control in the midfield because of their defensive behavior. They were in a mid to low block, pretty compact and organized. I'll give Houston credit and Ben credit for his defensive setup of this team.

We were arriving into the final third often, but there was no end product. And then again, you know, we get to the 80th minute where we are starting to put more dangerous chances in the box. We score two goals. I know Klauss, he hits the post at end.

But I told these guys and I've told you guys weeks ago, I knew when it hit the post, it was going to roll the opposite way of the goal. It's just what happened this season or for the group. So we have to continue to create more and more. On another day, on another year, another season, that ball probably bops the other way and rolls the other way for an equalizer, but not this season so far.

**Q. Following up on that, the first 30 minutes you could tell Houston, allowing you to have the ball a bit, dictating the pace a bit. Was there a sense things for whatever reason weren't going to work today?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Possibly. I knew we'd score goals. We've scored a lot of goals since I stepped in. I want to say around two a game. We got two again tonight.

But we can't throw away situations like that, and those errors, I'm sure the guys that were guilty of the individual errors will feel bad. So I have some sympathy for them, but we do have to sharpen up in them moments as well. We can't continue to give away goals where we are in the standings.

**Q. Talk the comeback, but also for Joyner to come in and have quite a few big moments in the match, not**

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**just against the ball but getting that ball. What did you think of his performance, also, bouncing back from last week's big moment?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: I was very, very happy for him. I know he had his moment. Look his performance last week against Vancouver was good as well. He had the moment which everyone spoke about, I feel like worldwide, about the call at the end.

So to see how he bounced back from that moment and get himself a goal today; I think he almost had a second one. I think he headed it across the box. I was super happy for him. When we can celebrate these moments, where homegrown -- I always told them when I was in the academy, I always told players, the academy players: The goal is not to just make a first team debut or a first team appearance. It's to go and impact the game and go and impact this club, and he done that tonight. So I was super happy for him.

**Q. So involved in every space, it seemed like.**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, absolutely, he's dynamic. He's pacey. He's brave. He wants to take on defenders. He's got a good end product with his finishing and crossing, and he's very good in the air, as well.

Good performance from him. He was one of the positives tonight.

**Q. You said it took you 75 minutes to get into the game. Now, what do you have to change for next weekend against Dallas in order that doesn't happen again?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: I think the easy one to say from the eye of a fan and a supporter is fix the individual mistakes. Three poor individual errors today cost us three goals.

When I look at it and analyze it probably deeper, we have to be much more quicker on the ball when we want to break a mid-block down. If you're coming up against a team that's going to sit in a little bit deeper on you, and you move the ball too slow, you'll never threaten a goal. It will look like you have a lot of moments, but you'll never truly threaten a goal.

So we have to be more clinical in how we move the ball and how quick we move it. Whether that's the quality of a pass, a guy being brave to take on a 1v1, they are going to be moments we have to focus on this week in training.

**Q. Is that why you think Joyner fits so well on your team? Probably one of the youngest players having**

**more minutes. Do you think in the future for sure he will be a great player, but do you think in those next six games, do you think he can actually be a key player for the team, being one of the youngest or being the youngest?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: I do. His mentality is right. He's growing every week. He's getting sharper in training sessions. He's probably now nice and confident with his goal. I believe Mykhi will help us not long-term future for this club but the short future, being the remaining games.

**Q. Last but not least, what's the goal for the next six games for the last six games?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: To continue to compete regardless of where we are in the standings, regardless of where we look. The end goal for this team is to fight towards something bigger. We know that this season is going to be -- this season, we are in a tough situation this season. We know where we are in the standings.

But I want to see very closely how these guys respond to the next six games, and there's a lot to play for for them individually for this club.

So I don't want to see a group that quits. I will not be happy if these guys give up for the rest of the season here. We need to fight. We need to have what we saw in the 75th minute, we need more of that, but for longer periods of the game.

**Q. Speaking of youth what was the strategy behind going with Timo and Kess to start and then bringing Fallou off the bench in the second half?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, I know last week we conceded three goals but we didn't concede any from open play. I thought Timo and Kess were about against Vancouver. Again, I don't want to go back and look in the past; there was the two penalty calls we could always argue weren't penalty calls. They were in a good run of open play. That was one of the first decisions.

One of the second decisions was trying to build some consistency. I don't want to chop and change a lineup every time that I'm given the opportunity to. I think when I stepped in 12 weeks ago, I had to due to injuries.

But now we have a fully strengthened squad, and I'm trying to build some consistency. But yeah, Fallou will put himself in for next week. I know he had that one error, but I look at it much more in detail than just one action.

**Q. You're going to be missing Mykhi next week. You**

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won't have him next week.

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Correct.

**Q. But presumably the national team experience is good for him?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Oh, yeah, any time a player, I know Sang-bin has also had his call-up. Anytime a player can represent their country on youth level, fully senior level, it's an opportunity we should celebrate.

So I'm excited for these guys.

**Q. How critical is the defensive problem? Three straight games you've allowed three goals, I think four of the last six. The numbers are consistently high for this. How dire is this situation?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, it's critical. When you go on and concede -- I mean, look, I'll just say it very simple: If you're going to concede this amount of goals, you're not going to win football games, and you're not going to be in playoffs. It's very simple.

So we have to button up. I need so much more from the guys on the defensive side of the ball, not just the back four I'm talking about or Roman. It's a collective. It's an entire team. We need to do much better on the defending side that. Is an absolute given.

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