

St. Louis CITY SC Media Conference

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St. Louis, Missouri, USA

David Critchley

Postgame Press Conference



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Q. All the soccer games you've seen, have you seen one like that with so many shots that you just can't get them going in?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: That might be the highest I've ever seen of shot counts. Is there a total number that we have?

Q. 40-something?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: 43.

Q. Your XG was 4.3 on the league's website.

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, that's the highest I've of seen in both cases.

Q. Can you attempt to explain how that happened?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Regardless, I know they had the keeper sent off early in the game, that probably adjusted to them maybe defending and behaving a little different. It was something we prepared for in training and something we expected. We knew that they were going to be in the low block and defend.

So we'd have a lot of the ball. We needed to create moments from them, 43 chances. And today, the execution wasn't there.

We get the goal, and then we have them pinned all the way back, let's say it that way. We have so much momentum on our side. The crowd has done a great job. We have them pinned all the way back to their own box and then we make a very big mistake and throwing people on our own. Call a flag and it was stuff that we had addressed all week and we have certain rules and situation where is when this happens we do something different. We didn't do that today on the field in that one moment.

So we prepared and we practiced it. We didn't do it, and

all of a sudden we turn the ball over and on our own 18 and it's 1-1. After that, we created a lot.

Overall, we couldn't find a way to win the game. So we have to look at ourselves and ask, how do we have that high of possession and all of these data points. But yeah, knocking away three points there.

Q. This has to be one of those games, it feels like a loss, even though you got a tie out of it.

DAVID CRITCHLEY: It does. It feels absolutely like a loss. I think everyone feels it in, there staff and players. So you know, for us, it's again another situation where we hurt ourselves today, deep in our own corner with the decisions that we've made down there to try and play out of a situation you don't ever need to play out of, and that put us in a tough spot, and we conceded from it.

Musa got the goal, clinical finish there. We know what he's like. We prepared for him. Clinical finisher inside the box, scores the goal and go ahead with one point.

Q. When you look at over four expected goals on target, things did go well to get into those positions but not getting over the line, is it as simple to say as the finishing wasn't what it needed to be or how do you address that as you go back through the game tape?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, very high field tilt, I'm sure. So with the balls in their final third quite a lot. We need to be really good in them moments when teams drop off on us about recognizing space and exploding into it and moving off the ball really clinical. Speed the game up when space is given. I think natural behavior for all players is when you get given space, you need to slow down and we need to speed up and try to get more service in the box before it gets really crowded that was one that also we needed to probably improve on.

Overall, I'll give the guys credit because we created and generated so much high data, which is good, but we talk about it right now. The only data, really, we should be

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focusing on is three points, one points or zero points. Our processes, I'm very happy with our processes and how we prepared this week for the training, for the game. Just couldn't get three points.

Q. Maybe a bright spot, McSorley makes an appearance, gets a good moment early on. How do you think of his energy that he brought and his performance?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, really good. That's something that Brendan has done fantastic with all year at the second team, the pro team, his energy, his intensity. He came on today and brought that as well. I think he had two or three overhead attempted kicks in the game.

Close on one of them. Makes a good save. A lot of shots went high today. I think we needed to find more moments to shoot low on the ground and test them down low. Too many shots were in the comfort area of being a little bit high but I was super happy with Brendan, yeah.

Q. The decision to start Simon and take Ostrák out, what was the main reason for that, to get more runs behind?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Dallas would do -- how we prepared was they would be in a 5-4-1 kind of mid-block situation. They deny a lot of space between lines which is Tomas's big strength. But they would leave space behind for Simon and as the game opened up, we were relying on his athleticism to get him behind.

A couple of good moments, one where we built down the left side and it got caught off the feet as he ran off the last line, if it was a little bit cleaner, maybe he's in on a 1v1. But yeah, it was more knowing how they were going to defend Dallas. We needed to stretch the game, and having two nines was going to help with that.

Q. The game plan changes because of the red card they are going to batten down the hatches, but you mention the lack of movement. You say they are giving up too much space. But you have guys out there for the extent, purpose of getting more runs; the game plays into ways where you're going to get more chances for runs and the runs don't materialize. How did that break down, and what do you think happened?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: It was just the awareness of knowing how much space you need to be dangerous, I think at times we can think we need five, six, seven, eight yards but you're not going to get given that much space against a low block. So how do you operate in two or three yards? How do you maybe check in to just get the defender to just

move his body forward to spinning behind.

Kind of like these finite details that we're still looking for was missing tonight. You know, how do you make a run to open up space just for another teammate. All those details that should have happened more effective tonight, I think. Just didn't happen.

Again, I sound frustrated up here. I'm frustrated at the result. There was a lot of good stuff that happened but we just weren't clinical enough.

Q. How much do you handicap them parking the bus for so much of the game and just maybe runs were happening but nothing materializing because two guys are in a spot where there wouldn't be. How much do you handicap that for the extra man out, and how much is the guys following through on the game plan?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Every time you make a decision as a coach or you speak on something, the other team is doing something else as well and something different. As much as we prepared them for situations this week in training, they are also preparing for perhaps things we're trying to do, as well.

You know, I know in 46 minutes onwards they were trying to take the sting out of the game because every goal kick took 35, 45 seconds. To see four minutes at the end of the game, I don't understand that. We played several games lately with 15 minutes added on and 12 minutes and here we are with probably the game that was the most shopped up because of them getting a restart in slowly, we only got four minutes, I don't understand that one.

But just like Vancouver, I'd like to stick back to focusing on the players and the team more than the referees.

Q. You talked about last week at other times, shots are going to hit the post this year and bounce away. As this game goes on, did you think that? This is a game in which the goalie is going to make every diving save he can; the shot is going to go over the bar. Did it feel cursed or just the way it goes that it's just not going to work?

DAVID CRITCHLEY: I get those he is feelings at times in the game when I'm coaching, I try to be more proactive at what I can keep fixing but as he reflect we may have hit the bar four times or something and everyone seemed to probably bounce off for a goal kick, hit the cross back and come back and we tap it in with our instep or something.

I often tell you guys in these situations when it's not going our way we have to do a better job of generating more. I

don't think you can generate more than 44 shots in a soccer game. I told you guys, that's one of the highest you'll probably see. To go searching really deep to find someone that beats that amount of shots.

Si we just have to be more clinical. I'll probably just stay with that.

Q. As you look at the chances, headers on crosses, it seemed like a whole bunch of guys, it wasn't just Klauss or Simon. Count it up, everybody seemed to have chances. It seemed like a team wide thing.

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, again, the way they defended, they would allow us to get in their final third quite a lot. So in that moment, you won't see a positional structure about it. It's all just about finding space, especially when you're inside the 18. It could be guys running out of their natural position if the space is there for them. But yeah a variety of shots, a variety of crosses into the box. We had some headers, should shots that went high. We missed shots that went low and I don't think we tested them enough with low hard driven grounds on the shot today.

I think a lot of our shots were aerial and in his comfort area. That could be something we could look at. But just with so many opportunities, there's no magic. You have to find a way to come away with three points, you just do.

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