



LA Galaxy Media Conference

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Los Angeles, California, USA

Greg Vanney

Press Conference

LA Galaxy 3, Sporting KC 2

Q. You said you guys weren't in a good spot for 60, 65 minutes and then what did you see over the last, I guess the last 20, 25 minutes there.

GREG VANNEY: I think, yeah, I feel like we were out of sorts for, like you said, a good 60 minutes or so. Just our movements positionally, just we were not in the right spot at the right times. We were -- when we did break lines, we were very impatient and trying to finish attack so fast and our front group was setting separated from our back group and then it was just when those attacks didn't finish or work, it was just so easy to get out of their half of the field back into our half of the field and it's just an incredible amount of work having to recover and defend back in your half of the field only to do it again.

One of the things we talked about at halftime was just, a, being more aggressive in our step-out presses. I think we were giving them way too much time in the first half on the ball to just kind of set us back, and start to pick us apart and move us around, and then to find the right moments to just be patient on the ball and not be in such a rush to have to finish the attack in one or two. But to actually force a team that's playing with two forwards on the field to defend their half of the field sometimes and force those forwards to come back and help the opposition and then they have less opportunity sometimes to get out of their own half and we can make second and third chances.

I thought we made better decisions with the ball as it progressed. We were more patient at the right times. We were fast at the right times and then we found some seams and holes and finished some goals. I think we scored what -- five and got two called back if I recall correctly and so things were flying once we got on the right foot, things were moving for us.

I think once we started to get goals, I thought our overall defensive effort and intensity started to improve. I thought the middle of the field was too open. Like we didn't do a good job of closing off the middle of field with our wide guys squeezing inside and our back-to-front being connected, we were conceding too much space to a team that's good with the ball and that gave us problems throughout the course of the night but we did the things we needed to do to come back and gets points out of this one.

Q. Five games, you guys have shown a tendency to fight back when you guys are down. What does that say about this group?

Yeah, they believe in it. They believe in each other. Again, when we can find the right wall in our game, then we are a very dangerous. Tonight for a strong stretch we just didn't find the right balance in the game and we can also be very vulnerable if we don't. I feel like we found it again towards the end.

I think Gastón came in and did a nice job. When Gastón came in Riqui started to get closer to Gastón, and I think he was too far away from Eddie at times, which meant that we had these two pivots. But they were so far apart, they were isolated and



then when Gastón game in he was closer and they were able to combine on each other a little bit more. I think that drew their midfield out a little bit and opened up spaces behind them where we could build space. Mark dropped lower and rolled out so other things to open up pockets started to happen and that got us going.

But the group has been resilient. Again, not an easy place to play and took us a little while to find our way in the game but we did.

The other side of it is we have to defend set pieces better. We had to defend a lot of set pieces, but we defended -- we didn't do our job and that's been five, I think, we've given off now in the course of the season, which is too many. We have to reassess whether we are doing the right things with the group and what needs to change there.

Q. Looking at Gabriel, his first start this season, what do they do that you liked and does he cause you issues on defense or balancing things? What did you see from him?

Yeah, I think the way we were attacking in the early part of the game wasn't necessarily good for anyone. It was anyone who is trying to get connected. I think he's trying to build relationships on the field in terms of positional relationships with some of the guys still. You know, when he was coming inside, he was a little bit too high so it was hard to find him, and he needs to come down a little lower so that we can find him when he's in that inside position.

When he's wide, I think he can be a little more patient and allow us to bring the game to him sometimes. These are things for him to pick up. For me they are tactical nuances in our group in being able to recognize when to do what and how to play with the guys that are over there on that side with him on both sides of the ball, even defensively. Defensively, I felt like he got very focused on defending the left back and often was very wide, and that was one of the reasons that the middle of the field was pretty open is because I feel like he was a little bit wide at times, which meant that our two midfielders were covering, having to cover a lot of extra space. Riqui was a little high, back line a little low and it just became a ton of territory to work, and we all as a group need to become a little more compact and close the middle of field, defend from inside out and we were just all a little bit separated.

And I think that played a little bit part of it as he's still trying to get used to the group and some of those nuances inside of that, and some of the things we're asking. But it was his first start, so his first run for 90. But we've seen things that he's capable of doing and a lot of that will come out as he gets more settled into the group.

Q. I want to ask you about two guys, could you speak about what Deon (ph) is doing well^ right now to be top of the Golden Boot Race in the League after five games and also Mark Delgado seems to be playing at a high level in all contexts right now.

Yeah, with Dan, he's doing a good job of showing up at the right places at the right times. When the team is attacking in the right ways, we said this for a long time, that our forwards are going to get chances when we attack in the right ways and we're able to move centre-backs out of the face of the goal and when we're able to get our wingers behind the back line, he's going to be the beneficiary of that.

Today he made a nice little cut behind the center back. Actually I think it happened twice in a row. First one he got called off-sides and then it was the same exact play where he actually was on side and buried it. I think, again, his reads and his tendencies on what -- when Riqui gets the ball and in some of those positives, what movements make sense at times. I've talked to him about not running in straight lines, but coming from angles because it shows Riqui where he wants the ball. And these things are happening for him at times now more so but he's going to be the beneficiary of the pace that we have on the outside with Joe and the work that's being done in the wide channels.

As far as Mark, he just understands so well what we are trying to do and then he has Joseph flying around the outsides which sets up a lot of opportunities for him to slip passes through and to do things, which is how he's been achieving great assists, slipping Joe through, finding other runners. He's just playing in his pockets and his space, and he understands systematically what we are trying to do so well that he is the epitome of what it looks like for us. And when the system is flowing, Mark is going to be on, always, that's just a fact.

The other thing Mark does is he transitions to defend and he covers ground and he works and plays at a high intensity for 90 minutes like nobody else. That constantly makes him in the middle of the game in the middle of the action because he's right

there in the game whether it's on the defensive side or the attacking side. He's omnipresent in whatever is happening because of his work rate how much high speed work he can do to stay involved in the game. But yeah, he's certainly thriving right now inside of the group that's out there and what's happening in the system when it's functioning.

Q. This is the Galaxy's first win in Kansas City since 2019 and your first win over Peter. How important is it to kind of have these games where you break those negative trends, and I guess in the locker room, how are you guys feeling now being able to come away with a win, the last couple of games with ties, and how important is that as you guys begin to gain more and more confidence as the games come ahead?

Yeah, it's huge for the confidence building. I know the group was really frustrated with themselves in the first half for sure because nothing seemed to be flowing smoothly, and we gave up more set piece goals but nothing was smooth.

I think they new coming here, even talking to a couple guys before, they know coming here is a really difficult place to win and difficult place to get results. Last year we suffered for 90 minutes and got a draw, like really suffered for 90 minutes and got a draw. Tonight we didn't play well for a solid 60 and managed to turn around a 2-0 to get a win.

One of those things that you've just got to get out of your head that certain places are hard to play in, and you just have to come and be a little patient and trust and play your game and I think it to being us awhile to get to that place but hopefully we did and that's a reminder for this group as we continue to come back here in the future that we've just got to stick to certain things and we can win. That's a positive. Everything else is about getting three points because we felt like we left some points on the table in some of the earlier games and so to come here where you don't always get three points and to get three points is certainly, you know, a bonus for the group in some ways but I think it shows that no matter where we are, this team is capable of winning games and causing some problems. So we've got to do it from minute 1 and not from minute 65 or whatever.

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