



LA Galaxy Media Conference

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Greg Vanney

Press Conference

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GREG VANNEY: I thought we got off to a decent start. Obviously getting an early goal, getting a penalty, which we didn't obviously finish, and then they kind of scored a goal, obviously not having had a ton of the play, and a little bit against maybe things which leveled it out I think in terms of emotion.

Maybe I think we started with a solid position and then kind of leveled out emotionally. Get a combination of sort of forcing some things, but also not really getting our runs going in behind as much as we need sometimes against the back five. The guys who you want to run through the lines don't really see the channels they want to run through, and the ball gets kind of stuck in front of that back line, and I felt like that was happening.

I was trying to encourage certain guys at the right times to just take off for the depth a little bit to disorganize their back five or to threaten spaces in behind, and I thought in the second half, we started to do that better. We started to get out in the transition a little bit more, things like that, that helped us. I mean, obviously we had set piece opportunities. Maya couldn't buy a goal tonight despite a number of opportunities on the set piece, and then we had some chances through.

But again, in the second half, just adapting, just a couple things a little bit, and us getting -- eventually getting on top of the game that led to us being able to -- them opening up a little bit more, and us having some counterattacking opportunities, as well, which I think one of our greatest strengths is actually in the transition. And obviously Riqui's goal was special. But it got us going.

I think midweek games, no matter what, home or away, they are a little bit strange because you don't get a lot of time to prepare for the opposition, and you have guys turning around on short notice. But I thought the guys did what they needed to do tonight in a good shift and took the three points.

Q. Midweek, and then Gastón who suffers something in warmups. How did that affect the subs?

Yeah, it was a little strange. He hit a shot in the warmup and I think more nerve-related with the knee, the knee that was repaired in the off-season. I don't think it's much, but we need to make sure.

But certainly was having some discomfort more from a nerve area and not from something else. So we didn't want to risk anything obviously at this point of the year, and given the circumstances.

So Marc, who was not going to start, and we were kind of rotating through that group a little bit had to quickly get thrown into action there last minute. And a night he was going to have less minutes, he ended up going 90. So guys have to adapt and be ready.



Yeah, it was a little awkward in the locker room to lose a guy like Gastón and then just get everybody going, because I think there was a little bit of concern, too, as to what happened. But we got ourselves going.

At the end of the game, obviously great to get Johnny back on, and obviously Danny back out there, Mauricio, guys like that to get them out there was great and they brought some dynamic actions, and it was good to see them.

Q. You touched a little bit about the speed in which the games are coming. You guys play again Saturday. How is the team doing with the travel and fatigue currently at the moment, and how do you think they are going to be coming in on Saturday?

Look, we had three a couple weeks ago, and it was home, which obviously a draw against RSL, we started strong and had to battle our way back. And then we went on the road and we managed the road pretty well. We had a chance to win potentially there in Minnesota after a bad start, but we had a chance to win down the stretch. Unfortunately we weren't able to get the three, but we got the one.

And we went and played a nice, solid third game on the East Coast there in North Carolina everyone and managed it well, and guys that were called on stepped up, and the team was nice and solid.

And so we got off to six points at home in the first two games this week, which was our target, of course, and now quick turnaround. I'm sure we'll have some adjustment to the group and some rotation as we go into now travel and play.

So we'll see how guys turn around after today, but we'll have some rotation and guys that are going to get an opportunity are certainly going to be motivated and are going to go out ready and compete and play. The group's target was nine points this week, so there's a lot to play for.

Q. Emiro Garcés is a player who has not had a chance to come in yet but he's probably very motivated. What have you seen from him in training, and when do you think, if you can say that, that we'll be seeing him on the pitch?

Yeah, he's ready. He's ready to help us and ready to play now. I'm trying to get him in a good circumstance. There was an opportunity maybe at the end of this game to go to three in the back and maybe utilize him. I don't want to throw him out there when there was one goal, game on the line. That's not maybe for me the right moment because I want him to be successful and give him the best opportunity to be successful in the moment.

Look, it took him a couple weeks in my opinion, and he probably would say the same thing, just to get settled in; the intensity of our training sessions, the intensity that he's seen in our league is different than the league that he was at.

So I think physically he was just kind of adapting over the first two or three weeks, and being able to repeat high-intensity days that kind of come.

But he's ready. I think he said it at the beginning of this week or maybe last week, it felt like physically he's turned a corner now and he feels like he's up to speed on the physical side of things now. So it's just getting him an opportunity out there so that we can really see what he can do.

But we are excited about his prospects. We like what we see in training. He's a guy that's not afraid to get tight on the defensive side. He's got a lot of confidence athletically and a lot of speed and he gets tight defensively. He's not easy to play against. And so that, I look forward to seeing.

We are also just trying to settle him in on some of our different rotations when we have possessions so he knows when to shape into a three and things like that and what that looks like. He's ready to go. We're going to try to find him an opportunity here real soon because we think he's going to help us.

Q. You had Dejan get two goals tonight. Seems like he's coming back from injury and working his way back, he's been very involved in his offensive moves. Are you getting what you want out of him, and are you pleased with the progress he's made?

Again, I think he's had a stop/start sort of year to this point. He came in and he was fit coming into preseason and he gets hurt in the first preseason game. Then he's ready, like the first game of the season, he gets off to a good start. He gets



another injury and he's out for a couple weeks.

I feel like he's still a guy who is trying to get to like real full season fitness because he's just been stop/start, you know.

And last week, I said last week the intensity level of his moments were not intense enough. It was just all kind of one speed, and because of it, he didn't really get any chances and didn't have an impact on the game.

I felt like he was more dynamic today. He was working hard to get to good spots. Obviously he got himself into good spots for chances, the goals. So I think it's strong. He's not a post-up striker. So you know, sometimes we force balls into him, these straight passes into him with guys on his back, and it's not really his game. And when he does get those, he's got to bounce them out real quick and get them off his foot to the next guy and get moving. He's a guy that, you know, if he can keep active and we can get to good spots to cross or to slip him through or things like that, he's going to finish his opportunities.

We've also got to play to his strength sometimes. But I think just in terms of his fitness, his sharpness, things like that, I think we're seeing progress now that he's had a couple weeks since coming back from the last injury. He was better tonight than I thought the other night, and was rewarded with two goals.

Q. With Paintsil out, you had to rely more on Pec and on Puig, you're getting a lot out of your designated players. Is it good to see them step in? Obviously Riqui has been at a very high level, but to see Pec step in there, as well?

Yeah, I think obviously they are playing at a high level. We are getting Gabriel involved more and he's getting more dynamic and getting more touches. We're still encouraging him a little bit to keep running ahead of the pass so that he can be playing on the move and not always just at his feet from a standstill position.

But he's showing what he's capable of doing, and I still I feel like there's so much upside still for him to continue to get at.

One of the things I want when he's hitting these curling shots, he's kind of decelerating and hitting them, and they don't have any power. We've been working on him trying to accelerate through the ball, and really, because then I think he'll hit it with more power, and he'll have more chances to finish some of those off where I think the goalkeepers are having an easier time. I think he's got to keep adding those things to his game.

Obviously Riqui has been playing at a high level, and just his capacity to accelerate is ridiculous, and get through spaces. And guys who are really fast, can't catch them. It's extraordinary to see, and so obviously he's there.

I have to give a lot of credit to Diego. Like he -- I know he doesn't have a lot on the scoreboard, but he does so many little things in our team on the defensive side and positionally and helping us to keep possession and move things to the next spot and he's like such a good systematic player for us that we don't have the speed that Joseph brings to the game and what Joseph brings to the game.

But Diego is really good at helping the team function, and to make sure that guys get in the right places and for him to have his impact on the game.

So I think guys are stepping in and stepping up. As you said, Dejan gets a couple tonight. We've got to keep doing that for at least one more game and then see where we are at after that.

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