



LA Galaxy Media Conference

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Greg Vanney

Press Conference

Salt Lake 2, LA Galaxy 0

Q. Two goals in the first half, but then it seemed pretty level on the day. What can you say about the performance and is it disappointing to follow up the midweek Championship Cup draw against Tigres with this performance, with this loss?

GREG VANNEY: Yeah, I mean, first I would say, I mean, in the grand scheme of things, they probably created three chances and scored two goals.

So I thought in the first half, a little bit, they were overloading our back line, and we didn't necessarily go a great job of managing that situation. I thought we were impatient with the ball at times, which also got us kind of spread out. This isn't the easiest place to play when it comes to altitude, and the field is in terrible condition. It's not a game you want to get into transitions back-and-forth, up-and-down. It's not an easy place for stuff like that, and I felt like we were rushing our possessions; and then we weren't really getting to the ball pressure-wise on the defensive side; and then they were overloading the back line; and we weren't doing a great job of managing that, which is what I think led to a couple of the chances and bad decisions on the second goal to release to try to get pressure to the ball; and then we don't get pressure to the ball, and we just get opened up. So yeah, I think that's errors in there.

It's disappointing to give up two goals because I feel like once we kind of settled in and became a touch more patient on the ball and closed up some of the spaces, then I felt like, okay, everything was relatively managed. The question was, can we create chances; and the answer to that so far most of the season has been not very much. We had still a lot of attacks that looked like they can be promising and they turn into not much promising.

And so then it becomes an uphill battle when you're at altitude, down two goals, and you're not, in the moment, we're not creating clear chances. We had some look, shots from distance and some things that look like we are going to get to somewhere good and then we don't.

And this week as many injuries we have in four games, there's priorities, let's just be straight. There's priorities. This week, backing up the Champions League game to this game, I would have liked us to be cleaner in this game, especially on the defensive side and not giving up the goals.

But there's priorities that are also focused on Tuesday right now. And then we finished this four-game stretch with a home game. There's priorities, and given where we are health-wise and everything else, we just have to try to manage through some of these moments.

So there was opportunities inside of today for some guys who haven't played a ton to be able to kind of learn and show what they are going to continue to bring and grow inside of it, and so they had some opportunity.



But the reality of the situation is we're just trying to one game at a time, continue to get healthy, build the fitness level of a couple guys, but not risk guys. So like John and Miki are two guys who are coming back from having injuries for two to three weeks. They can't play four games in two weeks right now. It's a huge risk for them. We tried to manage them through this one.

Joe, build his fitness by managing him. There's a lot of variables we're playing with right now, and trying to prioritize the things that we can prioritize while looking at two big games in front of us, as well.

Q. No shot on target today created by the team. Where was that disconnect offensively and what would you have like to have seen from this rotated squad?

GREG VANNEY: I think, again, we get into some attacks where we look like we're building some speed and we hit across into somebody, instead of getting across where we need to. We get somebody in a crossing situation, and we don't get a hard run to the near post across the face of the goal; that disrupts the keeper's ability to come out and handle it. We get some knock-down second shots from 12 yards or 14 yards out, and we sky it over the bar.

It's like some of these things have to fit together, creating chances is not super easy. It's something where you've got to have two or three parts fit together and you have to fit together in the final action. I felt like, again, I felt like details on that were, I keep saying the same thing, but I felt like the technique sometimes failed us, the choice sometimes failed us. And you know, and sometimes it was -- neither team was creating a ton of chances to be fair. It was not an easy field to play on and to combine actions and stuff like that in the final action.

I felt like that wasn't the only thing that hurt us but I felt like that didn't help us and I felt like we're already having a hard time connecting parts of an action to make sure that it ends up in a really good chance.

There was some of that inside of there, too. So you aggregate it and you end up with not a lot. Tuck had a couple of good looks from reasonable distance. You'd like to think we would hit that goal. We had a couple breaks on the right where it felt like maybe we could get the ball into a dangerous place, and we hit a defender that we're trying to cross to or we hit into the keeper. Just little execution things that we've got to tighten up.

Q. Noticed that Gabriel Pec was not on the team sheet today or training on Thursday. How serious is that hip injury, and will he be available on Tuesday? What's his prognosis look like?

GREG VANNEY: You probably recall the play where he was going pretty close to top speed and their player from Tigres cuts him off, and he lands on his back; and hip and the non-yellow-card-somehow situation, he landed very awkward. Like a hip pointer or hip contusion inside of that. The goal here was to not put him out there today because we felt like a few days could really benefit him and getting him ready for Tuesday.

So the hope is that he'll be ready for Tuesday. He'll be into the training environment tomorrow, so that we can see him moving around and see exactly how he's feeling and loosening up and things like that.

We're optimistic, but I can't give that you answer right this minute.

Q. And then that's seven games now without a win here in the League. I've spoken to a couple of the players and they feel that the team is just right there on the cusp, the performances are getting better, but with this type of performance, does it set the locker room, or yourself even, back in belief at all? Is it a challenge to stay positive during this stretch?

GREG VANNEY: No. I mean, we are all frustrated at the loss on the day and the way we gave up goals, and of course the day was going to be its challenge no matter what. I think we are all realistic about certain things.

So I think the key here is that you have to understand and the guys understand that we were here to get a result and grind and dig something out. But also that we had a rotated group; that we wanted to try to get us as far into this game at 0-0 or grind it out or put us into a position to get a result and see where that left us for the last 30, 45 minutes.

Everybody kind of understands. Nobody likes losing and everybody feels these things. But the reality is you feel very



different. Doesn't matter what team it is, when you can get your best players on the field that have the best opportunity to create chances, create goals, the continuity of the group matters, things like that.

We are all very aware that Tuesday is a huge opportunity for us as a team and a club in Champions League, and then again, home games are going to need to be important. Those are games we really need to get wins and get stuff out of. So it's a priority.

Again, nobody likes to lose and everybody is disappointed and upset and frustrated, but at the same time it will be a very different look in the group and feel as we go into a very difficult place to play in Tigres on Tuesday.

Q. Speaking of Tuesday, will you have -- you had mentioned that you were targeting Mauricio for Tuesday, Lucas for Tuesday. Will Marco be available for Tuesday?

GREG VANNEY: Of the group of players you just named, Lucas is probably the closest to being ready. Mauricio is getting there. You know, he has not really put any like real training sessions under his belt but he's doing a lot of the controlled environment stuff that he needs to do to be making progress. So I don't think he would be ready by Tuesday. We'll see if he's ready by the weekend.

You know, Marco was out running on the field, which is a step in the right direction from where he was, you know, a week ago or a few days ago. But I don't think he's done enough in terms of preparation to necessarily be ready for Tuesday.

So maybe Lucas, obviously Gab, hopefully will be back, and then some of the guys that obviously didn't get a ton of minutes or any minutes today are guys who we have ready to go for Tuesday.

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