



LA Galaxy Media Conference

Sunday, April 27, 2025

Los Angeles, California, USA

Greg Vanney

Press Conference

Portland 4, LA Galaxy 2

Q. Hi, Greg, my name is Landon. I would like to ask you, how do you feel about the current squad, and are there any plans for the summer transfer window to add any new players? Thank you for your time.

GREG VANNEY: Thank you for the question, Landon. I appreciate you coming and asking.

How do I feel about the current squad? You know I trust the guys, and I like them. I feel like we have some good moments and some good stretches and then we are a little snake bit and we sometimes create our own issues and sometimes we have some tough moments.

But I like our group. We've got to keep working and find the solutions inside of our group to help us turn the results around.

Thank you for your question.

Q. Hi, name is Jeremy Contreras, and I am ten years old. Coach Vanney, after a bad losing streak, how do you keep the team motivated?

GREG VANNEY: Jeremy, thank you for the question. Thank you for coming. It's a good question, actually.

Yeah, I mean, we keep the team motivated by, again, just trying to keep our objectives clear. Find the right solutions inside of our group to be able to step on the field with confidence in the next game, and preparing them, seeing the opposition and trying to understand exactly what the solutions are going into the next game to try to win each one of these games.

You know, it's all in preparation and trying to set these guys up to be as successful as possible and keeping them looking forward. Thanks for your question.

You guys don't have anything else to ask after these guys.

Q. How tired are you of all of this?

GREG VANNEY: Which part?

Q. Just going through this week-after-week. You guys do enough to be in position to take charge of the game and it doesn't happen.

GREG VANNEY: Yeah, you know, I felt -- again, I felt there were stretches in the first game, first half, we had some



opportunities to be really dangerous to open the scoring, I felt like, and we let some slip away that looked like they were going to be really promising. And one instance towards the end of the half when we I feel like we are pretty in control, and they are not really going anywhere and the game's in front of us most of the time. We get opened up and they end up in our box and we don't deal with the situation, and now we're going into halftime.

While I didn't feel like we were necessarily super sharp or super on it in the first half, I felt like we were controlled and we were fine, right, without -- and we were getting what I thought was the better looks through the half, even though I felt like we still were a little tight.

Yeah, we were a little tight. It didn't feel like it was smooth for us and free. I felt like we were a little bit tight.

The objective in the second half was to come out and try to get us out of our heads a little bit, see if we could get the ball moving. Get the game moving forward a little bit quicker, and then we concede after that.

Again we shifted the group, which was the intention as we got in about ten minutes into the half. We were going to start to shift some pieces around, and we shifted around. We got Marco in. We sat him a little lower. We put some runners in front of him so he could release some of our attacks, and I felt like we started to really build speed and momentum into the game.

And obviously we started to build ourselves back in the game at 3-2, and I felt like we had all the momentum and we were going to keep creating chances, and just out of the blue is a penalty call that I don't -- I haven't seen it, but I'm sure in the run of it live, I didn't see a penalty. It felt like a pretty even challenge of which they were going on around the field many a times. I'd have to see it again to have a stronger opinion.

But to me from where I was, it just didn't seem -- at best, at best, it was 50/50. And you call it, it's hard to overturn. You don't call it, and nobody says anything, ever. And those should not dictate games; and it does because at 4-2 it's a much bigger hill to climb, given our time.

And it just took the momentum, and for me a bit, the steam, out of the building and the momentum out of the team a little bit.

After that, we had kept fighting, and we still had chances. We hit the crossbar and we do some other things, and the guys kept pushing.

So it was also, for me, to look at some things. I've got to find a solution inside of our group. We've got to win the midfield in these games and we've got to be able to get ourselves moving, I think, a little bit more freely. I think sometimes we feel like we keep going to sometimes the simple basic option when we need to be more confident to play through the line and build speed to get ourselves moving with numbers into attacks.

Defensively, again, just we were, I felt like, pretty clean through stretches of it, and then we just make one mistake and then it feels like the momentum is against us again, and then the others come.

We've got to be way tougher, I don't know if that's the word. But, like, in transition moments, it's just too easy to get out from us. We don't foul. We don't impose ourselves in some of these situations, and turns like -- what looks like we have numbers in between the ball and the attack, and we can impede it or we can, again, end it.

We're kind of a little naïve in those moments, and then we're dealing with things in our half and deep in our half. There's things like that that we need to clean up because we're just leaving ourselves vulnerable over 90 minutes.

Q. I was reading the response from the referee.

GREG VANNEY: There's no response. They are never wrong. So it doesn't matter. It's impossible. Like, how do you get better if you can never look in the mirror, and say, You know what maybe I need to get better today.

Look, we need to get better and I need to get better with the group and I can stand in front of you and tell it. Why can't they come in front of the media and say, You know what, we need to get better; that wasn't good enough. Because today, it wasn't good enough. It's not good enough for this level. And they need to accept it and own it and say it, we'll all have more



respect for the situation when they can also sit up from us like us and say, We need to get better.

We, the LA Galaxy need to get better. And so do they. So do those people that are in charge of helping the game to flow smoothly and giving the two teams the best equal chance to win the game. They need to be better, too. Anyways.

Q. You talk about winning the midfield. With this group, do you have to change maybe the mindset of players like Isaiah and Edwin a little bit there to get things moving forward?

GREG VANNEY: Yeah, it's tough to -- yeah. It's tough to say change is a mindset but yes.

I mean, you know, we have to be harder to play against in the midfield. We have to be more brave to play forward sometimes in the midfield. We've got to create more density in there and just be harder. I feel like teams foul us through the midfield a lot to slow us down and we just let teams kind of run through us through the midfield.

We need to be sturdier. The spine of our team needs to be sturdier, and needs to be, again, more present. And I think it comes from confidence. I think it comes from, again, mindset in some ways, and I feel like we're being a little shy in there and we need to be a little more brave and impose ourselves in there.

The game is a lot of times won and lost in the middle of the field, especially with the way we go about doing things, but it's also in transitions and all these moments. A lot of things are won and lost in the middle of the field, and we have to be able to really control and impose ourselves in that space better.

Q. You brought up Marco Reus, a goal and an assist, and as you said, he started to turn things around and you guys got runners back in with Joseph running towards the goal, something you've been talking about. Can he be a longer-term answer in terms of more minutes to turn that around?

GREG VANNEY: I think he can. It's something that I have to calculate, and it's on me is to figure out the right solution with Marco defensively and attacking-wise and allowing him to run and dictate our game.

Today we shifted it to put an extra defender kind of behind him and to allow that. Those are things that I'm looking within our group now to figure out A, how do we win the midfield, and how do we continue to create chances to get our guys in the best positions to go score goals and win things.

Some of that is looking at some of those things. But you know Marco's quality has to be a solution for us, but we also have to do some of the work for him and with him and around him so that we can be steady on both sides of the ball. Because it's a big ask for him to do both of those things for 60 to 90 minutes. You know, he just came off of being sort of injured. So my goal was to set up the game for him to come in and do what he did. I was just hoping it wasn't from three.

But yeah, that has to be one of the solutions for sure.

Q. I know it's been a frustrating season and this game was frustrating for you, the players, and we heard it from the fan base toward the end of the game plan. What's your message to the fans who are confused by the current situation going on?

GREG VANNEY: Yeah, I understand their frustration. It's all of us. We're all frustrated. Because you come off such a high in 2024. The last thing you want to be is digging yourself out of a hole in 2025 right off the bat. And so I get it.

I ask just support and patience. We've got to find solutions inside of our group. We lost some really important players, especially in these key areas that I'm talking about and experience and things like that.

And so, support and patience. We're going to find solutions, and we're going to keep building within the roster as much as we can. Where we can create financial space to be able to do that in the right types of players, we will. We know what our formula looks like. We've got to keep building towards it, and with the current group, it's on me to keep working toward solutions.

Now, we're healthier: Maya back, Isaac back, guys like that. We have to find a solution to start building momentum. The



season is not done at all. If we can just get on the right side of a little bit of momentum, then you can get yourself right back in this thing pretty quickly. I think there's still a ton to play for.

Again, just inside of this group of players, we're trying to find the right solutions, and we just have a group that some guys are having to taken much more responsibility than they have had to take on in the past in order to be here at the L.A. Galaxy at the champion -- home of the champion, and now you have the pressure to take on some things that some of these guys have never had to do before.

So we need to build them up, and I need to keep working with guys to bring them forward and to trust them and to put them out there to grow. And I'm confident these guys can get there.

But we've got to keep working through it and dig through it. I completely understand it. I'm with them. But I'm focusing on solutions inside of this to try to keep moving our group to where we want to be.

We want to be fighting for the seventh ring, right. We're not there right this minute but we're going to build towards it and we're going to get there but I can't tell you we're there today, that's for sure.

Q. You have three away matches coming up and then three matches against California rivals here, a tough stretch coming up. How big is May for the success of this season? Conceivably if May goes badly, mathematically are you worried about where this team would be standing at the end of May?

GREG VANNEY: You know, two things. One thing, we have to continue to build clarity on how we can be successful as a group and what that's going to look like for us and resiliency because it's three road games. We have to go on the road and really fight and be resilient and be tough and find solutions inside of these games.

But with all of these road games, if we can build that type of clarity and resiliency, there are lots of home games and stretches of home games from us where we are going to have to attack those to go get points as well.

So there's ways we can grow in this next phase and go dig out some points and compete and fight together as a group, and come home in a better, stronger position to try to take the home points that are going to come from being on the road, right.

You've got to make up the balance of this at some point, and so this is an opportunity for us just to dig deep and go out there and depend on each other and trust in each other, and get some results and come home and build on that. So one game at a time at a time for us is kind of where our mindset is right now.

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