

POST GAME QUOTES
Saturday, April 8, 2023
LAFC VS. Austin FC

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Opening Statement

"Tonight, we're obviously very happy with another good performance and result after a Champions League match. Last time around it was against New England, this time against Austin. I'm extremely happy with the way the guys performed in Vancouver, we turned it around in a couple of days' time, performing with discipline, and defend as a group and in a smart manner."

"We did not give up much at all. Even though we conceded some possession, we didn't concede any chances in the first half. We did make an adjustment around the 31' minute which then made things a little easier. The game turned completely after that point, and we were in complete control towards the end."

"We didn't dominate, but the scoreboard helps. Scoring goals at the right moment also helps but very happy with the guys. I would like also to point out Denis Bouanga, who continued to score and be dominant. He is always a threat, which allows other players also to find better spots and moments."

"A couple of players who came on tonight who haven't played a lot lately is Sergi Palencia, who had a fantastic performance. It's like he has been a starter for five years at LAFC, and has learned our system. He's coming along very well in our system, and should be an intelligent player who hasn't missed a beat."

"Denil Maldonado came out tonight and played very well next to Giorgio Chiellini. There aren't very many players that are better to pair up than Gorgio, but Daniel was excellent. He didn't make a mistake tonight and was aggressive with his defending forward when all his aerial battles. I'm very happy to get him in the game and see that performance as well."

"Lastly, Erik Dueñas, our Academy product who came on in a very good manner, tried to get him a goal but it just wasn't his night. I'm sure there'll be many more in his career. It's wonderful to see academy players come through and get their first meaningful minutes. Not only get minutes, but perform very well at a high level."

RE: On Denis Bouanga being a true scorer at the 9 position and coaching him into better spaces:

"He was in the same space as last year as he is this year. It's just a little more frequent now than it was last season. We have to understand at the end of last season games were a little tighter in the playoffs and teams didn't give up as much, but certainly he is obviously confident and is scoring some great goals. Preparing players in preseason also gives you more time, more looks, and not so much patterns but habits and behaviors in certain portions of the field."

"Denis profited from that in the preseason but also the others in trying to find him a better spot. Time with a group definitely helps, but I don't think there's a whole lot of coaching going on with a player of his quality. The guy just scores, he's a threat on the dribble, and threat off the

crosses. If we could teach him how to set up moves more often and a little better, then then he's hands down the best player in the league. There is still room to improve and that's the scary thing."

RE: On adjustments made and how it impacted the game:

"It's just a simple shift in midfield, put two-sixes and one-10, instead of our classic three flat, three with a six, and 28. A small adjustment to help get a little more pressure on the ball, break up their little box that they felt they were building and quite successfully."

"We conceded a possession but I didn't feel they were a threat, but certainly conceding possession over 90 minutes like that is not an option. We had to make a change and after that the coast was clear, so to speak."