

POST GAME QUOTES
Wednesday, May 17, 2023
LAFC VS. Sporting Kansas City



STEVE CHERUNDOLO
LAFC HEAD COACH

RE: One of the things you talk about is box defending, what do you put down the amount of box entries and the softness of their ability to get into the box

“We spoke about that at half, we just dropped and didn't apply enough pressure on the ball while they were going forward and we talked about that at half time and it was much better the 2nd half. Just a kind of a lull in the game after we went up and we had a few chances and a had a very bright start to the game. I think the goal was the first thing that could happen to us, unfortunately because we started to become passive and drop, which is what we did not want to do against the ball. That's when you see those situations. I'm not sure there was a whole lot, it just looked that way because it doesn't happen to us very often, so if you had a number for me it would be better, but I'm not sure it was too concerning. But certainly, it concerned us enough to speak about it at half and to correct the mistakes.”

RE: Was it fitness? Was there a running problem at all?

“I'm not sure this is our 16th, 17th, 18th game, I'm not sure, so there is an element of fatigue, absolutely. Certainly not a fitness problem, I think you can see that towards the end of the game, which team running, trying to attack and score the goal.”

RE: Has the amount of pressure shifted on you as a coach and are there any lessons you learned in Germany that you have translated into coaching?

“Personally, the pressure is relative and artificial, it's a word. It doesn't have to mean anything to the players and it doesn't have to mean anything to us or coaches. IF you just view the game as the next 45 minutes and you approach it as the always the next 45 minutes, it becomes much simpler and everything else goes out the window. How can we be better than our opponent for the next 45 min. If you continue to do that week for week or half for half, then you're going to like the result at the end of the season. And so, I think not getting ahead of yourself and not thinking about the bigger picture as far as results go, that takes care of pressure all together. To answer your question, I really don't feel pressure. Any game or any competition, whether it's Monopoly with my kids and family or a game that's with LAFC, I want to win. I'm not really concerned with the pressure, for those who are I think it can be a little hamper and it can hold you back a little bit. For me it's totally artificial and I don't waste my time thinking about it.”

RE: Can you walk us through the substitutions and the change of shape throughout the game?

“Just in the middle playing with two holding 6's and one ten as opposed to 1 holding six and two 8's. Sometimes that alleviates a little bit of our defensive structure and allows us to step a little higher. Pressing them with 4 instead of 3 initially and it also helps us with keeping the opponent trapped on one side to engage in the battles and win the ball. Sometimes it helps us, it kind of depends on the opponent and how they're playing and their formations. And sometimes we feel more comfortable or more effective in a normal 4-3-3. That's all that is one small change in the middle of the field. Nothing drastic.”

RE: What do those young guys bring to the game?

“First and foremost a lot of energy, fresh legs, energy. I think m showed that. He created some situations for us, I think we scored a pretty good goal. The only video I have privy to is the iPad in front of our bench and for me he's onside, but that's the picture I saw. I don't know what picture the referee saw. It would be great if we all saw the same picture. I'd like to believe in 2023 that we the technology to do that, but apparently, we do not. All four of them brought a lot of energy and they're very close to breaking into starting positions. They should always be knocking on that door and they did their job today.”

RE: What is it about this team that's allowed Denis to thrive?

“This year it's Denis, last year it was Chicho, it's always Carlos, Mahala as well. Before he went to Real Salt Lake it was Danny Musovski at the beginning of last season. The way we play is geared towards attackers and creating chances and scoring goals. IF you're an attacker and you run towards the goal and you have a decent finish on you, you're going to score goals at LAFC. That's exactly what Denis is doing, those are his attributes, that's what embodies him. He has figured that out. Our patterns, the way our runs are, timing, our teammates, habits of his teammates, the types of passes they play. Once that all gels and once a player figures that out, they are going to be very prolific at LAFC.”

RE: With the game on Saturday, what's the mindset considering the last outcome against San Jose?

“Any game we play to win, that's the mindset. For the next two days, it's about recovery and then we will talk about San Jose. Our previous match was still fresh in our minds, so there isn't a whole lot of opponent analysis going on. For us it's about recovery. San Jose did not have a good game, so we'll obviously be fresh and recharged for the game and we will do our best to put an energetic team out there in order to win our game, and that's our objective.”

RE: Update on Aaron Long and the rest of the center backs

“Aaron no injury just precautionary. Denil is fine, he continued to play 90 min. Murillo is very close to joining us again”