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## Davies showing promise with FCD

### Hyndman impressed with 20-year-old MLS rookie in first start

By Steve Hunt / MLSnet.com Staff

FRISCO, Texas -- In a week that saw his first significant action since joining FC Dallas, 20-year-old defender Kyle Davies made his first start Saturday in the club's 3-1 loss to the Houston Dynamo.

At midweek, Davies played the full 90 minutes of a 2-0 win in a friendly with CS Herediano of Costa Rica, and used that experience as a springboard to secure his first MLS start.

"I thought Kyle did great," FCD head coach Schellas Hyndman said. "I think any coach would be nervous about how a player will do in their first game. He's a young player. He's the captain of the (U.S.) under-20s. What I keep hearing from Thomas Rongen is that he's a better game player than a practice player. He's done well in practice but I thought he did well in the game. He gives us a bright spot. We're sitting with six injured players and three of those are center backs. It's nice to see a young player get a chance to do a good job."

Davies was matched up with Dynamo forward Kei Kamara in the first half and while the tall striker did get three shots off, few of those efforts were dangerous.

"He's a very physical player," Davies said of Kamara. "He loves to get his body in front of you and weight you off the ball. I thought I fared all right. He got in front of me a couple of times but it was a good challenge."

At the break, Houston head coach Dominic Kinnear brought in the speedy Dominic Oduro for Kamara but Davies' performance didn't drop off in the least.

"Kyle did well," FCD right back Drew Moor said. "He's a good player. He's going to be fine. He's been great the last couple of weeks. He was great midweek in our friendly against the Costa Rican team. He talks a lot. His communication reminds me of (former FCD center back) Clarence Goodson. He's going to be a good defender. He is a good defender."

When told about Rongen's statement about him being a better game player than a practice player, Davies took no issue with his U-20 coach's assessment.

"He does say that," he said. "I have to agree. I do try hard in practice but I think in games, I'm actually more comfortable. I feel more comfortable and more confident in what I'm doing."

For the entire night, Davies was paired with captain Pablo Ricchetti in central defense, a player whose experience he continues to draw from.

"It's great not only watching him but playing with him because he's a veteran and he's so experienced," Davies said. "He makes me more confident, always talking to me and leading me in the right direction."

And when it comes to being vocal, Davies admits that is something that just goes with the territory regardless of whether a player is a rookie or a seasoned veteran.

"I think it kind of comes from being a center back," he said. "In that position, you have to be the organizer, the one who is giving other people direction. There's no point in coming in and not doing the best you can do. I tried to come in and just do what I always do."

FCD might have lost to the two-time defending champs 3-1 but other than the final result, Davies' first taste of the FCD-Dynamo rivalry was a good one.

"They brought down a good amount of fans and it was a good atmosphere (Saturday)," he said. "It was an unfortunate result but a good atmosphere for my first game."

Injuries to fellow center backs George John, Steve Purdy and Daniel Torres helped Davies get an opportunity, but the young defender realizes even after his solid performance against Houston, him returning to the first 11 next Saturday against defending league champion Columbus is far from assured.

"That's my hope, yeah," he said. "Only time will tell. We'll see next weekend. Obviously, you play one game and it doesn't mean anything. It's an accumulation of games, training well and doing all the small things right, so we'll see."

Besides making his league debut, another perk of Davies' first start on Saturday was that he got to play alongside longtime friend Anthony Wallace, now FCD's starting left back. "I'm really comfortable next to him," he said. "We've played together in so many games now since under-17s. It was good."

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