Marsch wants broader player pool after Copa test

AFP- Canada coach Jesse Marsch saw his team's Copa America dream end with a 2-0 loss to world champions Argentina on Tuesday and said that the unexpected run to the last four had taken a toll on his side.

American Marsch, the former RB Leipzig and Leeds United manager has quickly installed his high-energy, hard-pressing style on the Canada team since taking over in May.

But he conceded that he could see his players were struggling to bring that approach in the New Jersey heat after a run of five games in the competition and accepted he needed a broader selection of players to call on.

"I think that the tournament caught up with us a little bit. Argentina rotated a lot of players throughout the tournament so… they weren't calling on the same players every match," he said.

"There's been heat, there's been travel, there's been a lot of challenges. In the end, we're still in the beginning of our process. Argentina has maybe had eight years together with this team.

"So we need to develop more players that can contribute so that we can also rotate in tournament play because eventually the physicality and the fatigue can catch up with you. And that was a big part of what happened with us tonight," he said.

Despite the disappointment of the loss, Marsch said the run to the semis in Canada's first appearance in the Copa America was a notable achievement.

“What I said to the team afterwards is I know that they’re very disappointed, but I’m very proud of them. We’ve put together some incredible performances,” he said.

“We are just starting our process but we’ve had a wonderful five or six weeks together and it’s gone way better than any of us could have scripted. So, there’s still a lot of work to do, but we’ve built a really good foundation and I’m really optimistic about what the future can look like,” he said.

Canada will be co-hosts of the 2026 World Cup along with the USA and Mexico.

Marsch said that when he first took over the team he feared the Copa America might be too tough of an initial test for his squad but he was glad to have been proven wrong.

“We performed well in most of those matches which was good and so we’re way ahead already of where I would have thought we could possibly be and I’m thankful to have the opportunities to play the opponents that we’ve played because it’s made us much stronger.

“We will definitely use it to help us grow and develop and build confidence in what we’re doing.”

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