

Xabi Alonso Stresses Real Madrid's Total Focus Ahead of Crucial Champions League Clash With Manchester City

Real Madrid manager **Xabi Alonso** has made it clear that his team's attention is fixed squarely on their pivotal **Champions League showdown with Manchester City** at the Santiago Bernabéu. Speaking to the media on Tuesday, Alonso emphasized that despite the turbulence surrounding the club in recent weeks, the squad remains united and fully committed to delivering a strong performance on Europe's biggest stage.

The Spanish coach, who took over at Real Madrid this past summer after a successful spell at Bayer Leverkusen, enters Wednesday night's match under mounting pressure. A disappointing **2-0 defeat to Celta Vigo** on Sunday has intensified scrutiny, particularly as it left Los Blancos trailing league leaders Barcelona by four points in the **LaLiga standings**. The loss also extended Madrid's troubling run of form, with only **two victories in their last seven matches across all competitions**.

Alonso Acknowledges Pressure – but Says Madrid Must Embrace It

Despite the growing concern among fans and pundits, Alonso remained composed during his press conference. He underlined that managing Real Madrid inevitably brings intense pressure, and that he is prepared to handle both the expectations and the criticism that accompany the role.

"When you coach Real Madrid, you have to be prepared for these situations," Alonso said. "After the defeat against Celta, we analyzed everything thoroughly. Now our only focus is on the match against Manchester City. It's the Champions League, we're at the Bernabéu, and the atmosphere will be different, special, and full of energy. That is where our mindset is right now."

Real Madrid's problems against Celta were made worse by **red cards to Fran García and Álvaro Carreras**, meaning Alonso will be forced to shuffle his defensive options for the Champions League fixture. Nevertheless, he insisted that adversity must be met with calmness and clarity.

"This is a team, and we face situations together," he added. "Being the coach of Real Madrid requires the ability to face challenges calmly and responsibly. I'm looking forward to what's

ahead, starting with tomorrow's match. In football, things can change very quickly, and we are in one of those moments where a single good performance can shift the momentum."

Champions League Stakes Rising After Loss to Liverpool

Real Madrid's Champions League campaign began strongly, but last month's defeat to Liverpool – one of Alonso's former clubs – ended their perfect start to the group stage. While Madrid still remain in a favorable position to progress, the margin for error has narrowed. A second consecutive setback could place qualification in jeopardy, especially with Manchester City pushing hard to climb into the top eight places.

Alonso acknowledged the significance of the upcoming fixture:

"It's a big match — the kind of match that offers a great opportunity for us to keep moving forward with more points in the Champions League. The players understand what type of game to expect, and we hope to deliver our best performance. We are mentally prepared for everything that comes. The team is united and confident that we can win. To achieve that, we need rhythm, intensity, and a complete performance."

Tchouaméni: "We All Have to Pull in the Same Direction"

Real Madrid midfielder **Aurélien Tchouaméni** echoed the manager's sentiment, reinforcing that the squad remains united despite the difficult run of results. According to the French international, the team understands that collective responsibility is crucial if they are to reverse their current trajectory.

"We're all in this together," Tchouaméni said. "If we want to win games, everyone has to pull in the same direction. We know that we must improve on the pitch. Tomorrow gives us a great opportunity to change the momentum and earn important points in the Champions League."

The midfielder's comments reflect a broader belief within the squad that a strong performance against Manchester City could help reset their season and restore confidence.

Concerns Over Kylian Mbappé's Fitness

Perhaps the biggest storyline ahead of the match surrounds the availability of **Kylian Mbappé**, who has been Real Madrid's standout performer this season. With **30 goals in 25 appearances** across club and international competitions, Mbappé has quickly become vital to Alonso's attacking system.

However, a major doubt emerged when the forward **missed training on Tuesday**, raising fears that he may not be available for the decisive Champions League encounter. Real Madrid have not yet provided specific details regarding the nature of his issue, but the possibility of facing

Manchester City without their most prolific scorer adds another layer of intrigue — and concern — to the matchup.

High Stakes, High Expectations at the Bernabéu

Wednesday's tie against Manchester City is not just another group-stage match; it is a defining moment in Real Madrid's season. With the league title race tightening and their Champions League campaign at a potential turning point, the pressure on Alonso and his squad is considerable.

Yet the Bernabéu is no stranger to nights of immense pressure, and Real Madrid has built its legacy on thriving in high-stakes European encounters. Alonso's message to his players — and indirectly to the fans — is clear: remain calm, trust the process, and seize the moment.

If Madrid can produce a commanding performance, the narrative surrounding the team could shift dramatically. A victory would restore confidence, reduce pressure on Alonso, and create fresh momentum heading into the final stretch of the group stage.

What This Match Means for Real Madrid's Season

In summary, the clash with Manchester City represents more than just a battle for points:

- **A win** would strengthen their Champions League standing and alleviate pressure.
- **A draw** keeps them competitive but prolongs uncertainty.
- **A defeat** intensifies scrutiny and complicates their path to automatic qualification.

As Alonso noted, football can change quickly — and Wednesday offers Madrid the chance to change everything for the better.