



NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION

TRANSCRIPT

TRANSCRIPT (7/18): Press Conference

Match Preview soundbytes from Head Coach Caleb Porter & M Matt Polster

Revolution Head Coach Caleb Porter

On how the group has reflected on Wednesday night's match and preparing for Saturday's game against Orlando City SC:

Porter: "I think it's one of those where we know what happened. It was a tale of two halves. It was a great first half, one of the best of the year. Followed by a not good half, where we fell apart at 2-1. Some of that, I said it, I think had to do with fatigue. Some of it had to do with changes we had to make. We had some key guys out, as well. So, in the end, it doesn't do any good to beat the dead horse. We have to move on from it, and it's my belief that it won't happen again. We have to reset mentally, recover physically, and throw everything into this game. That's the most important thing, is that we get the three points versus Orlando."

On the importance of the team's mentality in moving past Wednesday's result:

Porter: "I think in every game, the mentality is really important. Obviously, that second half, everybody will remember it and that hurts. We didn't play well, but the first half was really good. When you look at what our mentality looked like to start the game, how we played, that first goal was 16 or 17 passes from back to front- unbelievable goal. There's a lot of reason to believe that we will get it right in the next game. We just have to learn from, obviously, the 2-1 [point in Wednesday's game]. We have to be stronger. Again, having Brayan [Ceballos] out, Mamadou [Fofana] out, for sure that's a factor. But for me, it's not something that I've seen from this group and it's not something I expect moving forward. We're not going to overanalyze it. We're just going to move on from it and continue to focus on how we played in that first half."

On his expectations for Orlando City SC and the challenges they present:

Porter: "We're in game 23 now, so we've played a lot of good teams. Orlando's another team good team. They're pretty well balanced, they have talent, they have a good coach, and they're capable of beating anybody. Recently, I think, they have two losses and two draws. They have a great attacking group, and Oscar [Pareja] is a great coach. Typically, they're athletic, good in transition, good on set pieces, and very well balanced. They're very well-rounded overall, which is why they've been so consistent over the last several years under Oscar. We have to perform well. I think we've shown that when we perform well, we can beat anybody. We just need to perform well for 90-plus minutes."

On Leo Campana's two-goal performance in Wednesday's game and the chemistry he's building with Luca Langoni in the attack:

Porter: "That's a really good sign. Obviously, it's a huge positive that we can't lose sight of. He [Campana] gets two goals in the match. It's another game where he and Luca [Langoni] look good together. I thought, without overstating it, that first half was one of the best of the year. We just need to build on that and correct what happened in the second half. But I liked the way he played, I loved the first goal that he took. Even that was after a chance where he missed, which I loved his mentality to bounce back and then finish the next one. Then, even when our team was struggling, he stuck with it, and he gets his second goal. I really loved that mentality out of him. I think Luca and him are playing really well together."

On how the team has worked through injuries to outside defenders Peyton Miller and Ilay Feingold:

Porter: "Peyton [Miller] we had to take out at half [on Wednesday], which was unfortunate. He was playing really well. Obviously, he's been a key guy, especially in this new structure we're playing. The wingbacks are huge, and we've had both those guys [Miller and Ilay Feingold] out recently. I do think Brandon [Bye] has been doing a really good job. He sets up the first goal with an excellent cross. But with Peyton going out, it was difficult. A bit unfair to some of the guys to get thrown right in, because they're in a game that becomes open, while we're chasing it. They haven't played together a lot, so there's not a ton of continuity. Certainly, I'm not pinning it on those guys. With Peyton, he's had this little ankle issue and his calf was tight in the first half, and he had to come out. We couldn't do much on the pitch today, so we're continuing to evaluate it. Hopefully, he'll be available for at least some minutes in this game."

On continuing to build toward a complete 90-minute performance as the playoff race becomes more intense:

Porter: "We've done a lot of good stuff in this stretch, but the bottom line is we have not won enough games. That's the reality, which means now the margins are tighter for us at the end of the year. In some ways, maybe that's good, because we know what we need to do. It's about the next game and getting three points. We have to take it one at a time. We know we have some work to do, but we have eight [games] at home. And we know we're capable. That's the other thing that gives us confidence, because we've shown in every game that we can do it against anybody in the league. We've played the best teams, a lot of the best teams. So, I think the confidence is still there. The team is very much still bought in. I met with the leadership council today and they still have a ton of confidence that we can get enough points to make the playoffs and make a run. We just have to stay focused on one [game] at a time. After this game, we have now a game every week. We'll have a full week of prep for the next 11 games, which is huge. It's really important that we throw everything into this next game and get the three points, which will give us a good feeling, and then allow us to kind of reset and prepare for Montréal at home [on July 25], as well."

Revolution Midfielder Matt Polster

On reflecting on Wednesday's loss and how the team can respond on Saturday vs. Orlando City:

Polster: "I think it's more the response than the reflection. We as a group, and as individuals, we know what we did right and wrong. I think we played well in the first half, and then we sat a little bit deeper and we defended for too-long spells in the second [half]. But you can't really reflect too much on the past when you have a game in two days. For us, the most important thing is to now look forward [to] Orlando at home, give the fans [something] to be happy [about] in the way of winning a game. For us, it's all focus on getting three points."

On the opportunity of playing eight of the next 12 games at home:

Polster: "I think we went on a stretch during the year where we played really good [football] and we won a lot of games, and then now we're in a little bit of a spell where we need to get out of it. But we have that opportunity in front of us. Like you said, eight of 12 to be at home and more than enough quality in this team and enough talent in this team to do that. So, we have a lot of opportunity, but we have to take it."

On how he is helping the team focus on Orlando as a leader of the team:

Polster: "Just forgetting about the past, trying to forget that happened and focus on what you can change. At the moment, all we can focus on and all we can control is Orlando and putting a good performance together and getting three points. As a leader, it's shifting the focus of the group and just being like, 'Let's worry about Orlando.'"

On making tactical adjustments during a game to halt an opponent's building momentum, like the second half in New York:

Polster: "In that specific situation, as a leader, I could have done a better job of getting the line up a little bit higher, not sinking so deep as a group. We defended way too deep at times and that allowed more and more pressure, and more opportunities for them to get shots on goal. Getting more pressure on the ball, pushing further up the pitch, and just applying more pressure makes it more difficult for them to get shots,

easy shots, and create more chances. Next time when we look at it or we're in that situation in a game, just being more aggressive defensively and trying to push them back."

On the team's leadership council meeting to maintain a strong mentality to work out of the current winless "rut":

Polster: "I think when you're in a 'rut' like this, obviously frustrations arise, but at the end of the day, you have to let those go. You can only control what you can control, which is the performances you put out. Right now, we as a group need to put out a really good performance against a good Orlando team at home, and start stringing some wins together at home, and being better and more difficult to play [against] at home. I don't want to reflect too much about what's going on in the past, I just want to reflect on what we can control in the future, and that's putting together a good performance [against Orlando]."

On what the leadership council discussed in the meeting, and which players have emerged as leaders during a difficult stretch of the team:

Polster: "For the first part of your question, I think it's just all being on the same page as a group. Again, it's knowing what we did wrong in the Red Bulls game and focusing on what we can control in the Orlando game. We didn't go over too much in the Red Bulls game, but we know what we did wrong. At the end of the day, we had a really good first 30 minutes. I thought in the first 45 minutes, we played pretty well, and then in the second half, we didn't do that as much. From that standpoint, we just know what we need to do when we get into those difficult moments [against] Orlando so that it doesn't happen again."

"Then as a group, we all have to become leaders, because we are in a difficult moment. But again, I think we have plenty of quality and talent in this team, and leaders in this team, and experience in this team to get out of it. It just takes one win. I think you go this weekend against Orlando, find a way to get a win, and then that can propel us into getting another."