



NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION

TRANSCRIPT

TRANSCRIPT (8/4): Matt Turner Introductory Press Conference

Soundbytes from Monday's press conference featuring Turner & Curt Onalfo

Revolution Goalkeeper Matt Turner

On Turner's tenure in England and what has changed for him since he last played for the Revolution in 2022:

Turner: "I mean, there's a lot of change. I think, first of all, you can see I have a beautiful family now, a bigger support group than I could have ever imagined back in 2016. So, 10 years later it's a big difference. Of course, I mean my European adventure, it didn't go perfectly to plan but I did learn a lot along the way. Being at Arsenal, when I was there with Aaron Ramsdale, he was PFA Team of the Season, and when I got wind that David Raya was coming in, who was a two-time Golden Glove winner since I left, I looked to make a move. I ended up at Nottingham [Forest] – I had some good times and some not-so-good times, and they went and got Matz Sels, who ended up being a Golden Glove winner. Then got a loan to Crystal Palace and at Crystal Palace Dean Henderson played his first full season in six years. So, I had some misfortunes. I had some opportunities that I didn't make the most of as well. It just didn't go perfectly to plan. However, like I said, I started my beautiful family over there, I have zero regrets about my time in England and I really loved it. I would never shut the door on a return either. But it's good to be back here right now and I need to find my form leading into the World Cup, and I think this is a really important opportunity for all of us."

On how quickly things moved on his return to New England:

Turner: "Yeah, pretty quickly, and credit to the staff here, [Sporting Director] Curt [Onalfo], [Assistant Sporting Director] Chris Tierney, [Technical Director] Remi [Roy], monitoring my situation – keeping in touch with my agent over the years. I think for me it was always New England, it was always my home, it was always coming back here, when the opportunity presented itself, and it's a good situation. It's the right time for us. I want to get to everyone's questions, so I think if I was to go into the whole situation of everything that happened, I would talk enough for this whole press conference to just end (*laughs*).

"It was a trying time, and it was difficult to be in limbo for a while, and thank you so much to my parents, and my wife's parents who are here today, because without them it would have been really difficult for our family. I mean, no one feels bad for a soccer player, right, because we make millions of dollars and it's all great and well and good, and your problems are insignificant. But to have a plan of the way things were going to go, especially with two little kids that you want to set up, get them into schools, and get their healthcare situated, and all that kind of stuff, that nitty gritty stuff that my wife has to deal with so much, and then just to be sort of left in that limbo for a while, it was difficult. And now, I turn to an extended family here in New England to take me in with open arms, and let me just focus on my work, and getting ready to achieve my ultimate goal, which we all know is to play in the 2026 World Cup here in the states."

On interacting with Revolution fans when he attended the match against Inter Miami CF in July:

Turner: "For me, when I left, I never stopped being a Revolution supporter myself. This club has meant so much to me and to my family. So, all the great ups and downs over the years, winning Supporters' Shield, and all those memories, are lifetime working memories. So, yeah, it meant a lot to us. I think we were sort of blown away by the reception. It was a last-minute decision to come to that game. We were like, 'What's happening, why don't we go?' I reached out to [Player Care Liaison] Willy [Whitelaw] who does a great job on the player care side here, and he was able to set it up, he had no questions asked, just how many tickets

do you need? He really set our family up. And to have to walk in front of the supporters, I was a little nervous. I was like, 'Oh my gosh, I'm sweating already thinking about it.' The way I felt the love from them, it was special, and it has been a while since I've really felt those arms sort of around me. It was eye opening for sure. It's good to be back in an environment where you're loved, but at the same time I don't want to sour any milk. I want to work, I want to continue the journey that I'm on here, and for this to be a huge part of launching that journey as well. And I'm not here to just parade around and be Matt Turner. I know and I understand that this club is going through some difficult moments this season, and I want to bring that winning mentality back and create relationships that will last a lifetime with the supporters and with the guys in the locker room."

On his emotions after not being a starter for the United States during the Concacaf Gold Cup and why coming to New England gives him the best opportunity to play in the 2026 World Cup:

Turner: "Yeah, obviously I was frustrated. Anytime you're a competitor and you get the opportunity to play, you want to play. But I had multiple conversations throughout the summer with the Gaffer there at the National Team [Mauricio Pochettino]. Sometimes you're just in a cycle and you need somebody to help you snap out of it a little bit. I think it took [Pochettino] to sort of help me take a step back and look at things from a different perspective, because I obviously was not playing at my best leading into that. I think sometimes you just have to shake it up a little bit to help the player then launch forward and achieve what the coach knows that the player and the player knows that they can achieve."

"So, for me I know what I can achieve, and his support was massive. He helped me to create a new perspective, create new relationships with guys on the team that I might not have had the chance to, and in another sort of scenario where I was playing. And I think also just to look at things from a different side, and show my leadership through a different way. I was grateful for the opportunity that he gave me in that sense, and now I think I can sort of see, with this journey that I've been on, that being in New England was the right place for me to continue to hone those skills, to create new relationships, to play games, to find my happiness in the sport. And then in turn I can give my best to him and to the National Team as well. I think if you look back at some of my greatest National Team games, obviously the [2022] World Cup was amazing, but some of my greatest National Team games happened when I was here playing in New England."

On if Turner will keep the door open on staying in New England long term:

Turner: "I think the door is open for anything. Obviously, if it goes well here, I play with the [United States] National Team and get consistently called in. I'm only 31 years old. As a goalkeeper, I still feel like a baby. I came late to the sport, so I don't feel like I have a [specific] time that I'm looking at in the future where I'm saying 'Yeah, this is it'. I feel young and I want to just continue to learn, continue to grow, and compete. So, I would never shut the door on a long-term stay, but at the same time I don't want to close my doors anywhere."

On how happy he is to reunite with some former Revolution teammates while building relationships with new teammates:

Turner: "Obviously, there's a massive turnover since I left. But, these are guys that I would be lying if I said I haven't talked to in the last three years that I was gone. I stayed in touch with every single one of them. So, when the news started dropping they were sending me the text messages with the eye emojis and wondering. I just put my hands up and said 'I don't know what you're talking about'. But yeah, it's good. It's good to be back with them. That means that the foundation is here for winning DNA. Also, I know guys like Alex Bono who I've known for years, we used to play against each other in [USL League Two]. Jackson Yueill, I had some time with on the National Team. So, it's not like a bunch of guys I've never heard of or spoken to before. It's great to create new relationships and start building something that the fans can be proud of."

On what it felt like to walk into the Revolution Training Center this morning:

Turner: "It's a bit of nostalgia, of course, because I was here when the training ground was built. And obviously, Gillette [Stadium] looks a little different now than it used to. Yeah, it was really special. I think the biggest thing for us, when I knew I made the right decision, was when the Instagram videos were dropping. My wife and I were getting quite emotional watching it, because it's just been a while since I've been in a

situation where I'm getting that feeling of that love and support. In reality, as I'm coming down, I'm feeling like, 'Oh this is amazing, this is so great to be back'. But then, quickly it's like, 'Okay [Caleb Porter] wants to meet with you, [Kevin] Hitchcock wants to meet with you'. Then you have to do all this stuff and it's like, 'Okay, the parade is all good, but you have to work, and you have to win'. I'm eager to get out on the pitch, close this little chapter of the book, and get to work."

On if he aims to make his 2025 debut on Saturday night against D.C. United:

Turner: "I'll let the coach make the decision at the end of the day. But, I'm eager to integrate myself with the squad, show my qualities to everybody, and earn my place on the field."

On looking forward to the opportunity to help New England clinch a playoff berth:

Turner: "Of course, I back myself to help propel this team to win games. I've been in late playoff hunts before. I think back to 2019, when we made a big change and were able to make the hunt, and get into the playoffs on a big run. MLS has always been a league of streaks, and if we can get hot at the right time, anything is possible. I'm really excited to see what we can achieve."

Revolution Sporting Director Curt Onalfo

On re-acquiring Matt Turner and assessing the team's needs during the current transfer window:

Onalfo: "Credit to my staff, we've had Matt [Turner] on discovery for quite some time. He just got bought [by Lyon] for \$8 million and then there's an opportunity to bring him [here]. If you look at our team, we started the season very strong defensively. That has changed. In the recent results, we've been leaking goals. Matt is a game-changer. He's one of these guys that can turn a shot that should be a goal into a save. We're continually looking to make our team better, and when we evaluated this scenario it was a no-brainer. We had to act quickly, and credit to [Assistant Sporting Director] Chris Tierney, who's in the room, he did an incredible job of capitalizing on that moment. [Matt's] agent did a great job. It was a very complicated deal. We feel very fortunate that Matt will help us with more clean sheets, which gives us the opportunity to win games."

On the leadership qualities Matt Turner brings to the club:

Onalfo: "First of all, [Matt] is also a winner too. When he plays, the teams tend to do quite well. But his leadership is key. He'll be a really important part of our locker room. And in games, when you have those unfortunate moments, when the momentum is shifting, you need key leaders to step up and help change those moments and turn them into settling the team and then pushing forward to get the results that you need to get. We know his leadership will be invaluable in the locker room."

On Aljaž Ivačič's role in New England moving forward:

Onalfo: "Aljaž's contract is up at the end of the year. Aljaž has started the season extremely strong for us. He's a class act. This is the part of the business that's tough. It's that simple, there's really no other way to describe it. You have an opportunity to get a goalkeeper of the caliber of Matt [Turner], you go ahead and do that. And that means that the role for Aljaž, at least how it looks on the surface, will likely change. We'll see how that goes. There's a lot of things that can happen. Aljaž is a class act. He'll continue to fight hard and continue to position himself to have a good situation for him at the end of the year."

On utilizing a Designated Player slot to sign Matt Turner and conversations about the future of the club's roster construction:

Onalfo: "There have been a ton of conversations, that's our job. If you look at it, we're in a situation that gave us the flexibility to stay in a 2-4 model or actually pivot to go to a three-DP [Designated Player] model. In this particular occasion, it made sense to utilize him as a DP because it helps us cap wise between now and the end of the year. We want to make sure that we do everything possible to get better between now and the end of the year. Next year, we will also have flexibility. The way the deal is structured, he [Matt] can be a TAM player next year and that's likely what he'll be. But we have flexibility, and we look at all those scenarios as we look to build our team."

On the statements shared by the club's supporters' groups last week:

Onalfo: “I can’t blame the fans and the supporters’ groups for being upset and being frustrated. We are frustrated. There’s probably no one that is more frustrated than me as I sit at the helm. Our job in the front office is to continue to make the team better. We’re doing that today, and we will continue to do that. We have a vision for the club. I’ve been here for six years. I helped build one of the best pro pathways in Major League Soccer. It took at least two years for that to start seeing some of the fruits of the labor. Now we have one of the better ones in the league producing great players. My goal is to do the same thing with the first team.

“If you look at our team, and we are frustrated, the area that we have to get better in is we have to better at home. It’s that simple. Our road record is in the top third of the league. But our home record has not been good. So, my job and my focus is to help and support Caleb [Porter], the staff, and the players to make sure we get a result this weekend against D.C. United at home and we start changing that home form. It will help to have Matt Turner in goal, assuming he starts the game, but we need to do better at home. It’s that simple. It’s unacceptable. We know that. It’s not our first rodeo – we understand the criticism. The way I look at it is how do we channel that frustration and that emotion into something that’s productive for everybody. That’s my approach, and hopefully the fans can come this weekend with that mentality in mind so that we can get a win this weekend.”

On the team’s salary cap and areas of the roster that the front office is looking to improve:

Onalfo: “We are tight, but every team is tight. We have ways to maneuver, and we will continue finding ways to get better in this window. You alluded to, could we do better in the attacking part of the field? Certainly, we could. Having said that, our attacking players are beginning to produce and you can see there’s a shift. We’re creating more chances, we’re creating more goals, and we’re scoring more goals. We believe the players that are here will continue to do that. But if we have an opportunity where we can get better in the attacking part of the field, then we’re going to go ahead and do it.”

On how the team can improve on its recent results at home:

Onalfo: “First of all, Caleb [Porter’s] work ethic is incredible. He puts so much effort into preparing the team. But what I can assure you is that the coaching staff is looking hard at ways to remedy the home form. The beauty is we had two weeks to prepare [for this Saturday’s match]. My focus, my job is to support Caleb and the players, and do everything within my power so we can win the game on Saturday.”

On his ideal vision for the direction and future of the club:

Onalfo: “We need to be a team that’s winning games consistently, and occasionally losing games. That’s the vision. That’s where we need to get to. These things don’t always happen overnight. Sometimes they happen quicker. But the important thing is to stay even-keeled. I know what I signed up for, these aren’t easy jobs. We believe in our process, we believe in the things that we’re doing, and we’re just going to continue to get better each day. What I can control right now is trying to continually bring in players that help the team. That’s what I’m focused on and that’s what my staff is focused on. We’ll continue to do that, and now we just have to make sure our home form gets better. That’s the goal, and hopefully it starts on Saturday.”