



NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION

TRANSCRIPT

TRANSCRIPT (9/16): Curt Onalfo Press Conference *Revolution Sporting Director discusses Monday's coaching decision*

Revolution Sporting Director Curt Onalfo

Opening statement:

Onalfo: "We want to thank [former Revolution Head Coach] Caleb [Porter] for his relentless effort over the last couple of years. We made a decision yesterday to part with him. Again, we want to thank him for all of his contributions over the last two years."

On if he agrees with statements Caleb Porter made about the Revolution being close to turning the corner:

Onalfo: "I do agree with that. We have a roster that's been assembled that has underperformed in terms of results. We feel like we have a team that should be further up in the standings, and we're not. It's a results-oriented business and that's why we had to make the change."

On what the next coach needs to do to bring the Revolution into postseason contention:

Onalfo: "We need to win our home games, it's pretty simple. If you look at our record, our away record was solid. If we had a better home record, we wouldn't be having this press conference. It's a results-oriented business and we have to find a way to win games at home. Our fans deserve it, the organization deserves it. That's a major focus for us, we have to have good home form. If you have good home form, you can now become a winning team and now you can start talking about things that are beyond just being a winning team. Talk is cheap. I'm not sitting here talking about winning championships, we need to win games at home. Once we start doing that, and we can continue with the road form, all of a sudden we start talking about, 'Okay, how do we make the next step to be able to win a championship?' Our home form has not been good over the last two years, and this year especially."

On the timing of the decision to part ways with Porter with four games remaining in the regular season:

Onalfo: "My job as Sporting Director, especially having been a head coach in the league, I know what coaches need. They need support. They're hard jobs, they just are. Coaching has a lot of variables. In my time with Caleb, I gave him the support and everything possible for him to be able to succeed, so that's the conviction you always see. I also had conviction about us still being a team that wasn't good enough at home, and that is still the point of emphasis and a big reason for the change."

On what the team needs to do to get out of a negative loop with a lack of results at home:

Onalfo: "I mean, it depends. That's life, right? How do you get out of the loop? The way to make change is just to take more risks and to be more aggressive. Because, if you think about it, three more wins, three ties, that could be three plays. It could be two saves, one save, it could be a couple of chances that you make. All of a sudden, we're not in this situation. So, the margins are thin. In my role, it's important to stay even-keeled, to be positive, to support, and to do whatever I can to help the coach be successful, the organization be successful. The way to do that is to be steady. I'm just as upset as everybody else is. I want to win. In a lot of ways, our club is thriving, but we have not gotten the results that we need to get. And in this business, you have to make change, and those are hard changes. Caleb is a good man, and he put a lot of time and effort into the team, and I've become very close with him – so they are not easy decisions."

On why he should continue as New England's Sporting Director:

Onalfo: "That's a question for other people. I would say that in each window, we've assembled better players. That's my job, and that's something I can control. This past window, we added Matt Turner, best goalkeeper in the league, who was bought for eight million dollars, and we got him for free. For me, that's my job. Those are things I can control and do whatever I can to support the coach to be successful. That's how I would answer your question."

On his conversations with Brian Bilello or ownership about his future at the organization:

Onalfo: "I'm the Sporting Director of this team, until I'm not. My focus is on being steady. I've been through a lot in my life. This is not the most difficult thing I've dealt with in my life. It's easy for people on the outside to point the finger and say what they would do, and this and that. That's all part of it and that's the way it should be, because it's professional athletics. But I'm very optimistic about the roster, about this club, and where we're going. When it turns, it turns. I steadfastly believe in our future."

On the process of finding a new head coach:

Onalfo: "The process began yesterday. Now, it's time to assemble the list, which we began doing, but it has obviously been a very busy couple of days. Then, we will do a thorough search to find the right person, the right coach, to lead us to where we want to be."

On conversations he's had with Pablo Moreira and captain Carles Gil about the goals for the remaining four games:

Onalfo: "I just want to end the season strong. It's that simple. Pablo has a different approach than Caleb [Porter]. They obviously worked together for years. Our goal is just to end the season strong."

On what important characteristics he's looking for in the next head coach:

Onalfo: "He needs to know how to win at home."

On if there is a specific profile or set of characteristics he's looking for in the next head coach:

Onalfo: "We're going to, now that the decision is made, spend an enormous amount of time profiling and getting exactly our credentials in terms of what we want, and characteristics for our next head coach. With time, we will come up with that. One thing I will say, I'm very confident there are good candidates out there and we will find a good coach for us."

On clarifying his comment about the club needing to take more risks:

Onalfo: "I think when we play at home, we have to go for it more. We have to play in the other team's end more, and we have to put teams under pressure. It's that type of stuff when I talk about risks."

On the timeline for hiring a new coach:

Onalfo: "We're going to get a coach in when we find the right person and we're able to get him in. I don't exactly have the timeline at this particular juncture."

On if he is confident in the current roster or feels another rebuild is needed in the offseason:

Onalfo: "We feel like we've assembled a much-improved roster, one that should be further up in the standings and one that should be in contention for playoffs. In part of the search, it will be important for the new head coach that would be coming in to have a good feel and to like our roster. There will be some of those conversations. Like anything, whenever you have a new head coach there are going to be changes, and we know that."

On if he would characterize the roster as playoff-worthy coming into this season:

Onalfo: "Like I said, we assembled a roster that is much improved, that should be a playoff team. We believe that."

On his confidence in the players to finish the season strong:

Onalfo: “In life, you have difficult moments and that’s when you kind of find out what people are made of. It’s easy when everything is going great. We feel like there is good character, good leadership, and a lot of quality. We believe in the group. We’ll continue, like every window, to make the team better.”

On who will be involved in the coaching search:

Onalfo: “Our front office is in charge of that. Of course, I spearhead it. I have [Assistant Sporting Director] Chris Tierney and [Technical Director] Remi Roy that can help me. Then, you have to get ownership involved and the president. It’s what every team deals with. It’s a very simple process.”

***On the expectations for the next four matches and for Interim Head Coach Pablo Moreira:
(Translated from Spanish)***

Onalfo: “Pablo is a very good coach, and he knows the team well. Our mentality is to finish the season strong for all the players individually, collectively as a club, and for our fans as well.”

***On his message to the fans with respect to the timing of the decision:
(Translated from Spanish)***

Onalfo: “In a game of 90 minutes, you always need to play the next 45 minutes. You can be in a situation where you’re losing the game in the first half, but you can win it in the second half. As a club, we felt that we gave Caleb all of the opportunities to give us a chance to win. That’s why we’ve decided to say ‘goodbye’ at this time.”

On his message to the fans:

Onalfo: “I would just that I’m still very optimistic and they should be as well. We have great fans. We actually continue to build our fanbase. Our ticket sales group here, I meet with them weekly. We have meetings and I hear about the hard work that’s being put in there. Our fanbase continues to grow. As that continues to grow, the results continue to come, and our home record gets better, we’ll be in situations where these conversations are more positive than they are right now.”