



# NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION

## TRANSCRIPT

### TRANSCRIPT (10/16): Match Preview Press Conference

*Soundbytes from Revolution Interim Head Coach Pablo Moreira & D Will Sands*

#### Revolution Interim Head Coach Pablo Moreira

##### ***On if he expects to have a full roster available for the season finale:***

**Moreira:** "In terms of the international guys coming back, everyone came back [Thursday], with the exception of [Alhassan] Yusuf. Yusuf comes back tomorrow. But, yeah, we'll have a full roster, and all those guys will be available unless something happens in the next couple days. I always view international call-ups as an asset in terms of we have that quality of players. I never want to punish guys for being called into their country. When they return to the club, I don't hold that against them, and everyone will be available for selection."

##### ***On what he's seen from the veteran leadership in the locker room over the past month:***

**Moreira:** "I think Matt [Polster] is more of a vocal leader, where Andrew [Farrell] and Carles [Gil] are more "lead by example." I think innately, Carles and Andrew, they just have that spirit to keep going and they're just true professionals in every sense of the word. I think they're showing by example of just showing up to training each and every day at the highest level possible and not letting bad results or bad days affect them. It's a clean slate every day. In terms of Matt, he's the communicator. He has just been great in terms of setting the tone, obviously along with the coaching staff, but he sets the tone in training. He's an organizer. What I love about all three of those guys is, obviously they're club legends, but they're great people and you see their character by them still pushing. Unfortunately, we aren't in the playoff picture, but again it speaks to their character even more that they're pushing this hard at this point in the season when ultimately we can't make the playoffs. But it shows their pride, it shows how they feel about the club, and what they want to give the fans."

##### ***On Matt Turner looking to earn minutes with the U.S. National Team:***

**Moreira:** "When the international guys come back I like to have a discussion with all of them just to be able to see how camp went and how it fared. From the outside looking in, exactly what you saw I saw, [Turner] didn't get any games, but he had a very good camp. Ultimately, I think he's very happy with that. I think coming here and playing the games that he has [played] has given him confidence. Not that he didn't have it, but a newfound confidence that he's in-form. So, I think he showed that in camp, and in talking to him, he showed very well. Again, the World Cup isn't until next year, so he's got some time to get into that position. But knowing Matt, he's going to do everything in his power to make that coach's decision as hard as possible in terms of picking a starting goalkeeper for the country."

##### ***On his final match as interim head coach and earning this opportunity:***

**Moreira:** "I've loved it. I've loved every bit of it. I think, ultimately, with how it happened, it's not how I envisioned it and that's just the truth. Let truth be told on that one. But I believe God's timing is perfect. For me, I know that it's what I was supposed to do in this time. All I did was focus on the daily and try to help the culture, try to help the training atmosphere, and then obviously prepare and try to win games. I still have one game left to do that. Definitely all my mind and all my efforts are in that. In terms of what that meant for me, it meant the world because I think every coach that's in my position, ultimately, wants to be a head coach at some point in their life. Thankfully, in this scenario, I was given the opportunity to lead those men. And like you said, who knows what happens in the future, but all I can control is the today. It's something

that I don't take lightly. To be able to lead that locker room and lead this club for a month's time, it means the world to me. I know, like I said, God's timing is perfect, so if it's meant for me, it'll be for me moving forward. And if it's not, I'm okay with that because I have faith in that. Ultimately, I just love this opportunity. I love how I've been supported by this club, by the fans, by all you guys, so you've made that transition easy knowing that it wasn't the easiest situation to walk into."

***On Darlington Nagbe announcing his retirement after the season:***

**Moreira:** "I'm going to try not to get long-winded on this one. I just missed [Nagbe] by a year, but on his recruiting trip to Akron, he stayed with me. He wanted to take my number, so there were some ties there. It was great to have ties early on. And I can say this now because he's retiring, but he's the best friend I have in this world. He's a very good person. If you know about his story, he came over from Liberia in a war-riddled situation. And again, if you know about his story, you know the person that he is, just genuinely one of the best people I've met in this life – unselfish.

"Talking to all the coaches around the league, whether he was on our team or playing against them, if you know the game you know the game, and he's a top player. I don't say this lightly, but for me, he's one of the best, if not the best, No. 6 or 8 that this league has seen. You've seen it with his success in winning championships, but he's truly a guy that makes everyone great around him. And all the greats that have been in this league, the top players, I know this just because I've been his coach and having conversations with those players, or when I come to new clubs everyone asks about him, it's because, again, game knows game. People understand what he offers, his unselfishness, and what a career he's had.

"I know that there are some legends that are retiring in terms of [Sergio] Busquets and [Jordi] Alba. But for Americans, he was our Busquets. He was our midfielder that everyone tipped their hat to and always wondered how he was doing these things. He leads innately. His play was fluid. I just love to watch him play and love what he is. All his accomplishments that he had, they're all well worth it because he's put in time. Again, just speaking of him as a player, easiest guy to coach. He just came in each and every day and just put in work. So, bless him, and again, I congratulate him. Ultimately, I just hope his career ends like he wants it to."

***On the focus in training to close the season on a positive note:***

**Moreira:** "As we talked about early on this week, training has been a little dodgy from the sense of just getting all these international guys back. But in terms of today and tomorrow, it's more of the same. It's just more honing in on ourselves and honing in on the game plan. We went over our defensive structures today, and tomorrow we'll finish with the attack. But really the mentality is just to win the game. I know it sounds simple, but ultimately we want all the fans to leave with that feeling of three points. We gave that to them the game prior [vs. Atlanta United FC], and we want to do it again.

"I know I've said this, but ultimately this momentum going into the offseason means something. I mean, you sit on that result for the offseason. We just want to end on a high, want to end showcasing what we have to offer, and then ultimately taking that momentum into next year. In 2019 [with Columbus], I was unfortunately in a similar situation of not being able to get into the playoffs. But again, because we ended so hot that year, the next year we rolled into preseason and rolled into the start of season, and we ended up winning a championship. I think every guy in that locker room wants to win a championship, and that's our mentality."

***On the opportunity to serve as Interim Head Coach:***

*(Translated from Spanish)*

**Moreira:** "The opportunity is something that is a dream for me. I'm in a moment where it's everything that I want in life. When you're in this position and you can do what you envision, and you see the players pushing, they like how we're training, they like our tactics, how we're talking, it's everything for me. I do it for the players. Yes, we want to win every game. But I want to be someone that this club and these players have faith in, and I have faith in them to win games. It's a dream for me."

***On if he has had any conversations with the front office about his future with the club:***

*(Translated from Spanish)*

**Moreira:** “I have a good relationship with [Sporting Director] Curt [Onalfo]. At this time, we’re not talking about that. It’s not the right time for that because we’re focused on this game and today’s training. But yes, we talk and we know we have a good relationship. We’ll talk at the end of the season to see what happens. But I have faith that this club will do what it needs to do to win games and win a championship.”

***On how the team will approach Saturday’s match against Chicago Fire FC:***

*(Translated from Spanish)*

**Moreira:** “I don’t want to speak too much about what we’re going to do. It’s a big game for [Chicago]. But like I said earlier in speaking about guys like Carles [Gil], Andrew Farrell, Matt [Polster], it’s a big game for us too. [Chicago] is playing for playoff seeding, but our mindset is on next season, and we need to win this game to feel good energy for next season. I feel that and the players feel that in the locker room. But it will be a difficult game because [Chicago] is a good team. [Gregg Berhalter] has done a great job this season getting them back to the playoffs. For us, it’s an important game. It’s like a playoff game for us. We want to do everything we can to push and win this game for our fans.”

**Revolution Defender Will Sands**

***On what the team is looking for out of Saturday’s season finale:***

**Sands:** “I think building momentum is really important at this point in the season. We’re obviously disappointed with how the season has gone so far. I think building into a project next year is really important. So, we’re just looking to put on a show and give the fans a show before the season ends.”

***On how he feels the season went overall:***

**Sands:** “Like I said, we’re obviously very disappointed. I think we struggled putting together cohesive performances. Whether it’s team continuity or just putting together a 90-minute performance, it wasn’t always there this year. I think that’s what hurt us the most in the end. I think that’s what cost us a lot of points and I think that’s why we’re sitting where we are now. I think moving forward it’s really important to work on that continuity as a team and being locked in for the full 90 minutes to get results.”

***On if he feels the team can be a playoff contender next season:***

**Sands:** “Ever since I’ve been here, the mindset, the motivation, and the culture of the club has been very positive. I think they’re striving to do great things in this league. Unfortunately, it didn’t happen this year but I think there’s a foundation there that the fans should be excited for and I’m certainly excited for in the years to come.”

***On what he expects this weekend Chicago Fire FC:***

**Sands:** “I think they’re going to come out with everything they have. It’s important for us to match that, at least in the first 15 [minutes], and then establish a control in the game, settle in. I’m sure our fans will have our back. Once we settle into the rhythm of the game, I’m confident that we’ll be able to perform at a high level. I think it’s just matching [Chicago’s] intensity and energy, which I have full confidence in our team to do.”

***On what the team has focused on this week in preparing for Chicago Fire FC:***

**Sands:** “Chicago’s a very disciplined team. They have fundamental ways of building out of the back with the ball. They have certain spatial tendencies that we’re looking for and pockets they like to occupy. That’s definitely something we’re focusing on this week.”

***On the fans and the atmosphere at Gillette Stadium:***

**Sands:** “I’ve really enjoyed the energy and the passion that the fans bring to the game. I think that’s something we can harness in years to come. I know that Gillette Stadium and the amount of fans that they bring out has made a fortress at home for many years. We haven’t given the fans what they want and what they deserve this year. That’s something we can use [as motivation]. I’ve always admired their passion.”