



## TRANSCRIPT (4/11): Postgame vs. D.C. United

Soundbytes from Assistant Coach Michael Morris, M Alhassan Yusuf & D Will Sands

### Revolution Assistant Coach Michael Morris

#### ***On midfielder Carles Gil's role in tonight's win:***

**Morris:** "You just mentioned the quality that Carles [Gil] possesses in those specific moments. In the first half we had quite a bit of possession. If you look at the stats after the goal we lost a bit of the momentum, specifically building into the second half and I think some of it is credit to the way that D.C. United defended against us, specifically on Carles' side. We have the wide triangles that we frequently talk about in the shape that we want to use and it's just a matter of trying to get him in the most effective positions possible. Sometimes it's not always about necessarily the quantity of touches he's getting, it's the areas that we want him to get the most quality touches in so he can create those specific moments."

#### ***On what went into goalkeeper Matt Turner's clean sheet in tonight's win:***

**Morris:** "At the end of the game that's an amazing save that [Turner] had. And the bravery that he showed to come off his line and make that save with his foot. The other piece that we can't ignore is we knew that D.C. was going to play a direct style with lots of channel runs. We have to give a lot of credit in terms of our defensive behavior of the backline, but also the willingness of the center midfielders to recover, to block shots, to block crosses, because that's the volume of the attacks that they generally create. I think it's always a relationship from back to front. Matt does an amazing job when he's called on to make those saves, but we also try to create as much clarity as possible for him to stop the opponent from getting into dangerous areas, so he doesn't have to make consistent saves like that."

#### ***On the adjustments made at halftime to defend D.C. United:***

**Morris:** "The shape that we saw [D.C. United] play is what we expected. One of the issues was we invited a lot of pressure from them, which brought them higher than we had anticipated or wanted them to be. In the second half, we tried to make some changes and reinforce some of the positions that we wanted to take up. We weren't as effective as we could have been and plan to be in those moments. Some of it was the line that they took up and some of it was just the way that we invited pressure from them so they could step up against us. I don't know how intentional it was from them."

#### ***On the importance of remaining undefeated at home:***

**Morris:** "Yeah, it's incredibly important. One of the things that I'd mentioned before when I first came [to New England] and took this opportunity with [Head Coach] Marko [Mitrović] is Massachusetts, the Boston area has an amazing legacy of winning and producing championship level teams, and that's something that we want to lean on. And I think it's something that's amazing. Whenever we're at home, we want to make this an incredibly difficult place for opponents to play. The message before the game was when opponents come here they don't get to choose to play us, they're forced to play here. And when they come, our plan is to be as difficult to play against, make them suffer, and basically try to add to the legacy of this city and this state and everything that we've seen in terms of building champions."

#### ***On the keys to closing out close victories:***

**Morris:** "Over the course of the season, it's going to be difficult to blow out every opponent that you want to play. In the most ideal situation, of course that's happening. Today D.C. defended very compact."

They're very difficult to play against, which is one of the things that we talked about. How are we going to break that down? But not every single win is going to be beautiful for us, especially at this point in the season. So that resilience, that ability to grind from the players is also a major component of teams being successful over the long run. Of course we want to find ways to win in the most beautiful, attractive way possible, and score as many goals as possible. But in games where it's either not our best day or the opponent is posing a lot of problems defensively, we have to find the ability to grind out results like we did today."

***On midfielder Alhassan Yusuf's performance in tonight's win:***

**Morris:** "[Alhassan] Yusuf was amazing today in my opinion. We started him up on the left hand side because we know we get a lot of defensive ability from him when we're defending from the front. But some of the plan was to try to occupy different spaces between the midfield and opponent's back line, and to bring him in as essentially an extra midfielder. And then, because of his versatility, like you saw today, we were able to drop him down another line when Jackson [Yueill] had to come out. Yusuf is a fantastic guy, and every single moment that I've been able to work with him, I've come to appreciate him that much more day in and day out. He has definitely put himself in a position where he's very integral to what we want to do in terms of in possession, out of possession, and in the multiple positions that he's been able to adapt to and play in so far."

***On defender Peyton Miller exiting the match in the closing minutes:***

**Morris:** "It was quite a chaotic moment toward the end of it, and we were discussing what sub we were going to make. Some of it was we wanted to get Eric Klein on who's a young, high-potential player. And in that moment, we talked about a couple of different options to bring players off and bring Eric into the midfield just for a bit more solidity to try to shut the game down. In that moment, knowing that there was very limited time remaining in the half, Peyton took a hit somewhere. I'm not necessarily going to mention [where] right now. It wasn't a muscular thing. It was just in that moment, Peyton's down, we're not entirely sure, and we had to make a sub immediately. So, rather than subbing somebody off and Peyton potentially being injured, Peyton just came off. We killed time, we got Eric on, we slowed the game down. But Peyton should be fine."

**Revolution Midfielder Alhassan Yusuf**

***On his versatility as a winger and defensive midfielder:***

**Yusuf:** "For me, it's no problem, because it's kind of [a] similar role because I don't stay really wide. I start wide, but then I come inside, and then come back in the middle. So, I think it's kind of the same role."

***On how he approaches coming off the bench versus being in the Starting XI:***

**Yusuf:** "It's the coach's decision, of course. When you get minutes, you then give everything and try to show that you have something to give. And then, of course, everyone sees, and then you'll get to play."

***On if he expected to be a key contributor in the attack with two goals scored this season:***

**Yusuf:** "No, not really, because I was in kind of a more defensive role before. But then, of course, the role that I'm playing now, I have to be in the box and then finish the attack. So yeah, I'm not surprised by the goals that I've scored."

**Revolution Defender Will Sands**

***On Carles Gil's cross that helped set up the Alhassan Yusuf goal assisted by Sands:***

**Sands:** "That's one of Carles [Gil's] biggest strengths. Whenever he cuts in, we just make it a big team effort to start making runs in behind. I always know there's a chance it's going to come on the back post, and Dor [Turgeman] is a great finisher in the box, so my only goal was to get him the ball, and I think it worked out when Alhassan Yusuf scored a great goal."

***On New England claiming its second consecutive shutout victory tonight:***

**Sands:** "It's huge. As a backline, we really are intent on getting as many clean sheets as possible. It's a group effort, but then at times you need individual moments, and you can see that with the Matt Turner save at the very end, coming up huge for us. I think it's little things like that, that gets us those results, and that matter down the road. I'm really happy to get three points. There are certainly things we can work on, but I think getting three points is most important right now."

***On playing alongside midfielder Alhassan Yusuf and the versatility he provides:***

**Sands:** "I love playing with [Alhassan] Yusuf. He does everything you ask of him. When he's playing on the wing, it's good to get him the ball to his feet, and it kind of makes my job a lot easier. He helps out defensively a lot. Then when he shifts inside, he's a very good center midfielder, so it really helps the team because whenever we have kind of a gap, he's there to fill it. He's kind of a jack of all trades, and I'm really happy that he's a part of this team."