



TRANSCRIPT (4/16): Match Preview Press Conference

Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović & D Mamadou Fofana

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On continuing to build momentum at home ahead of the final match of a three-game homestand:

Mitrović: "I think we have really focused [on the] day-by-day. We never talk about [our three wins at home], but I think everyone is aware that we've won three games out of three. But we have the same approach day-by-day and game-by-game, and for us, the game against Columbus is the next game. I think that all of our focus is on what we can do and how we can be at our best in that game."

On managing through a congested schedule with four more matches in April:

Mitrović: "It's demanding. As we know, for us it's the same as every other team in the league with the amount of travel. With the travel that we have, it becomes even more challenging for the players. We are trying to be as efficient in training as we can, doing things that we have to do, but on the other side knowing that we have to keep [players] fresh in certain ways."

"Also, the game that we played two days ago [against Rhode Island FC] was a great opportunity for some of the younger guys to get minutes, because when you have such an intense stretch of games, and not just in April, but now with another game in [the U.S. Open Cup] and potentially one more, we have another month of games to play until May 23rd. We need every player. We just need to create the right balance between what we are doing in training sessions and knowing that the player will be at a high load in the coming weeks."

On what he expects from Saturday's opponent, the Columbus Crew:

Mitrović: "Personally, I like to watch Columbus. I think that they are a team that's very good on the ball. Off [the ball], they are very well organized defensively. Maybe results-wise, they didn't start the season as they expected because they have a very strong roster. But it's a team that's very dangerous in every game, and they have a lot of quality on the field with a strong identity in what they are doing. It's enjoyable to watch them play."

On the younger players getting minutes in Tuesday's U.S. Open Cup win over Rhode Island FC:

Mitrović: "That game was a good opportunity for those guys to get experience. A different experience than they have had so far playing with the second team. We love the young guys coming up and getting their opportunity to grow with the first team. And it's a strong step in their development to play professional senior games, and especially in games that you have in the [U.S. Open Cup], where there are no second games. You have one chance, one opportunity. You have to win that one game. It's another [level of] pressure or adversity that they have as a challenge, and I was really positive about how they handled everything."

"We faced a good amount of adversities in the game, and the young guys were very mature from a mental performance perspective. We had a bunch of [younger players play]. Not just Damario [McIntosh] and Eric [Klein], but Cristiano [Oliveira] played, we had Marcos Zambrano for his first [senior] game and

Donovan [Parisian] for his first [senior] game. And Peyton [Miller], who has the experience but he's still 18 years old. A lot of young players were present on the field for that game and that just makes us happy."

On what Alhassan Yusuf and Griffin Yow bring to the team:

Mitrović: "I think they are different profiles. Obviously, Griffin [Yow] is naturally a wide forward or winger, and an attacking-minded player. [Alhassan] Yusuf is a midfielder. It just depends on what we need in the game because both of them give us very different balance and tendencies in the game. Same with Peyton [Miller] when we play him higher on the field. [Miller] is also very different than Yusuf and Griffin. Based on the circumstances on the day of the game, we just make our decision on who's going to play in what position and what's the best balance for our team."

On the progress Dor Turgeman has made this season and how he can continue to improve:

Mitrović: "I think no matter what, everyone would make assumptions on the forwards based on the number of goals they score. And I know that is the description of their job. Dor [Turgeman] is a very talented player, and Dor is actually very good in front of the goal. He had some opportunities that he didn't score goals, but I know that sometimes those goals come in flows. Sometimes forwards just score goals that just happen, and then they have those breaks where they don't score goals. Dor definitely has the quality to convert those opportunities in front of the goal. What matters to us is there are small actions and small behaviors that Dor has to do, and again he's still a young player, still in his development phase, and we are working on how we can build that foundation outside of pure finishing. He's strong in any given moment on the field, and he contributes to the team even when he doesn't score. But he will score goals because that's his highest potential."

Revolution Defender Mamadou Fofana

On how the backline has maintained strong form through consecutive clean sheets over the last two matches:

Fofana: "We are happy with the two clean sheets. But it's not just about the defender, we are a team [from] the defense up to the striker, and now we have two clean sheets. We just have to continue, but we are happy with that, because to win the game with a clean sheet is perfect, so now we have to continue."

On managing a busy stretch of games through the end of April with MLS and U.S. Open Cup:

Fofana: "I think we have a lot of players, so that can help us. But we know it will not be easy, because we have four [upcoming] games. So, we just have to recover well and keep going. We know it will not be easy, but we have to push for this."

On cheering on his teammates in Tuesday's U.S. Open Cup match against Rhode Island FC:

Fofana: "We are a team. [Marko Mitrović] makes the [lineup] choices, so [other] players will play. It's important to be there, to stay together, and to help our teammates. I [watched] the game from the side, but it was a good game, and we won after the extra time. We played against a good team, but in the end, we won the game. So, we are happy."

On the challenges of defending against teammate Dor Turgeman:

Fofana: "I know [Dor Turgeman] has one goal [this season], but he helps the team a lot. I think it's difficult to defend against him because he's a very good player, very good with the ball, and without the ball also. So, this is good for us. I hope he will continue to do that and to score more goals, because we will need everybody on the team. I hope he will continue like this."

On adapting to the club in his second season and the team's mentality ahead of Saturday's home match against Columbus:

Fofana: "It's my second season [with the Revolution]. The first, I think it was like adaptation. I know it was my first year, but I always try to improve, to do my best. This year, we don't have artificial [turf], but before I came here, I knew that. I can't say the [grass] pitch helps us, but we won [the last] two games [at home]. We want to continue. But with grass, without grass, we just have to stay focused and continue to find the three points every game. We know it will not be easy, but we have to keep the same mentality."

