



TRANSCRIPT (5/2): Postgame vs. Charlotte FC

Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović, D Will Sands, & M Carles Gil

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On tonight's victory and how defender Peyton Miller's abilities on the attacking end have helped the team:

Mitrović: "I would say I'm really proud of our team. We played against a great opponent [Charlotte FC], a very organized opponent that has a lot of quality, and a team that can make a difference in any given moment. Also a team that is very well organized defensively, and it's not easy to break them. But when we speak about our relentless fighting spirit and that this team is never going to give up, I think that this is part of our identity. We still have a long way to go, but I just love those small milestones that we are achieving game by game, and how much we are growing as a team.

"Peyton [Miller] is part of that process as well. We've spoken about Peyton many times. Peyton is one of the highest potentials that we have in the U.S. Soccer landscape. Unfortunately, he had that setback with injury during the preseason. He almost missed the whole preseason and he missed the first part of the season. I actually love the way we were patient, knowing how much he can contribute towards our team, but also not pushing him too early and making things even worse for Peyton. I think now that we get him minutes, he'll get in better shape, and automatically he'll have a better performance. I think today he had a very strong performance. But, as a young guy, what we want to see from Peyton is not being satisfied with this. I want him to come on Tuesday for the training session, and I want to see a fire in his eyes, and he's one player who is ready to keep going."

On opening the home slate 5-0-0 to match the club's best-ever start at Gillette Stadium:

Mitrović: "Since the [home opener] against [FC] Cincinnati we have felt really good playing games at home. It's a special environment. I think today we had probably the biggest crowd so far in the season, if I'm not wrong. When I came to the club I said to the players, 'Listen, we have to build trust from the people, and we have to build trust from the fans, and it's on us.' And today I felt that people believed, together with us, that we can win the game. I'm happy and we cannot ignore that. We have five [home] games and five wins. But again, we never speak about it. For us, it's just the next training session, next game, and we're not going to change our mindset."

On the Revolution tallying another clean sheet tonight:

Mitrović: "It's important. It's important to have a sheet and not concede goals. But for me what matters more are the actions on the field that we had, and then what led to that, that we had a clean sheet today. I said it once here [in a press conference], that every time you have a clean sheet, you're already in a good spot to win the game. But again, we never speak about those things. We don't have these kinds of

objectives in front of us, like, 'Oh, let's go to the game and have a clean sheet.' We have to go to the game to do every action in the right way, and let's see what the outcome is going to be."

On his halftime message to the team and how it helped limit Charlotte's chances in the second half:

Mitrović: "The way they create the chances was from one-on-one transitional moment when we lost our shape behind the ball. We were talking about how it's something we work on every day. Every training session is about what is our setup behind the ball when we attack, who is in charge of what. In that one opportunity, we kind of get excited because we can have a counter attack, and then we get excited and went all in. Then we lost the ball and that causes us to defend the position. The other came from the build up from the goalkeeper, when they won a second ball and then created that opportunity. So, we spoke about those two things. We adjusted a little bit our high press in the second half. We just talked about how our countermeasures have to be present all the time, and we have to have a strong communication between us, obviously, with certain roles that every player has. I think that our focus was higher in that second half in preventing those situations."

On defender Ethan Kohler's composure and his strengths as a player:

Mitrović: "I [have been] lucky to work with Ethan. I met Ethan for the first time, four years ago. When we select the players, we don't look at the passport, we look at what they can bring to our team. Before I speak about certain qualities as a player Ethan has, I want to say he is an unbelievable piece for our culture. He is someone who doesn't negotiate his effort. He's always ready. Trust me, he's one of those guys that when you have a meeting, if you need the right answer, you just go, 'Ethan what do we have to do?' He will give the right answer every time. He's so focused and is someone who dedicated everything to his career. Then on top of that, he has his qualities. He is very composed on the ball, but I want to also say that he's a great defender, somebody who is very passionate about defending. You could ask Ethan, what do you like most about games, he will tell you, 'I like to defend one-v-one.' That's something that is just culture, and obviously, with the quality, he belongs to us. I'm very happy that I have had the opportunity for the last four years to work with Ethan, and that Ethan made the decision to join us."

On midfielder Alhassan Yusuf's run of strong performances:

Mitrović: "With [Alhassan] Yusuf, I would say that I needed more time to learn more about Yusuf. He's one of those guys that no matter what, he always earns his spot to play. I say it many times, he's one of those players that every coach appreciates. He can play many positions. He and Ethan [Kohler] kind of have very similar mentalities. [Yusuf] is a player that doesn't negotiate effort, doesn't negotiate his determination, and is someone who's very reliable. As a coach, you need reliable players. That's very important."

On defender Will Sands' progress and growth this season:

Mitrović: "With Will [Sands], I think we spoke about it. When we came here, I felt that Will has much more in him than what he's showing. Not just me, the whole coaching staff. We talked about how we can unlock Will, that he first believe more in himself but we have to show that we believe in him. I'm happy with how much he's growing but I also think that Will can unlock himself even more. He's kind of like [Alhassan] Yusuf, a very reliable player. You put him anywhere on the field and he'll do his job."

On how Will Sands and New England's backline defended against Charlotte FC's Wilfried Zaha tonight:

Mitrović: "I think Wilfried [Zaha] is a proven player and one of the best players we have in the league. We also speak about how one of our core culture anchors is braveness. Whoever we play against, we have

to show that braveness and we have to show respect toward ourselves first. Obviously, we respect every opponent and everyone around.

“I think that was our approach today. We faced Zaha but it’s actually a great opportunity for Will [Sands] to show himself and to face that challenge. We’re embracing those things in a very positive way. We always say that if you play against someone who is not good, you actually don’t know how good you are. But if you play against the best and you can perform against them, then you really have a value. That’s our tendency, to build that value for our players and our team.”

On midfielder Carles Gil’s game-winning penalty kick:

Mitrović: “Those who haven’t been in those situations don’t know how difficult it is, because we always say that statistically a lot of PKs are goals. Many times we say that the goalkeepers have nothing to lose in those moments, they can only win in that pressure. You’re in additional time, two minutes before the end of the game, and you know that this is the winning shot in the game, almost. I just respect and appreciate Carles [Gil] a lot as a player and as a person. Carles taking that responsibility and not shaking. Even though he’s our captain and he’s one of, if not our most experienced player, but those moments aren’t easy. As I said, those who haven’t been in that situation don’t know how difficult it is. Congratulations to Carles being calm and being so sharp in that moment.”

Revolution Defender Will Sands

On putting his body on the line to earn the clean sheet:

Sands: “Part of the identity of this team, at least in the beginning, is we all said, ‘We’ve got to be willing to suffer to get three points.’ We don’t always want to do that, but when the time asks for it, I think everyone on this team is willing to put in the effort, put their bodies on the line, and you can see it in games like this. I’m just really happy that we [got] the three points.”

On Head Coach Marko Mitrović building a culture at the club:

Sands: “Yeah, it’s kind of a day-one thing. He [Mitrović] came in and that was one of the fundamental things that he asked for. It was really non-negotiable. He said, ‘As long as you’re willing to put in 100 percent effort, things will work out in the end,’ and I think that is a belief that we all carry. You can see in the 95th minute, we still believe that we can get three points, and thankfully, today, we were able to do that.”

On Wilfried Zaha and his scuffle with Brooklyn Raines:

Sands: “He [Wilfried Zaha] is a fantastic player. However, whenever we get in fights as a team, you always have to back up your teammates. Yeah, I think that got us going a little bit in the second half. But Wilfried is an incredible player and it’s an honor to go against him.”

On the team’s confidence at home:

Sands: “In MLS, one of the most important things is taking advantage of your home games. I think since there’s such parity across the league, you really have to win your home games. That was a thing we struggled with last year, and I think the fans didn’t get what they deserved last year. I think that’s been a big push this year, is to give them a show and get big points when we play in front of our own fans.”

On Peyton Miller:

Sands: “I think the world of Peyton [Miller]. I think he’s going to have a very, very, very bright future ahead of him. He has all the tools... When you put him on the field, he’s so dangerous, and whether it’s

bringing him on as a winger or playing as an outside back, he always is a threat in behind. And yeah, wonderful kid as well.”

Revolution Midfielder Carles Gil

On scoring the winning goal with a penalty kick in stoppage time:

Gil: “Obviously, it was a big moment, a moment that we like to have. I think we dictated that moment too, because we were pushing in the second half, creating some chances against a difficult team. I’m obviously very happy with the three points, and still winning every game at home is amazing. We want to continue this.”

On Head Coach Marko Mitrović’s impact on the team’s culture and competitive mentality:

Gil: “Since the beginning, when [Mitrović] arrived, he has started that mentality. Obviously, the team had difficult moments in the last two years, so it’s never easy, and [Mitrović] has started that part. Also, we train a lot with the ball, without the ball. We want to be better in many things, but for sure we are showing that we are a different team than the last two years.”

On if New England’s perfect 5-0-0 start at home is a positive sign for the rest of the season:

Gil: “Yeah, for sure. We say many times that the best teams in the league are very strong at home and that is what we want. With the fans, it’s the same. It was two difficult years for them too, and to see the team winning games the way we are, fighting until the end, where everyone is happy.”