



TRANSCRIPT (5/5): Media Availability

Soundbytes from Assistant Coach Michael Morris & M Alhassan Yusuf

Revolution Assistant Coach Michael Morris

On the coaching staff preaching a relentless fighting spirit:

Morris: “In regard to the last game and just based off the way Charlotte play, they’re very organized and have a lot of experience. So, for us, we knew it was going to be a long game. Some of that relentlessness just comes from being patient. We knew that they were so strong defending in the middle third of the field, that we were going to have to be patient, consistent, and continually try to wear them down and push them back. So, the positive from that relentlessness was we had the majority of the possession, but then you see, it comes down to the 96th minute, in which we were able to end up generating a result. I think that kind of exemplified, based off the last match, what we’re continually talking about.”

On tying the best home start to a season (5-0-0) in club history:

Morris: “I think that’s great, but I haven’t really taken that into any consideration just because it’s such a long season. Similar to what we just spoke about in terms of the Charlotte game and making that a long game, it’s a long season. That to me is not really relevant in terms of our thinking right now. It’s a long season, and we have to continue to build day-after-day, game-after-game in terms of what we want to do, because it takes being patient and relentless over the course of an entire season. So, while things like that might be exciting right now, it’s not really reflective of where we want to be in the long run. I actually don’t even really pay attention to that. It’s probably exciting for people to think about, but it doesn’t really register for me right now.”

On the team’s defensive effort in securing a clean sheet on Saturday:

Morris: “The clean sheet gets me more excited than probably that [home] record. It’s that collective behavior that we need to see within the team. Things got very challenging toward the end. We brought on an extra defender and everybody did their specific role. It’s the same thing that we talk about where it’s easy to look at, okay, you scored a penalty at the end of the game, but it’s also aggregating positive defensive actions over the course of a match. The other thing that was really important for us was just our shape behind the ball, in possession, and being as consistent as possible so we’re not vulnerable for a transition moment. The clean sheet, that’s positive and that’s very, very exciting for us – and not just because we get donuts (*laughs*).”

On how Head Coach Marko Mitrović and the staff have helped change the culture:

Morris: “I mean, something like culture can be very difficult to quantify. I think it’s just consistent behavior day-in and day-out in terms of the standards that you expect from the team, but also from ourselves as a staff in terms of people. One of [Mitrović’s] qualities is that he’s very positive with everybody, but it doesn’t sacrifice the standards and the demands. For me personally, aside from my family and my daughter, I love

coaching and I love the game more than anything. It consumes the way I think, and it consumes the way we all behave. Marko is the same way. This game is his passion and his life, and that transmits to the staff and to the players. That helps build that togetherness that I think we've shown over the last several weeks or so, and that helps us generate positive results in moments of adversity."

On how the coaching staff's has influenced the team over their first several months:

Morris: "That's what it's all about essentially. You have ideas and behaviors that you want to transmit to your team, because the team can be a reflection of the environment that we try to create. I think those are some of the most positive moments when we work towards making consistent actions and behaviors. When you see it happen, even if it's just a 15-second spell in a game, it's like, 'This is what we're here for and this is what it's all about.' So, I think it's really exciting to see a lot of the moments that we want to create attacking, defending, and in transition.

"But then also that spirit. My daughter made everyone on the staff bracelets with mottos from the club, and one of them was 'Defend the Fort' and 'Bring the Fight'. Our staff have different ones like that. When we all collectively come together, like there was the incident on the sideline [last Saturday], everybody comes together and supports each other. When you have that togetherness, nobody can break you. That, for me, is something that's outside of tactics and everything. It's just that culture we can create where we're defending the fort and bringing the fight, and it doesn't become just a motto, but an actual action we can live."

On if he can pinpoint a moment when things began to click for the team:

Morris: "That's tough to say because it's always an evolving process. I would never say that we've actually got this, but the more consistently we can see specific actions like running ahead of the ball in the right moment, and recovering and creating compactness, and getting our shape behind the ball consistently organized when we're in possession. The more consistent we can make those specific moments, the better we are going to be in terms of the overall course of the season. I'd probably say it's a small aggregation of positive actions that we want to see just consistently building game after game after game."

On preparations for Saturday's match against the Philadelphia Union:

Morris: "[Philadelphia] have had a slow start, but that's just in terms of goals scored and conceded in their results. If you look at their underlying data and how they've performed, they are a lot better than what their position in the table would put them at. For them, we know that Philadelphia, year after year, has very consistent behaviors. They're very organized in terms of their defending. They're built off playing direct and second balls and creating challenges for opponents. For us, we have a plan this week in terms of what we want to train, but we don't really look at teams in terms of where they are in the standings. We look in terms of what's their data, what are their behaviors, and what are their actions and how they want to play, and then how do we prepare for that effectively."

Revolution Midfielder Alhassan Yusuf

On the team improving to a 5-0-0 mark at home to match the club's best-ever home start:

Yusuf: "I think it's great that we've been on this winning streak [at home], but the most important thing is being relentless, never satisfied, as we always say. We just have to keep going."

On Head Coach Marko Mitrović's halftime message last Saturday emphasizing a relentless mindset:

Yusuf: "[Relentless] is a word that we keep repeating, because the game is 90-plus minutes. It's not about playing 20 or 45 minutes, you have to play from the beginning until the end, so it's important. Like in our

last game [against Charlotte FC last Saturday], we won the game [in stoppage time], so I think that's what it means to the team.”

On the key values that help the team shape its culture:

Yusuf: “I think it's the togetherness, the focus, and the relentlessness. I would say keeping the team together, and to just keep going, no matter what's happening in the game. It doesn't matter if we're losing or we're winning, just keep doing the same thing.”

On the unbeaten home record:

Yusuf: “It means a lot, winning in front of our supporters, but the most important thing is to keep winning until the [FIFA World Cup] break.”

On staying “humble” while the team sits in second place in the Eastern Conference standings:

Yusuf: “It's just to stay humble until the end of the season. It's just the beginning. We just played a few games, so we [still] have a lot of games to play.”

On playing the next three games at Gillette Stadium:

Yusuf: “It doesn't matter because it's one game at a time for us. So, if we win or we lose, we just have to keep the focus and keep going. “