



TRANSCRIPT (5/11): Match Preview Press Conference

Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović & D Ethan Kohler

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On the factors driving the team's strong run of form:

Mitrović: "I think it's the commitment that the guys have. Actually everyone here, day by day, to put us in a good spot to grow as a team and have clarity in what we want to do. Obviously, you can always do the right things and still not get the right outcome that you want on the field, because that's the highest uncertainty that we have when it's a matchday. But, by doing the right things more often, we always believe that we'll get the right outcome more often."

On defender Ilay Feingold's status for Wednesday's match:

Mitrović: "[Feingold] is still day by day. He has that small injury, but it really affects him. He has made progression, but maybe not as fast as we thought it was going to be. So he's still day by day."

On if New England will approach Wednesday's match against Eastern Conference leader Nashville SC as an opportunity to make a statement:

Mitrović: "I don't think about statements, to be honest. It's another game for us in terms of having a great opportunity to see where we are right now, comparing with Nashville, because we played the first game of the season [at Nashville]. Nashville is definitely one of the best teams in the league in terms of everything – in terms of player selection that they have, in terms of coaching. And no matter what, whenever you face Nashville, it's one of the highest challenges every team in this league can have. So, we are looking at that game just from that perspective. Not in terms of standings or statements."

On the importance of roster depth and Ethan Kohler's form in central defense as Brayan Ceballos returns from injury:

Mitrović: "It is very important. I think in this league, every league, every team, having the bigger roster helps. Number one, when you have injuries that we just spoke about, some of the guys that you have [are] available solutions. But on the other side, you also have that situation, [where] they're just pushing each other. If you're playing, you're playing because someone else is good and sitting on the bench, then you know there is a value. But if you're playing just because there is no competition, then you don't know really how much your value is. Also, players [like] Ethan [Kohler] – when Brayan [Ceballos] got injured, you have to step in and take your opportunity. We all believe that Ethan has done great so far, and we move forward now."

On defender Mamadou Fofana sharing words with the team after the 2-1 win over Philadelphia last Saturday:

Mitrović: “I feel that after our games, especially when we win, everyone can step in and say something. I felt the last few times, I was talking, but I actually think there are so many people doing great things and helping us to get the right outcomes right now from our games. There was a play from Mamadou [Fofana] that I would say reflects who we are as a team and what we want to do, and that's one of our core cultural performances. I felt the only decision there was that Mamadou said something because it reflects who we are.”

On what stands out about 18-year-old Homegrown defender Peyton Miller:

Mitrović: “I have said many times about Peyton [Miller] that he's one of the highest potential players that we have within our U.S. Soccer landscape. I'm happy when young players get the opportunity first to play. Also, what matters to them when they perform is they can help their growth and then open up more and more. Obviously, when someone like Peyton scores goals, I know that helps them. But on the other side, I also know that there is a long way to go for Peyton, and there's a lot of work ahead of him to reach his highest potential.”

On his growth as a coach this season and the players' developments as individuals:

Mitrović: “I think the biggest takeaway for me is that I had the opportunity to learn more about our club, more about our organization, more about people within our organization, and then obviously more about our players. First of all, when I signed here it was the offseason. So, now you watch players from very different contexts in their previous performances. Then we go to preseason, that's very different than when we play the regular season. So, I still have to learn, to be honest. There are still some milestones that I want us to achieve, so that I can have a clear picture and clarity of what the further steps are that we have to make to keep growing and sustain certain things within our environment.”

“Regarding players, something that is the most important thing for me is that they are a humble working group. That's a foundation for any team development. They are also very open to their development. We can talk about Peyton Miller, who is one of the youngest players here, and go all the way to our most experienced guys – Matt Turner, Carles Gil, Matt Polster. I can name all of them now. They have really come here day after day knowing that they can still grow as players and as people, and that they can also impact our growth as a team.”

On how much it helps to have a player like Carles Gil deliver game-changing plays:

Mitrović: “I think there are certain expectations around Carles [Gil], as always when you have high profile players that can change the game in any given moment for their teams. We are very aware that Carles is one of the most talented players in the league. As a coach, it's always great to have those players where you can really believe that they can do things differently and then help us to change the game in our favor. Also, I appreciate Carles doing so many right actions day by day in our training sessions, on and off the field, and his connections with the other guys. For me, that's the foundation that we can build on top of. Then on that foundation, we can add the special talent that he has.”

Revolution Defender Ethan Kohler

On the key factors behind multiple comeback victories this season:

Kohler: “I think first and foremost, our mentality has been what has carried us along. Obviously, we have a bunch of super talented footballers. But to come back in the way we have multiple times, that shows a team that's not riding a high. It shows a team that just always believes no matter what. It's easy to go win-win, then all of the sudden you're down 1-0 and guys are sort of asking questions. But this overall belief that in every game we can win is what's really helping us.”

On Wednesday's matchup against Eastern Conference leader Nashville SC:

Kohler: "It's a super important game because it's the next game in front of us. The occasion of them being first [place] always adds a little bit of extra pressure. With this group, we're focusing on what we can do. We know that us as a group, if we're firing on all cylinders, we're good and we can go against anybody. I think the focus this week, obviously tactically you look at Nashville. But we know that if we do what we can do, then against any opponent, it doesn't matter who's in front of us, we know we can win."

On playing alongside Mamadou Fofana in central defense:

Kohler: "It's easy to talk about [Fofana] after that goal-line clearance [during last weekend's match]. But he's a really important player. He does all the dirty work, he cleans up everything. He's super consistent, very clean on the ball. He's an air of calm. For me as a young center back coming in, having someone that you know is so stable is really important. It gives me that freedom to express myself and really get into my own game. He's been super helpful and he's an amazing guy as well."

On competing with other center backs, including Brayan Ceballos, for minutes on the backline:

Kohler: "It's a healthy competition. When Brayan [Ceballos] is on the field, I want him to do the best he can. When I'm on the field, it's the same. After the game, Brayan is the first one to come up to me and congratulate me or congratulate the team on winning. At the end of the day, I want the group to win. For us having three, four, five centerbacks, we have a lot of great depth. It's not just Brayan Ceballos. There's this really healthy competition between us that makes us play better, train better. We're all backing whoever's playing. So if for some reason, whatever happens and Brayan is playing, well then I'm there fully behind him. I think that's what is most important."

On how the team remains composed when going down a goal in games:

Kohler: "Being able to go down a goal and keep that belief is something really special. Knowing that we have done it so consistently, it does of course help. After that Columbus game, you go a goal down and in that locker room we still really believed. You go a goal down against Philadelphia and again in that locker room it's like, 'We've done this before.' It's not like we're looking to go down 1-0 to make these incredible comebacks. I mean, that just instills such a belief within us. Hopefully we don't have to have comeback wins in the upcoming games. But just know that things happen in football, sometimes you go a goal down. But we have a group that's going to reach in a positive way and we're still going to be able to turn the result in our side."

On how he has progressed in his role this season:

Kohler: "I'd say playing multiple positions really helps you grow because you see the field in different ways. Especially playing as a six, you recognize 'Ok, let's say I step back into centerback. How can I help my six?' Playing right back, I recognize, 'Ok, what kind of balls would I want to receive as a right back? What kind of cover would I want to get?' It allows me to view the game a little more holistically and I think that's been really important. Also, from a personal side, having a tougher start in the [season opener] against Nashville and progressing. Obviously, this comes from the staff continuing to have belief in me. Being able to deal with that and come a little bit more into my own over the past few games has also been really important for me. Dealing with adversity at the professional level, where the stakes are really high, I think has really helped me mature."

On how Marko Mitrović helps motivate and inspire players:

Kohler: "I mean, [Mitrović] is a guy who speaks with purpose. What helps his words carry so strongly among the group is that if he says something, he means it. If he's going to ask something of us, he'll do it himself. When he speaks at halftime, and you feel the fire, you feel that passion and desire from him. If he could take one of our places and get on the field to do everything he could to win the game, he would. When we go in at halftime, and you feel that from him, as players you can do nothing but give everything in that second half."