



## NEW ENGLAND REVOLUTION POSTGAME QUOTES

New England Revolution 1 vs. Sporting Kansas City 0  
Saturday, April 28, 2018

### New England Revolution Head Coach Brad Friedel

#### ***On the defensive performance:***

**Friedel:** “The goalkeeper and back four played well, but I thought our transition when we lost the ball was excellent. I thought Wilfried Zahibo and Luis Caicedo and Juan Agudelo and Cristian Penilla and Diego [Fagundez] and Teal [Bunbury], in the transition to keep in our block, very compact at all times, was outstanding. The system that we want to play, everyone has to work tremendously hard and I thought each and every player that played tonight did that.”

#### ***On what he saw on Teal Bunbury’s goal:***

**Friedel:** “I saw a linesman put a flag up on the goal. I just thought it was offside. Then, when you look, it came off their player, so I believe Video Review got it correct. I have not seen it again. I got a little glimpse of it, so I can’t comment too much on it, but people tell me that it was a correct decision.”

#### ***On what made Sporting Kansas City’s defense tough to break down during the first half:***

**Friedel:** “Well, you could tell Sporting Kansas City changed the way that they play against us. They went very, very direct, because they knew that we were going to press them, and I thought our back four – I thought Jalil [Anibaba] and Claude [Dielna] kept a really good line, a solid line, and Matt Turner’s positioning on those through balls was excellent. You have to stay brave in those situations. When you drop back, that’s when a lot of gaps are created in the center of midfield. It was a little bit warmer this evening than we’ve been playing, so the players were getting drained a little bit. The concentration levels we were really happy with under the circumstances and playing against a very, very good team.”

#### ***On opponents preparing to play against the press and how the Revolution were able to find success in doing so:***

**Friedel:** “It’s hard work. When you’re defending, I say this to the players a lot, that a lot of teams think that they can have a rest when they defend. You can’t have a rest when you defend. You try to get your breather and rest when you have the ball, and try to keep a little bit of possession and then go again, but you cannot rest when you defend. I think the players have adapted really well to keeping the high tempo for large portions of 90 minutes of games. I think every team that’s played against us finds it very difficult to keep up with that tempo. We have some excellent players on the counter attack, but we also have some excellent players in possession. We have a long way to go to get to that final product that we want to get to, but the players put in such high levels of work every week. And I think people that come watch us play week in and week out, or maybe since the first day of preseason, can see how we’ve evolved so far and I’m just really excited to see how we can end up this season.”

#### ***On if the team has met the coaches’ expectations through eight matches of the season:***

**Friedel:** “The work rate has exceeded our expectations, no doubt. It is really difficult work that we ask them to do and they’re in long hours, longer than they’re used to. But, it pays dividends when you can go out and get to fitness levels, so you can keep the ball and defend in a high-pressing manner, like we want to. The character of the players has always been there. We saw that in training and we’re just a team that’s in its infancy right now, but we’re very happy with where we’re at. We still want to add a couple of pieces to the puzzle and we still want to improve on a lot of things, but whenever you get three points against very, very good teams, it makes the hard work a little bit easier to give.”



***On the impact of Cristian Penilla:***

**Friedel:** “He’s a very difficult player to defend against and sometimes we play him on the right, sometimes on the left, depending on little tweaks to our system. And on the right side, he gets a tremendous amount of assists and crosses in the box. On the left hand side, he gets the assists, crosses and cuts in for shots. When you have the type of quickness and the technical ability that he has, it’s very difficult to defend against him, but more than that, when he was born, he’s just one of those players that understands soccer. He understands where to go, when to run, explosive when he does do his running, and he’s a creative player. Some players will try to double team and triple team, and he’ll still be a player that will be able to carve out a few chances. No player’s going to score or assist every single game, but every single game, he’ll have the opportunities to do so.”

***On if he’d like to see Cristian Penilla shoot more:***

**Friedel:** “Would I like him to shoot more? I’m very happy with the output that Cristian Penilla does.”

***On Jalil Anibaba’s celebrations after making defensive plays:***

**Friedel:** “Every player pours out emotions in games and Jalil [Anibaba] is a defender. He doesn’t get to pour those emotions out too often scoring goals. So, [you see celebrations] when he makes blocks or good headers and clearances, and he does it in training as well. True competitor. I thought Claude Dielna was excellent tonight also.”

**New England Revolution Forward Teal Bunbury**

***On his thoughts when he scored the game-winning goal that appeared to be offside:***

**Bunbury:** “As a striker, you want to be prepared and opportunistic whenever the chances come your way. You want to be ready, try to prepare for that. You could probably see my reaction after I got the ball and it went in the back of the net. I was like, ‘It was probably offside.’ They reviewed it, saw that it went off a Kansas City player, so just in the right spot at the right time. That’s my job, to kind of just be ready.”

***On whether he or Diego Fagundez appealed for the video review:***

**Bunbury:** “I wish we could ask for reviews, but no, they don’t listen to the players. It comes from whoever’s upstairs, I guess they call it.”

***On finishing a play even when he may be offside:***

**Bunbury:** “On any other day, maybe I just turn and just kind of pass it back to the keeper or something like that, but I think you just have to be alert and that’s what we train for during the weeks. Every player tonight I think was alert, was competitive, was pushing each other. It was a great match. Kansas City is a really great team, so that’s a really good result for us.”

***On beating a strong offensive team like Kansas City:***

**Bunbury:** “It means a lot for us as a group. Kansas City is a really good team. They’ve been in great form. We’ve been working hard. Our mindset coming from that 2-2 draw against Columbus, being back at home following our first loss [at home] in some time, we wanted to make a statement, and I think it was a very positive game from everyone, pumping each other up, working hard offensively and defensively. That’s what we’re going to need for the rest of the year.”

***On if this is a result that should catch other MLS clubs’ attention:***

**Bunbury:** “We don’t really concern ourselves with – not in any arrogant way or anything – [with] other teams and how they focus on us. We really just want to go out there and perform and get points, especially at home. So if other teams are looking, that’s great, but we’re going to keep moving along and pushing ourselves. There’s still a lot of things that we can work on, that we’re going to take from this game, but just something to be proud of tonight.”



***On if he's been in the situation before where an offside play was reviewed and ruled a goal:***

**Bunbury:** "Not off the top of my head can I think of a goal like that, but like I said, every player's got to be ready and prepared. As a striker, that's one of the things I need to take pride in, but if it's a defender, having a heads-up play and being ready defensively. Each guy tonight was winning one-vs.-one battles and winning their duels, and stepping up to the plate, so that was my job doing that. We've just got to move forward now."

**New England Revolution Midfielder Diego Fagundez**

***On the team's performance:***

**Fagundez:** "I think our teams definitely fight and you can see it out there. Today, it was one of those hard games. At the end of the day, we came out with three points and that's what matters right now."

***On Teal Bunbury's goal:***

**Fagundez:** "I think it was four-on-two, four-on-three or something. Juan [Agudelo] was coming to attack. He gave me the ball. I was trying to take a touch and shoot and I got unlucky where someone coming from behind played and I remember Teal [Bunbury] scoring and they said we're going to review it. I said to Teal, 'It's a goal, don't even think about it, it's a goal.' At the end of the day they had to talk, it went to review, and it was a goal, so it was good for us. It was an ugly goal, but at the end of the day, we'll take that ugly goal."

***On his certainty that Roger Espinoza played the ball forward on Bunbury's goal:***

**Fagundez:** "I was 100 percent [sure]. I told Teal [Bunbury] right away. I was like, don't even worry about, it's a goal. The referee said we have to review it and we have to see if it was offside. It was clear that I didn't go to shoot or pass it."

***On Brad Friedel instituting two-a-day sessions this season:***

**Fagundez:** "It's awesome. Since preseason, we've been working so hard with those sessions. At the end of the day, it becomes the games. If we are working hard in these games it's going to pay off for us. At the end of the day, we're doing well this year so we just have to keep going. Two-a-days are hard, but our bodies are getting used to it now so we just have to keep going."

***On Krisztián Németh's contributions:***

**Fagundez:** "Krisztián [Németh] is amazing. I think since preseason, everyone saw it. The first game he walks in and [you see] what he has. I think he's underrated, where people don't realize how good he is. At the end of the day, he's doing great for us. As much as possible we have to give him the ball so he can take a one-on-one. When you're taking shots on goal, you're going to get one."

**New England Revolution Defender Jalil Anibaba**

***On his first season with the New England Revolution:***

**Anibaba:** "I think we're off to a great start, I'm very, very, very happy here – very comfortable here. I have a lot of fun with the guys in the locker room. We work very hard, I think that's something that I've been able to do throughout my whole career – is just work really hard and I think the group shares that same mindset."

***On his intense celebrations:***

**Anibaba:** "It's an intense game, you guys saw from minute one the game was intense. The tempo was extremely high. They almost scored off the kickoff. We were all emotionally invested in this one, like we always are. This one needed a bit of extra motivation and emotion to be put into it."



***On importance of the fans' support:***

**Anibaba:** "It was great, our fans were awesome tonight. They gave us energy when we needed it. Like I said, it was a very high intensity game, but as far as the timing of the result, it was huge. You know, we've been playing with a chip on our shoulders since the last [match] here against [FC] Dallas. It's good to set the home record right tonight and build on it."

***On Sporting Kansas City skipping the midfield to avoid the press:***

**Anibaba:** "It was big, but it was our job to make sure we were clean on that aspect of the game. We know anytime we're able to get something on the end of a long ball from the opposition, our midfielders are very good at picking up the second balls. Like I spoke about before, [Sporting] Kansas City is a team that is always going to put everything into the game. I knew it was going to be intense, fair, hard match and an entertaining one as well and it turned out to be true."

**Sporting Kansas City Head Coach Peter Vermes**

***On the confusion surrounding Teal Bunbury's goal:***

**Vermes:** "I'm still trying to absorb it because there's a lot of things that happened. The linesman puts his flag up for off-sides – a lot of times what happens with players, especially in the situation where everybody sees that the player was off-sides, everybody kind of stops. Not saying that's an excuse, but that happens. The linesman has his flag up, Teal [Bunbury] turns around, just kicks it in the net, ball goes in, now they're checking on it. What they're checking to see, I don't know. This is what part I don't know. I don't know if they ever made a call one way or the other whether it was off-sides or it was a goal because they never turned around and pointed to the spot. I don't know if the referee ever made the whistle. So, at the end, the only thing they relied on was VAR [Video Assistant Referee]. Then at that point, again, I don't know. If they said it was a goal, then you have to overturn the goal. If they said it was offside, then you have to overturn the offside. But I don't know which one they were going with. When you look at both of those and you look at the play, what I have seen in the footage, it's not clear and obvious who kicked the ball. Roger [Espinoza] is wearing green shoes and [Diego] Fagundez is wearing orange, and the orange shoe is in front of the green. Honestly, it's a hard thing for me to say. It's one of those ones where you're just going to have to chalk it up and say that's maybe a learning lesson, I guess. Let me make no mistake about it – I'm in favor of VAR, I really am. I think it's going to be good for the game, but I think we're going to go through these growing pains like this, because I don't understand what transpired in that whole situation. Fair? I know that's a long winded answer, but it's a strange play."

***On his team's performance:***

**Vermes:** "I think it wasn't a good game. I don't think it was a good game to watch. It was like car crashes all over the field. At some point, I thought I was maybe watching a tennis match a little bit because the ball was in the air so much. I don't think it was a good game from that perspective, but I don't think any team really did anything to warrant three points. At the end, of the day it's probably a 0-0 game and that's probably where it would have ended off. That situation was very strange there at the end of the first half."

**Sporting Kansas City Midfielder Roger Espinoza**

***On what he saw on the Revolution's goal:***

**Espinoza:** "I saw [Diego] Fagundez was going to hit the ball, so I just challenged the ball at the same time as he did. I can't really tell exactly what happened. I just remember hitting the bottom of his cleat, and him going to shoot – intentionally shoot – and then the ball went through. It's kind of one of those balls that you don't really figure out what really happened. I thought the referee was going to call offside, to be honest."



***On whether or not he thinks VR made the right call about the goal being onside:***

**Espinoza:** “I think it was the right call – not that it matters anymore – but I thought he [Teal Bunbury] was offside. But, hey, I don’t make the rules here and if I would have hit the ball then, yeah, but I hit the bottom of his cleat. He was in the full motion of swinging so he kind of hit it, and I hit the back of his cleats while he was going in motion, so we challenged the ball at the same time.”

***On how he thinks the team bounced back in the second half after the goal:***

**Espinoza:** “We worked. We worked hard. We fought back. It’s not easy. It wasn’t easy, but I thought we fought back and sometimes games are going to go like that.”

***On whether they have something specific to work on for the next game to get back on track:***

**Espinoza:** “We have to start games the right way. I thought we didn’t start very sharp, we weren’t very sharp at the end. Hopefully, next game at home we’re sharp and we’re able to get on the right foot right away.”

**Sporting Kansas City Defender Graham Zusi**

***On the confusion surrounding Teal Bunbury’s goal:***

**Zusi:** “I’m not going to say too much about it until I’ve seen a replay. But from what I saw, it was a 50-50 challenge tackle that squirted to Teal [Bunbury], and as far as I’m concerned that should be an offside ball.”

***On his team’s performance:***

**Zusi:** “I think we were a bit sloppy throughout the match, to be honest. [We] didn’t play our brand of soccer that we can and know. Credit to New England for locking it down in the second half and getting the result. But, I think it’s a match that we’ll look at and try to learn from. At the end of the day, we were just a bit sloppy in what we’re usually good at.”

***On how they can bounce back next game:***

**Zusi:** “The ideas were there for us tonight, but the execution wasn’t. We saw what we wanted to do, and we saw some areas that we can exploit with New England, but at the end of the day we didn’t get it done.”

-###-