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POSTGAME RECAP: Revolution Conclude Preseason with 2-0 Win against New York Red Bulls

Rowe and Nguyen tally as Cropper posts shutout

TUCSON, Ariz. – The New England Revolution finished the 2017 preseason with a 2-0 victory over the New York Red Bulls in the club's Desert Diamond Cup finale. Goals from Kelyn Rowe and Lee Nguyen led the way as goalkeeper Cody Cropper earned the start and posted a shutout in 90 minutes of action.

The Revolution opened scoring in the 52nd minute when Diego Fagundez sent a curling pass into the stride of Kelyn Rowe's run. Rowe hit a first-time shot over New York goalkeeper Rafael Diaz to give the Revs a 1-0 lead. New England kept the pressure on for the remainder of the match, with close-range chances for Kamara in the 61st minute and Nguyen in the 73rd and 82nd minutes just missing the target. Nguyen then capped off the game with a goal in the 89th minute, which was assisted by Je-Vaughn Watson.

Cody Cropper went the full 90 minutes in net for the shutout victory. He preserved the clean sheet with a spectacular double save in the 64th minute. After a loss of possession led to a breakaway for New York, Cropper came off his line to snuff out the attack. The rebound led to another Red Bulls attempt, but the Revs' keeper stood his ground to clear away the shot. He was aided by the Revs' new central defense pairing of Antonio Mlinar Delamea and Benjamin Angoua, both of whom started the contest.

The Revolution will return home to Foxborough, Mass. on Sunday ahead of the 2017 regular season opener in Commerce City, Colo. against the Colorado Rapids on March 4. The match begins at 6:00 p.m. ET and will be televised locally on Comcast SportsNet, and can also be heard on the radio on 98.5 The Sports Hub. The club will then open its home slate against Orlando City SC on March 11 at 2:00 p.m. ET.

Scoring Summary:

NE – Kelyn Rowe (Diego Fagundez) 52'

NE – Lee Nguyen (Je-Vaughn Watson) 89'

New England Revolution: Cody Cropper; Donnie Smith (Xavier Kouassi – 82'), Benjamin Angoua (London Woodberry – 57'), Antonio Mlinar Delamea (Je-Vaughn Watson – 88'), Andrew Farrell; Scott Caldwell, Diego Fagundez, Kelyn Rowe (Daigo Kobayashi – 77'), Juan Agudelo (Teal Bunbury – 82'); Lee Nguyen, Kei Kamara (Je-Vaughn Watson – 77').

New York Red Bulls: Rafael Diaz; Lucas Batista (David Abidor – HT), Tim Schmoll (David Najem – HT), Hassan Ndam, Ethan Butler; Arun Basuljevic, Duane Muckette (Kazu Shigenobu – HT), Vincent Bezecourt, Florian Valot; Zeiko Lewis (Andrew Tinari – 77'), Omir Fernandez (Lucas Terci – 66').

POSTGAME TRANSCRIPTS

New England Revolution Head Coach Jay Heaps

On allowing many of the starters to play nearly the entire match:

Coach Heaps: “It was good to get guys minutes and push their minutes and just try to continue to get better and progress from day one in preseason to today.”

On the team’s improved performance in the second half:

Coach Heaps: “We needed to make some adjustments. We didn’t start the game real well in terms of a positive way about us. So it was good to have a good conversation at halftime and a good response from the team.”

On Cody Cropper’s double save in the second half to preserve the shutout:

Coach Heaps: “It was an important save at an important time. I think when you’re on the road, or playing in a game when you’re up 1-0 or it’s 0-0 and that one save keeps either the lead or keeps the game level, it’s critical and that’s what we’re looking for from our keepers.”

On the team’s ability to create opportunities:

Coach Heaps: “As long as we continue to create chances, they’re going to get their goals. I thought it was a really good one today in terms of how we had chances. I think we could’ve been better in the first half in getting that chemistry a little bit tighter, a little bit better, but second half it started to come around and we created a lot more chances.”

New England Revolution Defender Antonio Mlinar Delamea

On the win against New York:

Delamea: “I think we played two different halves. The first half wasn’t good from us. I think the biggest problem was that we were losing second balls. We let them pressure us the whole time and we had problems, as you can see. But the second half, I think we stepped higher, we tried to press them, and we pushed them into two mistakes that led to the goals. We should score more, but at the end, it’s important that no one got hurt. We’re all healthy and prepared for the season.”

On closing out the preseason in good form:

Delamea: “It’s important, but at the end, it will only count how we’ll be doing it on Saturday. That’s all that’s in our mind. We need to prepare for the first season game. It’s not the same if you’re playing preseason and the competition. We need to learn to compete, we need to work a little bit on our tactics, and we’re looking [forward to] the first game.”

On how his chemistry with Benjamin Angoua is progressing:

Delamea: “We are still getting to know each other. We’re playing for the second time today together. We need to do some training together. He was injured for almost half of the preseason. I think every game, he’s getting better. I think we look strong in the back, but of course we still made some mistakes and we need to work on these things to minimize this in the competition.”

On beginning the regular season next Saturday at Colorado:

Delamea: “Personally, I can’t wait for the season to begin. I like the challenge. I think this will be my new challenge and I’m looking forward to it. I think we’re ready as a team. But as I said, we need to do some tactical adjustments this week and then I hope we’ll be ready for the game.”

New England Revolution Midfielder Kelyn Rowe**On how the team improved after halftime:**

Rowe: “Especially during the middle of the season when everyone’s kind of tired, or the end of the season when we’re really pushing to get a playoff spot or get that first two spots in the East, we’ve got to be able to make adjustments mid-game. I think we did that very well. Especially, like I said, that second half, we played a lot better than the first half and you see that’s a talent that we need going forward.”

On the team’s ability to generate chances:

Rowe: “I’d rather see them go in the back of the net, as many as we can. Obviously, we had a good campaign on Wednesday and put together six goals, but I think we need to continue. We create a lot of chances. We always have in past years. Can we finish them now? Can we get in the habit of finishing these goals? I know they’re not easy, but can we put them away?”

On if the team is ready to begin the regular season:

Rowe: “As ready as we’re going to be. We don’t have much time left, so I think for us, it’s going to be a positive going into Colorado. We’ve obviously seen them in preseason before, but it’s about going in and getting a result. It’s the first game of the year, everyone’s pretty pumped up, everyone’s pretty excited. Obviously, it’s Colorado’s first home game of the year, so we need to come in and be smart. We need be able to have those mid-game changes throughout the whole year, but this first game especially.”

On the team’s offensive attack:

Rowe: “Going in from last year, we had I think the last 11 or 12 games, we moved into that diamond formation. We had Kei [Kamara] and Lee [Nguyen] and Juan [Agudelo] kind of interchanging within that. Throw Teal [Bunbury] in the mix there as well. Those guys can interchange and score goals and make things happen. You add Diego [Fagundez], you add myself and Scott Caldwell who can play balls in, it just creates so much. Can we create and finish? That’s our problem and if we can sort that out, going forward I think we’re going to have a lot of goals for us.”

On his game-winning goal in the 52nd minute:

Rowe: “Diego [Fagundez] picked his head up and I found a run behind. He played a good ball perfectly to my foot, and it was a one-touch finish over the keeper’s shoulder. It’s one of those you kind of grow up dreaming of – keeper’s coming out and all you have to do is either touch it around him or put it over him.”

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