



TRANSCRIPT: Match Preview Press Conference (July 20)
Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović & GK Matt Turner

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On resuming the MLS season with two home games this week and welcoming Matt Turner back to training today:

Mitrović: "It's always great when we are all together. Matt [Turner] had a great reason for why he wasn't with us. We all celebrated the reason why he wasn't here, with him being part of the U.S. National Team and participating in the World Cup. It is a great honor, but now Matt is back, ready to go, and as I said, we are happy to be all together."

On how excited the Revolution are to resume the MLS season on Wednesday night, hosting Toronto FC:

Mitrović: "I can feel that the team is ready to go. It was eight weeks off, but really five because we played a few friendly games. I think the guys are very ready to go. I think this break was great, because on one side, [it's good] for them to recover. Also, [in the past] five weeks, I think we used [the break] in a very good way to keep going, to keep improving, to keep getting better, and to prepare for what's coming."

On what New England expects from Toronto FC:

Mitrović: "First of all, Toronto is a team that has so many good players. I actually think they have a very good roster, and they are a team that can expose that talent on the field at any given moment. They have already had one [MLS] game since the break against CF Montreal, which in these moments can be a great benefit for those teams, because they are already in that competitive mindset. However, I think that we're going to be ready for that as well."

On playing on Gillette Stadium's artificial turf compared to a grass pitch:

Mitrović: "There are two perspectives. One perspective is, [when comparing] turf and grass, it's not the same surface. I'm not a genius when I say that. It's just different. But on the other side, who we are and what we want to do on the field, it doesn't change. I know that we had a very good record at home in the first eight games, but that's behind us. We have different circumstances. We just have to adapt and play our best game after game at home without thinking of what kind of surface we have ahead of us."

On the positive takeaways from the first half of the season and areas the team is looking to improve during the second half:

Mitrović: "I think something that this team shows day after day in our environment here is a great work ethic. It's something that I have mentioned many times, that they don't negotiate that. I think it's part of our culture. It's not just them on the field, but all the people in this building. We don't negotiate with our work. We come here day after day, and that is something that is enjoyable. I think players showed a great level of unity and togetherness in every game, no matter what the outcome was. I think this team was always together, and I think that's a great strength of ours."

"If we speak about the game, I think that we can improve every segment of our game. I think we had a good amount of time to learn about ourselves, and to learn how we can compete with the rest [of the league] in the way we want to play. We used these five weeks to try to remind ourselves who we are,

because we hadn't been together for [the previous three weeks]. But on the other side, how can we get better, and can we make the next step in our game?"

On the mindset as the team embarks on the second half of the season:

Mitrović: "I have a bit of a different mindset. It's more about coming here and giving our best every day and trying to do the right things. We believe here that we have that approach of doing our best day-by-day, and doing the right things. It's not just doing your best [without] doing the right things, because then it will be a mess. If we have clarity about our work, and if we really have a great approach, we believe that we're going to have more right outcomes than not. When we don't have the right outcome, it doesn't mean that we're not on the right path. And when we have the right outcome, it doesn't mean that we're not going to stay humble and keep working. That's how I see it. We still don't talk about standings. We still don't talk about further plans. It's very focused on what's now."

On how everyone in the organization has played a role in building a positive culture:

Mitrović: "It's difficult to talk about what was before, because I just don't know the context. I would say that if we spoke about what [Assistant Coaches] Sean Hughes and Michael Morris have brought here, it's everything we just spoke about - great energy, great work mindset, and great clarity day after day. I don't want this to sound like a cliché, but you can't do as much as you can if you don't have the right people around. I just love the people here, coming in day after day and just seeing them. It's not just our time that we spend here. We have so many events, Emma [Moneuse] and I are a part of a running team. We have different things that we do outside of this building together. You can have your ideas as much as you want, but if you don't have people around you to support that, it doesn't matter. I don't think it's Michael, Sean, or myself [that changed the culture]. I think there has been enjoyment created by everyone in this building."

On how the team's style of play evolved through the first half of the season:

Mitrović: "If we compare our first game against Nashville [on Feb. 21] and then our last game against Charlotte [on May 23], our first game and our last game [of this season], I think there was a lot of progress in at least what we were trying to do on both sides of the ball. If we speak about attacking when we are in possession, I think we have much more clarity."

"Again, it's not like we are at the ultimate place where I want us to be. It's also about the profiles and dynamics of our players that we have and how we can expose their strengths in the best possible way. I believe we'll learn about each other. I'll learn about this group and how we can get the most out of this group. But also, I think they have much more clarity than we had in January. When we spoke about the way we wanted to play for the first time, I think it was very foggy. Then day after day, you get knowledge and clarity on what that's going to look like."

"I'm positive in both directions. As I said, I think we know the group better, and the group knows us better. We still have a long way to go to be where we want to be and to be able to have control of the game in every given moment, or at least to try to get there. None of the teams in the world can have the control of the game all 90 minutes, but to [be able to] have majority of the games controlled, we still have a lot of work to do."

Revolution Goalkeeper Matt Turner

On returning to training with New England today:

Turner: "It's great to be back. Obviously, the boys have been hard at work over the last couple of months. I think it has been two months since I've been back. So, it's great to be here, great to be back home and have some stability in my life, and to be able to use it as a platform for the future and whatever is to come. But right now, my focus will be solely on keeping this team where we are in the standings and higher and ultimately pushing to make the playoffs. Off the back of the excitement of the World Cup in the area, continue to make new fans and new memories for people that want to support this great team."

On how it will feel to continue his career with New England:

Turner: “It’s going to feel great. First training back, it did feel great. This place, obviously everybody knows, it’s really special to me. I’m not going to outweigh one with the other. It’s great to represent the region. I’m happy to be back. I’m just looking forward to what this club is building. I think that was a huge attraction for remaining [in New England]. With the moves they made with Chris Tierney and things like that, it’s their feeling of ambition and everything. I think there are a lot of positive things to come. I really believe in [Marko Mitrović] as well and his vision for the team and what we can achieve. I feel like a big part of it, and that’s a great feeling.”

On reflecting on his FIFA World Cup experience with the United States Men’s National Team:

Turner: “It didn’t go exactly the way I dreamt it would go, but I found a lot of small victories and smiles and memories along the way. It was an honor of a lifetime to be here representing the U.S. on home soil. I think I didn’t realize the gravity of all of it until you walk out. It just felt like every seat was filled with red, white, and blue. In the last World Cup [in 2022], it was kind of like a 50-50 split in the stands. This one, that excitement was tangible, it was palpable. You could literally feel it. It was a great place to be, and I feel like obviously, in the end it ends in a disappointing way. When you see people afterwards reflecting on it and talking to you and saying how much they were captivated by the World Cup and by this team, and it’s a great feeling.

“It makes you disappointed because you think ‘Man, if we could have gone one or two steps further, what could it have done?’ But I think, ultimately, the feeling that a lot of people have had all around the country has been overwhelmingly positive and I know for a fact we made some memories for kids and players for generations to come.”

On if he’s already eyeing a spot on the United States roster for the 2030 World Cup, and if any Revolution teammates could also be part of the USMNT:

Turner: “I want to be very wary with the word ‘comfortable,’ because yes, I’m settled and I’m happy here, but I’m not the type of person that’s going to chuck in my hat and say, ‘I’m good now.’ I’ve always been the person to want to drive myself forward and break down barriers that have never been done before. So, for me, of course that’s going to be on my radar. It’s going to be something I want to achieve – to be at the 2030 World Cup. That is going to rely heavily on my performances here. And also, I want to come here to try to win things and do things that this club has never done before as well.

“And yeah, for younger players, we have a great locker room of talent. Brooklyn [Raines], Peyton [Miller], Ethan [Kohler], I could go on and on, Griffin [Yow] too. There are so many amazing young American players at this club, and hopefully my experiences that I’ve had, they can lean on and help them to make that next step in whatever they want to achieve. And if it is to make that [United States] roster for 2030, there’s only one way to do that and I know it all too well. So, for us to have all those like-minded individuals in this locker room is really important, and it will help us ultimately to achieve what this club has been trying to achieve for so long.”

On capitalizing on the momentum the World Cup has created for soccer:

Turner: “I’m not sure it has been specifically spoken about. Prior to the World Cup, I talked a lot about how soccer has really arrived in this region. Not just for this club, but in all the nooks and crannies. You look around New England and there’s a lot of passion for it everywhere. I’ll say the names again: you have the team in Portland, Maine [Hearts of Pine], the team that plays every summer in Vermont [Vermont Green FC] that sells it out. You have Rhode Island FC now. You also have the universities that are doing really well too – you have Vermont, Bryant, who else is doing well in the region. And now the women’s team [Boston Legacy FC].

“There is so much excitement for the game in this region, and that’s another piece of why it’s good to be back. I’m not sure we’ve specifically spoken about trying to make the most of it, but it is great to have that passion around and know that if we do well that people will come to see us play and support us. That’s not just because they love soccer, but that’s also the general culture of New England sports fans.”

On if there’s a balance to be found between enjoying his accomplishments and coming back from the World Cup to play again:

Turner: "Yeah, that's why I was a ghost for two weeks. I tried my best to balance that come-down of emotion. I think it was difficult in a lot of ways, because you work so hard for something and it's a big life moment, for four years and then you have to deal with the emotion of the fact that you achieved being there. You didn't achieve everything that you want, where do you go from here? You kind of have to sift through a lot of that, and in soccer you don't have a lot of time to do that. You never do. Even with this new schedule in MLS and the calendar flip, and having played in Europe the last couple seasons, really only last winter did I finally have a little time off.

"And here, trying to sandwich all that into two weeks, I didn't get to spend a night with my wife for seven weeks when I was on the road. It's a long time being away from family and all that. So, for us, to kind of align as a family on what's important for what I want, my career has driven a lot of what we've done. We have two kids, so what's best for them and what my wife ultimately feels and wants as well. I know she wants to always support me and what I want to do, and that's a really great feeling. I have a great partner. I think you have to find those balances, but then in the end the lights will come on again and nobody cares. It's just about the results after that. I feel rested and ready to just start churning results out again. The rest will take care of itself."

On his motivation for the second half of the season and what he brought back with him from his World Cup experience:

Turner: "The experiences that you have when you're away are always great. So, anytime you can learn and grow, learn about the game, see the players, and just get better in general and get sharper, it's really great. I felt like I had a little bit of a layoff. I came back and I had a great practice today, so that's always good to come back and get the ball rolling again. It fills your teammates with confidence. Like yeah, maybe I didn't go through exactly what they went through in the last six weeks or however long they've been training, but it's not like I've been on holiday. I'm focused, and I think the motivation for the rest of the season is to compete for trophies. Why not try to compete for trophies? Why not try to finish in a playoff spot and get into that Leagues Cup next season? There is a lot to play for, so I think it's a great time to be a Revs player and also a Revs fan."