



TRANSCRIPT: Match Preview Press Conference (August 13)

Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović & D Ethan Kohler

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On playing against Toronto FC for the second time in three weeks, with the two sides matching up back on July 22:

Mitrović: "I think it gives more clarity to both teams of where they are. Obviously for us, that was our first game back after the [World Cup] break, and the second for [Toronto FC]. I expect some different players on the field on both sides on Saturday, so maybe that will make a small difference or could be a big difference. But I feel that we know about each other enough, very good, and it's not something that is an uncertainty for any of those teams going into that game. A lot of things are very familiar for both teams. Again, it's another game and we are ready to go."

On the club acquiring 21-year-old defender Tylon Smith via loan:

Mitrović: "Tylon [Smith] is a player that we believe has a high potential. The first time I learned about him was during qualifiers for the [2025 FIFA] U-20 World Cup when I was watching the African Confederation Under-20s. And later, we played actually against South Africa in our group stage, so we got to face him on the field as well. We believe that he has a high potential. Obviously, he doesn't have a big number of professional games, and we want to see how much we can help him to grow as a player and automatically how much he can help us as a team, but without setting high expectations because he is a young athlete now changing countries and it's a new challenge for him. We are here to support him and help him find his success as soon as possible, and help his growth."

On what forward/winger Jack Harrison has added to the club's training environment:

Mitrović: "[Harrison] has great working habits, and really is someone who has a great mindset coming here every day. I actually want to say that's something new that we are learning about Jack from the past, and that's why we brought Jack. We always say that players have certain qualities to help the team, but on the other side we have a certain environment that we want to create. It's not just Jack, every player on this team is coming here with a great mindset to maximize every day and give everything. Jack is a great addition to that – another player who can reinforce the behavior that we want to instill here every day."

On if Jack Harrison will see increased minutes on Saturday in Toronto after a 36-minute performance in his club debut last weekend:

Mitrović: "Definitely the plan will be for [Harrison] to play more minutes. We also have to be very cautious because this will be his second game after an offseason. But again, connected with the last question you asked about him, he came here, I would say for game fitness, very ready. His numbers are amazing and we believe that he has more minutes not just to be on the field but also to perform compared with the last game. We would love to increase his minutes in the next game."

On what the club observed about Tylon Smith during the scouting process:

Mitrović: "If we speak about the attacking part of the game, he is someone who is very calm and very composed on the ball. Something that is important for us is that our center backs are quick and that they can play. Also, he is a great athlete and he is very fast. His athleticism is something that is one of his strengths and the way we want to play when we have a higher line or when we are in counter measures. I

don't think that will be an issue for him, because for him to cover the space has become naturally very comfortable doing that.

"Obviously, senior games are something different, and that's something that I want to see and learn how much he is ready in this moment and how fast he can start helping the team. We really believe he can do it as fast as possible, but again I don't want to put any pressure. He is very young guy who is changing to another country again, and those are not easy things for athletes. Sometimes, we forget how old they are and we want to help him when he comes here to adapt to our environment as soon as possible."

On how the team can improve its road form:

Mitrović: "I don't think anything much. We just have to keep going and we'll change that [away] record. I'm not worried about that. I don't think that, outside of the first game against Nashville, we were outperformed on the field in those games. We have, since that game, played six total games away. If we speak purely about results – one win, two ties, and three losses – is it the best record? No. But I always go to how we get certain results and what's our performance on the field. So first of all, I'm not thinking about those records, home or away. Every game has three points on the table, and that's the season."

"It's the way you earn your points. You can earn home and away, and now obviously we have a stretch where we have more games away. But really my mind is not there like 'Oh it's an away game.' It's really like 'Can we perform and keep developing as a team?' Knowing that we want to earn results that are strongly supported by our performance and who we are, because that is how we believe we can get results in the long term. Everything else will be game-by-game. Again, I feel very comfortable and confident in this team."

Revolution Defender Ethan Kohler

On the keys to another strong defensive performance against Toronto FC this weekend, after earning a clean sheet in the July 22 matchup:

Kohler: "I think being successful defensively is not just something that comes from the backline, it's a team effort. We have to continue to stay compact throughout our lines, and we have to press well. When we're sitting in our mid-block, we have to do that well. Obviously, defending is a lot easier when you're better on the ball. I think just as a whole, when we have the ball, taking care of it and taking our chances when they come is going to be really big just for taking a little bit of the load off us defensively. And, of course, just being disciplined."

On defender Tylon Smith joining the club and how the team can help him adjust to playing in New England:

Kohler: "Well, first and foremost, you're leaving your family, and that's a pretty major part of it. Culturally, everything is going to be different. But, we have a really open locker room, we have good guys, and we have a lot of good resources here for young players. The staff is very welcoming and understanding as well. So, it's difficult, that transition of course, but we have a really welcoming group here that's going to do everything we can to help [Smith] out."

On the value of consistent guidance from the coaching staff, regardless of results:

Kohler: "I mean, football is football. It's never going to be the same game to game. But if you have controllables that are consistent, then you know that you have things, at least, well within your control. So, sometimes the result goes your way, sometimes it doesn't. But having a staff that doesn't change things that are outside of your control is, for a player, important. Then you know that, going into that next match, no matter what happened before, we have things that are in our control so we can try and push the outcome in our favor."

On playing alongside Jack Harrison and how his strengths have added to the team:

Kohler: "Of course, [Harrison] has a ton of really important experience for us, especially for me as a young player. I've already tried to pick his brain a few times. You can just see the speed at which he plays, the rhythm he plays, just the sharpness in his movements. For me, it's inspiring to see, and I'm

sure for a lot of the other guys. When you have someone who comes in and sets the standard so high, it pushes the group further forward. So, I'm really excited just to continue to work with him and he's been such an open and humble person.

"He's very open to speaking with everybody and anybody about his experience and is even open to giving us tips and things that can help improve us as a group. So, he's been an amazing presence on the field and off the field."

On how Head Coach Marko Mitrović helps younger players reach their highest potential:

Kohler: "Marko [Mitrović] treats all players based on what they bring. Sometimes as a young player, you can be overlooked based on your age or lack of experience, so on and so forth. But he sees the picture for what it is. If you're playing well, you're playing well. If you're doing the things that he asks of you, then he doesn't see that you're a young player doing the things he asks of you. He just sees that you're a player doing those things. That can fill you with confidence and you have more of a sense of belonging. He doesn't have this hierarchy in the way that he coaches.

"So as a young player, you can go into that environment knowing you're going to get the same treatment as anyone else. That just gives you this kind of motivation to keep pushing yourself forward. Also, he's a guy with a lot of understanding and a lot of experience. Just for me as a young player, he's not only given me things to work on, but he's checked in continuously and he's someone who really cares. For a young player, that's massive."