



TRANSCRIPT: Match Preview Press Conference (Oct. 16)

Soundbytes from Head Marko Mitrović & M Carles Gil

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On the team's ability to stay resilient and continue competing at a high level during a stretch of three games in eight days:

Mitrović: "That's a great question. I think that's something that I'm really positive about with this group, that they are always ready to push their limits all the way up to everything they have. It's a really short stretch of three games, and we traveled to Cincinnati [on Wednesday]. But again, it's a circumstance for us, and it's the same way for every other team around the league. We worked these two days on one side to recover, but on the other side to prepare for the game [against Chicago Fire FC on Saturday] as best as possible, and we have 36 more hours to make the best preparation for the game."

On key takeaways from the first meeting with Chicago Fire FC, a 2-1 win on September 13, and preparations for this Saturday's rematch:

Mitrović: "It actually helps when it's this short a period of time between games, and when you don't have the full week to prepare toward the opponent. Those memories that happened in the game very recently [in September], I think actually help both teams, especially players. I still think that they have that feeling from the game and what happened on the field. As you mentioned, just playing the game against [Chicago] very recently, actually puts both teams with this short time between the two games in a good spot, with an understanding of who we are."

On forward Leo Campana's status as he continues to rehab from a long-term injury:

Mitrović: "Leo [Campana] is day by day. He's in a better spot, but he still has those days where he's in limited training sessions with the team, and then he has training sessions on his own. So, maybe the last time when you were here was a day when he was limited with the team. We are trying to kind of connect days where we have a load that would work for Leo, just to be around the team as much as possible. I'd say things are going well, but I don't want to rush into any predictions there."

On the approach toward building the right momentum heading into the postseason:

Mitrović: "There is definitely that piece of building the right momentum. I think there are also circumstances that teams will have to get in that stage as healthy as possible. We have a big amount of games just before that happens, and if you think also about the guys that played [on international duty] and if you see the load that they're going to have in the last two and a half months prior to the playoffs, it's massive. Then there's going to be that international break [in November], also before everything starts. So, there's going to be still a lot of circumstances that I think can shape teams for the playoffs. But we have to just go day by day, try to maximize the days. Obviously, we have to understand what the big picture is, but we are not changing our approach."

On clinching a playoff berth following Wednesday's match and his message to the team:

Mitrović: "I would say that in this league, everybody knows that the first big step is to get to the playoffs. I think that every team can kind of evaluate its season based on, number one, did you get to the playoffs or not? Also, I don't think you need to speak much with the team about [playoffs] every season, because

everybody knows that's the first objective is for every team. We never speak about playoffs in our locker room. I didn't say a word after the game [at Cincinnati] about the playoffs.

"We are very focused on Saturday, and when we get to the playoff games, we will be more focused on them. Right now, we are focused on the season, and I know that there is noise around not just us, around the whole league about the playoffs, but we still have five games to play, and I'm very focused on those five games before we get going. We're not ignoring the success that we [achieved], and I'm really proud of the guys. But our job is not done. We still have to keep going."

On the challenges he expects from Chicago during Saturday's match:

Mitrović: "[Saturday's] game against Chicago is kind of a copy-and-paste from when we played in Chicago [on September 13]. The only thing is we're now playing them this time at home, because [previously] it was the third game in the stretch of three [road] games, and we went to Chicago after our away game against New York City [on September 9]. So, kind of like similar circumstances.

"I think that, first of all, Chicago has one very strong roster. If you saw even in that game that we played against them, they had a starting lineup that was very strong. Then, the subs that they made with the five players coming on the field, all those players legitimately can be starters for that team. Chicago is a team that also has an amazing coaching staff, people that have a [high] level of not just the knowledge, but the experience in this league. I think that Chicago is legitimately one of the hardest teams to play in this league for any opponent. And something that I would say is I think we kind of confirmed that when we played against them.

"They are one team that really keeps you on your toes through 90 minutes, with the level of talent, and the level of game that they have. But I think those games can help us grow as a team. We still have levels of growth to achieve as a team, and they push us to our limits. That's the only way for us to keep growing as a team and become better and better. I always look forward to and am happy to play games like this."

On balancing day-to-day goals with bigger aspirations:

Mitrović: "That's actually something where I think we cannot separate these things. It's a great question because there is short, medium, and long-term planning. And there is always more certainty around short-term planning. It's like, 'Okay, we have a game on Saturday. Now we know [we're in] the playoffs. Okay, in the postseason, we have a certain amount of days, and that's where we have to plan.' That's maybe something that is mid-term, but then in the long term, where do we want to go with the club, and how is every step that we take going to make us better in the long term?"

"I always try for us to be very reflective and [put our emotions aside] because they're present every day. Before the game against Cincinnati, we lost two games in a row. Sometimes you win two less games. That's just part of this game. But something that is very important, at least for me, is that there can be an emotional stage when something happens, but then how can we just get back to reality? – 'Okay, this is what we have to do, and this is the best [thing] to do.' And take those emotions out of it. That's something that [applies] whether short, mid, or long-term planning is present.

"For me, it's more like I love to have planned things that are certain, that I know will happen, and everything else is imagination. If we are at the beginning of the season imagining for ourselves, 'Oh, we want to make the playoffs,' that's not going to take us there. There are so many actions that we have to execute to get there. That's why I believe in that day-by-day approach while knowing what the big picture in front of us is."

Revolution Midfielder Carles Gil

On how it feels to be part of this team after clinching a postseason berth on Wednesday:

Gil: "Very good, obviously. Also a good win in Cincinnati after two difficult losses. I think in Cincinnati we showed again the team we want to be. This league is difficult, sometimes you have ups and downs, but in

the end overall we are having a very good season so far. But the most important is coming, in the last five games, to try to be in the highest spot and then the playoffs."

On New England hosting Harry Potter Night on Saturday and his fandom:

Gil: "I'm a big fan and [my son] Marco is too. Honestly, he's too young to watch the movies, but I sometimes read some books with him, and I think he's coming on Saturday dressed as Harry Potter, so it will be fun."

On how rewarding it is for him personally to see the team back in the playoffs:

Gil: "Yeah, it's very important, When you are coming off a difficult season, here in MLS what you want is to play the important games in the playoffs. And last two years I went to Spain watching [playoffs] on the TV, or not watching because it's late there and it's difficult. So yeah, obviously the goal this year was to be competitive again and we are doing that, obviously with Marko [Mitrović] being our leader and changing many things since the beginning. But the job is not done. We have many more things to do, starting with tomorrow."

On Josh Wynder joining the squad and what he has added to the team in all phases:

Gil: "Josh [Wynder], since the first day, you can see he is a very good player on the ball, but also a very good defending player and still very young. These types of [younger] players we have right now, you can see every day they are better, learning very quickly. The way we play, building from the back, we need that. They have abilities on the ball, sometimes they are the first man, even with Matt [Turner], to build the attack, so it's very important for us."

On how 18-year-old Peyton Miller has added different elements to his game over the past three seasons:

Gil: "Like I said, with Josh [Wynder], Brooklyn [Raines], or Ethan [Kohler], this type of player, they are very young. Obviously Peyton [Miller], you can see that he is better every day, learning a lot and working hard. Peyton obviously has big talent. He's playing different roles this year, but since the beginning he adapted very quickly. His pace is unbelievable. It's very important for us, not just to find him in the space, but also to open some space for us in the middle with his runs. So, he's a key player for us and he's, like I said, getting better and better. I'm very happy for him."

On what makes Dor Turgeman effective as a striker:

Gil: "It's similar because he's still very young, Dor [Turgeman]. There are players, this type of player, that are still learning a lot and sometimes for learning you need to have ups and downs and continue working hard. That he always does. He's scoring right now, but he always does a very good job with the ball. Without the ball, he presses the whole game, it's something that sometimes you don't appreciate. But it's amazing the way that he works. And he has quality for finishing. A striker, sometimes, they need their moment, and like you said, right now he's in very good form. It's very important for us, because, like I said, we are in the important part of the season, so having Dor in this moment is important."

On what he has learned about himself as a player since arriving in New England and what it would mean to bring an MLS Cup to the club:

Gil: "I've learned a lot, honestly, and I'm a very different player. Sometimes I watch some videos or some games that are in my past in Europe, and sometimes I don't recognize me because I changed a lot. In many senses, obviously, I had many injuries in the past, but I think sometimes every player has their moment to mature or to change. I, myself, was a little late, maybe 27 or 28 years old when I found my best moment as the Carles that I want to be. Right now, I'm very consistent on that, but I learned a lot. Also, like you said, as a leader, I think it's something that you learn with age, and since the beginning they gave me that responsibility to be the captain. I learned a lot from my first year here to this moment right now, and I'm very happy."

For me, the most important thing is to win here. It's difficult, because we start the [regular] season and there are 30 teams looking for that, to win [MLS Cup], and just one can do it so it's difficult. We need to continue step-by-step. The most important thing in the beginning was to be competitive, and for sure we

are right now. Like I said, continue, I think, first try to be in the best place possible. Hopefully we can play the games in the playoffs at home and then try to win.”

On maintaining a level of consistency in MLS and going six straight seasons with double-digit assists in the league:

Gil: “For me it’s very important because in Europe I was not consistent. When you have assists, it’s because you try to be dangerous for the opponent, and I wasn’t in Europe. My mindset was different, so I’m very proud of that and finding my play. Right now, honestly, I’m still feeling very, very good. Even better because since Marko [Mitrović] and his staff arrived, they helped me a lot to be a better player without the ball. Obviously, with the ball, I try to be the best Carles. But without the ball, to learn during the game which position is better for the team to be dangerous. I’m learning a lot this year with Marko, so I hope I continue learning a lot with him.”

On what it means to be back in the postseason for the first time since 2023:

(Translated from Spanish)

Gil: “It’s important because, in the end, once you start the season, it’s the goal of the 30 teams in league to get into the playoffs as soon as possible. And then, well, the playoffs are like a separate league, where everything can happen in one game except the first round. The first objective has been achieved, but we don’t want to stay there. In the end, we have five important games left, where I think from the second place to even the sixth place can move a lot. We’re obviously interested in being as high up as possible and, like I said, the first objective has been achieved, but we want more.”

On some of the challenges Chicago Fire FC poses for Saturday’s match:

(Translated from Spanish)

Gil: “Well, I think Chicago is a team similar to us in terms of the intention of the game. A very complicated, competitive team, with good players and with a good coach who has very clear ideas. It’s always difficult [to play Chicago]. We managed to win 2-1 [in Chicago] but with a lot of difficulties, especially in the last 30 minutes. But knowing that we’re ahead and that if we beat them, we’ll be four points apart, which is a distance that, with how little time is left, would be important. And we’re recovering well today because we came from the game on Wednesday [in Cincinnati] and we’re ready for tomorrow.”

On the confidence the team plays with having an experienced goalkeeper like Matt Turner:

(Translated from Spanish)

Gil: “Having Matt [Turner] is important. As you said, he has a lot of experience in the league. In the end, when you have a goalkeeper like that, you know that there are always moments of difficulty where he can save you. When it comes to creating a game from behind, he’s one more player with the ball at his feet. I think that’s something that has improved a lot throughout his career. Obviously, he’s a fundamental piece for us.”