



TRANSCRIPT: Match Preview Press Conference (Oct. 30)

Soundbytes from Head Coach Marko Mitrović & GK Matt Turner

Revolution Head Coach Marko Mitrović

On Inter Miami CF's potent attack and his assessment Sunday's opponent:

Mitrović: "The last several years, they're very strong in the attack, not just this season. Overall, they have a lot of quality and experience around their team, and I think that with Miami, everybody knows who they are and what their strengths are as a team. We rely on ourselves, we rely on our team effort, and we know that we have to confront them as a team, knowing that we have one of the best teams in the league ahead of us with some amazing individuals. But it's another great opportunity for us to keep growing as a team. And again, those games can just help us to become a better team."

On instilling confidence in the younger players on the team:

Mitrović: "Obviously, you have players that have more games in their lives than others, and I think in every environment you have these kinds of circumstances and situations. We're really focused on what they are delivering day after day on the field, and that's how we evaluate them. Yes, on one side, the experience is tremendous and can help you a lot, but on the other side, what can help you the most is performing. We truly believe in our guys, no matter how old they are. Somebody told me when we made a sub against Philadelphia [on Oct. 24], for example, that at the same time Judah [Siqueira] and Diego [Fagundez] came on the field, with one taking his first steps and minutes in the league, Judah. And on the other side, you have Diego, who has so much experience. So, we really go with what the need is for the team and then how those guys perform, rather than their age and experience or no experience."

On how the team has grown since drawing 1-1 with Miami in the first meeting between the two sides on April 25:

Mitrović: "Similar to the situation when we spoke about Red Bull [New York] and we played them at the beginning of the season, and I said that I have the same message; I don't think that we changed as a team. We aren't trying to change, we are just trying to grow. I think that in all phases of the game, we are growing as a team. Obviously, there is still a level to improve, and there is still a level of consistency that has to be present all the time. But then, when we played Miami in the first game, there was a different coach, and now Miami has a [new] coach. It's a little bit different, their defensive and attacking organization, but they still have the same personalities. There are takeaways from that game. But they are also in a little bit of a different circumstance right now, and we are analyzing them based on their recent performances, not much of our performance against them back then."

On the expectations he had prior to beginning his first season as Head Coach of the Revolution:

Mitrović: "The things that I expected were probably [from] when I was talking to the people that hired me, during the interview process. For me, what matters is the kind of group we have, and how dedicated the players are, the team, the people around, to any goal and objective that we can put ahead of us. We have to have people that have an organic dedication to do the right things, and that's something that I would really emphasize. I don't want to say that I expected that because of the expectations you build once you're here, but that's something that I was told, and I can say that it was important for me."

“Did I expect that people are asking me [about] where we are in the standings? I'm telling you, I think we are as a team, even in this part of the season, I know we are fighting for certain things, but we have to grow in many aspects in order [for us to] look at the standings. That's something that I would love us still to keep growing as a team and as a club, that we can be in that situation [where] we are looking at the standings and we can kind of have more things in our control and predict things. We still have to go day by day, and that's something that I actually love about this team and this club, that we are ready to do those things. So, I don't want to say there was something that I expected or not, more that dedication that I spoke [about], which I see present every day here.”

On balancing the need to extend a lead while also protecting it:

Mitrović: “We don't have a particular strategy when we are winning the game like, ‘This is what we are going to do.’ I think that when the opponents are losing the game, they are more ready to gamble and to kind of put more numbers [up] and take more risks. Automatically, especially good teams, they can push you back in low block and then defend. Our idea is never to kind of be like, ‘Oh, we have a win and let's defend now.’ But I'm really happy that part of our identity is, wherever the ball is and whoever is in possession, [we play] as a team.

“We have to recognize those moments, not just connected with the result but connected with the current situation and current action on the field. That's something that we're quite decent in not accepting like, ‘Oh, we are in a low block, but if we are there and that's a part of the game in that moment, we'll embrace that and we will defend.’ I would love if we could still control more of the game with the ball when we are winning, but again, part of that is we can and will grow as a team in the future.”

On the challenges Miami will pose to New England's midfield and defense, and choosing the right moments to counterattack:

Mitrović: “I would say that every team has the tendency to find those spaces ahead of the ball. Some teams are stronger at running in behind because those are the profiles they have. Some teams want to go space by space, kind of not skipping the spaces. But I would say no matter what you want to do, it's the profiles and the players you have on the field, and that's why Miami is so efficient. What they are doing is just purely based on profiles of the players that they have, because you don't need to create a big gap for them to receive the ball and go forward. They are exceptional and we know what players we are talking about. They have guys that have won the World Cup, guys that have won the Champions League, guys that are the best that this game has ever had. When you have that level of quality, you don't need much time and space. That's what makes them efficient.

“So, we have to be sure that we can tighten our spaces as much as possible when we are defending. But not just the counterattack, we also have to be simple and efficient on the ball as well, because one part of defending is defending with the ball against teams that are strong in possession and attacking as Inter Miami is.”

Revolution Goalkeeper Matt Turner

On his message to the fans ahead of Sunday's regular season home finale vs. Inter Miami CF:

Turner: “Your support has been great all season. I think the Wednesday night was probably our lowest attendance of the entire season, which was a little disappointing given the form that we're currently in. But the reality is as we look forward to the future, we're going to need every single fan to come out and to support us. We're going to continue to put our best foot forward and hopefully continue to make you guys and all the fans proud of what we are as a team, the product we put out, our togetherness, and how we represent the region.”

On the impact of the team's mentality ahead of the postseason:

Turner: “I think we've kind of taken every single game down this stretch as a playoff level atmosphere and playoff level intensity. Every single result really matters down the stretch, for jockeying for position,

for keeping your playoff hopes alive, or whatever it is. So, the intensity, we've been up to the task for those really intense moments.

"And then learning from the past, making sure, especially in that layoff between games and during the [November] international break that we're switched on, we're competing, we're taking care of each other on the field. But also pushing each other to be sharp so that when that first whistle comes, come playoff time, we're ready to hit the ground running. The only way to get there is one step at a time.

"I think these guys do a really great job of being present, enjoying every day and keeping the same mentality win, lose, draw, whatever the results this entire season. The messaging has always been sort of the same, and that's been a really great feeling. Like Wednesday night, we didn't have our best night, but it's better to learn from winning than to learn from losing. So, we've been figuring out ways to get it done, and that's what it's going to take in the playoffs. Sometimes you get punched and you have to figure out how to punch back in a different way."

On how much he is looking forward to Sunday's match and playing for playoff seeding:

Turner: "I'm not going to be one of those people that says it's just like every other game. [Lionel] Messi is an amazing talent. He's the best player of all time in this game. It's special to share the field with him. We're very fortunate to share the field with him. And at the same time, we have a job to do and he has a job to do.

"The other players on that team, Casemiro, who I played against in the Premier League, [Rodrigo] De Paul, [Luis] Suarez, guys that their names are synonymous with success in this game. But for us, we have a job to do. We're at home. We want to demand a lot from ourselves. We know, of course, the challenge that the game presents. We're not going to be naive to that fact, but it's a great test for us to have something that we want on our home field against a very, very good opponent and try to get it. And I think that that's a good test for what's to come later in [the postseason] November."

On the team's ability to stay together and fight back during challenging moments of matches:

Turner: "Yeah, I think first of all, we need to improve. I think the last two times we were two goals up at home, we let the other team back into the game, 2-2. So from there, when we have the chance to put games away, we have to be able to do that. We have to put games out of reach. We can't invite teams back into games, and that comes from ruthlessness in both boxes, making plays defensively, making saves when I have the chances, and then scoring goals ultimately in the other box.

"I think all season, it has kind of been a little bit of a quality of ours. We kind of don't waver, we stick together. It's not always one person that sort of unlocks the box, and if that person isn't having a great game, then we are kind of out of ideas. You see different guys stepping up in different ways, all throughout this season, making big plays, scoring big goals. And just watch the way that this team celebrates the small successes on the field as well as the big ones. Everyone has got each other's back out there, and that's the resilience that we've built. I think celebrating those small wins creates that culture."

On how special it is to see defender Andrew Farrell being honored after announcing his retirement earlier this week:

Turner: "Yeah, I mean, it's hard to reflect on it right now. I think [Farrell's] presence in the locker room will be deeply missed. It's sad because he was here from the moment I stepped foot through the door. We lived together for a number of years, we got into some things on the field and off the field. He's a member of my family – he was in my wedding. I never had a real brother. He's one of those people I consider to be part of my family. And I want to celebrate with him privately. There's been a lot of noise around it, and I know it's not always easy for him to have that spotlight. He deserves it, though.

"I think his legacy stretches far beyond the minutes and the games. I think every single person that has come in contact with this club has nothing but positive things to say about that guy. And I don't just mean players, I mean any staff, anybody that's just a liaison, or anything. They love Andrew, and he's got this larger-than-life personality. He's the kind of person that can make you feel like a million dollars when

you're having a bad day, and that's something I will always cherish about him. Even when I was overseas, he's somebody that I relied upon a lot to talk to and to talk through things. He always gave me tremendous confidence. He saw things in me before I saw them within myself.

"And that generation of players that went to that 2014 MLS Cup, I think it was, I think he's pretty much the last piece of that. There were a lot of guys in that locker room that were still there in 2016. Teal Bunbury, Charlie Davies, Scotty Caldwell, Juan Agudelo, Chris Tierney, lots of guys that obviously I've played with, and he's kind of like the last one that is from that era. Nowadays, they just don't make guys like him anywhere else.

"So, we were very fortunate at this club to have him here for so long. I'm glad and extremely, extremely grateful that the club is going to take care of him afterwards and allow him to continue to build his legacy. We could talk about the on-the-pitch stuff, but now he's going to be a great resource for a lot of people, and that's an amazing thing. As sad as I am to not see him in the facet of teammates in the locker room every single day anymore, I know I'm going to see him a lot in the rest of my life. So as sad as I am, I'm also not teary-eyed about it quite yet, because he's still part of this team, and we still have a lot of ups and downs to go. "