

# 2022 MLS Cup: LAFC vs Philadelphia

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Los Angeles, California, USA

Banc of California Stadium

## Los Angeles FC

## Kellyn Acosta

### Pregame Press Conference

**Q. Could you talk a little bit about Ryan Hollingshead and what he's brought to this team, both on the field but also just his personality off of it and how that adds to the mix in the locker room?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, I mean, where do I start? I've been knowing Ryan for eight years, since the Dallas days. Not only is he a great player and fundamental for our team, he's an even better guy.

I think his locker room presence is second to none. He's a guy that comes in with a lot of energy, he's super respectful, and he works hard every single day.

I think what he puts in is what he gets out. He's been really key for us, especially both outside back positions, not only defending really well, but he's been scoring a lot of goals, like he's shown.

Like I said, he's been really key for us, and we're hoping that he can have another good performance on the weekend.

**Q. A lot of people around the league watch this LAFC team all the time, they see all the big star names and whatnot. Philly has had obviously a very good season but maybe not gotten quite the same amount of attention. You played them in the 2-2 tie earlier this year. How good a team do you think they are?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, they're a very good team. They're a team that can score a lot of goals, a team that's super dynamic, a team that is good on the transition. A lot of guys in double-digit goals, Defender of the Year, Goalkeeper of the Year, Coach of the Year. They've definitely gotten the recognition they've deserved.

It's going to be a great battle on Saturday. We can look back at the previous game, but that game doesn't matter.



That was so early on in the year.

I think now we're both two different teams now, and it's one of those things where it's going to just be more than just what we've done in the past. I think this game is going to have a little bit of everything, and I think for our standpoint, we've got to be up for the intense matchup.

**Q. Everyone is asking questions about other players, and I'm going to do the same thing. I wanted to ask you about Giorgio because I think he's impressed a lot of us in the media, his knowledge of MLS. He real he knows the league. But also what he's done on the field, we thought he was going to come here and be sort of a player-coach, and he's really contributed. Could you talk a little bit about his knowledge and appreciation of MLS and then his contribution to what you do on the field?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, Giorgio wears a lot of hats: player, coach, mentor, brother, friend. He does it all.

He actually surprised me, as well, because he literally watches every single MLS game and he knows all the players. He even surprised me when he first came in, he already knew my name and where I played previously and how many games, and I was just in awe because he's a guy that I've admired so many years now and a guy I have a lot of respect for.

Yeah, he takes things very serious, starting with in the gym to the trainings to the games. His energy is huge for us, a guy that's very vocal. I'd like to say that he's a big kid, but in a good way in the sense that he has a lot of energy, and sometimes it's hard to believe that he's 45 years old or whatever he is.

But yeah, Giorgio is great, and he's been a key addition for our squad.

What's it like? Sometimes I've got to pinch myself. He's experienced it all, Champions Leagues, World Cups, playing at the highest level for so many years. He's continuing to play at a high level.



For me, I'm just trying to just be a sponge and absorb all the information that he's giving to me and just taking it all in and learning as much as I can from him.

**Q. Could you describe just what this year has been for you? You joined LAFC, you became a fundamental piece for this team. You're about to play in the MLS Cup, all in a World Cup year. Can you describe what this year has been like and how you've grown as a player and as a person?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, it's kind of just been a roller coaster of emotions. Obviously we've had a successful year. It was a new team, new environment, new everything for me, so I had to adapt quickly. But a credit to the coaching staff and my teammates for helping me just feel right at home.

I think for our standpoint at LAFC, I'm in one of the best organizations in the league, an organization that believes in its players and does whatever they can to make sure that everyone is comfortable and feels great. And the community, I've got to thank them, as well, for welcoming me with open arms, making me feel at home. And just the 3252, the energy that they bring each and every game, and even away. We always say no away games, and we really feel that.

But yeah, this year is kind of a dream year. I've put, I don't know, 10 years now, and to finally reach MLS Cup, it's something super sweet. Obviously it's something I want to add on to my resume.

Yeah, then you talk about the World Cup coming up, it's like, this year is crazy. I would have never thought it. But I'm super grateful for all the opportunities, and I'm just trying to make the most of them.

**Q. How exciting is it to be in Philly right now? The Phillies are in the World Series, the Eagles are undefeated, and you guys are playing for the MLS Cup? Secondly, how does a game like this help you to be looked at for the upcoming World Cup?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Just playing against a Philadelphia team you're saying?

**Q. The excitement right now in Philadelphia, how exciting is that for you, and has it sunk in yet?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, I don't play for Philly, but it's exciting for them, I guess. Yeah, excited for -- yeah, I'm a Cowboys fan, so I don't like the Eagles. I know that they're undefeated, but shout-out to the Eagles, I guess. The Phillies are in the World Series, so congratulations. And

yeah, we're playing against the Union.

But yeah, we're here in LA, LA is home, and we're hoping to have a good result on the weekend.

**Q. Aside from the tactics and all the information you've had to digest this week, how have you quieted the chaos? What have you been doing to relax your mind? And hanging out, are you Netflix and chilling? What's your vibe?**

KELLYN ACOSTA: Yeah, a combination of a little bit of everything. Yeah, it's been a whirlwind. There's a lot going on, a lot of movement.

Yeah, for me, I enjoy the game. I'm just so excited just for the weekend. Obviously this is part of it, and seeing you guys, and I'm glad that you guys are all here. But I'm more focused on the match on Saturday.

I watch a little bit of Netflix. I hang out with my friends. I'm a normal person, you know.

But as far as like tactics and all that goes, I always tell Steve, I'm tired of hearing him talk sometimes because he loves meetings and he loves giving us all the details, but yeah, I think Saturday's matchup, we can talk about all the tactics we want, tactics give us structure, but I think it's more than that to win a game.

Yeah, it's going to be one of those things where you've got to roll up your sleeves and you've got to fight and you've got to battle, and may the best man win.

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