

# 2022 MLS Cup: LAFC vs Philadelphia

Saturday, November 5, 2022

Los Angeles, California, USA

Banc of California Stadium

## Los Angeles FC

## Gareth Bale

### Postgame Press Conference

LAFC 3, Philadelphia Union 3

3-0 Penalties

**Q. Can you describe what the goal meant for you to be able to help the team in the last minute and just the emotions of it all?**

GARETH BALE: No, of course, it's a big team effort. I think, yeah, we've been working hard, especially the boys from the start of the season, we've been working hard all season. Yeah, everybody has to chip in and do their bit. It was nice to be able to help the team to get us to 3-3 and give us the opportunity to win the title and happy to do so again.

**Q. You've scored some sweet goals in some major finals. Where did this rack up in terms of the sweet spot?**

GARETH BALE: It's nice. It's always nice to score in finals, and I seem to have a knack for doing that. No, it's big, it's important for the club, it's important for the fans. Like I said I said, we were down to ten men, I guess not really looking like we were going to get anything out of the game. Credit to everybody and to keep pushing and keep fighting, and yeah, like I said, it was nice to get the goal and to help the team. And where it ranks, I'm not too sure but it's a great feeling.

**Q. Steve said he doesn't want to you do the same when you play the U.S. in the World Cup.**

GARETH BALE: I'm sure he doesn't but I'll be trying to (chuckling).

**Q. Take us back to the summer when you signed, and now this moment, and just this journey for you this past year and I'm sure the reflection will come much**



**later but in the moment what comes to mind?**

GARETH BALE: No, it's been a difficult transition. Obviously coming in with no preseason, trying to catch up, it's been difficult, obviously relocating with my family.

Yeah, I've tried to keep as fit as I can and trying to help the team as much as I can on and off the pitch. It's all worth it when you have moments like today. Yeah, the most important thing was the target to win the MLS Cup Final, and yeah, we've managed to do that.

**Q. You said you've been trying to keep fit. Looking ahead towards the World Cup, how are you feeling sort of going into that now?**

GARETH BALE: Yeah, I'm feeling better and better as time goes on. Obviously I've had a few setbacks. Had a slight knock a couple of weeks ago which kept me out for ten days. Yeah, it's just one of those, I think it's been difficult mentally now leading into the World Cup. You see there's so many players that are dropping out, and now they are missing the World Cup. So it's been difficult mentally, and I'm sure it has been for a lot of players leading, going into the World Cup. For sure it's been in the back of my mind trying to make sure I'm 100 percent fit, and yeah, today obviously I felt good enough to come on the pitch and help the team, and yeah, obviously like I said, happy to see us lifting that trophy.

**Q. When did you finally feel like you were healthy and 100 percent to go, and did Steve tell you on what the strategy was today for when he was going to get you in?**

GARETH BALE: Yeah, I'm not 100 percent at the moment. I'm still coming back. I still have a few little issues like most players do.

Yeah, we spoke about if I'm needed for the last 20, 30 minutes, I'm available, because I haven't trained too much over the last three or four weeks because I've had this little slight issue, and yeah, I was able to come on for the last 20, 30 minutes, and just give as much as I can. Glad I came up with a goal to help the team. Yeah, that's what

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I'm here to do, I guess.

**Q. As regulation was going on and you're past the 60th, the 70th, was there concern you would not be able to get on the field just with the nature of the game? And how did the atmosphere in the stadium today compare to what you've seen in your career?**

GARETH BALE: Yeah, I was warming up for 40 minutes trying to make myself ready to come on. I knew if the game was close, then yeah, I'm obviously in a good place to call up on. Obviously we took the lead and I was like, right, I'm not coming on, and then we conceded and then yeah, time came for me to come on and try and help the team.

The atmosphere today is same as every game; the fans are incredible. They were probably a little more louder today, and I think everybody will tell you that we do it for the fans; that they make this club. Yeah, I'm sure they are going to enjoy tonight and this Cup.

**Q. You've played for a lot of special coaches in your career. Steve is a very young coach, first year in MLS. What is it about his coaching style that made him a success and able to handle a roster with big names, young guys? What is it about him that impresses you as a coach?**

GARETH BALE: Yeah, I think he's just very down-to-earth. He has the whole group working hard. I think that's the main thing.

Yeah, everybody really gets along. It's a close-knit group, and yeah, I think he's obviously got the best out of the team this year and able to win three trophies. Yeah, he's been very good this year and I'm sure he's learned a lot as a young coach, like you said, and yeah, he's only going to keep improving.

**Q. First and foremost, you've played for the best clubs in the world. What does it mean to you to bring a championship to Los Angeles?**

GARETH BALE: Yeah, it's special. The reason why I came here was to try and help the club win a trophy, and to win the MLS Cup. Obviously they have come close in the past but never got to the final and won it.

So yeah, it was a big goal coming here was to do that, and yeah, you can see how happy everybody is now, the fans, the city. It's important for this club to go to the next level, and I think by winning this trophy, it shows that we are -- it's a club really on the rise doing the right things, and yeah, it's an important trophy for us, especially the first one, first

major trophy, and hopefully there's more to come in the future.

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