

# Los Angeles Football Club Media Conference

Sunday, October 30, 2022

## Ryan Hollingshead

Press Conference



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LAFC 3, Austin FC 0

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Thoughts on getting to the MLS Cup Cup. Fun to be a part of a game like that and be a part of a team like this and now we've got one more to go so we're excited.

**Q. Your thoughts just on the way that you guys -- took him out of it for the most part.**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Yeah, from top to bottom I think everybody came to play. There wasn't a weak spot. Our lines were aggressive. Everybody was stepping. I think Ilie led the charge on a lot that have, when he steps it pushes our back line to step with him and pushes our eights to step ahead of him.

So that being part of your game plan and making sure they had no time on the ball I think was huge. They are a team that wants to play and so every time they lift up we had two, three guys chasing them down. They didn't know what to do with it. So put us in a really good spot.

**Q. Also your thoughts on Ilie, what he's brought to the team, it all circles around him?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: I love that guy. It's been a joy and honor playing with him. He's one of the best human beings you'll get to be around on and off the field. The guy leaves it all on the field every week. He's not one of the guys that you have to question, you know, if he's going to show up on any given game day. He's there every single time, and then on top of that, he's the first one after the game shaking hands, saying hi, interacting with the fans, so it's been a joy to be his teammate.

**Q. You led the charge talking about how great it would be to make the MLS Cup going through the opportunities for revenge against Austin. Can you talk about how good it feels to fulfill that goal and then talk about what it will take to maintain that same type of intensity given that regardless of the MLS Cup**

**opponent, there isn't that history?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Yeah, there's always chatter in the League and media is trying to make it a story, so everybody throughout the week was talking about Austin beating us twice in the regular season, and so to be able to put not just a win but such a dominant performance like that today on them when it matters, I think there is definitely a chip on our shoulder. I think the guys felt that, comes they were making about us being afraid to play them, things like that.

To have the performance we had, I think in a lot of ways is to combat those sort of narratives and those headlines. Now going into the Cup, I'm not sure who we are going to see. I don't think anybody on the team is hoping one way or the other but with the way that it's been going, it would be pretty fitting for it to be the Union and play against a team that we were fighting for the supporters shield with all year long.

So we've gotten what we've asked for and we've come and performed, and so we'll be ready, whoever the opponent is on Saturday, we'll be ready for it.

**Q. Talk about what it took to complete that shutout.**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Man, it was a special performance from the back line and it was a privilege to be a part of the four back there. Giorgio in the first half, I mean, just absolutely dominated Lima (ph) and had him in his pocket all game long. The guy did not have a touch that was meaningful in the first 45 minutes and that's because of a guy like Giorgio throwing him off his game.

You've seen great play in the MLS all year long; he can throw people off with his body and throw people off and disrupt, and having a star like Ilie, come in and lock the line down, he didn't know what to do and how to respond and that was special to watch.

I was on the other side, so every time the ball was going to him for a challenge I was on the other side just watching and it was, man, I couldn't help but just smile and laugh a couple times because he just did not know what to do, Giorgio is just on top of him. I think the sub, I wasn't part of why the sub happened but Sed came in and was stellar.



Like I've been saying all year long, we've got the greatest depth at center back in this league, we've got guys coming off the bench that should be starters on any other team in this league and Sed showed again why he's here and so necessary for our squad, he stepped in just like nothing had changed and the domination just kept coming with him in there, so again, special to be a part of a group like that.

**Q. The matchup of this team, what was it like for you and how do you expect you guys will experience the next week?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Yeah, I think that he says that because once the whistle blows, we are just focused on the task at hand. There's something, too, about playing at the Banc with the 3252 that when the whistle blows, the dalla (ph) starts and you feel like you're at home like nobody is going to come in here and take it from us, and so there's that confidence there, and I think that's what he's talking about.

I think, though, where I want to take it to the next level is you could see just the intensity that we played with, and we've had this same squad, basically, for the entire year, and minus a piece or two, and there's been moments where we've showed up or not showed up or been on the front foot or not been on the front foot and still been able to dominate in a lot of ways.

Tonight it was like they just couldn't even breathe. Like there wasn't a moment that you felt like they had control of the game throughout 90 minutes, and so it was cool to see the intensity of it being a Western Conference final, of it being the playoffs where everybody came to play and came with everything they had and you could see it from the start.

**Q. With the 3252, and the rhythm that they have that's going, they build up this original many that's happening the whole game. Does that inform some of your play? Is that something you can get into or is it something that you know it's there because when you're in the game, you're not hearing?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: It fuels us. We are hearing all of it and it fuels us. Every time, you can hear the emotion of the crowd when we put Chico through on a run on goal or we put Ilie through the crowd, gets up on their feet, you can feel it, you can sense it, you can hear it, all of that. It's huge for us and I think for opposing teams coming into the Banc and having to deal with that, you've got Ilie running at you 1v1 and you've got the Banc screaming at you, hard to team a level head and I think it shows in the way that we dominated.

**Q. Had you ever played before a fan base where that impact took place?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: No, nothing -- nothing like this, this is special what the 3252 does here. The only thing I can compare it to honestly it playing here in the past with other teams, when I've come here -- when I was on Dallas coming here and playing, it's the only time that I've felt something and it's the same supporter group doing the same thing.

**Q. Did it feel the same in Portland?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: Yeah, Portland has a good squad. I think there's a couple places in the league that I think have good supporters group but I don't think they even come close to matching what the 3252 does. 3252 is just special in so many ways. Maybe it's the stadium maybe or something about the turf that throws it off, but for me, the 3252 is in a league of their own.

**Q. On the second goal, did you get a piece of that?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: I flicked it. I flicked it. I touched it. But it wasn't going on goal. I was trying to play it off Rudy's shoulder or head or whatever it hit. Worked out well.

**Q. You mentioned there's moments where the team has not necessarily come out on fire and you still come out on top but this game clearly you did, and I'm asking other players, was that a product of something you felt in the locker room? Both Chiellini and Ilie felt like it was something that built up through the week. When did you realize that you guys were all cylinders going for the match?**

RYAN HOLLINGSHEAD: For me in this group we've known from the start of the season that when we play our best football, nobody can match us and the last week is long, the season is long, there's ups and downs, there's moments where your legs are not feeling 100 percent.

I would say there's lots of moments like that. There's moments where you have a knock here or there. There's moments where you just don't get up for a game in the same way and all that gets scratched when it's playoff time. Everybody shows up ready to go and today was just everybody at their peak, everybody focused mentally 100 percent, everybody physically ready 100 percent, and when you have that, and you put that together with the talent that we have, the result of today is what you see.

For us a big thing is not getting lackadaisical with it and showing up next week with the exact same mentality,

because if we do, I think that we are close to impossible to beat. FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...

