

# New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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## Gerhard Struber

Press Conference



Open Cup Quarterfinal

New York Red Bulls 3, Charlotte 1

GERHARD STRUBER: Right now, a very good feeling, we are in the quarterfinal. We expect today a high aggression team. Also from Charlotte, I think they changed today the style of play a little bit. Normally they celebrate possession, and today we can see how they work with long balls and how they create I think in many directions with long balls overloading against our back three. And this was I think sometimes in the first half our problem to find a good set up against it.

We was more on the front foot to step out and find not always the right distances to come in good second-ball fights.

But I think we handled and managed it better and better in the game time, and we find better distances. And especially in the second half, we concede every single battle, that we want the quarterfinal more.

In the end nevertheless with the referee and the performance from the referee, we win clear and with 3-1, and I am very happy in the end that we win and also that we have not a bad injury or something.

I must say this very clear and this is crazy. When you play on this level football and you have referees, they have absolutely not -- they are not ready from that. From the tempo in every direction, from the physical side, they cannot handle that.

You can see how he goes down from the physical side, the referee. And from the competence to come in good decisions, he has a decision-making, and especially Luquinhas, we can be happy that he is not injured after a game like that. I am very, very angry about that.

And this is I think also from the MLS and the U.S. association right now a big mission to find a better setup of

referees. This is absolutely outstanding bad, and they have to change that. This is in some moments dangerous for many, many players and I cannot say this is only in our direction bad decisions.

In both directions, the referees was outstanding bad, and this cannot be the level and the standard what the MLS and also the U.S. association wants from referees. This was a shame. And I have -- this is my last words about the referees. It's crazy.

**Q. Is this the best match that Patryk has played either League or Open Cup competition? He was on fire at the start of the opening whistle. He scored that brilliant goal to open up scoring and then that nice pass to Dylan for the go-ahead later in the second half.**

GERHARD STRUBER: Yeah, I think today Patryk bounced back from the Miami game and this is I think also a very big signal for him. And also I think to see what he can deliver when he's ready and when he was the right mindset, and today, he was sharp like a knife and from the first second. He was in 1-1, and top in his offense moments he work against the ball. He was dangerous to come in the box.

And yeah, in good situations, and of course he has also a good eye for his teammate and yeah, I think he was today very, very important for us and opened the victory with his important pass.

**Q. Can you talk about the importance of John Tolkin's return to the team from COVID? Seems like he brought some real balance to the back line as well as the attack. That was missing some previous games that he was out for.**

GERHARD STRUBER: Yeah, of course, I think John Tolkin is right now for us a player, he's very young.

But he's with a good balance on field and this is so -- he's from the tactical setup very ready in more directions to find always a good position to come in pressing moments, to find a good trigger to step outside. And of course, also, in on-ball moments, he can find the good decisions to play

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forward in the right time, or sometimes he break the moment, and yeah, we recycle with him.

And I think in more direction, he give us, yeah, today a very, very good feeling and help us, also, to step in the next round.

**Q. I would like to ask you about Luquinhas, and Omir Fernandez's roles in this game. Like a couple times, especially in the first half, Omir was the main attacking force going forward. Can you talk about his role during the game and how it transitioned over time and how it adjusted against Charlotte?**

GERHARD STRUBER: First of all, I think I must -- both players, Omir Fernandez and Luquinhas made a great job today. And of course, on ball moments, we can see both players very interesting and especially Luquinhas in the second half what he create sometimes with the ball. Yeah, these are magic moments.

But on the same time, and this is what I like so much and what I have so big respect for players, they have technical abilities, but on the same time, they never forget to work hard for the team and Omir Fernandez he has overload today from so many directions, from decelerations, accelerations, in speed meters.

And also Luquinhas, we can see in the last minute how he's spring back with pain and everything, and both players very helpful at the moment for the team and have also today I think a big part to create the victory.

Yeah, I am very, very proud of my whole team but especially I think from the working rate today, Luquinhas and Omir Fernandez was great.

**Q. Moving to the next round in the Open Cup, you're going to be playing a local derby against NYC FC. Curious your thoughts, not getting too far ahead, but your match in that team ahead of that game?**

GERHARD STRUBER: Yeah, I think we like to play a derby. We play in our stadium, and this is I think for everyone one more time a big chance to come in a derby atmosphere.

And I think in the end, we know that they don't like so much to play against us. They have not so much fun to play against us and we have one more time the chance at home to, yeah, to come in the half-final.

Yeah, it's I think a very, very massive opponent what's coming, yeah, not easy. But with all our energy with all our power and a good set up, I think, yeah, I think we can do it.

And I have a big trust in my boys, especially when we can reintroduce the performances like that from today in the next games, then I think, yeah, it's always difficult.

**Q. I know the match was not played at Red Bull Arena but in some ways, how much relief do you have that this was a home match and you finally won at home?**

GERHARD STRUBER: Yeah, I think right now, the atmosphere here was very, very good, and I think also, our fans help us today to create together an atmosphere and we can see the fire between fans and my boys. This is always very helpful when you have a good atmosphere.

Yeah, right now it's our first win at home and we have to do it again and the next chance is on Saturday.

For us it's important that we find fresh legs with a good regeneration, tomorrow, good sleep, good food and then we are hopefully also ready against a very, very good team from D.C. on Saturday in our stadium, hopefully with also a very good atmosphere from our fans.

**Q. When the game started, seemed like you were pressing with both Omir and Patryk on a level line with kind of Luquinhas in more of a central ten. Did that shift at some point for Omir and Luquinhas, was that just another tactical evolution for this team, depending on what the opponent shows?**

GERHARD STRUBER: Yeah, of course, I think we can see we are ready for that and flexible enough that the changes in the game, first of all, we can see they have a back four, and against the back four, it's always better you put pressure on the center backs with two strikers. But they changed this, and also they move many times the goalkeeper for long balls or for buildup. And with a class player we create in the end, yeah, Patryk Kamala on the pick and two tens behind, and we change this in many times, they are flexible.

We have the variability for that at the moment, and you can see it was not so easy that they find always the right spots and we can see we find more momentum and control in the game after the situation that the boys change this in a successful way.

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