

# New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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New York, New York, USA

## Sandro Schwarz

### Press Conference



New York Red Bulls 2, Columbus 2

Penalties 5-4

#### **Q. Run us through a combination of the emotions and how were able to handle that with the team?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, it was unbelievable. All these emotions -- yeah, it was unbelievable to handle all these emotions, especially the second half when we scored 2-1, and then in the, I don't know, 95th minute, we concede the goal and 2-2 and the penalties was unbelievable.

But the mentality of the whole team of the whole group was great in the first round in these both games against Columbus. And first half we had a little bit of problem especially with the ball. Was not against the ball to be honest. Was more with the ball in the first half.

And then we talked in the halftime about that to have more confidence with the ball in these situations, in these moments, and it was super that we showed then also in the second half.

But it's great. It's great to have these feelings today to be honest as a person, not only as a head coach, as a person, to see these faces to smile. And this is the reason why we are doing this job every day, to train hard, to have so many video sessions to talk about the opponent and to talk about our principles. But these are the days. I'm so happy to see all these faces.

Yeah, it's very emotional from my side as well and I'm very happy, I'm very proud and I love -- I will never forget for sure this day and the best messages, and I said this directly to our group is that the season is not over. That's the best message today.

Yeah, now I think in three weeks is the next game after the international break, and now is to enjoy these pictures in our stadium, to enjoy, also, these pictures which we create

in our atmosphere in the locker room, and then to prepare for the next round.

#### **Q. Can you talk about the big play of Sean and Dylan Nealis helping you out on the back line?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, it's necessary, with all these center backs and all our six position and also our three strikers in front to start the pressing, and to especially Sean Nealis, Dylan Nealis, Andrés. They made it very well to be active and also to be brave to play one-against-one all the time, and this was our idea in these two games, in these both games.

Dylan, great, and how he won the ball before the penalty situation in forward defending to be aggressive in one-against-one, and then to play forward. Yeah, it was great, the whole performance, especially in defense.

But sometimes I would also to say, to improve in our -- when we have the ball, and this was a little bit the problem from the whole team in the first half.

But then in the second half, when you score, then you have the confidence and you play forward, and not to think too much, maybe we have to play back. So this was a clear direction, and yeah, it was good. Very well.

#### **Q. I wanted to touch on the penalty kick shootout. In Leagues Cup you had two consecutive losses in penalty kick shootouts. What learnings did the team take from that to apply tonight in the playoffs?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, in my experience as a player, and then also it's sometimes the penalty to be honest as a player. It's important to have this experience that you can win in penalty, and this is what we showed today.

It was a similar movie, this penalty today, like in the Leagues Cup. We had the chance two times in the Leagues Cup to finish, and this was different, and Carlos was amazing, was outstanding performance, and especially in the penalty to save three penalties in a row.

And then also, after missing penalty from Sean Nealis to come back and to believe in that, and you said this, when you have in your mind, you lost two times in Leagues Cup the penalty, and we practiced it a lot of times the last ten days to be honest.

But you cannot similar the situation like in the game now because then everyone is looking, pressure, and so it was good. It was go to have this experience, as well, that we can win and that we are able also to win in penalty.

**Q. You mentioned that Carlos stopped three straight penalties. There's about a 1.32 percent chance of that happening. Talk about how he raised this level, not just in this game but in game one to put you in this position.**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Our goalkeeper coach. Jeremy Proud, our goalkeeper coach. He's responsible. And we are talking for sure about some topics which we need in our build-up, in our box defending.

But Jeremy Proud made in the last couple of days, in the last ten days especially, then, also, to prepare these penalties and also to have done our No. 1, Carlos, as a goalkeeper to be confident. This is goalkeeper coach, Jeremy Proud.

**Q. Cameron Harper looked like he got injured when he tried to get the ball out of the corner. What is his status? Is he going to be okay for the next game?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Oh, I don't know to be honest. I don't know. We have to check. We have to check him. Yeah, we will see. I don't think so. That's a big injury. I don't think so. But we have to check him now tomorrow, and it's good now that we.

Can relax and then after the national break, then in three weeks is the next game.

**Q. As a follow-up, take a step back in the entire series. What are things that stand out for your team knowing that you knocked out the defending champions?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, but I told this, and we had this also today in our meeting in the morning. After our losing game against Columbus and the home game in our regular season, the last game, I told this directly in the locker room and also one day after in our facilities, the situation is clear. We have to play against Columbus. For sure it's a very good team, very good coach, and they have a style of play very clear.

But to believe in that. To believe in that. And I said also to

our guys, the situation is now clear, and we are also able to beat them two times. We showed this today. We showed this last Tuesday, and that's great, and this was our message the whole ten days, don't think too much about the last games in our regular season.

And so I would say most of the time, from 34 games, I would say, 25 games, was very well. The last period in the regular season was not so good. We analyzed it as well.

But now it's a new competition, and this was a clear message to believe in that, and because we have the quality, and maybe for some guys outside, is this the biggest surprise? For me, not. It's not now that I have a feeling now it's, I don't know, a Cinderella story or something like that.

For me, it's more to believe in that and to think about, okay, we are able to win when we are tactical in a good spot, when we are from the mental side in a good spot and when we have this energy level and we have also then our supporters and we showed this.

Sorry for my answers; I answer today for a long time (laughing).

**Q. I thought Daniel Edelman had a really good game today. He covered a lot of ground and kept up with Columbus's movement and he scored the winning penalty. Can you speak about his performance and how strong he was in the midfield?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Vary, very good. And also in the first game in Columbus, very physical and this is very important for us to have our six position, when you play like Columbus with a lot of balls and they switch and find very good moments, and then it's important to have Danny on the six position and with Felipe Carballo to play this physical game.

And at the end, he scored. He missed in the Leagues Cup the penalty. I don't know it was the first or the second game, I'm not sure, but now, he deserved everything. He deserved everything, also, now to be this man in the penalty with Carlos Coronel at the end and that we come in the next round.

**Q. Just wanted to ask you on the performance of your designated players in this series, we've had all three of them score a goal, Vanzeir came up big today to get that go-ahead goal and how important is it for your squad to really have them step up when the big games matter? And second part, for you personally, your first playoff game, what was that atmosphere like, and how does it compare?**

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, what I said, what I can answer the second question, it is also for me very emotional to be honest. And this was not only because of the playoff game and the first game for me and to have this experience for me; and this is what I am doing, and this is why I'm working so hard with my whole coaching staff, with the whole staff with all our players together to see the smile in the face.

This is my main target every day. Every day, to wake up, to go in the facility for this group, and it's not only because of my experience or my feeling.

And then I'm so happy. I'm so happy then when I go in the locker room and I look then in the stadium to the supporters and they are happy and to feel this. This is, for me, great. And then this is then very emotional from my side to be honest.

And now I've forgot the first question.

Yeah, I don't want to talk about DP players or something like that. But when we are talking about Dante Vanzeir and Emil Forsberg and Felipe Carballo, great job, as well, individual in the first game and the second game and for sure you need then also this quality in these big games to make the difference in these moments. And they showed this with a very important goal, and Emil with a penalty to have this responsibility; and Felipe Carballo on Tuesday on the road, and this is very important.

And this is great. Not only these guys, DP players or something like that, but they feel also the rib for the group, and this is top.

**Q. We've all seen the clip of Emil telling the players, "Why not us? Why can't we go out and win these games?" Before this playoff series, we saw the pundits saying that they thought Columbus would go through maybe in two games. Sitting where you are now with how many people were doubting this team, how does that feel knowing that you guys are going to play in the Eastern Conference semifinals?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, this was also our topic after we finished the regular season. So now it's a new competition, and I heard this so many times from many players in our personal conversation.

Now it's a new competition and we showed this, and to believe in that, we talked about principles and tactical points and especially against Columbus, you need also a good tactical performance.

But in the end, it's also to have this confidence and to believe in that. This is then -- if you don't do that, you can have the best match plan, and I don't know, the best tactics, but if you don't believe, if you don't give your best, if you don't try everything, and when you make a mistake, to help each other, to communicate, to coach each other.

And Emil is our captain, is a leader. He showed us every day, every day in our locker room with the whole group, and it's great to see him every morning. It's great to work with him every morning, every day. And, yeah, I'm very happy today.

But when I don't know what I have to say, I say I'm happy (laughing).

**Q. You stuck with the same 11 and same tactical set that up worked in game one. What specifically about that structure has allowed the team to be successful and on a personal note, great team over, there great manager. Does it feel any bit of personal pride that you've gotten the success in this two-leg game?**

SANDRO SCHWARZ: No. It's not for me personally. To be honest, that's my job, to find the best solution, especially in the playoffs because this is then a do-or-die game. This is with our coaching staff to find the best solutions. Yeah, we want to play very aggressive against them. This was our idea directly after the last game in the regular season, and yeah, this was -- but it's not from my side to be honest -- this is what I said. I'm so happy today, and to go in my bed and to have the pictures in my mind to see all these faces, that's, for me, that's the best. That's the best, and this is also what we need.

And what I said at the beginning of the press conference and also to our player, the best message is for all, for all of us here in the club, outside of the club, is that the season is not over.

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