

New York Red Bulls Media Conference

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Sandro Schwarz

Press Conference



New York Red Bulls 4, Charlotte

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the offense? It really seemed to be flowing well and you were able to get in behind Charlotte's defense, something that's been a little bit different than previous games you scored early. What do you think about the team's offense?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: First of all, the basic behavior was very well with the highest intensity in our pressing and after that, very good, very good moments in our ball possession with a lot of confidence to keep the ball in these moments, and how we scored, especially the first goal was great. And all the guys had a good connection all together and with our goalkeeper in buildup, with center back, six position good behavior, and also then the guys in our offensive line, very well.

Q. Mohammed Sofo has seven goals in all competitions this year. How impressed are you that he's taken this role that he's sprung into the starting is 11 and kind of cemented himself in this role?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, of course it's a great development and it's not only because of the numbers, how we scored. It's more the way, and I think that's a very, very good example. It's a good result from all the coaches, from the second team last year, from all our coaching staff.

And he did it great, especially the last couple of weeks, good progress, and to be very aggressive against the ball, and also with this quality in one against one situation with the deep runs. Yeah, it's very good.

Q. How would you evaluate Duncan's performance?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, Kyle Duncan is great. He's playing all the games after his long-term injury, Saturday, midweek, Saturday. It's great. Very aggressive, very serious. It's important for him individual in his defense behavior and also to play very clean in our build up to feel the responsibility to find the right position.

Today his position was in our build up as a right wingback to stay between the winger and the fullback, and he did it very well, and it's great. It's great in which physical spot he's in after his injury, and he's able to directly play 90 minutes Saturday, then Wednesday 90 minutes, and now we will see him also in the starting lineup on Saturday.

Q. Wiktor Bogacz got his first start tonight and his first goal. Can you give an overall impression of his performance tonight?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, and also Wike together, the intensity, first of all, and Wiktor, as well, I agree a hundred percent. His performance and his quick steps, every time to be ready in our quick reaction after losing a ball, with the ball and how we scored the first goal with the top deep run between center back, fullback, and how we finished was really, really good.

Yeah, we have seen this the last couple of weeks in the training session, this development. And now it's good that he has also first goal in the MLS, it's great, and now we have to continue that growth.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the competition that's currently happening within the team that these guys are obviously bringing out the best in each other when it comes to game day during your week of practice? Because everybody is playing amazing now.

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, it's great. Of course, when we have a lot of games, and we talked after LA Galaxy, and we played Wednesday, Nashville; and Saturday, NYC FC, and we didn't change a lot in the starting lineup.

This was then good to think about, okay, we have to change, and we did it last week, last Wednesday in the U.S. Open Cup with all these rotations. We need everyone.

So the decision was then clear that we are playing with a similar starting lineup. The only change was AJ Marcucci for Carlos, for AJ Marcucci now, compared to now the last week. And, of course, we will have some rotations on



Saturday, that's clear. Emil Forsberg will play, that's clear, in our starting lineup, because he is our captain and now he has fresh legs. That's very important for us.

It's good to have these competitions to keep the group together and that everyone has a chance to play, to get minutes, to be important for us and this is really, really good.

Q. With the stop and penalty kick, it looked as though you told something, and Daniel Edelman, he ran over to the spot, looked like Cameron Harper was going to shoot it. Choupo took a shot and converted. Was that your choice, or he was the hot foot? What was the decision behind that?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: First of all, it's good that everyone, and especially Cam, that he wants to take the penalty. That's good. But 3-2, it's always to play serious from the beginning of the game until the end. And it's clear when Emil and Choupo is on the field, that's clear that they are making the penalty.

Q. You're coming up on your ninth game this month on this weekend. Talk about what you've learned about this group in the ups and downs throughout the chaotic month, and going into this international break?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, seems a little bit these ups and downs, because we lost NYC FC which was not good in our performance, of course. But when we are looking to the picture after Inter Miami, we played seven games; we won five.

But now I said this directly in our locker room to keep the focus, the concentration on Saturday. This is the last game now before our national break and this is the main part, the main focus for Saturday.

It's a tough schedule but it's okay, and we are physically after D.C. United in a top spot, and all these guys, it's a great work from the performance team, the whole medical.

Now Saturday, we calm down now to relax in training session tomorrow and Friday and to be ready for the next opponent on Saturday against Atlanta.

Q. Choupo is on nine goals. This team has not had a striker that has had that many goals in a very long time.

SANDRO SCHWARZ: How many penalties?

Q. What is it now, three?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: I don't know.

Q. How important is that to you who last year struggled a bit from the pure striker position to have someone like Choupo-Moting in that spot this year?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: With Emil, with our leader, with their qualities on the field, it's good that Choupo, and we know everyone, his quality, and he's taking always the responsibility then also with a penalty, which is important for us to build up his confidence to score, able to score every weekend, two games, three games in a row.

It's great. It's very good player, very good character. So it's good and we have to keep him at this level.

Q. I wanted to ask you about the partnership between Choupo and Sofo. We have seen him at the celebrations of the goals really connecting, and also the play on the field speaks for itself. Can you comment on how he's helping not just with the goals and assist but also in mentoring these younger guys around him?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: I haven't seen how they celebrate to be honest. I don't know exactly how they celebrate.

But yeah, it's the result of the whole group and what I said so many times, Choupo, Emil, Lewis Morgan, all these experiences, Sean Nealis, Edelman, as well, they have the feeling, the responsibility for the whole group. And you need these players in the locker room and off the field, on the field.

And it's great. And also, it's good, then, for the young players, as well, to learn not only sometimes from the coach maybe what he is saying, sometimes it's very important, as well what the experienced guys, what they experience in their career talking to the guys, and they have to listen to these guys.

And it's a great group, what I said to them so many times, it's a great group.

But now, Saturday, Atlanta.

Q. And outside of Kyle doing very well defending Zaha, talk about what Sean Nealis and Noah Elie did against Agyemang. They held him off very well, and following up on what you said about Emil, how happy are you that you didn't have use him when the match was basically well in hand, even though the final whistle finally came after the second penalty was converted by Choupo?

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, but it's clear that we need Emil but now when we are playing Saturday, Wednesday, Saturday, all these games, it's clear that all the guys that they need fresh legs for the next game.

But at the end, what I said is clear that Emil is playing on Saturday, our captain.

And what was the first question?

Q. Stopping Agyemang.

SANDRO SCHWARZ: Yeah, defense. Yeah, we talked in our pre match meeting. We had yesterday a video, all the guys. It's very important to defense against Agyemang, his runs, deep runs in their transition moments, and they did it very well. The connections, our counterpress was top today most of the time, and especially in the first half, and it's then very important these shifting moments with the center backs when Kyle is going out against Zaha. And you need these shifting moments, and it's good now. But now we have to continue this.

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