

# St. Louis CITY SC Media Conference

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St. Louis, Missouri, USA

## Olof Mellberg

### Postgame Press Conference



St. Louis 0, Colorado 0

**Q. You must be pleased with the defense, but not many scoring chances, not many shots, pleased but the offense?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, I mean overall it's normally a game we win. You know, I think we dominated most of the game. We have the stats here, it was 18-2 shots and limited them to, yeah, zero chances, basically.

There were a couple of dangerous situations in the box where we defended well but apart from that, they didn't have any chances, and we created enough to score at least two or three goals.

A little bit unlucky with the off-side there on Kess, and we had three, four, great chances to score. Obviously a game we should have won. But performance was good.

**Q. How did you feel about the defensive unit, the three in the back, and with the job it did on limiting chances?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, very good. They all did very well, and we looked solid tactically.

But I was pleased with the attack, as well. We had some great combinations from build-out, built-up, varied our game with the longer ball, the ball in behind, but some really good periods in possession, as well, where we managed to create chances.

Yeah, it wasn't an amazing performance from our point of view, but it was the first game, and we dominated. Probably should have won.

You know, we'll analyze it tomorrow and move on, and hopefully do better next week.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about Alfredo Morales makes his City debut tonight for Edu Löwen, and he looked**

**comfortable for his first time getting into the game. Can you explain about what you see in him that makes you trust him in that way.**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, he's done well in the preseason, even though he has not had that many trainings, and a long off-season. He still needs to work on his fitness. So I don't think he's ready for so much more than he did today.

But we'll build on that performance, and he's good on the ball. He brings calmness in possession, and is an intelligent photocopy.

So you know, I thought Edu did really well, as well. He worked extremely hard. He got a bit tired, but you know, that's what we want. We wanted to give it all, and if they get a little bit tired after 60, 70, we change.

**Q. You walk away with one point tonight. I guarantee you, one name stuck in the head of 22,000 people tonight is Simon Becher. With the majority of the expected goals for the team with 1.12 with the full expected goals being 1.87 for the squad tonight, can you talk on his performance and what you thought you saw from Simon Becher tonight?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, he worked really hard, as did the whole team. Klauss did well up front, as well.

I thought it was an overall really good team performance. You know, several great individual performances, as well. I would look at it afterwards and analyze it and all the individual performances. But no, I have a feeling that many did well today.

**Q. Clearly it was a decent performance from the team but next games, you're going to be against really tough opponents, San Diego and Galaxy, both in California. What do you think the team has to do better, besides be more clinical? Because those two teams have a little bit more hierarchy than Colorado.**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, really tough games coming up.

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We need to improve in all areas. Even though it was a really solid defending performance, we can improve there, as well. We already had a look at halftime on the few occasion they threaten and how we can improve there.

I'm sure we'll find more clips more tomorrow, and you know, improve our attack, as well.

I was happy with the end, with the last 15, 20, when we showed even more confidence in our buildup, a little bit more movement, center backs being confident in taking the ball forward.

You know, we just need to continue to build on our confidence. But it will be tough, these games coming up.

**Q. From what I noticed, you clearly value possession a lot, most likely when it's side-to-side. Is that something that you think the team has to do better or has to do more often instead of play more direct, or do you think it's a hybrid, a mix of both?**

OLOF MELLBERG: It's definitely a mix. I thought runs in behind were really good from our wingback, from Célio, from our two strikers. So it's a mix, not to become predictable.

But as I said it before, especially in the second half, we had a couple of longer possession attacks that finished with chances or corners.

So no, I think you're right, it's about mixing it up and not being predictable.

**Q. The back line group there with Yaro, Kessler, Hiebert, what was it with that mix that you settled on that group? I know that was before you, obviously there's a lot of different parts there. What made you settle on that group, and what did you see from them?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, I mean Kyle and Josh has done well in the preseason in those positions. Kyle played everywhere, all across the back five. He's played right wingback and left wingback, and right and left center-back, and has done well in all those positions.

Josh mostly to the right, handled the play to the right, and in the middle. And that's what we've done in preseason, you know, made them play in all those positions, both to get an understanding of all the position, but also to see where they are most comfortable.

Henry in the middle I thought had a great game today, and you know, we've had Jannes there, as well. He played wingback today. We had Joakim, unfortunately, injured

now, has played to the middle and left as well. We have some options there.

**Q. Late last year, there the development on the team was they would build up short on the left and then long on the right, and that seemed to be what kind of manifested tonight, especially in the first half. Is that something you saw from last year, or is that something that naturally came from today's game plan?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Sorry, say again?

**Q. So last year, late in the season, we saw them, City would build up a lot shorter on the left and then they would build up with longer balls down the right flank. And it seems like in the first half, that was a lot of the buildup, shorter on the left, looking for the long stuff on the right, or switching it over to the right. Is that something that you saw from last year that you wanted to bring forward because you knew guys were similar or is that just something that manifested because of the game plan against Colorado tonight?**

OLOF MELLBERG: I think it mostly has to do with the personnel. We have those really good runs from Tots on the right-hand side. He at times does really well, and we also have Akil there who can also join in in the attacks. Whilst we're maybe a little bit more buildup-orientated on the left side with Edu and with Jannes, but mostly it depends on who is playing. We have other options on the left as well. Maybe some more deep runs. Obviously Simon playing to the right a little bit, as well, which he really likes those runs in behind.

So yeah, it had mostly to do with the personnel.

**Q. You're used to playing in this type of environment. What do you think about the energy at Energizer Park?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Yeah, it was amazing, amazing today. I wish I could have enjoyed it more. But so focused on, you know, the game plan and to get everything right before the game.

But it was nice. It was really nice before the game, and they supported us all the way through. So great atmosphere.

**Q. And what positive moments do you want to take into the next match?**

OLOF MELLBERG: I have to analyze it now tonight. Have a look at it again, and come back with a more detailed opinion.

But I think as I said before, overall it was a good gig and we created a couple of chances to score a couple of goals, at least; and obviously defending to have, yeah, basically, expected goals is almost zero for Colorado is quite unusual in a game.

So obviously happy with that.

**Q. What can you say about Nilsson's injury, severity of it, how long? And also, Rasmus wasn't in. Is he also --**

OLOF MELLBERG: We're evaluating that. Unfortunately late now in preseason, they had those injuries. So we're not exactly sure yet.

We don't think it's too serious. Should be back soon. But we're going to evaluate that next few days and we'll know more.

**Q. Same for both of them?**

OLOF MELLBERG: I don't know. No, it's not the same injury. You know --

**Q. Timetable?**

OLOF MELLBERG: Could be. I don't know. I have to get back to you in a few days. We'll know more.

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