

# St. Louis CITY SC Media Conference

Sunday, July 13, 2025

St. Louis, Missouri, USA

**David Critchley**

Postgame Press Conference



St. Louis 2, Portland 1

**Q. What was that like for you?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: That felt good. That felt good. I've set here enough and said we perform well. I read some data to you guys -- (audio break) -- and now we have to build on it for the next game.

**Q. The way the first 50 minutes went when it seemed like you had the edge in every stat, and couldn't score, did it seem like it was going to be that game again?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Possibly. I was very optimistic. Maybe we talked about that. We had an unbelievable training week.

So we prepared very well. It was by far the players best intensity and energy on quality that they have had every single training session. So then we go out and have a great first half performance. I think the field tilt was 78 percent us to 22 percent them. So domination.

But we found ourselves going in 1-0 down, so I had to find a way to message across; if we keep applying the same game model, the result will come our way. Whenever you are a coach and you have that moment and the result comes your way, it feels extra special.

**Q. Marcel, he had two goals the whole season until now, the importance of him breaking through at this point.**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, super important. He's been super impactful for this team in all spaces on the field. So to finalize his game, he needs to build off this now and continue to score goals.

But I was super, super happy for him. He comes in every single day. He covers so much ground in his intensity in the way he runs and the way he trains. So to see him get two today, I was very, very happy for Marcel.

**Q. You've told us you're a glass half-full-to-overflowing kind of guy. Do you feel that this is now rubbing off on the team?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yes, I do. I know we've sat here and had some results that haven't gone our way. And when we've talked before in the past, it's always, "How is the mood in there?" I was always, it's not that bad. They want to win and they have a strong mindset but there was never blaming of each other.

I think the guys, they are on this journey the last eight weeks with me; we are on this journey together and the performance, as well. There was optimism, and now it's going to overflow into the night. So I'm excited for them.

**Q. Could you feel the energy in the stadium pick up when Edu came in?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yes. Edu's presence is contagious. But we had the crowd on our side from the first minute and I want to give a massive shout out to our fans because from the first minute of the game, we felt that 12th man presence. We felt them be really energetic to get us over the line when we needed two, in one or two plays specifically.

So their support, it means everything to us. So we are very, very happy to give them the win tonight.

**Q. Santiago and David Da Costa had success in the first half, obviously finding that first goal from David Da Costa. Second half, shut down. No goals. A lack of production offensively for Portland. What do you attribute to that second half success defensively?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: We didn't change any tactics. I just tried to demand more from the players. So that one percent better mentality. So sprint back and double up on them. I think Da Costa had one where he was picking the ball up and running at Totland, and you saw a guy creating back -- to create 2v1 for us, 3v1 for us.



What changed is we continued to do what we did but the mentality and intensity hit another level in the second half. So they now feel what is required to go win a football game. So probably just the energy and intensity.

**Q. I was going to ask you how much change at halftime was mentality or strategic? And you sort of alluded to it, but I guess you also mentioned earlier the message. What did it take or how did you feel like you got that message across? You said that you felt like you had to get a message across and kept doing the things that they were doing; that that would end up in good results.**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: The one on top of the intensity and maybe the emotional side of the coaching points I gave, we had to get more players in the box.

So we were pinning it back, as I said, with the 72 percent field tilt, but we couldn't quite -- I think Cedric had one good -- behind the back line of the box -- we needed more of those runs. We talked about in the second half could we get a little more dynamic runs behind their back four in order to stride to stretch them. That was the one tweak that we applied because we came out with two goals from it. That was one of the small adjustments we made.

**Q. Cedric's attacking energy today seemed great and seems like the practice drills you've been focusing on the attacking side of the field has been really good for attacking on counters and it showed very effective. How do you think the team did with this?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, I thought they applied it really well. We tried to demand a quicker rhythm with the ball and more intensity in our off the ball movements and runs. Really applied themselves well today and even keep in the game.

There were several moments when we had a 2-1 lead and we were defending deep and we won it, and you could see guys sprinting up the field. If I have one moment of being -- I have many moments of being proud today but we're not sitting back on a 2-1 lead, I think I told you guys in week one, we're going to try to win a football game and the best way to do that is score more goals. A couple moments defending deep in the second half and we won it, and four, five, six guys are sprinting 75 yards down the field to try to get the third goal. I was super proud to see them moments happening today.

**Q. The press was really effective in the first half and as well as in the second half, although creating some more turnovers in the second. What adjustments did you want to see later on as the game progressed?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, just try to keep our present lines and our confrontation higher up the field. They had a five-minute moment where they pinned us back into our own 18-yard box late, but with the exception of a five- or six-, seven-momentum moment for them, we did a good job confronting in the midfield and winning the ball in the midfield. So that was something I was super happy for.

Just to be aggressive and brave in defending higher up the field not to drop all the way back into our own 18-yard box.

**Q. Dealing with the injuries you've had, how frustrating was it to see Célio go down and is there any update on his well-being?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, it's almost a perfect picture that we come off injury-free from that game with the result. I haven't spoke to the medical team. He's got it in a sling right now but I assume it's just precautionary for him.

I haven't spoke to medical team, so I'll probably get an update a little bit later here. Hopefully it's not too bad and just a mild strain or something. No update.

**Q. And this won't be the question, but Jaziel, cramping at the end?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yeah, the odd cramp for him. So he'll be fine.

**Q. Now how do you channel this? It seemed like the emotions were really high. Were they higher than the San Jose game?**

DAVID CRITCHLEY: Yes, I think because the performances have been so good but we couldn't quite get across the line with the result. But I asked these guys to be emotionally connected with the game. That's what I think helps winning teams, be emotionally connected with the game while also applying the discipline and the tactics and all of these things.

My message to them was get 1 percent better last week, which we've done and now the message is go be consistent. So now we have to pick up consistent results now moving.

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