

# REVOLUTION

## MEDIA RELEASE

April 17, 2021

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### **Revolution Open 2021 MLS Season with 2-2 Draw Against Chicago Fire FC**

*Bou and Buksa erase two-goal deficit as New England picks up a point in season opener*

CHICAGO – The New England Revolution (0-0-1; 1 pt.) opened the 2021 MLS season with a 2-2 draw against Chicago Fire FC (0-0-1, 1 pt.) at Soldier Field on Saturday night. Chicago scored twice within the game's opening 11 minutes, but New England responded with goals from Adam Buksa and Gustavo Bou in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> minutes, respectively, to secure a point on the road.

All four of the Revolution's starting attacking players got on the scoresheet in tonight's match. Buksa connected with a corner kick from Carles Gil to cut the Revolution's deficit in half, beating Fire FC goalkeeper Bobby Shuttleworth with a headed shot. The 6-foot-3 forward paced the team with four shots and two shots on target. Gil registered his first assist of the season and the 17<sup>th</sup> of his MLS career. New England's captain led the club with five chances created and three fouls won.

Later in the first half, Gustavo Bou and Tajon Buchanan combined for the game-tying goal, with the latter assisting the former. Bou carried his form from last season's MLS Cup Playoffs – where he scored three times across four games – into the season opener. Buchanan saw time on both wings and contributed two shots, including one on target, as well as one chance created and two fouls won.

In net, goalkeeper Matt Turner made five saves in his 70<sup>th</sup> career start.

Newcomer Wilfrid Kaptoum and first-round SuperDraft selection Edward Kizza made their Revolution and MLS debuts as substitutes in the 83<sup>rd</sup> minute. Kaptoum, who was limited in preseason by an injury, slotted into central midfield and played seven minutes. Kizza replaced Adam Buksa at forward in his professional debut and hit the crossbar with his first career shot attempt.

New England returns to action on Saturday, April 24, when the club opens its 2021 home slate at Gillette Stadium against D.C. United. The match kicks off at 8:00 p.m. ET on myTV38, myRITV, 98.5 The Sports Hub, and in Portuguese on WBIX 1260 AM Nossa Radio USA.

### **POSTGAME NOTES**

**New England Revolution 2, Chicago Fire FC 2**  
**April 17, 2021 – Soldier Field (Chicago, Ill.)**

#### **Revolution and Chicago Fire FC Play to 2-2 Draw in Season Opener**

- The New England Revolution played to a 2-2 draw against Chicago Fire FC at Soldier Field on Saturday night.
- New England's all-time record against Chicago moves to 23-27-15, including a 6-17-10 mark in games played in Chicago. The Revs are now 1-0-1 at Soldier Field since Fire FC relocated there in 2020.

- The Revs earned a point in their first away game of 2021, following a 2020 campaign that saw the club pace MLS in away points (21) and tied for the league lead in away wins (six).

#### **Buksa Combines with Gil to Open 2021 Account**

- Forward **Adam Buksa** scored the Revolution's first goal of the season in the 14<sup>th</sup> minute, converting a headed shot off a corner kick from **Carles Gil**.
- Buksa, the only Revolution player to appear in all 28 games across all competitions last season, paced the team with four shots and two shots on target. He scored six times in his debut MLS campaign in 2020.
- Gil picked up his first assist of the campaign by delivering the corner kick, giving him 17 for his Revolution career.
- The Revolution's captain posted team highs with five chances created and three fouls won, adding three shots and 69 total touches.

#### **Bou's First Goal of '21 Nets Revolution a Point in Chicago**

- Forward **Gustavo Bou** opened his account in the 27<sup>th</sup> minute with what proved to be the game-tying goal.
- Bou picked up where he left off in last year's MLS Cup Playoffs, where he scored three times in four games. He now has 13 goals from open play dating back to his MLS debut on July 17, 2019 – tied for fourth most among all players.
- **Tajon Buchanan** recorded the assist on Bou's goal after corralling a long throw-in from **Brandon Bye** and delivering a right-footed cross.
- Buchanan played 61 minutes on both wings, registering two shots – including one on target – one chance created, and two fouls won.

#### **Kaptoum and Kizza make MLS & Revolution Debuts**

- Two newcomers to the Revolution, midfielder **Wilfrid Kaptoum** and forward **Edward Kizza**, made their debuts as substitutes in the 83<sup>rd</sup> minute of tonight's match.
- Kaptoum recorded seven touches and completed five of his six passes in seven minutes in central midfield.
- Kizza, selected by the Revolution from the University of Pittsburgh with the 24<sup>th</sup> overall pick in January's SuperDraft, made his professional debut in Chicago.
- He registered one shot – a headed attempt that hit the crossbar.

#### **Arena makes Two Changes to Starting XI from Eastern Conference Final**

- New England's first starting lineup of the season featured two changes from December's Eastern Conference Final, with right back **Brandon Bye** and midfielder **Tommy McNamara** stepping in for **Teal Bunbury** and **Scott Caldwell**, who began tonight's contest on the bench.
- Three offseason additions – **Ema Boateng**, **A.J. DeLaGarza**, and **Wilfrid Kaptoum** – were included in the match day squad for the first time in their Revolution careers.
- Another offseason addition, defender **Jon Bell** was also included in the match day squad. Bell signed a first-team contract with the Revolution in March after playing for Revolution II in 2020. He is the first Revs II alum to make the first team's game day roster.

## **GAME CAPSULE**

**Referee:** Fotis Bazakos

**Assistant Referee:** Brian Poeschel (AR1), Peter Manikowski (AR2)

**Fourth Official:** Lukasz Szpala

**Video Assistant Referee:** Malik Badawi

**Weather:** 46 degrees and clear

#### **Scoring Summary:**

CHI - Robert Berić 1 (Boris Sekulić 1, Luka Stojanović 1) 5'

CHI - Luka Stojanović 1 (Robert Berić 1, Przemysław Frankowski 1) 11'

NE – Adam Buksa 1 (Carles Gil 1) 14'

NE – Gustavo Bou 1 (Tajon Buchanan 1) 27'

**Misconduct Summary:**

CHI – Johan Kappelhof (Yellow Card – Unsporting Behavior) 79'

NE – DeJuan Jones (Red Card – Denial of Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity) 90'+5'

**New England Revolution:** Matt Turner; DeJuan Jones, Henry Kessler, Andrew Farrell, Brandon Bye; Matt Polster, Tommy McNamara (Wilfrid Kaptoun 83'); Tajon Buchanan (Teal Bunbury 61'), Carles Gil ©; Gustavo Bou, Adam Buksa (Edward Kizza 83')

Substitutes Not Used: Brad Knighton, A.J. DeLaGarza, Jon Bell, Emmanuel Boateng, Scott Caldwell

**Chicago Fire FC:** Bobby Shuttleworth; Jonathan Bornstein, Francisco Calvo ©, Johan Kappelhof, Boris Sekulić; Gastón Giménez, Luka Stojanović (Ignacio Aliseda 66'); Chinonso Offor (Miguel Ángel Navarro 75'), Álvaro Medrán, Przemysław Frankowski; Robert Berić

Substitutes Not Used: Gabriel Slonina, Andre Reynolds, Wyatt Omsberg, Javier Casas, Jhon Espinoza, Brian Gutierrez, Mauricio Pineda

New England Revolution	Team Statistics	Chicago Fire FC
13 (5)	Shots (on Target)	20 (7)
3	Blocked Shots	3
5	Saves	5
10	Corner Kicks	7
0	Offsides	0
9	Fouls	15
409 (73%)	Passes Attempted (% Completed)	422 (77.7%)
52.7%	Possession	51.2 %

## POSTGAME QUOTES

### New England Revolution Sporting Director & Head Coach Bruce Arena

***On his takeaways from tonight's 2-2 draw:***

**Arena:** "It certainly was not a good start in the game. To fall behind by two goals in the first 10 minutes is poor. After 90-plus minutes, to walk off the field with a point is good. Having said that, on the day I don't think we played particularly well. I think Chicago was a much more physical team. They took the game to us. I think when you play on the road in the home opener in any season, it's difficult and it's challenging. I'm disappointed that we weren't better prepared to start the game. Having said all that, important first goal by Adam [Buksa] and then Gustavo [Bou] getting the second one. And then in the second half, keeping them off the board – we kept them scoreless for 80-plus minutes. That part is good. We had a chance at the end of the game with [Edward] Kizza. But having said all that, to get a point out of this, we should take it and just get out of Chicago and not look back."

***On Carles Gil and Tajon Buchanan switching sides in the first half:***

**Arena:** "Tajon [Buchanan] struggled to start the game. He was poor on the ball, had defensive lapses, and certainly the first goal he didn't do well on. I thought we were really struggling on that side of the field with Tajon and DeJuan [Jones], and Carles [Gil] helped settle things down a little bit. Tajon was a little bit more comfortable obviously on the right side of the field."

***On Adam Buksa's performance:***

**Arena:** "That was a better start this year than last year. He got us an important goal, he battled hard on the night, and I think we've seen some improvement out of Adam."

***On the red card issued to DeJuan Jones in second-half stoppage time:***

**Arena:** "I have to see the replay. The referee obviously did with VAR, so I guess the claim is he's the last defender denying a goal scoring opportunity. If that's the case, then it's a red card. I can't tell you because I haven't seen the replay, and I certainly was not anywhere where I could see that play any better than the referee."

***On erasing a two-goal deficit in the first half:***

**Arena:** "That part is where we get the highest grades today. We showed enough character to come back and get a point out of this game on a day where we didn't play particularly well. I'm pleased with the effort by our guys."

***On Maciel's status:***

**Arena:** "He'll be back this week. I thought we missed him a little bit. He's one of our better players playing under pressure. I think we would've been a little bit more comfortable playing out of the back with Maciel in there, but I think Matt Polster had a very good game and [Tommy] McNamara had a real good second half."

***On what he attributes the team's slow start to:***

**Arena:** "I don't know. If you could help me with that, I'd appreciate it. Whoever knows? Sports are highly unpredictable. Certainly, the game plan wasn't to go in there and be really casual and let the other team take the game to us. I can't attribute that to anything. Obviously, a couple of players didn't play well in the opening minutes of the game. Certainly, not by design."

***On if he's concerned with the back line's performance:***

**Arena:** "I thought defensively, [Brandon] Bye and [Andrew] Farrell played very well. I think DeJuan [Jones] and Henry [Kessler] had some difficult times. Henry had to be better clearing some balls. DeJuan, defensively actually played pretty well – take away the red card at the end of the game – but on the ball, he didn't play particularly well. It's the first game against a good team, and they put us under a lot of pressure, and we didn't respond that well to it."

**Revolution Forward Adam Buksa**

***On conceding twice early in the game but responding with two goals to secure a draw:***

**Buksa:** "We started the game very bad. That shouldn't have happened. We conceded two very easy goals. We expected that Chicago would start pretty strong because they wanted to dominate from the beginning. They played their first home game, their home opener, so it was obvious to us that they'd start strong. Even though we expected the way they started, we didn't react well. This is the thing we have to analyze. It cannot happen in the future. But then, in the second part of the first half we I think responded well. We scored two goals and we could've scored a third one, so it was a good part. Then in the second half, obviously it was a 50-50 game. It could have gone both ways. I think that a draw is a fair result for today. It wasn't our best game overall, but we need to respect the one point."

***On the corner kick from Carles Gil that led to his goal:***

**Buksa:** "Carles [Gil] is a quality player and I understand him very well. I can expect from him to get great balls from corners, from free kicks, and that's what he did today. My job is to finish that off. I hope that he'll have a lot of assists throughout this season, and I'll be the one who will have a lot of goals come from his passes."

***On the importance of the timing of his goal immediately after Chicago went up 2-0:***

**Buksa:** "I think it was a crucial moment, because Chicago were very strong. It was a danger to concede the third goal from them. After the second one we conceded, we responded very fast and it kind of plugged them a little bit and gave us a little bit more confidence. After a few minutes we got the second one and the game was still on. It was a very important moment to respond very quickly and we did that."

***On feeling fortunate to get away with a draw in tonight's match:***

**Buksa:** "Yeah, I think they showed the right attitude, and they played a really good game. You have to

give credit to them because they showed that they improved compared to last season. Obviously, for the game, we were only interested in taking three points here because we want to win every game in this league. But if you look at this game and you analyze the first half, they were really good. We responded well, but still, it's not enough for us to grab all three points. That's why I said it's a fair result."

***On what it says about the team that it was able to erase the two-goal deficit:***

**Buksa:** "I think it's about character and quality. If you have quality and character, if you combine these two things, everything can happen. We should work on that every time because the character builds game by game. If you know the group well and the group stays together, it's always easier to win games. I would rather focus on quality. Our performance is based on soccer level because we can play better. If we can play on our level, we'll be able to win a lot of games in this league."

***On getting confidence from scoring in the season opener after struggling at times last season:***

**Buksa:** "I don't like the word that I was struggling last season. I don't agree with that. Obviously, I'm happy to have scored the goal and I think that I played a good game, but it's a natural process. I expected to start better this season, but it's a process. It's nothing new and nothing unexpected. So yeah, I think I'm in a good spot and I hope to be getting better and better every game."

**Revolution Defender Andrew Farrell**

***On the club's recent string of struggles in season opener:***

**Farrell:** "That's a good question. I guess if we knew the answer, we would've won the game, right? I think it's just hectic. I mean, first game of the season is always hectic. We're away, Chicago's opening the stadium with fans for the first time in over a year. They're a really good team and they press really well. They were rolling. They caught us off-guard. I think the first two goals were in the first 10 minutes. After that I think we got into the game. We had a lot of chances. Obviously, we scored some good goals. We hit the post late in the game. I mean, over the game in the first half we had some chances to score as well. So obviously frustrated with how we started but there's some positives. Our attack's looking really, really good and really, really strong. Obviously, we want to win the first game of the season. It's been a long time. But given how we started the game, I think with the performance from the guys, after that I think it was better than how we started and so now we're looking forward to looking at the tape and getting ready for D.C. [United]."

***On Adam Buksa's performance:***

**Farrell:** "Yeah he's a handful. I think he really came in sharp this year. He's big spread on set pieces but also his hold-up play was really great for us. Him and Gustavo did a really good job holding the ball up for us at times and causing havoc for their center backs and defenders. But yeah, Adam's looked really, really good throughout the preseason. Obviously, he scored a lot of goals and then, you know, getting a set piece goal kind of gave us the momentum that we needed to kick off that momentum at halftime, and then in the second half where I thought we had some good moments."

***On Maciel's strengths and what he brings to the team:***

**Farrell:** "Yeah he's a really good player. He can play in the mid spots but he kind of has a really good range of passing, which can break lines and he can find guys like Carles, Gustavo and Adam. Going forward, he has a really good motor so he can cover a lot of ground and is really confident on the ball. So obviously he's a player that we missed, obviously through injury but I think we're looking forward to having him back soon. I think Polster and McNamara did a really good job tonight. We have a lot of talented players in the midfield so it's going to be important to keep everybody healthy and keep the competition good."

***On the difficulties both teams faced in finding their rhythms:***

**Farrell:** "It was obviously a hectic game from the get-go. I think Chicago did a good job putting us on the back foot. They won a lot of second balls early in the game and pressed us. Their left-mid, the big, young kid, he did a really good job holding the ball up and being physical. I think we weren't physical enough with him early on and I think that kind of led to them getting ahead of us on the scoreboard. It's hard to get into the flow of the game in the early minutes but obviously they got two goals in the first eight

minutes, 10 minutes, whatever it was. Once the game slowed down and once we got comfortable we finally got a little more confident. The play, obviously, you saw the chances we could create. Whether it was on the counter-attack, when we're setting a block or when we turned the ball over, held the ball up with our two forwards. I think the first game's always tricky because a lot of things can happen. I think it was good to show that our attack's very potent and we have a lot of pieces that can make things happen. We just have to make sure that we start better and we have to defend well. I think after the first 10-12 minutes we did a good job defending. That gives credit to Matt, organizing the back and everybody else in front of us. That's something to build on for the next game against D.C. [United]."

***On whether he agrees with the referee's decision to assess DeJuan Jones a red card:***

**Farrell:** "I personally don't agree with the call. I thought it was in between. So maybe he got fouled, I was there in between. But obviously it's not my call. I thought they maybe would've changed it when they checked the VAR but the referee made his call and I guess we have to stand with it. He makes the decisions. Hopefully that can be reversed."

***On how much the team's looking forward to playing in front of its fans in next Saturday's home opener at Gillette Stadium:***

**Farrell:** "Yeah it's been a long time. Obviously, we weren't able to host any, we had that one playoff game. We're excited to play at home again, to host our fans. I know they've been waiting a long, long time. Obviously, this game was exciting. I think with what we saw in our attack, it's going to be a fun season for our fans at home. We just have to make sure we start the game better but we're really excited to see our fans. They always support us no matter what. Obviously last year was a fun run and we're excited to have that run again but in front of our own fans and play a lot of home games this year."

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