

# REVOLUTION

## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
April 24, 2021

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### **Revolution Defeat D.C. United, 1-0, in 2021 Home Opener**

*Revs top Eastern Conference rival in first live event with fans since March 2020*

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. – The New England Revolution (1-0-1; 4 pts.) opened their 2021 home slate with a 1-0 win against D.C. United at Gillette Stadium on Saturday night. The match marked Gillette Stadium's first event with fans since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic – a span of 414 days. New England's lone tally came via an own goal from D.C. United's Brendan Hines-Ike following a cross from Brandon Bye in the 48<sup>th</sup> minute. The Revolution's record in the club's last 15 home openers improved to 8-1-6 with tonight's result.

Two Revolution newcomers – midfielder Arnór Traustason and defender Christian Mafla – made their MLS debuts in tonight's contest as the Revs picked up a fourth consecutive win against D.C. United. Traustason, acquired from Swedish side Malmö FF on March 16, began training with the Revolution on Monday and slotted into the starting lineup on the left wing. He played 81 minutes and recorded one shot on target with three fouls won. Mafla played 54 minutes at left back in his first outing with New England's senior team. He played 76 minutes for Revolution II on April 17 after recovering from a preseason injury.

Another offseason addition, midfielder Wilfrid Kaptoun, registered his first start with the Revolution after debuting as a substitute in Chicago last weekend. The central midfielder played 64 minutes alongside Matt Polster and submitted one chance created, one tackle, and one foul won.

Anchored by Matt Turner in net, the Revolution submitted their first clean sheet of the season. Turner made one save in his 17<sup>th</sup> career shutout and 25<sup>th</sup> MLS win.

New England will remain home next for a tilt with Atlanta United FC on Saturday, May 1 at Gillette Stadium. The match kicks off at 7:00 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 1, D.C. United 0**

**April 24, 2021 – Gillette Stadium (Foxborough, Mass.)**

- The New England Revolution defeated D.C. United at Gillette Stadium on Saturday night, 1-0, in the club's 2021 home opener. The result pushed New England's unbeaten run against D.C. to seven games (4-0-3), including four consecutive wins over the Black and Red.
- New England's all-time record against D.C. United moves to 31-34-15, including a 20-10-9 mark at home.
- Revolution Sporting Director & Head Coach Bruce Arena's career record against his former club moved to 11-4-8, including a 4-0-2 mark with New England.
- The Revs improved to 8-1-6 in their last 15 home openers.

- New England's starting lineup featured a trio of changes from the previous match on April 17 at Chicago, with left back **Christian Mafla**, and midfielder **Wilfrid Kaptoum** and **Arnór Traustason** replacing **DeJuan Jones**, **Tommy McNamara**, and **Tajon Buchanan**.
- **Traustason**, a 27-year-old winger from Iceland and the club's newest acquisition, registered one shot on target in his MLS debut.
- **Mafla** also made his MLS debut and logged 54 minutes in the contest. He finished the night with a team-high four interceptions.
- **Kaptoum** made his first appearance in the Revolution's Starting XI on Saturday with his Gillette Stadium debut, playing 64 minutes with six recoveries and 81.6 percent of his passes completed. The 24-year-old native of Cameroon made his MLS and club debuts with a seven-minute shift off the bench in last Saturday's 2-2 draw at Chicago Fire FC.
- Goalkeeper **Matt Turner** recorded his 25<sup>th</sup> career win and his 17<sup>th</sup> career clean sheet with the victory over D.C. on Saturday. His record against D.C. improves to 5-1-2.
- Defender **Henry Kessler** recorded 10 clearances, tying his career high set on March 7, 2020 during last year's home opener. Kessler added six recoveries and won four duels in the clean-sheet performance.
- Defender **Brandon Bye**, whose cross led to the game's lone goal in the 48<sup>th</sup> minute, paced the team with three tackles on the night.
- With his second start of the 2021 season and the 238<sup>th</sup> of his MLS career, defender **Andrew Farrell** tied Jay Heaps for third-most starts in club history. Farrell recorded a team-high nine recoveries along with three clearances and an interception in the shutout win.
- Midfielder **Matt Polster** earned his second consecutive start in central midfield. He led the team with 43 completed passes and won nine of his 11 duels.
- Defender **A.J. DeLaGarza** made his Revolution debut when he replaced Mafla in the 54<sup>th</sup> minute. DeLaGarza signed with New England as a free agent this offseason, bringing more than 250 career appearances and three MLS Cup championships to the club.

#### GAME CAPSULE

**REFEREE:** Guido Gonzales Jr.

**AR1:** Adam Garner; **AR2:** Ryan Graves

**4th:** Matthew Thompson

**Video Assistant Referee:** Jorge Gonzalez

**Weather:** 62 degrees and clear

#### Scoring Summary:

NE – Brendan Hines-Ike (Own Goal) 48'

#### Misconduct Summary:

DC – Russell Canouse (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 25'

NE – Arnór Traustason (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 32'

DC – Júnior Moreno (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 58'

NE – Wilfrid Kaptoum (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 60'

NE – Andrew Farrell (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 80'

NE – Adam Buksa (Yellow Card – Time Wasting) 89'

DC – Brendan Hines-Ike (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 90'+4

**New England Revolution:** Matt Turner; Christian Mafla (A.J. DeLaGarza 54'), Andrew Farrell, Henry Kessler, Brandon Bye; Matt Polster, Wilfrid Kaptoum (Tommy McNamara 63'); Arnór Traustason (Tajon Buchanan 81'), Carles Gil ©; Gustavo Bou, Adam Buksa.

Substitutes Not Used: Brad Knighton, Jon Bell, Emmanuel Boateng, Scott Caldwell, Teal Bunbury, Edward Kizza.

**D.C. United:** Chris Seitz; Julian Gressel, Frédéric Brillant ©, Brendan Hines-Ike, Tony Alfaro, Joseph Mora; Russell Canouse, Edison Flores, Júnior Moreno (Adrien Pérez 70'), Yamil Asad (Nigel Robertha 70'); Erik Sorga (Kimarni Smith 70').

Substitutes Not Used: Jon Kempin, Felipe, Moses Nyeman.

New England Revolution	Team Statistics	D.C. United
6 (2)	Shots (on Target)	6 (1)
1	Blocked Shots	3
1	Saves	1
6	Corner Kicks	5
1	Offsides	1
18	Fouls	21
376 (74.5%)	Passes Attempted (% Completed)	376 (73.7%)
49.6%	Possession	50.4%

## POSTGAME QUOTES

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

#### ***On the immediate takeaways from tonight's win:***

**Arena:** "It was just a battle. It was a real scrap. I don't think the referee had a good feel for the game. There was just too much fouling. I think Carles Gil got fouled every time he touched the ball. It made for a difficult game. No flow. Difficult to build our attack. I guess no excuses for us. It's the same for both teams, but I thought there was too much fouling permitted in the game and it made for a difficult, ugly kind of game."

#### ***On how encouraging it was to get a result at home, after last year's struggles at home:***

**Arena:** "I think large segments of the game we played well. I really think it was a difficult game to play in because of the officiating. I think there was absolutely no rhythm to the game, but our guys hung in there and dealt with it. I thought we started the game well. The start of the second half, we started well. Obviously, the own goal was the difference in the game. But I thought for the most part, our guys gave good effort tonight. Defensively, we were solid. I don't really think they created much on the night."

#### ***On the play Brandon Bye made that led up to the goal:***

**Arena:** "Yeah, I mean pretty typical of what we expect out of Brandon [Bye]. Obviously, the ball was played in to Carles [Gil] and his timing in getting outside of Carles, was perfect. And Carless laid off a perfect ball for him. And you know, we always tell our guys that's a dangerous area in front of the goal and to serve it there and try to get runners at the end of those type of serves. Whenever you do that, you put your opponents under a lot of pressure. Defenders are facing their goal and it's difficult. And you saw on that particular play, they weren't able to clear the ball properly. And it resulted in an own goal."

#### ***On the atmosphere at the stadium with the return of fans:***

**Arena:** "It was good. I enjoyed the way the stadium was set up. Great distribution with the fans. So, they made a lot of noise and it was great to see. I know our players were excited to have people in the stands. We give a lot of credit to our fans. It was a great night for us to get three points."

#### ***On the debuts of Wilfrid Kaptoum, Christian Mafla, and Arnór Traustason:***

**Arena:** "I thought Arnór [Traustason] obviously played more minutes. He was a little fitter. We knew that [Christian] Mafla and [Wilfrid] Kaptoum, weren't going to be able to play close to ninety minutes. The only mistake I made with them, is I should've taken both out at the same time so it would count as one moment in the game. And it would've given us a chance to make another substitution at the end of the game. But I

thought they all did well. And obviously, we're bringing them along slowly. They need to get fitter as we continue to grow into the season and they will. I thought Arnór showed pretty well, considering the fact that he's been with us for a week. So, overall, I'm pleased with the effort of all of the players.

***On the combination play of Adam Buksa and Gustavo Bou:***

**Arena:** "At times, it was good. We were a little sloppy trying to deliver the final ball and all. But it's getting better. I thought Carles [Gil] played well. Unfortunately, Carles was fouled an awful lot tonight and the referee was not aware of that. And it hurt our flow. And it hurt the ability for us to combine a little bit better with our top attackers."

***On whether or not there is concern about the lack of scoring chances created:***

**Arena:** "No. I'm not. Again, I don't know if you saw the game tonight, but it was very difficult for us to get in to the final third of the field without being fouled. It hurt our ability to create in the attack, but at times, if we were a little bit sharper, we would've been a lot more dangerous. So, give D.C. [United] credit. That's the way they play. They try to disrupt their opponent and they did a good job with it. I'm not concerned about our attack. I think, when we play other teams, the games are going to look a little different as well."

***On Tajon Buchanan and his performance off the bench:***

**Arena:** "Well, he played about thirteen minutes. I'm not quite sure his exact minutes. He did a good job. Obviously, he got fouled a couple of times and went down, but I thought he was dangerous when got the ball and tried to create a little bit. Overall, his attitude was good coming into the game, and he did a good job."

**Revolution Midfielder Arnór Traustason**

***On making his MLS and Revolution debut:***

**Traustason:** "It was good. Good minutes in the legs and a difficult game, really. But we managed to get the win, which is important."

***On areas where the team can improve moving forward:***

**Traustason:** "In that particular game, it was difficult to manage because they dragged the tempo down, they made some fouls, they hit some long balls. It was almost like a fight, that game. It's difficult to pick something out. It's just in those type of games, the most important thing is to get the first goal and try to sit on that, and hopefully get another goal and get the win and a clean sheet. That's exactly what we did today, so nothing in particular we need to work on right now."

***On building chemistry with his teammates:***

**Traustason:** "I feel like I'm getting there. I will just be better day by day, getting the days with them and trying to make some bond with the players and they get to know me, and I get to know them. Of course, that sometimes takes some time, but hopefully it will take a shorter time."

***On the physicality of MLS:***

**Traustason:** "They were physical. Yeah, it was a physical game really. That's a part of the game. They played hard tonight. It is physical and I just have to get used to it."

***On playing in front of fans, and at Gillette Stadium for the first time:***

**Traustason:** "It was amazing. When we were walking in, it was amazing really. I was happy to play that game in front of the fans and we were able to get the win for them."

***On how he feels physically:***

**Traustason:** "I got those 75-plus minutes in my body now in a quite difficult game, which I'm quite happy with. I'm happy. I'm happy to get those minutes, so just get on from here."

**Revolution Defender Henry Kessler**

***On no penalty being awarded after he was taken down in the box:***

**Kessler:** “One hundred percent a penalty. I was in front of the guy, he tripped me from behind, to me it was an obvious penalty. The referee was talking with the fourth official, he notified me of that, I don't know why he didn't go review it. Yeah, I think it was a clear penalty.”

***On finding a way to win:***

**Kessler:** “One of the things we said coming into the game was if we have to win ugly, win ugly. So we're happy with the three points at the end of the day. At times, it wasn't pretty. I thought at times it was actually okay. But overall, good to get the three points even if it wasn't an ideal performance.”

***On integrating Christian Mafla into the lineup:***

**Kessler:** “I thought Christian did well. I think he adds a bit of a flair with the ball. I thought his entry balls were really good. I thought when he got in either line or interior passes, were both really good. And he was solid defensively, so I thought it was a good performance from him.”

***On having fans back at Gillette Stadium:***

**Kessler:** “Really good to have the fans back. We always look forward to seeing them. Hopefully as we go further and further in the year, we get more and more fans at the stadium as they loosen restrictions. It was really good to have them back and really good to get three points and the clean sheet as well.”

***On things the team needs to improve upon heading into next weekend:***

**Kessler:** “Just some communication. I think at times we were a little deep. That's something we said at halftime is if we can get our line up a bit and match up more men to man, then that's something that we'll do. That's one of the things we'll go over and film this week. And then we'll go over film and Atlanta specifically and see how we can deal with them to be well prepared.”

***On his relationship with Andrew Farrell:***

**Kessler:** “I think this kind of goes into preseason. I was only really able to play with Andrew once during preseason and it was against LAFC in last preseason game. I'd been playing a different system with the [U.S.] Under-23 [National Team] so to just refamiliarize myself with our system and you know refamiliarize myself with Andrew, it was always going to take a little time. And I think with each game we'll get more and more comfortable. And I think today we trended in the right direction, obviously, the clean sheet was really good. And then for myself, solid performance. A clean sheet is really good as a center back, that's always a top priority just after winning. So, a decent performance. I mean obviously not a perfect game, I think there's still things I can work on, but solid.”

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**COMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS**

**Communications Staff**

<b>Kaitlin Gangl Alden</b>	Communications Director	(508) 549-0496	Media@revolutionssoccer.net
<b>Adam Klionsky</b>	Senior Communications Manager	(508) 455-7551	KaitlinGA@revolutionssoccer.net
<b>Scott Altman</b>	Communications Coordinator	(508) 549-0533	AdamK@revolutionssoccer.net
<b>Harold Rivera</b>	Communications Coordinator (Bilingual)	(508) 404-0248	ScottA@revolutionssoccer.net
<b>Dan Shulman</b>	Communications Associate	(508) 404-5677	HaroldR@revolutionssoccer.net
			DShulman@revolutionssoccer.net