

REVOLUTION

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 22, 2021

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POSTGAME NOTES: Revolution Clinch Playoff Berth with 3-2 Win at Chicago Fire FC

Carles Gil scores game winner in stoppage time as Revs record club-record 18th victory

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. – The New England Revolution (18-4-5; 59 pts.) defeated Chicago Fire FC (6-14-6; 23 pts.), 3-2, on Wednesday night at Soldier Field. With tonight's win, New England clinches its berth in the 2021 Audi MLS Cup Playoffs, while also setting a single-season club record for victories (18) and matching the franchise record for points (59). Defender Henry Kessler opened the scoring in the 11th minute with his first goal of the season, followed by midfielder Teal Bunbury's third tally of the year in the 62nd minute. Midfielder Carles Gil netted the game-winner on a fastbreak in the 91st minute to give New England its eighth away win of the year, also a new high-water mark for the club.

New England is en route to the playoffs for the third consecutive year, and its third in as many seasons under Sporting Director and Head Coach Bruce Arena. Arena is now four wins away from equalling Sigi Schmid for the most regular season wins in MLS history. The Revolution's away record improves to 8-3-3, one win ahead of Seattle for the most road victories in MLS this season. New England, 11-1-2 over its last 14 contests, is now 3-0-2 in the last five meetings with Chicago. The Revs also added to their MLS record of 15 wins by a one-goal margin.

Kessler becomes the 13th different Revolution player to score a goal this season. The second-year defender's right-footed shot from the center of the box was assisted by defender Jon Bell and midfielder Arnór Traustason. Traustason registered his seventh assist of the season on the play, second most on the team and among the top 12 in MLS, while Bell collected his second helper. On Bunbury's goal, Gustavo tallied an assist, as did goalkeeper Matt Turner – the first of his MLS career. Meanwhile, Gil's third goal of the season gives the midfielder 19 combined goals and assists this season – tied for third most in MLS at the conclusion of tonight's match.

Arena deployed a season-high nine changes to New England's Starting XI for tonight's match, highlighted by midfielder Luis Caicedo's first MLS appearance since Oct. 6, 2019. Caicedo, who has been sidelined this season with a knee injury, surpassed 5,000 minutes played in MLS with his full 90-minute performance tonight. The 25-year-old from Colombia finished with four clearances, three interceptions and three tackles. Wilfrid Kaptoum also went the distance in the midfield for New England.

Turner, who recorded his 90th MLS appearance tonight, backstopped the Revs' defense with seven saves, matching his season high. In addition, Homegrown Player Scott Caldwell logged his 175th MLS start, while veteran defender A.J. DeLaGarza recorded his 275th MLS appearance tonight.

New England returns home to Gillette Stadium to host Orlando City SC on Saturday, September 25. The match kicks off at 7:00 p.m. ET on WSBK-TV38, myRITV, 98.5 The Sports Hub, and 1260 AM Nossa Radio.

POSTGAME NOTES
New England Revolution 3, Chicago Fire FC 2
September 22, 2021 – Soldier Field (Chicago, Illinois)

Team Notes:

- The New England Revolution defeated Chicago Fire FC, 3-2, on the road Wednesday night, improving their record to 18-4-5 (59 pts.) on the season and maintaining a 15-point lead atop the Eastern Conference and a 13-point lead in the Supporters' Shield standings.
- The victory means New England becomes the first MLS team to punch its ticket to the 2021 Audi MLS Cup Playoffs, the club's third consecutive postseason bid.
- With their 18th victory of the season, the Revolution set a new all-time single season wins record surpassing the previous mark of 17 set in 2005 and matched in 2014.
- The Revolution's 2.19 points per game through 27 matches keep the team on pace to challenge the MLS single-season points record (72 – LAFC, 2019) as well as the MLS points-per-game record (2.13 – LA Galaxy, 1998).
- New England's 59 points matches the team record set in 2005 with seven games still to play.
- The Revs' 50 goals and 26 first-half tallies both lead the league, while the team's +19 goal differential (as of the end of Wednesday's match) ranks second in MLS. New England is five goals away from matching the most goals scored in a season in club history.
- The Revolution improve to 8-3-3 away from home this season, building on a club record for most road victories in a season. New England's 19 road wins since Bruce Arena took over as head coach are the most in MLS over that time.
- Bruce Arena deployed a season-high nine changes to the starting lineup featuring from last Saturday's match against Columbus, as A.J. DeLaGarza, Jon Bell, Christian Mafla, Luis Caicedo, Scott Caldwell, Wilfrid Kaptoum, Arnór Traustason, Teal Bunbury, and Edward Kizza were all inserted into the lineup.
- Bruce Arena's options off the bench entered tonight with a combined 38 goals and 34 assists in 2021. Tonight's subs totaled one goal and two assists. Entering the match, tonight's bench had scored more goals than 19 MLS teams entering Wednesday's competition.

Individual Notes:

- **Carles Gil** scored his third goal of the year, his second game-winning tally, in second-half stoppage time. In just 45 minutes of action, Gil recorded team highs in shots (4), shots on target (3), and chances created (4).
- **Gil's** 19 combined goals and assists are tied for third most in MLS this season.
- **Henry Kessler** scored his first goal of the campaign – his second career tally – and finished the night with a team-high six clearances and four blocked shots, including a goal-line clearance in the second half.
- **Jon Bell** recorded his second assist of the season, and first since July 21, on Kessler's tally. In his first MLS appearance since July 25, Bell recorded team highs in clearances (6) and tackles (4).
- **Arnór Traustason** added his seventh assist, second most on the team behind Carles Gil's 16. His seven helpers are tied for 12th league wide.
- **Teal Bunbury** scored his third goal of the season and finished his 90-minute effort with two key passes and five clearances.
- **Gustavo Bou** tallied an assist, his fifth of the year, on Bunbury's second-half strike and added four shots and three chances created.
- **Matt Turner** recorded his first career assist in the second half and matched a season-high with seven saves on the night.
- **Tajon Buchanan** added his fifth assist of the season, and third game-winning helper of 2021, in a 29-minute shift off the bench.

- **Luis Caicedo** made his first MLS appearance since Oct. 6, 2019, playing 90 minutes in MLS match for the first time since Sept. 29, 2019 to surpass 5,000 for his Revolution career. Caicedo recorded three interceptions and five clearances in his return.
- **Wilfrid Kaptoum** completed a team best 28 of his 30 passes, recorded six recoveries, and won seven duels in his first 90-minute outing of the campaign.
- **A.J. DeLaGarza** started for the fourth time this season and recorded team highs in interceptions (3) and recoveries (6). The appearance marked his 275th in MLS, 19th most among all active players.

GAME CAPSULE

Referee: Lukasz Szpala.

Assistant Referees: Peter Manikowski (AR1); Claudiu Badea (AR2).

Fourth Official: Jair Marrufo.

Video Assistant Referee: Edvin Jurisevic.

Weather: 60 degrees and cloudy

Attendance: 7,052.

Scoring Summary:

NE – Henry Kessler 1 (Jon Bell 2, Arnór Traustason 7) 11'

CHI – Carlos Terán 1 (Gastón Giménez 1) 40'

NE – Teal Bunbury 3 (Gustavo Bou 5, Matt Turner 1) 62'

CHI – Gastón Giménez 2 (Chinonso Offor 2, Robert Beric 2) 63'

NE – Carles Gil 3 (Tajon Buchanan 5) 90'+1

Misconduct Summary:

CHI – Carlos Terán (Yellow Card – Dissent) 17'

NE – Scott Caldwell (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 31'

CHI – Álvaro Medrán (Yellow Card – Bad Foul) 34'

NE – Carles Gil (Yellow Card – Unsporting Behavior) 90'+2

New England Revolution: Matt Turner; A.J.DeLaGarza (Brandon Bye 69'), Henry Kessler, Jon Bell, Christian Mafla (DeJuan Jones 84'); Luis Caicedo, Scott Caldwell (Carles Gil 46'), Wilfrid Kaptoum, Arnór Traustason (Tajon Buchanan 61'); Teal Bunbury ©, Edward Kizza (Gustavo Bou 46').

Substitutes Not Used: Brad Knighton, Andrew Farrell, Tommy McNamara, Matt Polster, Adam Buksa.

Chicago Fire FC: Gabriel Slonina; Boris Sekulic, Carlos Terán, Johann Kappelhof (Ignacio Aliseda 60'), Jonathan Bornstein ©, Federico Navarro; Miguel Ángel Navarro, Gastón Giménez, Álvaro Medrán (Luka Stojanovic 76'); Robert Beric, Chinonso Offor (Fabian Herbers 77').

Substitutes Not Used: Bobby Shuttleworth, Mauricio Pineda, Jhon Espinoza, Wyatt Omsberg, Elliott Collier, Stanislav Ivanov.

New England Revolution	Team Statistics	Chicago Fire FC
18 (7)	Shots (on Target)	26 (10)
4	Blocked Shots	8
8	Saves	4
8	Corner Kicks	9
1	Offsides	3
16	Fouls	15
285 (73.3%)	Passes Attempted (% Completed)	417 (80.8%)
40.4%	Possession	59.6%

POSTGAME QUOTES: New England Revolution 3 at Chicago Fire FC 2

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Revolution Sporting Director & Head Coach Bruce Arena

On whether he was surprised by Carles Gil's performance in tonight's win:

Arena: "Well, he scored a goal with his right foot, that's impressive. It was good to get him and Gustavo on the field for 45 minutes tonight. We keep moving them forward with their fitness and their sharpness, so I was real pleased with that, and obviously, Gustavo [Bou] serving the second goal and Carles [Gil] scored the third. So pretty good stuff there."

On the Revolution setting a new club record with their 18th win of the season and matching the club record with 59 points:

Arena: "I'm not that focused on those type of things. Obviously, we're pleased with the effort the team has given and the position we're in. They are milestones, that's great. I think we accomplished one of our objectives tonight, we qualified for the playoffs. So that's official, which is great. Now we want to make sure we get homefield advantage. I think we're pretty close to that. Then thirdly, we want to be the first seed in the Eastern Conference. So, we're moving forward. Those are the things we want to achieve. As you indicated, currently we have a record with victories and points. That's nice. That's certainly an accomplishment that needs to be recognized. I need to applaud our players, obviously, number one. My staff is wonderful, and they deserve a lot of credit. Everything we do is about the team so that's a great accomplishment for our team."

On how Luis Caicedo performed over a full 90-minute shift in his first MLS appearance since October 2019:

Arena: "He did very well. I thought he was going to go 45-60 minutes tonight. He played 90 minutes last Friday with Revolution II. We certainly didn't think he could go 90 minutes. Maybe it would've been wise to get him out a little early, but we had to make a couple of substitutions there in an effort to try to win the game. Luis hung in there and he should be praised for his effort tonight."

On Jon Bell and Henry Kessler playing together in central defense tonight:

Arena: "They did alright. There's some work we have to do there. That's a pairing we would've liked to have had on the field at some point this year and we never managed to do that. The big thing is we had to get Jon Bell back on the field. He hasn't played with our team for a while, so we got him through tonight, which is good because I think as we close out the season and the playoffs, we have to have another center back ready to go. So that was a real plus for us."

On his assessment of the team's performance in the first half of tonight's win:

Arena: "I wouldn't say we took our foot off the pedal. We didn't play particularly well. We weren't able to hold the ball up. After we scored the first goal, I thought Chicago did well coming after us. They pressed us a little bit and we didn't do a good job playing out of the back or holding the ball up top. They outplayed us for probably the last 15-20 minutes of the first half and we did poorly on the goal we conceded. So, give Chicago credit for coming back. That's my analysis of the first half."

On Henry Kessler and Matt Turner's performances tonight:

Arena: "Well, Henry had a goal, played 90 minutes and made some good plays at the end of the game. Matt was called on to make some saves. We had some shaky moments back there and Matt was steady. So, give them both a lot of credit."

Revolution Forward Teal Bunbury

Revolution Forward Teal Bunbury

On what it's like clinching a postseason berth with seven games remaining in the regular season:

Bunbury: "It's interesting. It's kind of weird, actually. We still have a lot of games left. Our ultimate goal is finishing first in the East, to have homefield advantage. For us, it's like our job isn't done. Our goal is

always to make it into the playoffs, so it happening this soon is great. We're excited and we're happy, but we're still thinking about things we could've done better in tonight's game in Chicago. Taking the lead and then giving it away a couple times and not being clean enough, I think, on the ball, not winning enough tackles. So there's a lot of things we can work on but it's positive. I mean, making the playoffs is always the goal but we have bigger aspirations."

On Carles Gil's impact in tonight's win:

Bunbury: "He's just quality. He makes the other team have to scramble to figure out, 'how are we going to stop him?' He's so composed on the ball. He just brings a level of experience and it's just going to help us. His class showed. Not only him, but I think the rest of the guys too. We stuck with it. The subs that came off the bench as well played a big part. Guys that haven't played many minutes- Luis Caicedo was a machine out there, breaking up some plays. I thought Jon Bell did extremely well also. Mafla did great, Scotty in the first half did awesome. I think a lot of guys played well, but there's also a lot of things we can get better at."

On whether he feels the players who haven't seen a lot of minutes viewed tonight's match as an opportunity to earn more time ahead of the playoffs:

Bunbury: "I would just say that we have a deep team. We have guys that every day in training are working their tail off. When their time comes, they're stepping up to the plate and playing well, and are ready for that moment. It's about a mindset, it's about being ready when your name's called. I think that's what it's going to take down this stretch and into the playoffs. It's guys just being ready. I think we have a group that's ready and we can do special things."

On his emotions when he saw Carles Gil net the game-winning goal in stoppage time:

Bunbury: "Just happy. We wanted three points tonight. For it to come down to the wire like that, I was just talking to some of the guys, our flight back would've been a lot different had we tied that game or lost that game. Now it'll be a little bit easier to fly back tonight, get in early in the morning. It was just such a resilient effort from everybody. Once that goal goes in from Carles it's just a special moment. A lot of excitement. You can tell guys on the bench, normally that are starting games, are getting excited too. So we really have a family here."

On balancing excitement with avoiding a sense of being complacent:

Bunbury: "I think we want to continue to improve so we're always being nit-picky on the things we can be better at. Obviously, we're excited about three points, we're excited about going to the playoffs. We're excited our fans get to see that and get to share that with us. But it's going to take a lot of effort from a lot of guys coming down this stretch. Getting into the playoffs but we can't have performances like this, so I think that's just the attitude we need to have to be a better team, to be a great team."

On Luis Caicedo's performance in his first appearance since October 2019:

Bunbury: "I thought he did well. I mean, he hasn't played in however long. He's really worked hard to get back. He's had some injuries. It's been difficult for him but he's always had an unbelievable mindset, great work rate, and I think it showed tonight, that he can step up to the plate and he's ready to go. I think he adds another level of fight into our team that we're going to need down this stretch."

Revolution Defender Henry Kessler

On if he's surprised by Carles Gil producing the game-winning goal:

Kessler: "No, it doesn't surprise me. He's a great player and one that's capable of producing great moments, and that was one of them. And it's not the first time and it won't be the last that he produces something of that quality, so it doesn't surprise me."

On the mood in the locker room:

Kessler: "It was great to get a win. It's always really difficult to get a win on the road and Chicago is a tough place to play, as we experienced in week one of the season. It's never easy here. And the feeling in the locker room is good, happy to have clinched a playoff spot but I think we were pretty sure that that was

going to be the case as we got further and further into the season. So, as you said, we have our sights set on achieving even more.”

On if the goal or the goal-line clearance felt better:

Kessler: “It’s tough. It’s tough to say which one felt better because obviously I don’t score much. So, it’s special when I score a goal, but being a defender and having that grind of trying to keep the ball out of the net, that one might have been just as valuable. So, they were both important to me, but it’s hard to choose so I’m going to default to answer on that one, sorry.”

On how he and Jon Bell performed together:

Kessler: “Pretty solid. [Jon Bell] is a really physical player and I think both of us can contribute. And he’s a left-footed guy, so I switched over to the right side and I feel like we didn’t really miss a beat. So, I thought it was good. He had a couple of nice plays, there was one of the first where he held a good line and [Robert] Beric went offside. Some good clearances as well. So, I thought it was pretty good. Obviously, giving up two goals, we have to look back on that and I feel like they had a couple other chances. I think we need to get our clearances right, that’s just everyone in general and not just us. So, there will be some things that we can look at, but overall, not bad.”

On what makes Carles Gil special and the team’s emotions following his goal:

Kessler: “Yeah, he’s a great player. I think something that gives him a great edge is his dribbling. He has a low center of gravity and it’s really hard to get the ball off of him so often you see opponents fouling him. I think he was fouled maybe five times in one half today. So, that makes it really hard to defend him is his dribbling. And elation was the initial emotion, kind of getting that goal after conceding what was not a great second goal. So, we were really happy to get the third goal and put ourselves in a position to get three points. And then it quickly switched to, ‘Okay, we need to secure the three points.’ And luckily, we did.”

On why the group remains steady on the road:

Kessler: “Yeah, I think it has to do with our mentality. We expect to win every time we take the field and we’ve been in close games throughout the season. I think we have 14-plus one-goal victories, so we have many where we’ve been in this situation before and I think we rely on that experience a little bit. And as you said, several of them were 3-2 and several of them have been 1-0, so we can win in different ways.”

On how his role changes without Andrew Farrell in the lineup:

Kessler: “[Andrew Farrell] didn’t give me any advice but I think if it was maybe last year, he would have. I think he’s taught me a lot over the two years that I’ve been here. So, I don’t think there was anything he necessarily needs to tell me today. You know, I think I just need to be more vocal, because he’s obviously very vocal when he’s on the field. So, I needed to kind of take that role a little bit more and make sure my presence was felt vocally. I think that was the main difference. But obviously, he’s been great this season, and like you said, he’s an Iron Man. I think these were the first minutes he hasn’t played all season, so it goes to show you just how reliable it is.”

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