



# PORTLAND TIMBERS PRESS RELEASE

**For immediate release: Jan. 22, 2025**

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## **TIMBERS SIGN FORWARD KEVIN KELSY** **Kelsy signs four-year contract with a club option for 2029**

**PORTLAND, Ore.** – The Portland Timbers have signed forward Kevin Kelsy, the club announced today. Kelsy is set to join the Timbers through the 2028 season with a club option for 2029.

Portland acquired Kelsy from Ukrainian top-flight side FC Shakhtar Donetsk for a transfer fee after trading \$75,000 in 2025 General Allocation Money (GAM) to FC Cincinnati in exchange for his Right of First Refusal. The Timbers will also trade up to \$100,000 in conditional GAM to Cincinnati if certain performance-based metrics are achieved. The six-foot-four striker will occupy a U22 Initiative roster slot.

“We are delighted with the acquisition of Kevin, and our staff believe he is a player that has huge potential. With support from ownership, this investment allows us to strengthen our attacking group now and Kevin’s addition will bring a different component along our front line,” said Timbers General Manager Ned Grabavoy. “Our club is excited to continue supporting his development and growth as a young player, and we are eager to see the influence he can have with us here in Portland.”

Kelsy, 20, joins Portland for his second MLS season. In his debut 2024 campaign, Kelsy tallied six goals in 23 appearances (16 starts) for FC Cincinnati while on loan from Shakhtar Donetsk, helping the Eastern Conference side to a third-place finish in league standings. Of his six goals, three were scored with his head. Notably, Kelsy led all MLS teenagers in scoring last season, earning himself a spot in the 2024 MLS class of 22 Under 22. Kelsy appeared in two of Cincinnati’s 2024 postseason matches and converted his penalty kick in a shootout against New York City FC on November 9.

“Kevin is a player that we’ve watched for months now. He’s young and one of the brightest center forwards in world football,” said Head Coach Phil Neville. “We’re really excited to have him join us – he’s got pace, power, a lot of development and scores goals. His great potential will fit great with the young group that we have here at Portland.”

Prior to his move to MLS, Kelsy logged nine goals in 37 matches played for Shakhtar over two seasons (2023-2024). Notably, he scored twice across Champions League and Europa League play for the Ukrainian side. A native of Valencia, Venezuela, Kelsy made his professional debut at the age of 16 for Mineros de Guayana of the Venezuelan Primera División in 2021, where he made 31 appearances and scored five goals.

Internationally, Kelsy has made 16 appearances for Venezuela’s U23 and U20 sides, registering four goals at the youth level. His most recent goal for Venezuela’s U23s came as the game-tying goal in the 100<sup>th</sup> minute of a 2-2 draw against Argentina’s U23s on February 5, 2024.

**Transaction:** Portland Timbers sign forward Kevin Kelsy through 2028 season with a club option for

2029. Portland acquired Kelsy from Ukrainian top-flight side Shakhtar Donetsk for a transfer fee after trading \$75,000 in 2025 General Allocation Money (GAM) to FC Cincinnati in exchange for his Right of First Refusal. The Timbers will also trade up to \$100,000 in conditional GAM to Cincinnati if certain performance-based metrics are achieved.

**Kevin Kelsy**

Full name: Kevin Kelsy

Pronunciation: KELL-see

Position: Forward

Height: 6-4

Date of Birth: July 27, 2004

Age: 20

Birthplace: Valencia, Venezuela

Citizenship: Venezuelan

Last Club: FC Shakhtar Donetsk

**Portland Timbers 2025 Roster**

\*as of Jan. 22

**Goalkeepers (4):** Maxime Crépeau, Trey Muse, James Pantemis, Hunter Sulte

**Defenders (8):** Miguel Araujo, Claudio Bravo, Zac McGraw, Eric Miller, Kamal Miller, Juan Mosquera, Finn Surman, Dario Zuparic

**Midfielders (6):** David Ayala, Diego Chara, Evander, Santiago Moreno, Cristhian Paredes, Joao Ortiz

**Forwards (5):** Antony, Kevin Kelsy, Ariel Lassiter, Felipe Mora, Jonathan Rodríguez

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