

MLS POST-GAME QUOTES

Portland Timbers vs LA Galaxy

Mar. 22, 2026 – Providence Park, Portland, Ore.

Final: Portland Timbers 1, LA Galaxy 1

Portland Timber FC Quotes

Portland Timbers FC Coach Phil Neville

On conceding from an opportunity where the Timbers gave the ball away...

"I think it was in a moment when we lost our composure a little bit. It felt like 11 v 11. It was going to be a really good day for us. The goal came off the back of probably two early chances just before that as well. I think when we get possession of the ball, it's been our Achilles heel a little bit. But I thought some of our possession today was a massive improvement. Just disappointed with these games, really good games, two really good teams, both teams wanting to play a really good football match. I feel that they get ruined by things that you can't control. I've been in this league for a long time now. So just par for the course, really."

On what positives were seen from today's match...

"Joao [Ortiz] was a massive positive. I think if you think about the journey that he's been on, he put up with an awful lot. I thought Vancouver, he played well. I thought he came on last week and played well against Austin. I believe in him, you know, I think he's obviously got competition now with José [Caicedo] whenever we get his visa, that's today, our next week or next month. I'm not sure when Cole [Bassett] comes back. He's got competition, but I think the two midfield players today showed their experience. We felt as if, because there was a buildup of expectation and pressure, we felt that it was a game for experience. And I thought the experienced players were outstanding. I thought [Alex] Bonetig and Finn [Surman] were really good. And I thought Brandon Bye had one of his best games. And I think with Jim Fory we've got a really good back four there. So, I'm super pleased. You know, there's obviously now a two-week break where, you know, in reality, we have to get our players back, or else we're not going to win games of football. If you take six, seven players out of any team in this league, you're not going to win games of football. And I think the work that the coaching staff are doing, the support that we gave the players, have been absolutely incredible in difficult situations. And now it's time to get the players back, get the players back fit, and get the players back competing. And when we do that, I believe that I trust this squad."

Thoughts on the game and what the locker room was like for half time...

"We wanted to put on a performance for the supporters. And I think they saw today a team that was really connected. I thought we saw in the first 20 minutes a really high-level team, tactically, technically, confidence, trust. Yeah, I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed for them. I'm disappointed for the owner. I'm disappointed. I'm disappointed for everyone that's connected with this club, that we couldn't deliver what we wanted to today because of things out of our control. Six yellow cards, one sending off. We control the things that we control, which is that we've got some really outstanding players. We've got a really outstanding team when everybody's fit."

Portland Timbers Forward Kristoffer Velde

On what he saw as a positive moving for the team in today's match...

"We defended, but I don't think LA was playing good either. We were a bit lucky, but it's also huge improvement from the last games. We look more solid with 10 guys than 11. So, I think everybody was committed to staying in good shape. And yeah, defend the goal in the best possible way to not concede them. We need to be happy with that point, but at the same time, it's disappointing, because the first 15 minutes, was electric and we knew we were going to score. So, think if we stayed with 11 guys on the field, I think it would be a different result."

On what the difference it is playing on the right over the left position...

"So, this game, we want to keep me and [David] Da Costa in the pockets, and I'm more suitable in the pockets than Antony. So, we kept Antony out wide, and me and [Brandon] Bye on the on the right, for me to come inside and drop and find the opposite pocket. I think me and Da Costa find each other really well

there. And I'm also capable of making the runs in behind. So, like I said in the past as well, I prefer to be on the left, but I can also play on the right. And if you see, the goal came from the left side, but yeah, I was able to create on the right side as well. So, if the coach wants me there, he puts me there, I just shut up and work and run.”

On changing his work ethic going down a player...

“Yeah, it's hard, man. I'm not the guy that likes to track back the most, but yeah, you just need to do it for the team and defend. It was a difficult game. We were just hoping for a good counterattack for me or Antony or [David] Da Costa. I don't think we succeed as good as we hoped to do. But yeah, it was hard man. I don't think LA played a great game, and I think we should have hurt them, even though we were one man down. But I don't feel like we came to positions where we could really hurt them. I feel like every ball in behind was like stopping, or like it just didn't have the rhythm. So, yeah, it was hard. It was really hard there.”

Portland Timbers Goalkeeper James Pantemis

On tonight's mentality for make 6 saves in goal after the injury from the last match...

“I mean, obviously it was a tough week. It was a little bit up in the air at the beginning of what was going on. Obviously, it's not easy to split your head open. And again, that was my first experience, so I didn't really know what to expect, how to deal with it. But I have to give credit to everybody around me, the medical staff, the staff that helped me through it, whether it was treating or making me take my time and making sure I was okay and checking in on me. And at the end of the day, got the green light to be available this weekend, and if I have the green light, that just means I keep doing my job. Mentality doesn't change. I feel like if there was no head injury, no stitches, no mask. I think I got it out of the system a couple days in training, and then straight back to it.”

On the defensive improvement from the team in today's match, aside from conceding...

“First of all, I think everybody was awesome. I think the spirit, the evidence that we show is something that we want to build on, and something that we need. We want to be successful. And I think this is just a learning lesson for all of us and we need to build to believe that this is our standard now. This is how we need to be defending, not only because we're down to ten men, but it should be hard to concede a goal all the time against us. And I think that's what we're going to put a lot of emphasis on in the next coming weeks, because we know we have another huge challenge coming in two weeks. But I think for me, there's no excuse. We've done it. We showed we could do it, especially with adversity. So why not do it consistently?”

Thoughts on the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup...

“I've always been adamant on the fact that if I perform here, things will happen. I can't make the team if I don't play well. So, my main focus is to do what I got to do for this team, to get results, save goals, get clean sheets. It's the daily work I put in with a goalkeeper coach and then the performances on the weekend, and then that will lead to the reward at the end of the summer. And then, obviously, that's a short-term goal, and we have playoffs here, we have Leagues Cup, we have trophies, we have all that. So, it's all a consequence of your work. It's all a consequence of just continuing to be consistent, continuing to perform. And again, I've always said and always will, it's my day to day that's going to make me be able to achieve those goals.”