

MLS POST-GAME QUOTES

Minnesota United vs Portland Timbers FC
Apr 18, 2026 – Allianz Field, Saint Paul, Minnesota
Final: Minnesota United 2, Portland Timbers 0

Portland Timbers FC Quotes

Portland Timbers FC Head Coach Phil Neville

On the main frustrations from tonight's match...

"I've just said to the team that away from home, you're not going to have as many chances as you're going to have at home. And there are two things you need to do. You need to win your duels, which we didn't do for their first goal. We didn't win our duels for the first goal, and then they scored, and they were ruthless, and we weren't ruthless. We weren't ruthless enough in the moments when we controlled the game. In that first half period, when we were breaking, we were controlling the game. We had fluidity, and we didn't hit the target with our shots. We weren't ruthless enough with our 1v1 ones, and we weren't ruthless enough with, obviously, Cole [Bennett]'s chance. And so, if you don't do those two things, forget anything else, then you're going to struggle to win games in football. And I'd say that's my frustration and the frustration of the team."

On being winless in last 12 away games...

"Well, I mean, it's not a great start, and it's a stat that we're over the next obviously, until the break, we need to make sure we're picking points up away from home. We've worked all week on the toughness that's needed, the mentality that's needed, the structure of the team that's needed. And like I say, I think there are things in this league that you have to do when you're away from home and winning your duels, being hard to beat. What by winning those duels is one, and then the ruthlessness, the quality in the final third, the quality of your best players in the final third to take the extra pass to make sure that they hit the target with their shots. And I think that's where I feel as if we've been punished. And I said something there that we need to learn very, very fast now, because if not, then the next two weeks are going to be really difficult. I firmly believe in this run of games that we've got the structure, we've got the players to cause problems, to pick up points. And I'd say that I admit that it is difficult on the road, but it's difficult for everyone, and we need to start playing better on the road."

On what wasn't clicking in the execution of the team's game plan for tonight...

"Well, I think in the first half, what happened was we, I felt we controlled the game, and we were the dangerous team in the first half, and when we came out in the second half, we knew that they would probably sit back a little bit. Sit back and maybe close the spaces for the [David de] Costa, for Felipe [Mora], for Cole [Bassett] when he advanced into that space, and what we said to him was, when they drop off, we've got to be even more patient with the ball. We're going to move the ball quickly, and the second goal was from a turnover, a sloppy turnover, and we didn't stay with our run. So we've been punished for two lapses of concentration. One, where we didn't win a duel, and two, where we were sloppy on the ball in the second half. In those 15 minutes, we told them they had to enjoy the ball, keep possession, get passes, make sure that we could suck them out, because we knew Minnesota. You've seen Minnesota for the last two or three seasons, even though they've got a different manager; their default is to drop when they're under pressure. And I think in the first half, we didn't punish them. In the first half, when they were coming at us, we could penetrate through them. In the second half, we didn't enjoy the ball well enough. We were sloppy in possession. We became a little bit static. And if you're not ruthless in front of goal, if you're not taking your chances, then you're going to get punished. And I feel as if that was the story and narrative of the game."

Portland Timbers FC Defender Brandon Bye

Overall thoughts on tonight's match...

"They took advantage of their chances. I think we had a couple of half-chances, a couple of chances that we could have taken care of and taken advantage of. But that's how games go, and that's MLS for you,

like it can change so quickly. But I think we need to create our own luck a little more and create some more opportunities for us to have those chances. And maybe one gets in the back of the net. But credit to them. They took advantage of their chances. And they buried them. Jimmy [James Pantemis] made a couple of great saves in the second half. They kept us in the game. But, yeah, unfortunate.”

On what the differences were between the first and second half...

“I think we were solid in the first half, keeping the ball. I think we can be even more aggressive with the ball when we have it, trying to create chances. But yeah, in the second half, we just didn't get those opportunities. And I feel like we just didn't flow on the ball as we did in the first half.

On how important it is for the Timbers to have consistency in the back defensive line...

“Yeah. I mean, it's life as a player. You have to be always ready to go. And no matter what, who's next to you, who's in the lineup, whatever it is, you have to be ready to go. And we do a good job in training and working with partnerships and stuff like that. But I think we're all continuing to learn how we work together and understanding that more and more. So I think it's building, but unfortunately again, it's not a time to build, it's time to win, to fight. So that's tough.”

On what the root cause was of losing second balls and the number of turnovers...

“Maybe we weren't wearing as clean on the balls as we could have been. We talk a lot about getting guys around the ball and playing when we're close to it. Along with that, when we lose it, fighting to win it back as quickly as possible. And credit to them. They did exactly that. I felt that as well. And so, it's tough. I think we'll reflect on it and talk about it next week and look to do better.”