

## **MLS POST-GAME QUOTES**

San Diego FC vs Portland Timbers FC  
Apr 25, 2026 – Snapdragon Stadium, San Diego, CA  
Final: San Diego FC 1, Portland Timbers FC 2

### **Portland Timbers FC Quotes**

#### **Portland Timbers FC Head Coach Phil Neville**

##### ***Overall thoughts on tonight's match...***

"I think first half was the most disappointed I felt in a long time. You know, you take all your playoff game defeats first half because I thought I saw a team that played with too much fear, that was scared, that didn't have the courage. And I told him that at halftime, and then in the second half, I saw a team that had courage, that had spirit, and you think about that's two wins out of three. The two wins we got, we scored late in the game. I've told them that you can talk about the systems and the tactics, but I think that desire and passion to go right to the very last whistle is phenomenal. Two 90-minute goals in two games shows that this team is gathering something special. I understand that people might not have seen it, but I have. I felt it. I've seen it and I want us to keep playing to that level that we showed in the second half. Which was a young team that was playing with no fear, a young team that was playing with courage, a young team that wanted to dominate one of the best teams in the league. And super proud."

##### ***On what the team was doing to shut down San Diego FC...***

"I think they just executed the tactical plan of being really compact and aggressive and winning duels. Stay with runners, blocking shots. They're a really good team. They've proven that. So tactically, the game plan was executed by the players phenomenally, [Kevin] Kelsey and [David] da Costa. I thought they were outstanding in terms of their sort of like out of possession work they did for the team. We had people that were doing their jobs to a very high level. Even in the first half, I thought out of possession was okay. It was the in possession that was the biggest problem. Second half, I thought we controlled the game with and without the ball, and that's something they should be proud of. And thought tactically, we got the game plan really well today."

##### ***On the tactical set up and how it all came together for tonight...***

"The out possession in the first half wasn't the problem. We wanted to make sure we flooded areas of the pitch. I think maybe the first nine possessions that we had we turned it over eight times, that was the problem. And I think I've been consistent in what I've said is that our problem's not been the out of possession game plan, the out possession in every game this season. I think it's been the in possession that we're now driving to. We want to control games with the ball. We want to show more fluidity in what we're doing. And second half, I thought that. And it took us to the 41st minute. We had a passage of play in the 41st minute where, I think [Alexander] Aravena had a cutback cross, where the keepers saved it. I thought we just showed who we are and where we want to go. I think that's a fair reflection of the game. I thought we had some performances today that were really top."

##### ***Thoughts on Kevin Kelsey's performance tonight...***

"I think at halftime I said that I was disappointed with every single player but one, and that was Kevin Kelsey. I thought he was the only one that showed like "Oh, I'm here. This is my stage. This is where I want to play." He was up for it, and he has been for the last month. I've got to say, for the last month I've seen him mature. He's committed himself to the group. He's done some incredible work on the days off. He's come in and done some work to be better as a person and as a player. And, you know, I thought we saw a top center forward performance today, real top. And I'd say that out of all the players in the squad, he's one of my weakness, in terms of, I believe in him so much. And today, I felt last week, I felt the week before, we're now seeing some consistency from his play and now needs to build on that."

## **Portland Timbers FC Central Defender Alex Bonetig**

### ***His thoughts on scoring tonight...***

“To be honest, I don't really have a go to celebration. That's my first professional goal, so I was just running around, to be honest with you. But it's a great feeling. And a great time to score, and most importantly to get the three points. So yeah, feeling great at the moment.”

### ***On setting up and maintaining the game plan through the full game...***

“Yeah we never wanted to sit back. I thought the first half was a little bit sloppy defensively and with the ball. You know, I put my hand up first for being a bit too sloppy on the ball. But in terms of second half, I thought it was a total 180. We wanted to press and I thought we executed that really well at times, and we created chances off it. So I think tactically what we wanted to do, we executed. And then that's the reason we walked away with three points today.”