MLS POST-GAME QUOTES
Portland Timbers FC v FC Dallas
Nov 21, 2026 – Toyota Stadium, Frisco, Texas
Final: FC Dallas 3, Portland Timbers 0

Portland Timbers FC Quotes

Portland Timbers FC Head Coach Martí Cifuentes

Overall thoughts on the match…
"Well, right now, really disappointed for the final score, but I think it's a game with two very different halves. I think first half, despite a period perhaps between minute 15 and minute 20, we were not as fluid as we were during the first 45 minutes. I think we created the chances. We were playing well. We were controlling transitions, and it's a pity that we couldn't score because we knew that in a game like this, taking the lead changes the dynamics of the game. We were not good enough to finish those actions, and obviously the start of the second half is far from what we wanted. We conceded two quick goals. I think that perhaps, especially after the second, the team looked a little bit out mentally. Obviously, it was a big one to climb, and I think after that we were just trying to open up the game, trying to send more bodies in front. Obviously, we conceded more chances. So for me, the consequence of not being able to score that goal that could've given us the chance to get back into the game. But yeah, overall, just congratulations to Dallas. I think that they scored on their chances. We didn't, and at the end, that's what the game is about."

On how Ariel Lassiter is feeling after being subbed out in the first half…
"I think he felt it very early on the on the first half. It was very unlucky, very unfortunate for the team. Not only because obviously Ariel is an important player for us, but because we had to, we were waiting to see if he could cope with the first half. We had some transition moments where he didn't feel confident to sprint. We didn't want to risk anymore, and he felt something on his thigh. Then as well, Jimmer [Fory] in the second half, he was cramping, and then again, we had to make another substitution. So, it's those kinds of small things, adversity things that you need to cope with. But I don't want to overreact because, again, the nature of a playoff, especially in this format, is that once you are chasing a result, then you can risk because at the end the goals against don't count. So, at the end of the day, it's the same losing on penalties and losing three-nil. What we need to make sure is that mentally we are capable to overcome all this adversity with the injuries and with the score and be very strong on Saturday in Portland."

On if Omir Fernandez sub was targeted to handle Daniel Job…
"No, just the opposite. It was to make sure that we were attacking and to stretch a little bit more. So, from the two-nil, we had prepared something that we have done already in a couple of games previously to play with two strikers. In that moment we tried Omir as a right winger, and then we were using both Alexander [Aravena] and Vincent [Janssen] more in central zones. While defending, it's true that then Omir had to track back, and then Ale[xander] trying to help him. But no, it was a mix of decision on trying to create more chances to try to score this goal to get us into the game, and I think that Omir did really well what we asked him to do."

Portland Timbers FC Captain and Defender Finn Surman

On what the difference was between the first and second half that allowed Dallas to get three goals…
"I'd say it just comes down to two laps in concentration, and I think we need to be better when we concede a goal and not let that turn into two-nil. Because we concede so quickly after that first goal, and so we all need to take responsibility on that, and we need to be better there. And then we can't basically give them the game like that. I think after that, we're still pushing, but it's hard to come back from two-nil down when we give away two costly goals."

On how the team is feeling after tonight's result and looking towards the next game in the series…
"I think whether we lose that game how we did, or whether we lose that game on penalties, the reality is we still have to go back to Portland and we still must win. And that was going to be the same case

regardless of the result today. And so, the message that I've been saying to the group and the boys inside the dressing room are saying is, we got to learn very fast from that, but we must go back and win anyway. And that was always going to be the same: learn from it fast and then move on from it because we know that Portland this week is going to be rocking, and it's going to be an amazing opportunity to get back into this series."

On how defensive decisions are made along the wing versus inside the box…
"It's again, there's so many things that are going on; depends on where other attackers are, depends on where other defenders are. I think there's moments where we're going to talk about it during the week and what we want players doing, who are defending the ball, whether we want them to show them, and then it's also recognizing at moments we do need to help there. It's so situational, and often it comes down to anticipation and reading of it, and so that comes from having good connections, and we do have those, so this is going to be something we talk about and make sure it's better for next game."