

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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## Raphael Wicky

Press Conference



NYC FC 3, Chicago 1

**Q. Obviously it was a big night for Connor Sparrow getting his first start. How did he do in your eyes?**

RAPHAEL WICKY: Look, I think we told him, just play your game. Don't overthink. Try to enjoy. And I think he started well. He started well with that big save after two or three minutes. I think that gives him confidence, and we also told him, look, if you feel like you have to play long, then go long. It's your first game. New York City is a team who presses, so I think he took many times good decisions, and all the rest I have to see and speak with the goalkeeper coach. I think the big save in the first two minutes gave him some confidence, and that's good.

**Q. What did you see from the group otherwise beyond Connor?**

RAPHAEL WICKY: I think especially first off, I saw -- again, we know New York City, they are a good team. They are always creating. I think we saw a good 45 minutes where we created quite a lot of chances again, but we have to be clinical. It was good that we came back just before halftime, but we could have scored minimum one, if not two before, and yeah, those are -- again, those are the key moments.

But I think the first 45, we had very good moments in possession where we created and we let them move as well. We knew they are a good team. They like possession -- if you can move as well, you can create.

We concede 2-1 which is an easy goal again. Maybe I have to watch it again. Maybe Connor can do a little bit better but we are not going to start blaming one player, because it's too easy he gets a shot there.

But there's a key moment, the game -- the key moment I think is a chance for Elliot. Elliot has this big chance to equalize, and the other side, we concede the 3-1, and then to be fair, with the 3-1, I think our legs are getting heavier,

heavier, we tried to make some stops. We have very young subs coming in. So it is what it is.

The end of the day, we have to take the positive, which is we create a lot and we talk again about the same thing. We gave up too many easy goals.

**Q. Speaking about that first half, it seemed like it was a pretty even half with a fairly open game going back and forth on both ends. What did New York do in the second half that sort of helped them create an early goal and then kind of take control of the game from there?**

RAPHAEL WICKY: Well, I think they were a little bit better in possession. They kept the ball better. We were not as aggressive as we were the first half and then obviously we concede quite quickly the second goal, which in these temperatures, with traveling the same day and all of that, it's not easy when you concede them.

But like I said, I mean what did they do better I think at the end of the game, you always have key moments. And for me, the key moments for me is we don't equalize that big chance from Elliot, and then on the other side, I think right directly, or a little moment like today, they scored their chance. I think that's the big difference.

And then they kept the ball, and then like I said before, our legs were heavy and it was difficult to move together and pressure them together because if you don't pressure them, if you just give them the ball, New York City is a very good team.

**Q. This is away from the field. What opportunity have you had to speak with C.J. Sapong and him having time away from the team, what impact does that have on how you look at your team's offensive options?**

RAPHAEL WICKY: Yeah, look, that's a personal -- obviously C.J. is gone for personal reasons and we fully support him there.

Yeah, it's a big impact. C.J. is a proven goal scorer in this league, a vet Ron who we all know is quality. Of course we miss C.J. Like I always say, I'm trying to focus on the players who are here, but of course we miss C.J., of course.

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