

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Tuesday, March 2, 2021
Chicago, Illinois, USA



Gastón Giménez Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, everyone. Appreciate you all being with us. With that, we'll go ahead and get started.

Q. Rafa last year had mentioned that he hoped to see you in more of a leadership role as you got more comfortable with the team and as you've lived in Chicago now a year. How prepared are you for that leadership role, now that you've played a whole season with the Fire?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: Well, I have always been prepared for a leadership role. It's always a little bit complicated when you're new on the team and especially when it's a new country. But I think I have been ready to be a leader. I have been doing that for a while in Argentina, and I want to do what's best for the club to help the club finish in a better position this year, get to where we wanted to be last year. We didn't make the playoffs, unfortunately, but this year we want to make the playoffs and go far, and we hope that the other teams are always talking about the Chicago Fire, saying that the Chicago Fire is a hard team, a good team, right up at the top there of teams that are hard to play against.

So I think I've always been ready for it, and that's what we're here for this year.

Q. A lot of people, the coach, the technical director, the sporting director have been saying that continuity will really help this team this season. Why? Why will continuity help a team in its second year together?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: Because we are going to get to know each other even more, and we know each other much better now. It's always good to have a foundation, a good base, and I think that's what we did last year. We formed a good foundation, and now going into the process, because it's a process, what the coach wants, we are getting to know each other better on the field. I think last year we did that really well, where we were getting to know each other on the field.

On the soccer field, we meshed very well, we got to know each other, and now with that base, adding in the players that came in in the off-season, we're going to be able to do even more, and we're going to be able to make the team and the city proud.

Q. We're facing a 2021 full of tournaments, World Cup qualifying, Olympic Games, Olympic qualifying. How do you see the team facing those absences that will be caused by all of those tournaments, and personally how do you feel going into the season for your club and your country?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: It's important because the base of the team will have to be ready. Everyone on the team will have to be prepared and fully committed to the season, and it's also a good thing, and it's very important because in this case this is where the young players and the new players really have to give everything that they have and show why they're here and be ready to step in for whatever absence might show up, whether it's for injury or for a national team call-up, and not only us, other teams are also going to lose players, whether it's to injury, whether it's to qualifying or being called into the national team. So it's a little bit complicated during the season because during qualifying the league doesn't stop playing, but it's not only going to be us, every team is going to have to face these challenges.

And for me, it's important first and foremost and that I give my all to my club and be ready, and of course it's an honor to play for my country, and I'll be ready to give everything that I have should that happen. But I am focused on the Fire and ready to take on this season and the summer, whatever it brings.

Q. What were some of the key lessons that you learned about the league in your first season in Chicago, and how have those shaped both your personal approach to your second season and your expectations for yourself and the team around you?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: Experience dictates that I need to work even harder. I have to play the way I have been playing in Argentina with my style of play because when I came back after the quarantine period, I wasn't at my fullest, and I'm aware of that.



So I have to be more focused, work even harder, more alert. It's my personal objective to have a much better season than I did last year personally for me, so I have been preparing very hard during the off-season, and now during preseason I'm going to give my all because I'm ready to go out there and have a better season and give my all for the team.

Q. Taking into account all of the travel, all of the moves, preseason starting and then things will stop, you'll go back, all the quarantine, back and forth, would it have been more beneficial to have been training in pair gay or with the national team?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: It's a good question. Yes, we had thought about it. There had been some talk about it. But someone had a positive result, and so that was all canceled, so I was working with a personal trainer in Argentina by myself, and I just wanted to be prepared. If I am able to be called up, I'll be ready for it and as prepared as possible.

Q. If you are to be called up, what would that look like? Would you miss some of the friendly games or when would you be able to come back? How many days would you be quarantined? How would that be?

GASTÓN GIMÉNEZ: We don't have a lot of information right now. All we know is that if I were to be called up I would miss some friendly games in Orlando. I don't have a date for leaving. I don't know how many days I would have to be in quarantine. What I do know is that the friendly dates we have in Orlando and our preseason calendar; that's all I know.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports