

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Gaston Gimenez

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll get started with Gaston. First question.

**Q. Having played a full season in a new league, that always helps you prepare for your second year. What about off the pitch? How does being settled into a new city help you on and off the pitch in year two?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) The truth is that I'm very happy and I feel a lot calmer. I understand the customs better off of the field, people's habits and people's customs in the country. I'm very happy.

It's always hard going into the first year with a new team in every sense of the word. The second year is just calmer, a little bit easier. So I'm getting used to it. It's easier for me. Now I'm trying to find the best version of myself soccer-wise, football speaking, so that I can put that forward going into this year.

**Q. I'm curious, do you have any goals for this season as far as individual statistics or goals that you want to accomplish, or a team goal?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) Yes, my first goal is to go back to the playing level that I had before in previous seasons, go back to my level of play.

I think as far as the team is concerned our goal is the same: to qualify for playoffs and to be fighting for a championship at the end of the season. That's what we committed ourselves to. That's the goal that we have for ourselves as a team.

In order to do that, each one of us has to work individually as hard as possible and be the best player that each one can in order for us to be the best team possible. So that's my goal, is to go back to my best level of play so that I can give more to the team.

**Q. When you played with Medran last year, you guys were both very, very good, effective as a double pivot.**

**Why were you guys so effective together? Is it that you're both really good players or is there some other reason that your two games kind of mesh with each other?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) First, it was all the work that we'd done on the field, that we do with our coaches every training session. Just the repetitions of how to move, how to work off of each other. That makes things really easy, knowing how to do things, what our movements are, what the expectations are.

I think with Alvaro we've built a really good relationship as far as football. I think it's because we understand the game the same way. We're watching it, understanding the same game. It didn't take us very long to get to know each other and be able to work together on the field.

We really do understand the game in the same fashion. So that helped us last year be able to work off of each other and build that relationship on the field, as well as off the field we have a very good relationship.

We can only hope that this year it will be even better, that we can continue to work together. As I mentioned before, we're always trying to grow and improve. So give more of ourselves so at the end of the season everyone can raise the Chicago Fire's name high.

**Q. (Translated from Spanish) You've mentioned several times that you want to go back to being your best, the best version of yourself. Can you list maybe one or two things you've done, that you've modified, to get yourself to that level?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) I think maybe my style of living. I've always been very into what I'm doing, very into football, maybe a little bit obsessive even, trying not to commit too many mistakes or make many errors.

I think last year I made a lot of errors, and I didn't correct them necessarily throughout the season. During the break I really took time to reflect. I have to go back and see what I can improve on because I need to be up to the standards, I need to be at that better level so that we can contribute more to the team and help the team be better.

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**Q. (Translated from Spanish) With everything that's going on in the world today, how much does that affect you and your goal of returning to your best level? That's regarding your family is away, the pandemic is still going on, things aren't as easy, people can't visit, everything is just a little bit off.**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) I try not to think too much about those things. I've always been more of a solitary person. So I know that they're out there, it's a thing, they're far away, and I miss them and I love them very much, but I really try to focus on what I have with me.

I'm with my wife. She understands me. She knows how I am. She understands how focused I am on football. She knows what I need, when I need my space, when I need to be focused on football.

I really try not to think about all the other things that are going on. I know that taking the time to reflect during the break was good for me, and that's going to help me put forward my best football.

**Q. Looking ahead to the schedule and seeing many of the same opponents this year that you saw last year in the Eastern Conference, in your mind are there more advantages or disadvantages to that?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) Yeah, I think it is somewhat of a small advantage to have already played against them and to have faced them already. But really every football game is different, every year is different. Maybe this year there are some teams that are going to be a surprise and other teams that are candidates to be fighting for a championship that might not finish as high as expected. Really everything could change. Every game is different.

We have to go out there. It's football. We just have to go out there and play each day, play each game because every game is so different. Hopefully taking that into account, we'll go out there, we'll play well and have a good season and do our best each game for the Chicago Fire.

**Q. (Translated from Spanish) Do you prefer the 3-4-3 or the 4-4-2 lineups? Which one of those do you prefer? Those are the ones that coach used most last year. Also, as a national team player for Paraguay, was it a benefit for you that the upcoming qualifiers were canceled given that you weren't in your best form and you hadn't quite gotten your rhythm yet?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) As far as the tactical systems go, I really don't have a preference.

Sometimes I do like to see how our opponent plays, to maybe see how that will affect or how we should play. But I'm not a coach yet, so I can't really say. I really can't form an opinion on that. It's nice to be able to see how our opponent will play, how we'll adjust. But really I don't prefer one system over the other.

As far as the national team, yes, it's always wonderful to play for your national team. It's something great. But, yeah, if I was to have gone with the national team, it was going to be very difficult because really I didn't even have a pre-season under my belt, and I wasn't going to have the same rhythm, so it was going to be complicated a little bit.

But things happened as they did and I was able to finish pre-season here with the Chicago Fire, which is something that I wanted. So now I have to focus on the upcoming games that I have here with the Chicago Fire and do a good job so that I can have the opportunity to be called up to the national team again.

**Q. (Translated from Spanish) You've played three pre-season friendlies already. Now you have three left. How do you feel? Personally how do you see the group? Is everyone feeling ready? What do you think about the team?**

GASTON GIMENEZ: (Translated from Spanish) I see everyone very well. I think that it was very important for the core of the group to be together and then add in all the young players that were added to a group that already had an idea of what we wanted to do, how we wanted to move on the field. That made things easier this year. We understand each other better on the field. Now we can really keep growing and continue to learn from the things that we did last year, fix the things that maybe failed us a little bit last season.

I think it's going to be a good year, or at the very least we're going to be a competitive team, we're going to be out there competing.

I think we did that actually last season, but maybe some of the results didn't quite fall our way. Sometimes it was deserved, maybe it wasn't, but we were out there competing. Now we're going to work on those things so the things that we needed to fix don't happen to us again this season.

So, yeah, you were able to see the three pre-season games. Obviously you see that we're lacking a little bit in the rhythm. We're trying to get back into our football rhythm and playing. But we're getting there. Now we're going to take the three games that are left and work as hard as we can and work together to improve and be ready

for the season, which is coming up. That's where the important work starts. That's where the wonderful work starts, getting into the season and playing those games, really we're just going out there to be competitive.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your time this afternoon, Gaston. Really appreciate it.

GASTON GIMENEZ: You're welcome.

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