

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Johan Kappelhof Press Conference



Q. The scoring explosion the last few games, from your perspective, what has been the biggest difference

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: I think we played with more confidence and we are more solid defensively. I mean, we've been working. It didn't come our way and we kept working on training session and we kept believing in ourselves.

But just the details that matters, and now the last two or three games was better, so yeah, that's a step forward for us.

Q. Since the start of the 2020 season, what have these last, I don't know, 17 months been like for you with some of the ups and downs and now back up for you right now?

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: Do you mean personally?

Q. You as a player, yeah.

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: So, yeah, beginning of 2020, I played the first two games and then during the quarantine I had an injury and that kept me out for like several months. So that was tough for me as a player. I was not used to being injured. I kept getting setbacks with the injury, like three or four setbacks, so it was tough. Of course you start to doubt, will I come back the say same way and will my body hold it.

So this year was a very important year for me to prove month to myself that I can still do it and be healthy. I worked really hard in the off-season. And yeah, I'm glad that I'm healthy and available for the team and to help the team and playing now, so that's good.

Q. What have you learned about yourself through all of this?

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: I've learned to be mentally strong, stronger than ever, because like during my career, I didn't

have many setbacks. It always went my way. I was playing. I was healthy. And now, you know, you're like struggling with yourself and mentally it's tough when you're injured. I came out stronger. So that was the positive.

Q. How are you viewing this game on Saturday, playing well at home, knowing this is your lone road match in the month of July, and Nashville just one loss in the season and what the opportunity means to keep up the play that you guys have shown and hopefully translate that on the road against a good squad?

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: Yeah, it's a very good squad. They have a good team. They are a hard-working team. So we have to get the same, you know, the aggressiveness we've shown in the last few games. It starts with winning your duels and that's what we did the last three games, winning our personal duels and fight for each other as a team, you know and then the chances and the opportunities will come.

And if we stick together, it's going to be much easier to play against a team like Nashville that has a lot of hard workers and they always fight, you know. It's a tough game on the road but we take them very seriously. We are preparing very well and we keep building on top what we already build it, and we are playing now a new system. So.

I think that fits us good for now. We are doing good the last three games, so we have to keep building on top of that.

Q. Can you just expand more about how the new system, and how it does fit this club and the personnel that you guys have?

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: I don't know necessarily the club, but it's just at the moment at this time where we were, I think this system fits us better. It's like more secure at the back, more solid. I think we have the players for it to play.

So I think at the moment and this time and with the players we have now, I think it's a good system. We've shown in the last few games we've improved.

Personally I like this system, to play this way and I think it fits the team well.



Q. We're trying to figure out if it is a three in the back or a five in the back, and we asked Raphael Wicky right before you and he told us to call it what we want. So the question is: What are you guys calling it? And when the coaches draw up the starting 11, do they refer to it as three in the back or five in the back?

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: This system, you can't like -- you can call it in the way you want it. You can call it five or you can call it three. Some teams play this system more like three in the back and the wingbacks attacking very high and more. Depends, also, like how you want to put pressure and how you analyze a team. That's the way you can say three or five.

But I like to say 5-3-2, and like in attack, you have the three center backs for the control and then you have one -- plus one midfielder. And then the wingbacks, they can attack, so that's a two for us to create chances to score more.

But yeah, some people say 5-3-2, some 3-5-2, I don't know.

Q. All-Star voting opened today. Is there a teammate or two you wanted to single out as somebody that people should throw a vote in for this year.

JOHAN KAPPELHOF: Yeah, of course, there are guys in the team doing good. I think Alvaro Medrán right now is on fire. He has like, I don't know how many assists in the last three games, but Alvaro is doing good. I'd like to say Bobby. You know, he saved us a couple of time in important moments in the game. So I think Bobby, as well. Alvaro is doing good now. Yeah, some couple of guys who could make it, yeah.

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