

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Raphael Wicky

Press Conference



Q. Is there any update on the status of Carlos Terán and Alvaro Medrán?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Yeah, Alvaro is still under health and safety protocol and Carlos is with the team, and we just have to be very careful with him and bringing him back slowly after obviously being injured multiple times in quite a long time. So we're bringing him back slowly but he's with the team.

Q. With Carlos, was that a cramp or was there something else going on? And with Alvaro, are you and expecting him, and Carlos too, for Sunday?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Carlos was a cramp but obviously he was injured in that area before. So that's why we have to be just very, very careful. But it was a cramp, and he felt much better in these last days. But we still have to be very careful obviously managing him and giving him the right amount of minutes, and also next week where we have three games in one week with a lot of traveling and a lot of health and safety down in Florida and humidity.

Alvaro, there is not much more I can tell you right now. Right now he's still under health and safety and he's not with the team.

Q. Robert Beric has not gotten significant minutes; do his struggles have anything to do with it?

RAPHAEL WICKY: The main reason is that Robert had a broken nose, you all know that. He was wearing a mask. I felt that when I saw him in training and in games and also in speaking to him that it bothered him. It was not ease for him to breathe for him. He was a little bit scared of going into challenges I saw that, and I also saw him in Philadelphia he came in with the mask and going into long balls and duels, he struggled a little bit with that. And so that's one of the reasons.

Obviously I'm happy that we have other players back from injuries and multiple options also up front, and Chino know

has done a good job. And also we knew these games especially against Philadelphia and Red Bulls are aimed where it's often very vertical, lots of duels, lots of long balls, lots of fighting. We also knew that these games are going to be a little bit different.

So those are the main reasons. Of course we all would like that Robert has more goals. I think in general Robert has a lot of chances this season, created his chances, was sometimes a bit unlucky.

And yeah, I think and I believe that he will always have chances and always score goals. He will get his minutes in those upcoming weeks and months for sure because of so many games.

Q. When do you expect him to be like 100 percent from the broken nose? What's the prognosis for that?

RAPHAEL WICKY: I believe that he is now without the mask, so I hope that -- yeah, I hope that it's bothering him less now.

Q. You're facing a Crew team that has lost their last three matches. If you seen anything from them in their last three matches in terms of weaknesses that you can exploit, and have you learned anything from the performance you put in last month where you lost 2-nil at their old stadium?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Obviously we analyzed them and we have seen the results and we have seen that they conceded quite a few goals, but it's not my job to judge and to tell why and what happens.

I think their style of play is still the same. They have a good team. They have good players. They are still trying to play the same style as they did before. This league is a very tough league. You see a lot of teams struggling from time to time. You have a lot of teams who suddenly have for a few weeks not results, and so I wouldn't give this too much importance.

This is still a very, very good team. These are champions. So we still expect them to be a strong opponent, of course. We will focus on what we can do and on our game. I think in this season, the ones this season and last season, the games we had against them, they were always very

interesting games where both teams tried to play forward, tried to play offensive. We always create the chances against from them, and I think we are going from there and we will focus on what we do.

Q. You guys are fourth in the MLS table since the start of July but still several points out of the playoff places. Do you still see the playoffs as a realistic goal and what are your priorities when you look at rest of the season right now?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Look, I think I've told you that last week or whenever it was in the press conference that we are taking game by game and we are not talking any more right now about long-term or mid-term goals. I've spoken to the team and it doesn't make sense in the situation we were or still are. Let's take game by game, and I think we've done well so far.

Points-wise, yes, we have done pretty well since July 4, so whenever that was, but still, if you look at obviously the draw against D.C. United, the loss against Toronto, these were games where the team put in good performances where we should have had more points.

I think with the progress of the team, with the way the team developed since maybe now two months, this is very positive, we are in a good way. We are making more points, too, but we believe that we could have had even more points. We are not saying that we are happy with where we are.

We are happy with the development we see and we are just going to go game by game and the next game is Columbus Crew on Sunday most important, and we go for three points there.

Q. Right now, how difficult is it for you as the manager to balance the minutes of all your midfielders? Obviously Luka coming off a very strong game; Alvaro being out right now maybe helps that a bit but with the current composition of the team and especially if Federico Navarro is able to join in the regular season, how do you look at managing the minutes of all your attacking midfield players, especially when several of them are playing well at the same time?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Well, first of all, it's a good problem to have as a coach. You have options, which, again, brings the competition up which makes every player better which makes every player has to train better and harder, because if you relax too much, there is another guy who may take your job. So I think that's a good problem to have.

But Federico Navarro is not here yet, so that is not yet a

concern to have or an option to; that's not yet here.

But like I said before, I'm happy that players come back from injuries, we had a lot of injuries in the beginning of the season the first two months, some of those guys come back, are back, and also very happy the way some guys stepped in last Sunday, guys who did not play for a long time like Luke, Elliot, Carlos played well.

That's what a good team is about; you're not only having 10 or 11 guys. You're having 16, 18, 20 guys and that's what we are going to need in the next two months. We have so many games coming up, and that's what I expect from all the players: To train hard and to be ready and to take every opportunity they have and to give their best when they have minutes, however minutes that they are starting, halftime, twenty minutes early, ten minutes, whatever it is.

Q. Something that came up last year but is going to come up again now, the Bears play on Saturday afternoon, and then you guys play Sunday 5:00 in a matinee. How much do you game plan for the grass maybe not being optimal, and what are you expecting out of the field conditions on Sunday afternoon?

RAPHAEL WICKY: Yeah, obviously we are aware of that. Look, so far since I'm head coach here, the people who work on Soldier Field have done a great job always trying to provide us the best possible field, and they have done a great job.

I believe that they will do the same, even if this turnover obviously is shorter from Saturday to Sunday afternoon, but I believe they will do a great job and provide us with a good surface. And it will also depend a little bit on the weather; is it raining a lot, then the field may be a little less good.

But those are things we cannot control. I believe the people will do a good job and we will focus on what we can control and obviously once we are on the field, we see if we have to adapt. But so far, they have done a good job.

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