

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Frank Klopas

Press Conference



Chicago 4, Cincinnati 3

**Q. What are the emotions after a game like that just back and forth, back and forth, and then winning as Alvaro said, that was a goalazo by Luka.**

FRANK KLOPAS: It was a goalazo. Yeah, no, I mean. It's like a roller coaster, right. I mean, when we got to the early lead and 2-0, I mean, I think we dropped off a little bit and we let them back into the game.

But I think we came out the second half and made some adjustments and the team played really well. We moved the ball extremely well. We made good decisions. We could have been a little bit more dangerous in the final third and decisive to finish the action.

But I thought we played a very good second half. We took the lead and obviously you equalize. Look, as coaches and the staff we talked about it. You make certain changes to push the game, and comes in, he's got that quality and it's just a great feeling, a lot of emotions. And extremely proud of the group regardless even if we would have stayed at 3-3; the way that they played, the way they competed, the mentality, just the attitude I think was great.

And obviously to get the three points, those emotions are sky-high and we hope they never go away, but they don't last too long, you know. But it was a great team performance obviously that's the most important thing. I'm extremely proud of the guys.

**Q. How does it feel to get a road win? I know this is something we used to always ask Rapha about when the team was struggling to get wins on the road. How does it feel to get one away from home?**

FRANK KLOPAS: A win is a win yeah but obviously it's difficult. It's not easy in this league to go on the road and win. You look at our record, but you look at other teams, it's difficult.

I think it helped a lot today, obviously the stadium, the atmosphere was fantastic, the pitch was great. I sensed that from the warm up. When I saw the guys at the warm up and I talked to -- with the staff there, it was one of the sharpest warmups that I've seen, and the guys were excited. They were ready to go.

And I mean, you never know sometimes how that's going to go but they came out, I felt, flying, and so look, just to get a win -- and I think it's important now. Like I told the group, sometimes no one really remembers what we did in the beginning but last impressions really matter. And I think we need to come and compete hard in every game and really leave a good impression for our fans that throughout the season, you know, maybe they haven't had a lot of moments to celebrate, and this is one of those moments and I think it's important that every game we go into, that we leave everything on the field and we leave, you know, a good lasting image for them and something to look forward to next year.

**Q. With Luka tonight of course scoring that goal, how would you evaluate Luka's season, and is there maybe an argument that he could have played and started more over the course of the season?**

FRANK KLOPAS: Look, you look at he's a guy that made goals right now, sew has quality. I think sometimes depending on the system that we switched earlier on makes it a little more difficult when we played with 3-5-2. You need three midfielders, really that, cover a lot of ground. He's best, at least in my opinion, when you have two players behind him and he plays almost as a number ten because he has quality, he's really, really smart in getting and finding spaces, and he has a quality like you saw tonight.

When he gets opportunities, he's always a danger. Yeah, you can -- definitely you can have an argument about that for sure.

**Q. Saturday will be the last home game of the year. Probably almost for sure the biggest crowd you guys are going to see all year the way things are looking. How important is it for you to go out there and get a win, looking ahead to Saturday, to give those fans something to think about for the off-season?**

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I think we talked about it with the players. But it's one game at a time, right. So we have a short turnover right now, playing mid-week but it is what it is. Sometimes it's good to play, we had a good game, we are coming off a really good performance, and everybody is ready and sharp to go.

Yeah, being home in front of our fans, I think definitely the guys want to come out and try to get three points. But more than anything, just compete really hard and make all the fans that come out there really proud of the group, and I think that's in our mind.

You know, look, we've got to do whatever is possible to try to get the three points, and everybody knows that and looking forward to Saturday. Hopefully we can get a really big crowd. I know that it will probably be the biggest of the year. The weather is going to be nice.

So I urge all the Fire fans, soccer fans to come out and support the teams. And I know we are going to do our best to make sure that that last game at Soldier Field, at least for this year, it's a memorable one and it's something that they have to look forward to next year.

**Q. Just back to Luka. He seems to have emerged as a real fan favorite and both how he plays and some of his charitable work with I think Fire fans for food or something like that, and you know Fire fans of course better than anybody. What does it mean for the fan base and for the team when the fans really get behind a player for a lot of reasons, both for his play and who he is as a guy?**

FRANK KLOPAS: It's always great to have the fans support you. I think our fans, they support all the players out there. They expect obviously a certain effort in every game, and when you do that, when you put this Fire jersey on and you leave everything on the field, regardless of the outcome or the scores, I think that's the most important thing. They respect that. They respect that you put this jersey on and you represent the club and the city in the right way and the fans that come up.

So I think Luka has always done that. I think all our players, you know, have a great relationship with the fans, win or lose, they always go out there and try to make sure that you know, those relationships are strong and solid because at the end of the day without the fans, playing in empty stadiums, we wouldn't have opportunities or jobs without the fans.

So we know how important they are and the players know all that. I think Luka and all the players, they go out of their way to make sure they spend time to get to know the fans

and all the events that they are able to go to and attend that are there.

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