

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Gabriel Slonina Press Conference



Inter Miami 0, Chicago Fire FC 0

**Q. How did it feel to be back on the field for a regular-season game and how do you evaluate the team's performance tonight?**

GABRIEL SLONINA: It feels amazing, you know, walking out, it's a feeling that you can't recreate in training. I just wanted to enjoy that moment and just be the best version of myself I could be on the football field, crowd -- it's a feeling like no other. It felt to be great on the field and -- successful season and proud of the effort we put in today.

**Q. I was going to ask you about the game but looking at your shirt (says "No War") tell me what's going on there.**

GABRIEL SLONINA: Yeah, the game is important but there's other things that happen outside life that are above the game, so I think it's about putting the most awareness that we can to making sure that families and victims that are going through this hard time right now stay safe and we can support them as much as possible.

**Q. How much do you guys talk about what's going on in the world right now? I mean, just how much of a consciousness is there in the locker room about the events in Ukraine?**

GABRIEL SLONINA: I think, you know, a lot of teams have a lot of culture on their team so a lot of people are affected about it even if they don't seem like they are. It's about putting awareness out there and making sure that you're with them and knowing that you're supporting them even if it's just a shirt with a message and letting them know that the stuff going on is not okay. Everyone is aware of it and everyone knows what's going on right now.

I think there are bigger things outside of soccer and families that need to be saved. So it's about putting as much awareness and support as we can into this matter right now.

**Q. Does the war hit closer to home for you having relatives in Poland knowing what they are going through in a nearby country?**

GABRIEL SLONINA: Of course, I have family in Poland, so it's pretty close to their home. So I want to make sure that they are safe as well and that if there could be no war, and love and peace in the world, they could stay safe and there's less stress and worry about their safety and everything.

Every war shouldn't be on this earth. I think I believe in that and I'm going to continue to put as positive of a message as I can out there even if it's just wearing it on my shirt after a game.

**Q. Just back to the game, I feel foolish asking about the game, but what did you think of the performance of the back line tonight? Obviously without projected starter but what did you see from Czichos back there?**

GABRIEL SLONINA: Yeah, I'm proud of the back line, the work they put in -- they do a good job of picking me up when I make an error, and hope I can put that back into them when they make an error. I think Wyatt and Rafael, they are strong and they are big, and their presence in the back, I'm super confident with them. And Brian and Jhon guys that come in and do their job -- I'm super confident working with them every single day. We have a good connection and I think we are going to grow into that in the season.

**Q. Rafa told us earlier in the preseason that he was a big communicator and he wanted to be a leader on the back line. What was it like from a communication standpoint?**

GABRIEL SLONINA: It's incredible, if I make a big save, he's the first one to me, and if he makes a good tackle I try to be the first one to him.

I think we can grow the connection to be even stronger during the season and have more clean sheets but he is exactly that. He's a communicator and he's a leader on the field and he's what we needed. He's a presence in the locker room and guys are comfortable around him. He's a monster on the field and he wants to win, and off the field,



he wants to teach you and make you better.

So I think he's an incredible player and amazing person to work with.

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