

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

Ezra Hendrickson

Press Conference



Q. Wondering if there's any updates on the injury situations with Gastón Giménez and Jhon Duran?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: Jhon Duran is back from his ankle injury and he's been training with us. Gastón picked up a hamstring injury, so he won't be available.

Q. With Cascadia, Seattle, Vancouver, Portland, a place the Fire have traditionally struggled before, how can that change going into Saturday's game?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: We are going into this game with a bit of momentum after our last two games, one being against a Cascadia team. So you know, we are just going to go there, and we know we have to pick up points on the road and we are going to go there and try to get the three points.

As far as what has happened in the past with the club, we can't really think about that. We can't think about what happened a couple Saturdays ago against Columbus. Right now we are just looking forward and what we can do, and hopefully ride the wave of this momentum through the end of the season.

Q. You guys are now in the middle of the secondary transfer window. Just what kind of needs do you think the team needs to address before now -- between now and when the window closes?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: Well, we are constantly trying to make the team better. As far as specifics, you know, right now, we want to improve in every position as much as we can, even if it's getting a depth piece. But there's no specific point position that we're targeting.

But we just want to make sure that going to the end of the season that we are strongest as we possibly can be with the salary cap and all the stuff like that that we have to go along with, the rules of the league. But we are definitely trying to improve the team as much as we can.

Q. As far as Jairo Torres, how are you feeling with him? He spoke about struggling to adapt to the League a little bit and he's been struggling with some fitness issues, so what's the feeling with him right now?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: I think the main thing with him is to get him healthy. He's the healthiest now that he's ever been and we are looking forward to good things and more minutes for him going forward. When healthy he'll be a starter on this team. He's that quality of a player. But we just haven't been able to get him physically healthy enough to be on the pitch for an extended period of time, but we have been very cautious about that and I think it's getting close to the point where he's on the pitch from the start.

But he's a very good player. That's why we have him here in our ranks and we just want to make sure that -- you're never going to be 100 percent but as close to 100 percent as possible before we put him out on the pitch for an extended period of time to avoid further injury.

Q. I would like to find out if you are aware of Vancouver -- playing the Canadian championship with Toronto, and probably they are going to have other players available to play, maybe they will use some subs. What's your opinion about it and if you are aware of the situation?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: Yeah, definitely aware of the situation. But we are just preparing for the Vancouver Whitecaps. I don't think, whoever they put on the pitch, they are going to play the same way. Vanni has shown to be very consistent with his formation, so we expect something similar to what we've been seeing.

There might be some different players on there but regardless, they are going to try to play the same way. Our concern right now is to make sure that we continue to play the way that we've been playing both offensively, defensively, and also being good on set pieces and in transition, just playing a complete game, something that we've been striving for all year, that consistency, and I think we've finally shown some of that. So we just want to really make sure we add on to what we've done the past couple games.

Q. When everybody is healthy, who is your starting



striker?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: When everyone is healthy, as of now, there's a good combination between Kacper and Durán, with you right now I would say Durán has the upper hand but that's always going to be a competitive situation for us until one of them wins it out right. Right now we don't have an outright starter there. I think Duran has, what he has shown last week before the injury, maybe he's ahead of Kacper right now, but we need both players to be very good for the rest of the season.

Q. Since you dropped Kacper from the starting lineup, although you brought him back against Seattle because of injury what have your conversations been like with him and how receptive has he been to his new role?

EZRA HENDRICKSON: Well, he's a professional. He's a veteran and it's never easy to take a veteran player with some pedigree out of the lineup. You know, he understands that, you know, it had been 17, 18 games. We had given him opportunity to really grasp that position for himself, and it just wasn't happening for us. And we needed, as a team, to try something different. We went with Jhon Durán, and he played really, really well for us against Toronto.

So Kacper understands, and he's been working hard. It would have been easy for him to just after being benched against Toronto not be ready to play against Seattle, but you saw that he was ready and he played well. He didn't score but he did a lot for us. He does a lot defensively and he does a lot of holding up so we can get the team up the field and stuff like that. We need both players to be very good going forward because we need goals and we need these guys both to be in good form and be able to score some goals for us because we are going to need that going forward.

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