

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Saturday, August 6, 2022

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Jonathan Bornstein

Press Conference



Chicago Fire FC 3, Charlotte 2

Q. Quite the way to mark the 200th appearance.

JONATHAN BORNSTEIN: Felt amazing to get the victory here in Charlotte in front of a great crowd, and their fan base, and overall a pretty hard fought game by both sides. The fact that we came out on top, three points, felt pretty good and to get the 200th MLS regular season appearance, it was very, very touching for myself and for me and my family. It's a great milestone.

Q. Ezra mentioned you were recovering from COVID and came in out of position. What were the last few days like, and how did it feel to go 90 minutes in this humidity and under these conditions?

JONATHAN BORNSTEIN: I was diagnosed with COVID last week Friday afternoon. So it was a pretty tough three days of a lot of symptoms and at home, just dealing with that, taking care of myself. Didn't get a chance to train with the team until yesterday when we had our pregame training, and that was my first time with the team.

Obviously we had some other illnesses and injuries that caused me having to be called upon without having actually trained with the team. It was what it was. I tried to do my best given the circumstances. Pretty tired right now but the most important thing is the team got the win.

As I've always said, you have to do everything you can for the betterment of the team, and I think a lot of players showed that tonight, myself included and really proud of the group, proud of everybody who put in the effort to get the three points tonight.

Q. What was your reaction when Ezra told you, hey, you're back in the starting lineup and oh, yeah, you're playing somewhat out of position?

JONATHAN BORNSTEIN: I welcomed it. I welcomed it. I kind of read the situation even beforehand. You know,

having Stein (ph) who was available for training on Friday, and just got myself mentally ready for the task at hand; and when he asked me about how I felt everything, I had kind of predicted it, so I was already ready.

So I told him, "I'm ready. I'm good to go. I'll go as long as I can, as long as my legs, body and everything will allow me." And so that's just how this game works.

And I've actually played center back last year quite a bit in the previous years, and so it wasn't exactly a new position but a new position with the formation of the players that we have. I was ready for it.

I thought, again, those are all external circumstances that were going on but I think we did a good job of dealing with all the adversity that we had to overcome tonight.

Q. In what ways have you seen growth and changes over the couple of weeks and months that have enabled the team to push back above the playoff line for the first time since early spring?

JONATHAN BORNSTEIN: Consistency within the group. Not just consistency for 45 minutes or a good half or a good game but we are being able to string a run of games together and get ourselves back in where we actually want to be which is above the playoff line.

Now that we have kind of gotten ourselves there, we have got to continue to have that consistency and so I think we can't think we've done anything because this league is very hard in that regard; that you can win a few games, and then teams will come after you and so we've got to find a way to continue to do what we're doing, which is in training, training extremely hard, training well and for the games that are ahead of us.

As a group, we have really come together. We knew that the results weren't there in the beginning and we stayed true to the process that we were going through.

So I really applaud Ezra and his coaching staff for not kind of changing things when things weren't going well because we knew we were right there, we were so close and you could feel it. So we have to continue to do that and stay consistent.



Q. And then tonight, you go down 1-0 in the first minute or so. What does it say about the growth or mentality of this team that in that atmosphere, taking the lead in the second half and fighting Charlotte off the rest of the match, what does that say about the growth that you guys have shown, what you guys did tonight?

JONATHAN BORNSTEIN: Yeah, if you compare it to earlier in the season when something like that would happen to us, it was tough to climb back from something like that.

Tonight you saw the character of the group really shine, and it happened so early in the game. But everyone, you could see it in their eyes. It's like, all right, let's just keep going, keep playing and let's not let something like that surprise us.

And I think it's impressive to be honest. I think you know it takes a lot of fight in a group to be able to come back from 1-0, especially the first 30 seconds of the game it can be disheartening.

Then you add in their fans, like you said, and it's like a very, very tough mountain to climb back from. But guys showed a lot of heart and showed a lot of character, and I was extremely proud of the way we responded; and I think that learning experience tonight will serve us a lot going into the future and going into even tougher games as we get closer to the playoff deadline, and hopefully into the playoffs.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...