

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Brian Gutierrez

Press Conference



**Q. It's been a really big year for you improving. You've met a lot of the goals you spoke about earlier in the year. Was there any piece of advice that you received at any point during the year that really helped you push on and learn a lot?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: Yeah, for sure, thank you. For sure, being able to train with these guy, the experienced guys, telling me just be ready and look forward for any situation.

And going to camp with the 20s also gave me a boost of confidence with the coach, with Mikey. He's always talking to me and telling me what's best for me and, that just gives me confidence and it reflects on the field.

**Q. Just looking ahead now to the off-season, what are some things that you feel like you want to improve on and work on heading into 2023?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: Yeah, for sure. You know, basically finishing my one-on-ones, shooting, heading, of course, and just getting fit for the new season. That's the main goals.

**Q. Building off of that, how important was it for you this season to start scoring and to start contributing to goals? What does that do for your confidence?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: It gives me a great boost of confidence. It gives me -- it makes me more confident on the field and it makes me play free and it tells me that I can do it. Like I can do it, and it shows on the field.

**Q. Over the course of maybe this season, or even when you debuted in MLS, what are the biggest areas you felt like you improved on? What are the biggest areas you think you've gotten better?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: Yeah, thank you. The transition from attack to defense, that's one of my goals that I've been improving. Obviously I feel like I have more time when I get the ball and I have more time and space on the

wall. So that's one of the biggest things that's helped me throughout the years. And I can see more passes than usually didn't see as I started.

**Q. Also going to ask you, based off what you've seen this year, what are your hopes for the future of the club moving forward, and how much does it mean to you to be a part of that and a part of the vision for where they are looking to go?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: Yeah, obviously just being a full-on starter and contributing for my team and making the playoffs, and just having a good season and growing from there.

**Q. You've been with the fire three years already. Do you see yourself as an example or as a leader for all the young kids in Chicago who look to you and hope to one day realize their dreams? And the second question with the World Cup coming up, who do you support, México or the U.S.?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: First question, yeah, obviously every time I step on the field, on the pitch, I have to be an example. A lot of people watch me and you know, they see the homegrowns play on the field and you have to lead by example on and off the field. It's just an honor just doing that.

And then also for the second question, yeah, I mean, I'm going to support both of them because, well, my parents are from México and my whole family is from México. So growing up watching them, also, and also the United States, they gave me everything for me and my family. So also supporting them, and it's where I was born; so supporting both.

**Q. This weekend is a pretty important one for the history of the club considering it's the 25-year anniversary of the club's founding. What does it mean to you to be part of the 25th anniversary? I know the team was founded a few years before you were born, but wondering what you think that means to be a part of this, and what does the Fire as a whole mean to soccer in Chicago?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: It's a true honor. It's a true honor to be a part of this club, and the history of this club, it's really

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good. I just think you know, what the Fire means for Chicago is working hard, tradition, honor, passion. That's what I think it means.

**Q. Before you came on, Ezra confirmed that Chris Brady is going to be starting this weekend. Between him and a lot of the other homegrowns that we could be seeing potentially this weekend, what does it mean to you to be playing alongside in the MLS guys you played in the academy with on the biggest stage?**

BRIAN GUTIÉRREZ: It's actually something really crazy. It's fun. You grew up playing with these guys at such a young age starting with all these guys from 10 to 12, 13, playing with Brady, Gaga, all those guys, it's a cool experience. We don't take it for granted and it's amazing. It brings a joy to everyone.

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