

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Kei Kamara

Press Conference



Chicago Fire 3, Inter Miami 2

**Q. What does it mean to you to score for ten MLS clubs and to do it the way you did tonight picking up a huge goal and a huge win for this team?**

KEI KAMARA: Yeah, I'm sorry, I'm going to be really, really bad today and people are going to think I'm lying, but it wasn't really about my goal. Really focusing to say I'm scoring for another team and it was really about how we played the past, you know, three games and not being able to close it out and get a win.

So it felt so much bigger than me scoring that goal for the rest of us because, you know, it gives us a lot of belief that what we've been working on, since I've been here for the past three, four weeks now, that it's paying off.

**Q. First of all, I just wanted to ask if you could just walk us through the sequence involving that goal and as a second part to that, how does it feel to be scoring for the Fire and not against the Fire as we've grown accustomed to over the years?**

KEI KAMARA: It's a blur. I'm a striker. I don't remember what happened in the goal. I just scored.

It's some things we've been working on obviously, and you know, Guti being on the ball means he's growing, he's growing really, really well. Obviously I've watched him from being outside of this team and obviously being here for the little bit that I have been and we are just working together. Again, it was a bit hard for us to be up a few goals and then tying it up.

But we knew, I knew, actually, we needed just one chance. If we can get one chance, even if it's a through ball, then I can just run behind him. I was looking for one of those things. When I saw the ball it got played to the other side and it kept going in. That was on the far left side and in my mind it was just run to the back side, and it was a great pass from him. I think it's the same pass he passed to

Kacper the last game where he had a great finish, so today was just my turn.

**Q. I have to ask, you've been here for about a month, you've seen this team go through the ups and downs of these first few matches. Why do you think or what have you seen in training and from kind of an outside perspective now coming in that shows why this team can be so resilient in matches like tonight's?**

KEI KAMARA: Youth, man. Youth. The only thing younger players, when you're around that you can do, is absorb so much of the information that's been given, and that's really what the locker room is. There's a lot of youth in the locker room, but they are taking in so much information.

For us now, it's how do we help the rest of the group to help apply that information that everybody is given. You can see, I can see it from most of these guys -- I hope they didn't hear this interview, but I can see so much of heart that they do have and everybody wants to prove something.

And it's great. It's really great. I don't want to feel like it's going to take me long to fit into the locker room. Obviously that's not my character. I'm ready to go right away and ready to just make my mark with them and just be part of the group.

**Q. Coach Ezra was talking about how you all played together back at Columbus.**

KEI KAMARA: He said that? That was our secret. He's not such toed to tell people that.

**Q. He let the cat out of the bag, I'm sorry to say. Now I've got to wonder, just what's your relationship been like over the years and how is it playing with him now, or playing for him?**

KEI KAMARA: Yeah, great, great. I think it's not good for me let out that I play for somebody that I played with because the guys call me "Grandpa" in the locker room, that's really bad. It's something that I followed Ezra over the years, how he was working over in Seattle and back to Columbus, and we've always talked. We've always talked about the game and what he's going to do when he

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becomes a head coach of a team, and I believed in him all these years.

So I was really happy even last season, I was happy that he was the leader of the team here.

But I remember when we played against this team and I said to him that I want to play for you but it's not happening, so I'm going to punish you today, and that's what happened last year.

But when I came here, or since I've been here, we actually haven't had a moment to sit down and talk one-on-one yet because I kind of just want it click with the guys in the locker room first before I sit down with the coach.

But I respect him, and it's not about me saying, oh, because we played together. You know, I'm always going to work hard. When I deserve a chance to play, he'll play me or he'll tell me what he wants to do, and I'll make sure that I apply it to the fullest.

**Q. You touched on this briefly during one of your previous answers but what has been your impression of Brian Gutierrez so far and what he brings to the team from the midfield?**

KEI KAMARA: He's too big for his age. He's too tall. I wasn't that tall when I was that age. That's what I think about him.

No, it's great to see that. He's coming from the ranks. He's coming from the academy. He's a local player and being at home that does help him. And it's not just him, the group that we do have, I see guys coming from the academy up, which shows a lot of credit to what the club is producing from the lower levels.

For him, you can see he wants to adapt to everybody and he wants to make sure that he's competing, not by age but you know by his experience and that, you know he's going to play and compete with the rest of the group. For me I'm just going to definitely continue to pass on some knowledge that I do have along the way and hopefully we can all grow together.

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