

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Thursday, June 22, 2023

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Kei Kamara

Press Conference



Chicago Fire FC 2, Portland 1

Q. Very exciting match. Of course congrats on the win and the goal. You come off the bench in the 69th minute. Only ten touches in the match, a lot of them were defensive touches. Curious what you saw coming into the match and off the bench, kind what have was coming in, what they were doing to Kacper. And then if you could walk us through the goal which seemed to come out of nowhere via a nice Guti cross.

KEI KAMARA: Yeah, thanks for those stats. I don't think I've ever counted some of my touches coming into a game but that's a perfect ten and scoring the goal.

But going to the goal, really, a lot of credit to Guti. I enjoy whenever he has the ball to his feet, so I can make some runs. So I can check to him so he can pass me the ball, so it was good.

But overall, being on the bench, that's what you do. You read the game, you watch the game, and you're supposed to come on and help and do something different than what the other person is doing.

So Kacper was doing the job that we want the striker to do, and coming on, obviously it's just to take a little bit of the load off him so I can add a little bit to the game, and that's what I was able to do. It's a good ball from Guti.

But just in general, it's been a tough run. But for us to get a big win like this on the road, it's really good for us.

Q. And you're on the precipice of some pretty big history with goal 144 in MLS. Any emotions going on with that, and just with a busy schedule ahead, as well?

KEI KAMARA: Just a lot of pressure. Now I've got to think about getting another goal. Next week I'll be playing in front of my kids in Kansas City.

But I love it. I love it. I enjoy this. I enjoy scoring goals; I can't say I don't. But when you can score goals like this, like this one tonight, that's a huge one to give the team all three points on the road in a place like Portland. To me, that's all that matters.

Q. You talked about how important it is to win in a place like Portland, but what does that do for the group coming out of the break to kick off the second half of the season?

KEI KAMARA: For sure it builds confidence. It helps us. We had a little bit of a break, and again, it's been rough. We've had some unlucky bounces to go against us, I would say. And you know, to kick off like this, it does give us some positive mentality to go into another game on the road, which you can say, really, in the first half of the season, we've put up some really good performances on the road.

You know, most of the guys, the ones that have played here before, they know the crowd and the place we are playing and it was going to be tough. But usually we're the one going down in the last -- at the end of the game. But today, hopefully again, this is the turnaround for all of us going forward.

Q. Your partnership with Brian Gutierrez, the game-winning assist. He now has the fifth-most assists in MLS. Can you talk about what it's been like to play with him over the course of the year?

KEI KAMARA: He has what?

Q. The fifth-most assists in MLS.

KEI KAMARA: This season?

Q. Yeah?

KEI KAMARA: Okay. Wow, really? My son will be happy. My son, Kendrick, loves Brian. So all he talks about is Guti rrez, Guti rrez. When I tell him that, he's probably celebrating the fact that he passed me the ball.

Like I said, he's a great player. When he plays in the middle of the field, he links us and finds the ball, and he knows what to do, and we enjoy doing that. We want to



also give him credit for what he's doing when he does have the ball.

And again, for me, I love seeing a smile on his face, being a -- I'm not going to give myself an elderly name here, but yeah, just being his teammate, so it's good.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...

