

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

Thursday, January 25, 2024  
Chicago, Illinois, USA



## Rafael Czichos Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Rafa, so good to see your face. How are you?

ANDREW GUTMAN: I'm great.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you so much for joining us today.

We'll go ahead and get started.

**Q. Rafa, first few weeks back in training. New squad, but not entirely new. How are you assessing everything so far? Frank said everything is a work in progress. How is that work in progress going?**

RAFAEL CZICHOS: First of all, I'm very happy to be back here with the team and to spend time with the guys. Yeah, I think we have now two new players here, plus all the draft picks. Yeah, of course we are missing the other two additions we've made so far with the two defenders.

I would lie if I would say I think the roster is already good enough to play on the highest level. So to compete for the championship, I think everybody knows we have a little bit of work to do still. We are all waiting for it.

I think for right now it's been fun here to be with the guys. I think we are working hard. Yeah, the first result in the first game two days ago, I think that was a good start for us.

**Q. You mentioned two of your new back linemates yet to arrive. A new man to your left in Andrew Gutman. What has that experience been like so far, getting to know Andrew? How does it feel to be prepping not knowing yet who the right half of that defensive back line is going to be?**

RAFAEL CZICHOS: Yeah, I think I'm used to it. Even if you sign a new player, it takes a few days, few weeks to get them here.

For right now, with Tom and Andrew, especially Andrew

because he plays next to me most of the time, I think we're going to have a great chemistry on the field. It feels already very good next to him. I like his style of play. I like the intensity he plays with.

Yeah, like I said, like he said before, I think we're going to have a great back line this year. I hope that we going to be able to integrate the new two defenders that will come hopefully soon, as good as we were able to do it with Andrew and Tom.

**Q. Rafa, I don't know if you guys have been able to get in touch or speak at all yet with Salquist. How does it feel having another super back providing competition, or what's the psychology with you and the rest of the group?**

RAFAEL CZICHOS: It's very important. I think we've talked a lot about the depth on our roster. Every new player, especially with high quality, helps us. Yeah, it's a competition. In the back line especially, in the position of the center backs, what we all need, we have to perform on a high level every day.

Yeah, for these reasons, it's very good that the club made some moves on this position.

**Q. What was your reaction to the off-season, before you came into camp? Do you expect there to be big changes in terms of the leadership? How do you make sure this season goes differently from last year?**

RAFAEL CZICHOS: Yeah, we all working on it, that it's going to be different. I think our front office is working on it, too. We all are very, very sick of not winning, or let me say losing. That's why we are working hard here in training camp.

Yeah, at the end of the day everything starts with the game in Philadelphia. I think we're going to be prepared well for it. I hope we going to have the new players with us, even the players we haven't signed yet. Then we will see.

I think we will have a different mentality this year because the guys we already added to the roster, they have already a good impact on the rest. Yeah, that will help us with the season hopefully.

**Q. Just wanted to ask you about the new additions on the staff, in particular Ryan Needs. As someone who is one of the veterans on the squad now, how has his addition in the early stages helped out so far?**

RAFAEL CZICHOS: Honestly I know him for, what is it now, 10 days, and I already love this guy. The energy he brings us on the field, especially in all the set pieces, is what we need. I think we're going to be well-prepared for all the teams that will come to our stadium or to the teams we going to travel to.

Set pieces is something I'm really looking forward because we going to be tough to play.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Rafa, we really appreciate your time today.

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