

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Maren Haile-Selassie

Press Conference



I think he's feeling really comfortable, and most important thing is obviously on the pitch that he's helping us.

Q. Do you think facing Columbus this weekend will be a really hard test, and can you be competitive if you get a good (indiscernible) in Columbus?

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: I'm not sure if I understood the question correct. Well, obviously they're the defending champions, so I think right now they're maybe the best team in the league, especially at home. It's going to be an interesting challenge for us.

While they have a great team, I think we have a great team this season, as well, and it's on us to show that we can compete with them.

I think against good teams, in the past we did pretty well, so it's going to be an exciting game, I think.

Q. What's it like working with someone a year after going through the transition? You and Allan were together in Lugano, now together again in Chicago, and just working along the right side? He told me that was a level of comfort that was very nice for him to have.

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: Yeah. I mean, we played for half the year together in Lugano. Obviously there we were building a relationship on the pitch and outside the pitch, as well. Before that, I played a couple times against him, so I knew him even before that.

Now, yeah, I think if you have in general a good chemistry outside the pitch, I think it affects the work on the pitch, as well. Right now we're feeling very good. Also when Shaq is coming on the right side, I think we have a good connection over there, as well.

I think it's just going to be better and better. Every training session, every game is going to help us to build even a better relationship.

Obviously the goal is that it helps the team at the end that we're going to be successful, but I think so far he's feeling comfortable on the pitch, and that's the most important thing.

Q. I wanted to ask you about right wingback position because last year when we spoke, you said it wasn't your favorite position to play, but now we've seen you a bit more there, and I think we might see that again this weekend. How do you feel about that now as you've had more time to work in it?

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: Well, it's still not my favorite position, but if the coach and the training staff thinks that I'm helpful there for the team and the system is better for the opponent and for ourselves, of course I'm available and trying to do my best job wherever I play.

Yeah, last game the coaching staff thought it's the best system, and I think the system was not the reason that we lost the game. We had a pretty even game, I'd say, and yeah, we'll see what's going to happen the next game.

Q. I was talking to Allan Arigoni last week, and he spoke really highly about the way you presented Chicago as an option over the off-season when he was discussing coming here. I'm curious if you'd be willing to share anything you told to another Zurich guy about coming to Chicago on very similar terms that you did last year?

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: I think first of all, the club had interest in him first. Then the interest has to be from both sides, so he was open to that, and he obviously asked me about everything, about the club, the league, the city, the team, and I just told him from my experience, which was really good, my experience was good. I had a good year all around. In the team we have a pretty good chemistry, good training staff.

The league is intense and obviously growing. He knew that, as well.

The city, he didn't know the city so good, so I explained to him that the summer is a little -- he's going to like the summer a little more than the winter, but yeah, so far he had a good impression. We've been out a couple times, so

Q. We're going to have to call the right side the Swiss connection. Just keep that going.

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: Yeah.

Q. With Shaqiri the captain now, how has that impacted the group, and what's that been like having him as your captain?

MAREN HAILE-SELASSIE: Well, to be honest, inside the group it didn't change anything because I think the coach also mentioned a couple times that it's not just the captain or the one who's wearing the band that's the leader. We have a couple leaders. We have good chemistry. Everyone knows their roles. Inside the group, it didn't change anything, to be honest. Shaq is still the same. Rafa also is still the same. All of us, everyone who wants to speak, who wants to have an impact to the team is welcome to that, and yeah, didn't change anything.

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