Chicago Fire Media Conference

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 *Chicago, Illinois, USA*

Chris Mueller

Press Conference

Q. Two starts now after really a long road back. How has it felt being out there again?

CHRIS MUELLER: Felt great, man. It was a long time coming like you said. It was over 11 months since I started my last game. To be back out there with the guys and to be getting good minutes under my belt, finding my form, is a really good thing. I'm really pleased with how I've done so far and I just want to continue to build and keep helping the team in the best way that I can.

But like I said for me individually, it's been awesome.

Q. So we were just talking to Frank and just taking in last weekend's result, he talked about the team not being aggressive enough in the final third. I'm curious how you feel about that, and if maybe the team is looking for that perfect pass to the center with Hugo, and how that adjustment period has been when there's the central forward who everyone has expectations for?

CHRIS MUELLER: Yeah, obviously we need to get him a bit more service and have just a little bit more courage putting the ball to the box. I think that's something that might be limiting guys and holding guys back in general in football, not just here, but that fear of losing the ball.

It's about having guys who are not afraid to risk failing. To go to a guy and lose the ball or to put in a cross in minutes, and then you have guys on top of you saying, you know, I'll keep the ball this and that. But if you don't have guys who are willing to take those risks, willing to unbreak -- like unbalance teams by taking someone on the dribble and leaving yourself susceptible to a mistake, it becomes difficult.

So I think that ultimately just the attacking players, especially, once we do get in those areas which I think we need to do a better job of, too, is getting us more balls in those areas of the field where we can really be effective because it's not a hundred percent guarantee every time



you go at a guy. You'll beat a guy one out of two times, maybe two-out-of-three if you're having a good night but those chances come few and far between, right.

But ultimately we need to get in those spots more and then have the courage, right. Like I said, it takes that risk of failure and daring to fail. The moment that you don't have guys who are willing to unbalance teams by taking guys on the dribble or putting in a cross when it might be low probability at times, that's what it takes to put those balls in those dangerous areas and score goals. So that's what we've got to be doing better at next weekend.

Q. In addition to you being out there starting these last couple matches, we've seen the team play a little bit differently with you and Maren wide and providing kind of similar pace on the outsides and giving the attack a bit of a different dynamic. What do you think having two players like you -- like you guys out there together does, and on that note of trying to be more aggressive, what do you view your role personally as being as you try to make that impact?

CHRIS MUELLER: Yeah, at least from our end, somebody who has got base and can get had behind teams and unbalance them that way. For myself, you know, would like to be getting more balls in those dangerous areas, especially in those transition moments. I think that sometimes that's been lacking a little bit. I think that we do a good job providing that, especially in transition moments when we are deep sometimes and we need to get out, you have two guys who have some decent pace like you are saying who can change the game and counterattack in one moment. So that's always a positive, having two guys like that in the wide areas.

But yeah for myself again, I just want to -- I think that this is for me, too, if I was to really analyze my game and knowing football, as well, how long it takes to get back into the real form and swing of things and taking guys 1v1 and trusting your instincts in those moments where you're not thinking and things are coming naturally, and you're taking guys 1v1 and scoring goals or whatever. I'm giving myself time and I want more reps with that.

I think that I've shown a decent amount of it, but I know that I've got a lot more in the tank to offer the team. I'm just looking to continue to build and be better at every single

... when all is said, we're done."



game to help us get three points as the weeks comes down.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...

