

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Frank Klopas

Press Conference



don't overthink things, and I think that comes from confidence and you know, really settling in now and adjusting to the league and settling into Chicago.

So I think that's a great confidence for him and for the team, also, that knowing that you have a guy that if not every game, every second game, that he's going to get a goal.

### Q. Curious, any update on Fede Navarro?

FRANK KLOPAS: He still has not been on the pitch with the team doing anything. He's still on the side and doing recovery stuff and treatment. I'm just hoping some point next week he's going to start taking part in training sessions.

Obviously gradual, but as of right now, he's just been doing stuff inside with the trainers. He's, you know, unfortunately will not -- for this game, not be available. We'll have to see if there's any chance where he can be, you know, available to help the team versus Philly but then probably more realistic, San Jose or even past that.

### Q. And then on a different note, Hugo has scored now seven goals. That's more than anybody had last year. We're pretty much halfway through the season. What does it do for this team to just have that option that's been consistent now after a little bit of a slow start but finally it seems like the goal scorer that this club has so desperately need is here?

FRANK KLOPAS: I think it's good for the team. I think it's also good for Hugo, Hugo is definitely a person that cares and coming in, I knew that that's always going to be a period where he needs to adjust to the League, to his teammates. And he was trying extremely hard.

And I think, you know, always I think sometimes when you try hard from a good -- because he cares so much, he wanted to help the team right way, and I think it's taken some time but you can just see now, I think the goals have helped a lot from a confidence standpoint and also you can see now, you can see how he's moving in training, the form that he's in.

It's just instinctively you're not overthinking stuff as a player and as a forward -- I haven't played as a striker No. 9, but I've been as a second forward a lot of times and I know how you are in a game when you're in good form. Things just come. You're sharper with your decision-making. You

### Q. Looking ahead to Saturday, the team had not won in Cascadia until 2022, victory over Vancouver that career and victory over Portland last year. Has there been any talk in the team about trying to get a win in Seattle and complete the set? Does that provide extra motivation?

FRANK KLOPAS: Definitely, and I just think we are just looking forward to getting back on the field after -- I just felt, when you look overall at the game in Orlando, big picture, I think we had some good moments with the ball. We created opportunities, but it's just difficult with the start and just falling behind with the score line the first half. You know, give credit. I felt Torres hit some -- two great goals. I felt we could have done better, I think in every situation, though.

It's motivation in itself because you know, we got to get back now into -- we had a good run up to Orlando, and you know, we need to continue to pick up points and play well. I thought we did. There were stretches where we played well and we created a lot of chances. But the motivation to go there and obviously play a good team, that's always -- we've played them well there, even in the past. We've dropped games really late in the games, I think it's an opportunity to go there against a good team and try to get back on track now.

### Q. You've got three games coming up, two long trips out to the West Coast. So Seattle and San Jose, sandwiched a home game in between. How does having those two long trips affect preparation this week?

FRANK KLOPAS: Well, I think for this game, I think it's just preparation. It's just normal preparation. But I think that, you know, rotations going to come, it's going to be a part of -- I think within the three games. We just have to take one game at a time and see -- assess where guys are.



Obviously we are going to Seattle. You're playing on turf. You come back here after a long trip and we're on grass, and then, you know, then we go to San Jose, but good thing is it's not a Saturday game. It's a Sunday. Gives us an extra day.

But you know, I think we take one game at a time and prepare accordingly to an opponent and obviously we have to see how guys are recovering and how they feel after the next game, and for sure, you know, we are going to have to freshen up the team, you know, with some rotation in players, that's for sure.

**Q. I figure you have a great scouting department, watching the Copa America or the Euros, what position, if you guys are looking for a player in the summer window, what position do you think the Fire needs a player of or what position you might be looking for, if you are looking for a player in the summer window?**

FRANK KLOPAS: I think the best answer there, I think we are always -- if there's an opportunity to improve our team, I think we are always looking to do.

So that's the only thing I can tell you at the moment. I have nothing else to say. I think we are looking at all options if there's a good opportunity where we can look to improve the team, not only short term but also long term, I think that's an important thing. It's just not what we do in the next, you know, remaining ten games because that's probably what you're going to have left if you bring a player now in this window, unless it's, you know -- and then also, you've got to consider visas and by the time the guy adjusts and stuff like that.

So this window is always tougher. But we are always on the lookout; the scouting department, they are always looking at different options and we have to see at the end if it makes sense for the team, and also, we have to look within the League. If there's opportunities we can improve, there's always times, best situations because your players that come in know the league already, and they can come in and help right away.

We are looking at all options. Sorry I couldn't tell you that we are bringing anyone at the moment, but we are keeping all options open to see if there's an opportunity to improve the team.

**Q. There's a report out of Seattle that Ruidiaz and Nouhou have been suspended following something that happened in their last match. Is that something that you think changes the team's approach to the way**

**you play Seattle, key defender, their leading scorer potentially out on Saturday?**

FRANK KLOPAS: Yeah, I saw the game against Dallas. Nouhou was taken out and they brought in Baker-Whiting. He's played there also against Houston. You know, look, they made the changes when they were losing. I think Ruidiaz set a goal and then they won the game after that when Nouhou was out.

I think they are a deep team. For us, look, obviously there's different dynamics if Nouhou is there and Whiting, just player characteristics and how they may try to build out of the back.

But we are prepared for both scenarios, and that's, you know, the important thing with us. We've covered a lot of stuff yesterday and today, and you know, tomorrow will be more stuff on the ball. So we've seen those reports. We don't know. We are just preparing for both case scenarios, Nouhou or if it's Whiting playing.

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