

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Saturday, July 27, 2024
Chicago, Illinois, USA



Fabian Herbers Press Conference

Q. So obviously it's a clean slate and everyone starts at zero points for this tournament. What's the discussion and mentality like been in the group as you approach being in a knock out tournament?

FABIAN HERBERS: You know, of course it's a clean slate. Everybody starts at zero. We go there to win. We go to do our best to get as far as possible in the tournament.

I think it's an opportunity to get good games in, you know, high-quality games. Even different opponents with some Mexican sides there and just gaining confidence, as well, if you look at the last stretch of the season.

I think it's good that we keep playing against good opponents, and hopefully we can get some rhythm going, and even gain a little bit of confidence going into the final stretch of the season.

Q. Does this tournament, being the two games, and you're playing against opponents, Toluca obviously you're not too familiar with, and in Kansas City you haven't played them this year, is that maybe an advantage that you are facing two opponents that you have not seen this year? So it's kind of new in a sense versus someone you might have played during the season. How do you view playing twosome what unfamiliar opponents?

FABIAN HERBERS: Yeah, I mean, like you said, it's two opponents that we have not played against and we are not super familiar with.

Kansas City we played last year and they are usually pretty good at their home stadium. They usually have a good crowd there. So it's a hostile environment for us to play in. We beat them last year there. So I think we can do that again.

And Toluca obviously is a side that, again, I couldn't name you one player at the moment. We will study them when we face them closer, so during the week.

But I wouldn't say it's an advantage. More a disadvantage because you are not familiar with their playing style as much or with what they are about. I think it's more of an advantage if you know the team and if you know some of the players and if you know what they are all about.

Q. Also, quickly, getting some of the guys back now, do you think it's going to be seamless to throw them in, like Gutman and some of the guys coming back now? Or maybe there might be a little bit of adjustment to get them kind of going again?

FABIAN HERBERS: No, I think it's good that we have these games for them to come back. Obviously have to manage their game time. I don't think everybody that is coming back from injury can play 90 minutes right away.

So I mean, I cannot speak for everybody but I think in general, it's good when they come back. Get some minutes and gain confidence themselves. We know what the players are all about, and I don't think there's too much of hesitation for them to come in or too much of an adjustment phase.

I think they are experienced guys. Gutman, Fede, Tobias, I think they are all good players, and they have seen out the injury now and hopefully they can come back and give us another push.

Q. Small groups, just three teams, that's different than a group stage, and there's obviously not simultaneous games. Has there been talk about how important it is to treat this game as a must-win to get off on the right foot, given there's just one more game for the Fire after that in the group?

FABIAN HERBERS: No, we haven't talked about a must-win game. Obviously we go there with the right mentality of want to go win. You also have -- if you tie, you have the penalty, so you can get I think two points, right.

And so in that sense, I don't think it's a must-win game because two-out-of-three advance. Even if you don't win that one, you still have a chance on the other game.

So I wouldn't say the mentality is a must-win but we have the mentality to go there and win the game. But it's not

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all-out for the whole game, either.

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