

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chris Brady

Press Conference



Q. Thanks, Chris, for the time. Curious, Frank just talked about everyone understandably feeling a little bit of pressure this week, just not only the expectations going forward trying to get a playoff spot, but with a higher profile match. I'm curious if you feel the same way and just how you're handling said pressure.

CHRIS BRADY: I felt that pressure last week. It's just going to be for me, I think, a game-to-game sort of thing. I know it's a higher profile game, like you said, but for me, we really have a chance to do something special if we get the results we need. So if we treat them like finals, like Frank has been saying, I feel that pressure every week.

Yeah, I would say that's sort of the same feeling as well throughout the locker room is that, whether it's this game, the next one, or the next one, I'm sure that that pressure is still going to be there.

Q. A pleasure to speak with you today. I appreciate your insight. I know there's the pressure of the playoff run, and then in the bigger picture, you guys are still working to reintroduce the club and connect with new fans and build the fan base. I figure that you as a homegrown have some perspective on that. What is it like in the locker room? Do you guys talk about it? Is it something you think about, kind of that bigger picture of growing the Fire fan base, especially for a big game like this weekend?

CHRIS BRADY: I wouldn't necessarily say that's something that's talked about, or I'm not even sure it's a feeling shared within the locker room, but like you said for me as a homegrown, it's extremely important to be connected to the club and the club's fans.

I know there's quite a bit of things that I've done and a lot of the guys on the team have done to sort of grow that connection with off the field stuff. Whether it's player appearances or charity work, I know that always helps the fan base grow.

Yeah, just doing everything we can to let our fans know that we hear them and that we're doing everything week in and week out to hopefully give them the performances that they want and the results that they want. I know for me that's always something that helps a fan base know they're heard.

Yeah, it's important. Like I said, it's something I haven't really thought about.

Q. Also, with the kind of events the last few weeks with Shaq moving on and learning that Georg is moving on, how has that reverberated, I guess, for you guys? I know there's still hope with the playoff race still in front of you, and maybe a sense of positive evolution in that longer term looking ahead to the future?

CHRIS BRADY: Yeah, for sure. The mindset right now is obviously on that playoff run. I know, when those two things happened sort of simultaneously, it threw everybody for a little bit of a loop, but I wouldn't say it knocked everybody off their footing.

The guys have done pretty well, I think, as you saw last week, to put the past behind them. We take each game now as a final. They're going to be missed for sure, but we still have a job to do, so I think that's sort of what's going around the locker room right now is we're all just trying to go game to game and make something happen.

Q. Here to know about this game. It's Inter Miami. It comes with all these legend players that have come to MLS. Is this for you guys that you get prepared for a regular game, doesn't matter that it's Inter Miami? What's the dialogue in the locker room regarding this game? I know it's Inter Miami. What is it for you that you say, okay, this is a regular game. We need just to be ready and concentrate the 90 minutes of the game to have the victory and try to go and follow that playoff situation?

CHRIS BRADY: Yeah, we prepare for this like it's a regular MLS game. Obviously it's a higher profile game because we know it's going to be in front of a bigger crowd and, like you said, with some quality players on the other end.



No matter who they put on the field, we're studying them. We know what to expect, and we'll have a game plan put in place. We've definitely been treating it like a regular game, preparing for it like a regular game.

Q. Kind of going off the last question in a sense, do you allow yourself maybe prior to the game, after, you're a young guy, you're kind of just starting your career, you're a local Chicagoland kid, to go back and think, wow, I'm actually playing against guys like Suarez who I watched in Barcelona, Muskett, Alba. Do you ever go back and kind of soak in the moment and take it in to even reinforce your hard work where it got you to this point that you're on a level to face sort of these guys that you grew up watching literally as legends?

CHRIS BRADY: Yeah, I like that question. That's sort of an after the season feeling for me. Yeah, that's sort of something that sets in maybe months or even a year after, especially -- like I can tell you, looking back on film for myself last year, which I do every now and again just to prepare for games now, but that's sort of a feeling that sets in when it's maybe a year later.

It's crazy to think, but it's not something I commonly do in the moment to reinforce that feeling. But that is definitely the reaction I get from myself, saying to myself, like wow, that did take a lot of hard work to put myself in a situation where I'm playing against teams like this, I'm playing against players like this.

Yeah, I like that question, but no, it's something that sets in a little after the season.

Q. Tobias is getting more and more time on the field, gets his first assist. Curious how you've experienced working with him and seeing him kind of find his role?

CHRIS BRADY: Yeah, I know earlier in the season he was sort of getting into a rhythm, and then unfortunately he dealt with an injury, but he's back. He's the same old confident Tobi, funny guy in the locker room. Love the guy.

Yeah, I say it with all my defenders, but whoever they put in front of me, they have 100 percent faith from me. I trust them with everything I've got to make the right plays, make the right decisions, and also have that trust in me behind them.

I'm really happy for him. I'm really happy with the work I've seen him put in to get back to this point. Hopefully the sky's the limit for him.

Q. I've got to ask you one more thing. Hypothetically, of course, hypothetically, if you were ever to throw a pitch in a baseball scenario, would you go off the mound or from the grass?

CHRIS BRADY: What's MLB distance?

Q. 60 feet, 6 inches.

CHRIS BRADY: I've been getting out to -- that's from --

Q. The top of the mound is 60 feet.

CHRIS BRADY: I've been practicing from there. So I won't cut it short. I've been practicing from whatever the pitchers pitch from.

Q. Noted. We will be breaking that down later.

CHRIS BRADY: Okay.

Q. Hey, Chris, nice to speak with you. I'm unfortunately going to have to follow up an inter-Miami game question after that fun question. Looking back at last year's game, I know it was a great experience for everyone on and off the field. I think it's a memory that most Fire fans will look fondly back on. Do you have any lessons from that first experience in front of such a big crowd like that that you can use going into another game like this?

CHRIS BRADY: Yeah, I would say lessons would be to start the game as sharp as you possibly can and as fast as you possibly can. With a game like this, there's really no room to warm up to the game. There's really no room to allow yourself to break into the game, take your time.

You've really got to, from the first whistle, start at 100 percent. That's one of the biggest lessons I think I took from -- especially this last game as well, but even last year's game -- can't start slow.

Then the importance of -- I know, unfortunately, last year we weren't able to keep the clean sheet, but keeping the guys in it, at least from my end and the back line's end, keeping the guys in it by keeping a shutout. That always helps everybody with belief and the ability to get out of the game with the results.

So, yeah, I guess those are the two big lessons. Also, it's going to be a packed house, so it's going to be loud.

Q. I guess also looking back to last year, the situation is kind of familiar where you didn't really 100 percent notice that it's a certain player on the other team, and

you needed really needed to get some points on the board in the playoff race. Does it feel different this year than it did last year? Is there a different sense of feeling around this game, or is it similar?

CHRIS BRADY: I'd say there's a little more hype around it. It's a little bit of a higher profile game. I didn't necessarily feel this amount of pressure with last year's game, not that it's pressure we can't handle.

I'd say it's a little more, yeah.

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