

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Andrew Gutman

Press Conference



Q. What do you think of your back line, the defense needs to do to get to that point of getting that first clean sheet of the season?

ANDREW GUTMAN: Yeah, I think it's basically a brand new back line. You know, none of us have played together previously. So it is still learning each other's tendencies still, understanding where we need to be in positioning. Felipe, one of our assistant coaches, works with us every week on trying to improve and I think from the first game till now, you can see improvements but we still have to make even bigger jumps to get that clean sheet.

Q. Your kind of challenge, you've been more of a wing back this year with more defensive responsibilities. The Red Bulls have one of the stringiest defenses in the League, and at the same time they can also get back and press quickly. Can you talk about the challenges of having to be good on both sides of the ball and picking your moments to press?

ANDREW GUTMAN: I played in New York in 2021, so the system, it tweaks a little bit year-to-year but it's kind of the same principles and stuff and they are a very aggressive, fit team.

But at the same time, the way we play there, will be spaces for me to get forward and exploit. But at the same time, I do know that they leave some guys up top that are very dangerous in the League that have a lot of quality.

I do have to be smart when I'm getting forward but I think if we're good on the ball and we execute our game plan, I think there's good job a lot of chances for maybe not only me, Joe, Hugo, to get into the attack and create chances.

Q. You were winning three games and then you tied at home. Referring to the game on last Saturday, I want to ask you, what were the things that you took to this week to improve on this Saturday?

ANDREW GUTMAN: I don't think last week was our best

game overall. You know, I think we talked this week just about you know being more aggressive, being on the front foot, winning duels and trying to play forward and exploit the places teams leave when they are trying to press us.

I think last week was a good learning experience for us because not every game we are going to be able to play our best style of play.

But at the same time, if that doesn't happen, we have to figure out a way to get a result and get a win. You know, to come out with a tie, it's probably a good sign. I think we still have chances to maybe even come out with a win.

But this team, it's a very new team and we are still trying to gel and I think that this was a good lesson for us to take from it and try to grow from it.

Q. How would you describe the process of getting to play with Joe?

ANDREW GUTMAN: Joe is a phenomenal player. You look at his career so far, some of the teams he's played on and the games he's played in. The thing for me is how do I get into positions to help Joe be able to do what he does best.

You know, I think we've had a good understanding so far of what spaces he wants to pick up and then I try to occupy space that can help him either make a pass or if he wants to get on the dribble and create something. You know, one thing that I am super impressed with his work rate. This guy doesn't stop running. He tracks back and even helps me in defense and in the attack, he's always going forward trying to create something.

It's a joy to play with him. I'm having a lot of fun with him and hopefully we can continue this and help the team be super successful this season.

Q. How do you experience the in-game prep, the crowd after the injury? Looking to get your mentality of how you experience a game, each individual game.

ANDREW GUTMAN: Yeah, I think last year was super difficult for me. Being injured, coming back a for a few games, being injured, coming back for a few games, I could never get a rhythm. The biggest takeaway I took

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from last year is not so much the in-game stuff. It was more so the day-to-day stuff I'm doing. You know, the prep I'm doing every single day to be ready for training. You know, the stuff I'm doing when I'm going home, as well, to recover properly and get my body right.

The best way to describe it for my mentality is it's 24/7 for me. If I'm not training I'm doing something to recover to get ready for training and making sure that my body is feeling as good as it can be. I'm super in tune to what I'm feeling in my body and I think that's helped me a lot leading into the games.

Leading up to the game Thursday, Friday, especially, I'm focused on getting myself to feel as best as possible. So far I've been a pretty good job of it and I just have to keep doing it all year.

Q. Feels like this season between the results and Gregg, there's a lot more conversation around the league about the team. Do you guys perceive that or is it just in the background?

ANDREW GUTMAN: No, I think it's just in the background. With the guys that have been here for a while, this is my second season, you know, we all want the club to do well. We all wanted to do a lot better than what it's done the past few years and for me especially growing up in and around this club, I've seen what this club's been like since I was 14, 15 years old and with the new training facility and Gregg and his staff coming in, you can feel there's a big step forward with the club. That alone probably garnishes a lot of media attention.

As players we're trying to focus every single day to get better and on the weekend trying to form what we are doing in training. We've had a good start but now it's consistently doing it every single day, showing up, having good training habits and in the game, continuing to get wins as much as we can.

Q. Talk about what it means to have so many players that came from the academy playing on the squad with you and how that reflects on the growth of the team?

ANDREW GUTMAN: It's crazy, I grew up in the academy with Mauricio. I was 14 when we joined and it's kind of crazy to be teammates with him now as full-grown adults. But the thing about Chicago is it's such a soccer city. I think the club has done a good job on finding those players and really cultivating them to potentially be professionals, and now with the amount of resources the club and the league has, it's even better for young players.

I don't know too much about how the academy is doing

now but back then we were one of the better in the nation. I'm assuming it's still the same. I wouldn't be surprised if Chicago produces many, many more talented players in the future.

Q. What growth can you see from Chris Brady with the new system and adjusting to playing a lot more with his feet?

ANDREW GUTMAN: You look at Chris's first six games, he's been incredible. For me, I wouldn't say I'm not shocked but pleasantly surprised with how good he's been with his feet. From last season to this season, I think he's taken a massive step forward. For me, he's up there now with one of the better goalkeepers I've played with throughout my career. The kid has a super bright future ahead of him. Day-to-day, he's always trying to get better at something. You see in training every week, he's always improving with his feet or decision-making or incredible saves he makes. He has a bright future and he's also just a great guy and a great teammate.

Q. What's the the message for this game this Saturday?

ANDREW GUTMAN: You know this week we really focused on putting the Montréal game behind discuss get back to how we've been playing the last few weeks and I think the team will respond pretty well and hopefully we can go to New York and get a win. FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...