

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Gregg Berhalter

Press Conference



**Q. Curious, I just asked Andrew a similar question, from the back line perspective. What does this team need to do to get that first clean sheet other than have simply a clean defensive game?**

GREGG BERHALTER: Hmm, that's a good question. I think if we're looking at the process of building this team, the important thing is just consistency, really, instead of chasing the result, trying to chase the shutout, it's really about continuing to build our defensive principles and our defensive structure and really becoming a team that's difficult to break down, more difficult to break down.

When I look at some of the chances we've conceded especially last game a lot of them have to do with us and making mistakes. That's something we want to continue to improve and build on.

**Q. Looking on the other side of the ball, the Red Bull have been one of the best defensively the past few seasons. Can you talk about the challenges for your squad this game, especially since it looks like Brian Gutiérrez may not be in the lineup for the team?**

GREGG BERHALTER: Yeah, Guti is still out. That takes a toll on the production, but it is what it is, right. It's really about continuing with the group we have, and you know, Red Bull, I really admire what they did last year, especially with their compactness and their pressure on the ball.

And it always presents an interesting challenge. They move together as a block. They adapt into man versus man situations. And they make -- they reduce the space between the lines.

And for us, it's a great challenge. I think we want to learn from Montréal, build from that. It was a poor performance offensively and really analyze, okay, what could we have done better and try to apply it against Red Bull. But the team is scoring enough goals lately, and we need to continue to do that.

**Q. I want to ask you about the new signing, União de Leiria, how was the process and how do you think he's going to help the team?**

GREGG BERHALTER: Yeah, I think not only have we seen videos but we've met him live a numerous amount of times and did a profile on him.

We think he's a good addition to the midfield. We know that we need to pick up some of the defensive work in midfield, winning more balls, and he can certainly help with that.

**Q. Winging more balls in the midfield, is the idea to get a bigger profile looking at the current midfield room where maybe there isn't the height that you want?**

GREGG BERHALTER: It wasn't necessarily about height. It's more about the profile of player that we are looking for and that can give the team a boost.

We want to be an offensive team. We want to be a team that sets the tone in games, and you know, we have players like Sergio Oregel who are so good at doing that, and Brian Gutiérrez good at doing that, but you also need guys like Mauricio and Kellyn Acosta and Rominigue Kouamé and Dje D'Avilla to help out. For us it's really looking at, now, this complete midfield with the six that we have.

**Q. How close is Claudio to the first team? And Diego has been on the bench the last two games. Wondering what the plan is with those and the other Chicago Fire II guys on the brink of the first team?**

GREGG BERHALTER: Diego, we are not going to need him this week. It's been great to be able to call up some of these younger players, especially in need. You know, the second team has been helping us all season with both training and game rostered players. So that's been a huge plus. But we won't need Diego this week.

In terms of Claudio, it really is about a project with him. He's a player that I've had the opportunity to see live a number of times in Italy. I think he's a fantastic player. He's been training with us all year and it's really about, you know, I think trying to get him integrated and get him on the

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roster so he can make an impact.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about your process of dissecting a game, analysis post, when you get some time 24, 48 hours, how do you dive in and dissect a game like that of what might have gone wrong?**

GREGG BERHALTER: I think it's all part of the process. You want to play well. You want to play a hundred percent game all the time. But you can't. I think the key is when you don't play your best game is still getting something out of it, and we did. We got a point out of the game.

So from that standpoint, we keep moving forward. The analysis is looking at the video and having a lot of group and individual conversations, and actually being quite critical. You know, the players weren't happy with the performance, either.

So it was really about, you know, them doing a really good job of taking accountability, all of us taking accountability and then just moving forward. We have a process. We believe in the group and we want to continue to do better.

**Q. I wanted to ask about the possibility for the first time this weekend that we could see Kellyn Acosta and Rominigue Kouamé playing together. What excites you about them potentially being on the field at the same time and how do you think their games complement each other well?**

GREGG BERHALTER: Two similar style of players who give us, you know, the ability to cover ground for sure. I think defensively, some good attributes for both of those.

Offensively, you know, Kellyn, between his line breaking passes, longer passing, Kouamé with his dribbling, it can be very dangerous, the position he takes up, his shot from distance.

You know, it's interesting to think about them being able to play together. Kellyn will be back. We have to see how many minutes he can go.

**Q. After Saturday's result, you talked about the disappointment and you mentioned it again today. How important is it for the team going back on the road to show the form on the road to keep the progress going forward?**

GREGG BERHALTER: For us, it's continuing to build. We are not getting attached too much to the results. If we put in a good performance, a performance in all phases that we're proud of and that signifies Chicago Fire soccer, we'll be happy. You can't control results all the time, and we're

going for the win for sure. But for us, it's about having a strong performance and throughout the team.

**Q. Sam Rogers, what's his outlook for Saturday?**

GREGG BERHALTER: I think he should be good.

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