

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Jack Elliott

Press Conference



**Q. Curious, you've got now three guys in the center back room who you're going to be working with for the foreseeable future while Carlos is out injured. Curious if you can talk us through maybe what these three guys, Sam, Omar and Christopher bring to the back line in your center back room?**

JACK ELLIOTT: I think they all have unique skillsets but ones that are going to help the team and you see week-to-week, it can be different. But you know, I think everyone has got a role together, and it's more of understanding each other and how we want to play and understanding the system as one rather than focusing on the individuals and who is playing in what role.

**Q. Curious, the different center backs next to you during the different points of the season, what's it like not having a consistent partner week-in and week-out in the games?**

JACK ELLIOTT: Well, obviously, consistency is the key but things happen during the season, and injuries happen. We've all had some sort of jurat some point so far which isn't ideal. But I think establishing consistency, it doesn't necessarily have to be with one partner. I think the way we play, it's about establishing it in a system with everyone understanding on the back line what the situation is and what situations are happening in the game.

So I think it's been good. It's good for everyone to be able to get good, important match minutes, and you know, as I say, anything can happen and everyone needs to be ready to be called upon.

**Q. We're about a third of the way through the season. One thing that's been consistent is the Fire have had a pretty high line defensively. You guys have an average line of defensive actions was ten meters higher than Atlanta, and you were even with Orlando, even being down a man. Has that made it challenging trying to give the team defensive stability when you're playing further up the pitch and picking moments to**

**contribute on the other side of the ball?**

JACK ELLIOTT: Yeah, that's one of the things that we work on ask try and work together to understand moments where you're able to squeeze space and you're able to make it easier for everyone in front of us to do their jobs, and obviously at the same time trying to protect in behind. It's not something that usually happens overnight, and it does take some understanding and you know, consistency, which I think we're starting to understand and show a bit more in recent weeks.

**Q. Over the course of the season, you've been not the club captain but the on-field captain for the team. What's it like taking such a big leadership role as the season has gone on?**

JACK ELLIOTT: Yeah, it's been this year an incredible experience. I'm very proud of being able to captain the team on the field and try and lead by example in helping us to achieve our goals.

Hopefully it translates, and you know, it's definitely very proud for me to be able to represent this club like that in front of the fans and hopefully do everyone proud.

**Q. Last week, three matches in a tight period of time. The only goal is really a self-inflicted one when you look back on. It curious what that does for your guys' confidence after a tough early part of the season, especially that Nashville result, making the goals concede a number so high early?**

JACK ELLIOTT: I think you obviously take out the Nashville game, which it's not -- won't happen again. I think we're starting to trend in the right direction of limiting opportunities for other teams, limiting goals, and especially last week, showing resiliency being down a man for 60 minutes and still managing to keep a clean sheet.

And then obviously in the Open Cup, it's another situation where anything can happen and a clean sheet was extremely important in a game like that to make sure it goes smoothly.

And then again against Atlanta, they didn't create too many chances. Obviously in the end, you get to a situation where a team is pressing you to get a goal and things

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But I think overall in the 90 minutes, we managed to limit them, and I think it's obviously a third of the way through a season, a third of the way through the new journey of the Chicago Fire, and I think it's definitely trending in the right directions. I think obviously everyone wants to come out -- inaudible -- it takes time, and I think it's definitely something that we're starting to show and show the resiliency defensively and obviously going for it -- I think we're going in the right direction.

**Q. Going up against Charlotte, they have some really good attackers. Curious what your expectations are?**

JACK ELLIOTT: Yeah, Charlotte is always a tough team. It's going to be a tough game. They are strong and have good attackers that can score goals at any time. It's just for us I think it's staying focused for 90 minutes and trying to limit the dangerous players that they have.

**Q. One of the stories was the team's last long road trip, three games, three wins. This is the team's last long road trip of the regular season, four games on the road. Can you just talk about what you think the success was of the team doing so well the last time that they had to go play away from home for multiple games in a row like that?**

JACK ELLIOTT: Yeah, I think in the time we showed resilience being away from home and really fighting with each other and digging in. It's not easy in this league to play away from home. The confidence of knowing that we can win away games is going to be huge going into this stretch. I think that's something we definitely have to take and use the confidence from knowing that we've got the ability to do that on long stretches of road games.

**Q. I want to ask you about the midfield. How confident do you feel? It's been almost four months playing together with Mauricio and Guti and Sergio, the confidence that these players give to you in the back line.**

JACK ELLIOTT: Yeah, all three are great players, especially in build up, they are excellent to have in front of you. They can handle any ball that you play and make passes and rally and give the ball away. It's very comforting to know that those are the three in front of you, and then even outside of that, anyone on this team can handle the ball well and can play in the system that they want to play.

They work hard and that's all that you can ask for from the guys that are in front of you.

