

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Sunday, May 25, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Gregg Berhalter

Press Conference



New York City is 3, Chicago Fire 1

Q. Do you feel you guys got the short rub of the grain on the pitch?

GREGG BERHALTER: What I would say is that we hurt ourselves, and for Guti to make that action, put his whole team in jeopardy, really puts us behind the 8-ball.

Third game that week, some fatigue in the legs and a lot of travel, and I think for a player to do that is irresponsible.

So anything that happens after that point is almost a moot point. This is an example of us really hurting ourselves in a situation where we had good control of the game.

Q. The second red card, there was discussion about whether that was the right call. Any thoughts on that decision?

GREGG BERHALTER: I just think that when you're called over to VAR, you're called over for a reason, right. You have the experts there in calm situation and seeing the play and they are saying, okay, this is what happened. You know, for the referee to go and then double down on an error is confusing to me. When you look at the play, it's even more confusing. He wins the ball completely. Almost barely makes contact with the guy.

So that was disappointing because it's actually a moment in the game where we changed our shape a little and we were putting some pressure on NYC. We are disappointed with that but we have to keep moving.

Q. Any positives you can take away from this?

GREGG BERHALTER: I think so. If you look at the guys on the field, they gave everything they had. You saw a group that I think was grinding for each other, and I think another positive, we got Leo back and got him some minutes, which is important. I think the effort; when you have that much adversity and you keep going and you

don't give up, I think that says a lot about this group.

Q. Thanks for taking the time. I don't want to make it all about the reffing, but it's pretty clear from early on the way the ref was calling the game, was not afraid to give out cards, call falls and stuff like that. Is that a discussion at halftime to make sure the guys are aware of being up a goal but down a man for the second half; that you need to be aware of how the ref is going? And how do you think your squad responded, excluding that kind of red card with whatever the circumstances were in the second half?

GREGG BERHALTER: I think it was a confusing situation for everyone, for both teams. I think the referee boxed himself in and put himself in a difficult position by his behavior early in the game, and it led to that fiasco.

You know, again, I would rather not talk about the referee because it is what it is, right. You have to keep playing and you have to try to get the results that help your team.

Q. Thanks as always for the time. You mentioned that getting Leo Barroso some minutes was a positive. Given he's a young player and given he's been out for a while, what was your post-game message to him, the way he struggled on the first two NYC goals?

GREGG BERHALTER: Yeah, that's the interesting thing is that you saw he was lacking rhythm, and you know, as a result, we conceded goals.

But I think as he starts to build and as he continues to gain his fitness, he's going to help the team. Because you saw, also, really, moments of brilliance from him. Unfortunate plays on the goals, especially the second one.

But for him, he's been out for a while. The talk to him is positive and continue to move on and improve and get better.

Q. Pineda looked like he was in discomfort and had to come off early. Any update on his status?

GREGG BERHALTER: We don't know. No update.

Q. It was a lot easier to see the size of the field here, in the sun -- any thoughts on that, the impact?

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GREGG BERHALTER: You guys are giving us a lot of outs, right. Now we have the size of field; we have the sun; we have the referee. It comes down to we didn't perform well enough to win the game, and it's as simple as that. We made a bad mistake, a bad mistake by Guti that put his team in jeopardy and we lost the game.

You know, all the other factors both teams had to deal with. So to me, it's very clear.

Q. What needs to be learned from this as a group when you have a result like this?

GREGG BERHALTER: I think there's a couple things. We have to move forward from this game, erase it as quickly as possible.

But for Guti this has to be a learning experience. This isn't the first time something like this has happened. He got suspended in the Columbus game after the disciplinary looked at the play, a very similar type of play. He needs to do some soul-searching, and he needs to figure out why this is recurring.

The rest of the group, I think it gives them confidence that they can grind. These guys didn't quit. They didn't give up. It didn't look like it was our third game in a week, and that's, I think, the important thing.

So we are going to keep going and go down to Orlando and try to get a result.

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