

Chicago Fire Media Conference

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Chicago, Illinois, USA

Tom Barlow

Press Conference



Q. Can you talk about the difficulties of your role when you're having to provide this energy option no matter what the result is at that time and you're coming on usually in that straight swap for Hugo with that high-pressing role, crucial to that the Fire needs, and can you talk about what makes that hard and empowering to know that your role is important in the squad?

TOM BARLOW: Yeah, sometimes it's difficult coming into games, to get up to speed. You're either winning the game and trying to hold off the other team or you're chasing the game and you're getting behind.

Yeah, I think it's important for me to come in and bring good energy and in certain ways try to change the game. That's been my role and something I enjoy doing.

But yeah, it's got its difficult moments but for the most part, it's pretty straightforward and I enjoy doing it, and yeah, Hugo is doing such a good job scoring goals and stuff like that.

So for me to come in and try to help the team close out a win is important. So it's been good.

Q. Last week when we spoke to Gregg after the game he said the bulk of the team needed to erase it from memory and move on to the next one. What response have you seen from the majority of the group since that tough result?

TOM BARLOW: It's been good. Obviously that was an unfortunate result after a long week. We wanted to close out the week on a high note. The important thing is to, like he said, put it behind us and we move on. We focus on the next game and that's Orlando this weekend. So it's been a hard training week. Everyone seems to be dialed in. We have a good paper, and it's just about going down there and executing and putting on a good performance, and we think if we'll do that, we'll be successful.

Q. Compared to all the previous games this season, it's going to be about 88 degrees. Is there anything that changes mentally with the climate?

TOM BARLOW: Yeah, obviously, yeah, it's going to be hot. And Chicago weather lately, it's just starting to warm up.

Yeah, it will be a little bit different. But I think when it's hot and humid, it makes it a little bit tougher.

But I think we enjoy that environment and suffering a little bit and it makes everybody I think focus a little bit more and really come together and fight for each other a little bit because it's going to be a little bit harder. Yeah, we're excited about it. It's a good opportunity for us so try to make the most of it.

Q. With it being Orlando, and with that NYC FC result, are you trying to approach is as it's not just another match, build not only on result from a month ago but after going down to ten men last time?

TOM BARLOW: Like you said last game against Orlando was tough going down a man, but I thought we put on a good performance and the guys really fought hard.

And that was a big step in the right direction for us, even though we didn't get the result we wanted. We were happy about it but yeah, we're here to win games.

And like you said, New York City wasn't how we wanted it to go. We turn a new page and worry about this game, and we're confident we can go down there and get three points.

Q. You've been here obviously last year and now this year with a new coaching staff and then a big roster tougher. What is the chemistry like in training and off the field with the guys this year? Are you seeing a difference from last year's chemistry in a sense or is it similar, the vibes? Curious how the team chemistry is off the field.

TOM BARLOW: Team chemistry has been great this year. We had a good group last year, as well. But this year we added some really good pieces and you know some of the players we brought in are obviously very talented, which

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

has been really good.

And so yeah, coming into this year, a lot of these guys are performing really well and really helping the team, and off the field, it's been great, too. They are all super good dudes, and they are hard workers and like I said, they are very talented.

So it's a lot of fun coming in here every day and training with these guys, and then, you know, going together on the weekend and trying to win games. So it's been really good, and it's been a lot of fun.

Q. So you know, Gregg has talked about sort of the duality of having midweek games happening more often, like it can help you just get past a result if it's not what you wanted and on the other hand, obviously rotation is a part of it. Orlando is playing a lot more midweek games. Do you think that's an advantage for the Fire going into the game, or do you think the added rest can also mean a little bit less sharpness?

TOM BARLOW: Yeah, I watched the game last night. Orlando rotated a few guys. We expect a strong lineup, though, weekend. Personally I like the midweek games. More games is good. I think you do get a little bit of an advantage, a little bit of a break and you can focus in on training and prepare for a full week to get ready for the game, has its advantages.

Like I said earlier, we are ready to go. We've got a good game plan. It's just about going down there and executing and we're confident we can go down there and have a good result.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...