

# Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

## Gregg Berhalter

### Press Conference



Q San Diego what makes them so successful so far in their first season of existence?

GREGG BERHALTER: I think they have got a good team spirit. They play well. They are well-coached. Good playing style. Aggressive in all phases of the game. Good in offensive transition, and they have been fun to watch. You know, scoring late goals, scoring plenty of goals.

So for me, it's one of the more exciting teams in the League for sure.

Q Mikey Varas is someone you've worked with before. Curious what you're expecting from him and if you've spoken with him this week at all leading up to the game.

GREGG BERHALTER: I haven't spoken to him yet. We are probably going to play a staff game tomorrow against his team. Kind of set the tone for the match on Saturday, right.

No, he's a great guy. Happy for him. Happy for -- you never know how an expansion team is going to end up, and I think Tyler Heaps put together a really good roster, and like I said, you can tell they have a clear identity and understanding of what they do. I expect a fun game, actually.

Q Looking at another game coming up quickly after the last one, do you have any update on Rominigue and Kellyn Acosta who are both doing rehab training today?

GREGG BERHALTER: They are both getting back to fitness.

In terms of the game on Saturday, it's going to be a game-time decision. We're not ruling them out yet but you never know.

Q The past few games have been against some of the top teams in the MLS, both the MLS Cup and the Open Cup. The team has not gotten the results, but can you talk about

what you can take from those performances as you go against San Diego?

GREGG BERHALTER: It shows where we are for a reason. We've struggled so far beating the top teams. When you look at our losses so far, many have come from the top teams in the Supporter Shield area, standings.

So you know, that's something that we need to work on. I do think we have a good team but against top teams.

I think it's the small things that make a big difference, right. When we talk about Cincinnati two goals; we conceded we'd love to have back. When you look at the game against Minnesota, obviously being down a man for a lot of time, 90-plus minutes, you know, it's tough.

We want to correct some of that stuff, and you know, we know we have a good team. It's just about playing our way.

Q It's Spanish heritage night and will create a lot of people will want to see Chucky Lozano. I want to know your opinion about him.

GREGG BERHALTER: Who is that? I'm just kidding. Fantastic player.

I obviously know him well from the Mexican team but also following his career in Europe and now for San Diego. And he's a play-maker. He's a guy that you love to be around.

What I really love is his commitment to the game, his high-speed running. I've always thought he has a great separation for a shot from distance, and you know, we're going to have to be aware of him for sure.

Q Obviously a pivotal time of the season for the team, and for you in specific, we sometimes forget that you have two jobs, you're a coach and technical director. With the window sort of opening up, can you share just a little bit of insight into your processor day-to-day life as technical director. We know the focus about the coaching and all that sort of stuff, but do you do you find time for the technical director aspect and researching players, if you can share insights into that?

GREGG BERHALTER: Well, we have a recruiting

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department. We have a sporting director, recruitment department led by Michael Stephens, supporting director Gregg Broughton and they are working around the clock. I'm in a continuous conversation with them getting updates.

We have some clear targets that we're going after and we'd like to get these players signed. We know the team needs a boost. You know, we're looking to help out the squad and strengthen the squad.

Q Curious with the rotation that had to happen early on with the center backs because of Omar's red card, what are your expectations for him and Sam Rogers with minutes, considering Sam had to take on a bigger load this week?

GREGG BERHALTER: Wrench in the plans. My God, we're going to have to adapt. It's now entering the not perfect stage, and we just have to deal with it. It is what it is. We'll get -- we'll put two players on the field, two center backs on the field, maybe three, that can do a job and that's all we can focus on. We don't know exactly who or how yet but we'll get through the week for sure.

Q You can expand a little more broadly on the rotation? 30 more minutes than you were planning on Tuesday night, and a pretty quick turnaround to Saturday.

GREGG BERHALTER: Yeah, I mean, it was actually worst case scenario, right, that you go down a man and you play overtime and you lose, right. That was actually the triple threat there. That hurt us.

But like I said, it is what it is. What I'm really proud of and I think it's going to carry the guys a long way is the effort and the fight in that game. Dealing with a situation like that.

So we had a plan of how we are going to rotate guys and get minutes so certain guys and the plan goes out the window 25 minutes into the game.

But like I said, it's an opportunity. It's possible to play three games in a week. We know that, right. It happens all the time around the world. So we'll rest some guys, play some guys more and we'll get through this next eight days.

Q Going back to the transfer window, I believe it's in 13 days, less than two weeks away that opens up. I know you mentioned a DP midfielder being one priority, but is there any other aspect of the team that you are also looking at adding a player in?

GREGG BERHALTER: Again, we're looking at all areas to strengthen. And it's finding, I think the right -- the right profile but also the right fit for a project, for something that

-- somewhere we can build with. I think that's important. We want to continue to progress this year but also looking to the future and how do we put a good team on the field for years to come.

Q I wanted to again an update on my Polish buddy, David Poreba. How is his rehab coming along? You mentioned he might still try to get in this season, if you can mention, do you guys anticipate him still potentially playing this season and how has his recovery been?

GREGG BERHALTER: He's doing great. He's ahead of schedule. But having said that, you know, it's really this last phase of his rehab is the most difficult phase.

So you make a ton of progress early on, and then you kind of hit this plateau that we have to get him through before he's ready to actually join team training. He looks great running. You know, all that, he's in a good way. But it is really about this next step where contact and hard cutting and you know, the explosiveness still needs to come back. FastScripts by ASAP Sports ...

