

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Chicago, Illinois, USA

Sam Rogers

Press Conference



Q. If I can ask you kind of like a basic question just about the center back room right now as you guys have been dealing with guys going in and out of the lineup due to injuries and what have you. What has been the message for you guys, as it's just been Jack who's kind of been consistent, as you all are fighting for that extra spot?

SAM ROGERS: I think we have our principles and we understand the way we want to do things, the way we want to prepare and play. With guys coming in and out, it's very competitive. Like you said, Jack's been consistent and been the captain, so he's playing every game, and he's been doing well. The rest of us have kind of been in and out a little bit more.

I think it's competitive in training, but it's also at the same time we all want to win, and we all want to push each other to be better. Like there's no ill will between us in any way, but yeah, it's just competitive. Like I want to be playing, and Carlos wants to be playing, Omar, Cupps. It's just competitive drive, pushing all of us, and the rest is out of our control.

Q. What did it do for the group to get two positive results last week? It's been a tough run until then. Just to get that road point in Atlanta, came down to the way it did, but then another point on the road as well, for 3 points on the road.

SAM ROGERS: It was a lot of games in a short amount of time. I think we were disappointed in all those results because I think maybe we could have gotten more from those games. Yeah, it was definitely good. We feel like we should have won in Atlanta but came away with a point.

Then, yeah, finishing the trip with 3 points was really good. It was really needed because it's tight, in that 7 through 10 range right now, so every win could be a 6-point swing like it could be this weekend.

It was a good feeling to end the road trip like that, yeah.

Q. It's not really an All-Star break because there's still games on either Saturday for you guys, but All-Star is traditionally a point to stop and reflect on the season. Two-thirds of the way, give or take, through your first MLS season, how do you think your performance is compared to where you were? What's your assessment of the season you've had so far?

SAM ROGERS: I think for me it's been a little too inconsistent for me, for myself, that I would like -- I think I've done some really good things and then had some not so good things in some matches that I let myself down, and then I think obviously it hurts the team a little sometimes too because we've conceded more goals than obviously we would like. We try to pride ourselves on eliminating those mistakes and keeping zeros and all that. I think it's been a little up-and-down.

It's also a little -- playing in this league for the first time, like playing teams that I've never played before -- in Seattle, I was on the West Coast, West Conference, so I'd never played any of these Eastern teams. They can be a little difficult when you don't quite know what to expect. We obviously do film and we prepare, but it's different live and different in person.

I think, as I've gotten to play more games and play more teams, I think I've gotten a little more comfortable with what to expect and how to prepare for certain things. Yeah, I just try to get better each game and learn from what I could do better and utilize the coaching staff and the other guys to help me improve as much as I can so it's better for the team.

Q. You came here from the Norwegian league. The Fire had recently been linked to Patrick Berg from Bodø. You were there for a couple of seasons playing against Bodø in different capacities. Do you have any experience with him? Either way, can you talk about your experience transitioning from that league last season to MLS this season?

SAM ROGERS: I would say MLS is obviously more -- I would say it's a more athletic league. You have more teams with more athletic, better athletes and players. On a weekly basis, you have to deal with that more consistently.

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Just compared to Norway, you have the top five teams are very good, play in the Champions League, Europa League, so they're very competitive. Then it can kind of, the level drops a little bit the lower you get on the table, obviously teams don't have as much money they can spend. But I would say on a weekly basis, it's just more competitive here.

As far as Berg, he's a good player. I played against him a few times when we played Bodø. He plays for Norway as well, so he's very well-known there. Yeah, he can play on a good team.

Q. A big setback this week in Montreal with you coming out of the game. Wondering how you're feeling from that looking forward now?

SAM ROGERS: I was pretty bummed. Obviously it sucks to come out of a game early. Luckily it wasn't anything serious. It's been better each day. Yeah, I'm just being positive about it. It's not anything serious. We just push it a little each day and test it. I'm not anticipating missing much time. It's a positive compared to what it could have been, I guess.

Q. Cupps is now coming back from a six-week injury. Looks like he's going to be back for LAFC. What have you seen from him in his growth? He's been ascending rapidly over the last 18 months, just what you've seen from preseason until now.

SAM ROGERS: I'd say he's like a physical freak. He's just turning 17, and to be as big as he is and the way he can move, he's very calm. He doesn't get flustered. He's definitely matured in his head beyond 17 on the pitch.

It's cool to see because I remember when I was 17 and coming up like on the second team into the first team, and it can be a lot. He's handling it really well. He's got a steady head, and he pushes, he wants to learn, and he works hard. He's doing stuff after training pretty much every day. He's got a great work rate. He has a really bright future, I think for sure.

Q. Do you have a favorite Chance the Rapper song? Or are you slightly too young?

SAM ROGERS: I remember listening to Acid Rap, and he had one in 2019, like It's a Long Day, that one, and the one he won a Grammy for, Coloring Book. Coloring Book was good. I don't know if I have a favorite song, but I would say Coloring Book is my favorite album from him.

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