

Chicago Fire Media Conference

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Jonathan Dean

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Questions, please.

Q. In the last couple of weeks you've signed a new deal with the club. You're going to be here for at least a couple more years. Compound that with getting a massive goal midweek, what has the last few weeks been for you, understanding the short-term goals and the long-term goals that you've been able to accomplish?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, no, for me it's been exciting. Me and my wife, you know, we love it up here, and we're glad to extend, especially with what we're building throughout this year.

You can see the progress throughout the year. It hasn't always been up. There's been up and downs. That's with any given year. Doing everything we can, and we're excited to continue that and obviously keep pushing this and seeing where we go.

Q. Talking about the ups and downs, tell us about the way the group is feeling right now knowing that you are in the postseason after a season where it's been ups and downs, but also generally a lot more ups than I think the previous couple of years when you've been here.

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, I would say for the most part we're excited that we qualified for playoffs. Then just going back after the game and seeing the standings, there's room for us to actually keep climbing, right? So our goal now and our objective is to hopefully get out of the play-in game, which would be huge for us as well.

Like you said, the first thing was to make playoffs this year. Fortunately, we achieved that, but now as this group, we believe in ourselves that we can even go even farther than that.

Q. We're a few weeks now into this back three setup, and you are somebody who has obviously gotten to

play a lot of minutes in that. How do you feel like this has fit your game, and what's been your experience in that wing back position about how these last couple of weeks have been a bit different and what was asked of you that maybe different than the instructions were getting in the back four?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, I think with the back three obviously there's a little more cover for us to be more advanced and not have to necessarily worry about the opposition attacking as much, because you have cover that slides in the back three. That allows us to get higher.

But with how we continue to still play, it's kind of similar if we were in the back four ultimately, whether that's, you know, Jack pushing up almost like a left back sometimes, Andrew higher, vice versa on the other side. I think it just gives us more tools obviously, and to be able to play multiple formations is massive.

For me personally, it's just obviously continue to work hard, offensively and defensively and keep going from there.

Q. How do you personally manage recovery and preparation for the upcoming match?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, I mean, it's a quick turnaround, especially this week playing Saturday, Tuesday, Saturday. It's just being focused and diligent of getting massages, treatment, utilizing all the options that we have here, which we're fortunate enough to have many different things, like cold tub, cryotherapy, sauna. It's just taking advantage of that and recovering to the best that you can.

Q. Jonny, you were on the bench at this point in the game against Miami, but when it got to 3-3, what do you think about this group makes it so resilient that you can give up two goals early in the second half to Luis Suarez, of course, and then to still bounce back and get those two goals late against one of the best teams in the region?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, you've seen it throughout the year. I mean, we're a really dangerous team, and we still have belief in ourselves. That's people coming on the field as well, we have belief. It's not just the 11 every time. It's people coming in, making a difference, and ultimately helping us and pushing us over the line to get the job done,

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right, which you saw obviously on Saturday how deep the team is this year and the competition throughout, which if you want to be a winning team and win things, you have to have that.

Q. Looking at the game against Toronto, they're a team that hasn't been getting wins, but also has just six or seven now either 0-0 or 1-1 draws in a row. What are you expecting for Toronto to bring, and how do you plan to try to break them down and get goals against a team that hasn't been giving up a lot?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, that's a great question. Like you said, seven games they haven't lost, and they also don't concede a lot either. For us that's take our game plan and try to do what we do and be aggressive and on the front feet, because like you said, we're still playing for finishing higher on the table, so there's a lot at stake.

For them it's going to be the same, you know, in this year's past. You're going to have people out there still fighting for their jobs and trying to perform to showcase their abilities, so...

Q. Your goal in that last game we saw in the end, obviously you have that choice there whether you are going to cross it or go for goal yourself. Is there any discussion before a game like Miami, I'm just curious, because they're a team that's near the bottom of the league this year in terms of the amount of goals that they're conceding versus how many you would expect them to. Different opponents, are you told, Hey, this is more of a shoot-first game, or is it totally left to you guys that like, Hey, whatever you are feeling in the moment is the right choice, go for it.

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, it's totally up to us and our decision, right? We'll see before the game going off the last game, had a chance, kept it high. This game going in, you know, one of our assistant coaches said, Just pass it and keep it low. That's immediately what I thought, and fortunately, it ended up going in, so...

Q. This Saturday the last regular season home game at Soldier Field. Is there any special message that you have for the fans to come out? I know we're playing Toronto, but anything that you would like to say to the fans to come out and support?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, we love our fans. We would love them to be there to support us and get the last home win of the season and then hopefully have many more going throughout the playoffs. Having our fan base there being loud makes a massive difference, so hope to see them there.

Q. If we can take a three-year look at how you have evolved over the last three years, thinking back to two years ago when you can play for Fire II, and Charles Ostrem came off the field that day and said, Jonny Dean shows what we can be, what we can do, especially how you had to grind through USL after you were drafted. What have you learned over these last three years that can be imparted to younger soccer players that are trying to grind their way up to MLS?

JONATHAN DEAN: Ultimately, it's have the belief in yourself, but also do the little things right every day. As easy as it is to say, it's harder to do, right, especially being in tough, different environments, but I would just say do the little things right and continue to do day-to-day things, and what happens, happens.

Ultimately you give it everything you can, and then see what happens from there, but just believe in yourself and continue the journey.

Q. Zooming out on the timelines just a little bit, your first MLS goal was just over a year ago in a 1-1 game against Toronto. Having scored against this team something that's in your head going into this match?

JONATHAN DEAN: Yeah, I mean, I didn't think about it until you just brought it up, but yeah, no, hopefully I can repeat and do it again, right?

It's one of those things, that game too was crashing the box, getting in, which allowed the opportunity. So hopefully this weekend continue to do the same thing and be in a position where I'm able to.

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