**FINAL: MLS RE-ENTRY DRAFT – TOP PROSPECTS**

**Analysis & Written Summary - Due by Saturday, December 11, 2021 | 11:59 pm ET**

**GROUP FINAL (max of 4-5 students per group)**

Background:

The MLS Re-Entry Draft is an annual event in which Major League Soccer teams select players who are out-of-contract or have had their options declined by their current teams. While the single-entity league does not have true free agency, the re-entry draft was created to provide an outlet of internal movement for veteran players. The re-entry draft has proven to be an important method of acquiring players that can provide valuable minutes in a long MLS season. Drew Moor (Toronto FC) is a recent example of an experienced player who played a key role in his team's success in winning the Supporters Shield in 2017.

Assignment:

For **each** of the following three positions - Forward, Central Midfielder, Central Defender, you will analyze available players in two steps/tiers to **identify 3** (i.e. 9 total players) that you perceive to be most superior to others listed. Then, you will compare those 3 players to 1-2 under contract with D.C. United as well as 2 players under contract with other MLS clubs.

\* Steps 1-2: Identifying a Top 3 list for each of the 3 positions.

\* Use the file titled: “2018 Re-entry draft player pool & comparison list “

\* Step 1: From the Tier 1 player pool, identify 3 players for each of the three positions that D.C. United should most consider selecting in the re-entry draft.

\* Step 2: For each position, compare the 3 players that you selected from Tier 1 against those listed in Tier 2 to either confirm your Tier 1 list or replace any with those judged to be superior from Tier 2.

\* Step 3: Analyze how your top 3 players per position from the previous steps stack up against the current D.C. United player(s) listed.

\* Step 4: Analyze how your top 3 players per position compare to the players listed from other MLS clubs? Is there enough of a gap that D.C. United should consider trading for any of them?

Requirements:

Your analysis must be driven by the Opta performance data provided for this assignment. Start with the 2018 PLAYER file which contains 250+ data categories. You may use as many of the data categories as necessary for your player recommendations. The data contains both attacking and defensive metrics – you may use as many of both areas as desired. All data has been normalized across 90 minutes.

Your analysis must also cover PLAYER data from the 2017 season, unless the selected player was a rookie in 2018.

Thirdly, your analysis should look at the player’s contribution in 2017 and 2018 to their overall team, using the TEAM data contained in the Team Stat files for each season.

Opta Data Definitions: For definitions, consult the provided OPTA Definitions file.

Submit the following: 1 team member should upload the following to blackboard by11:59pm ET on Saturday, December 11th.

\* Written analysis in Word or PDF: Up to 20 pages (TOTAL) to clearly present you player recommendations, summarize your findings and process used. Include data results/exhibits/visualizations to demonstrate your analysis and make sure to integrate/reference them in your written analysis

\* Excel/R models, Tableau visualizations and any other files used to either run your model/analysis/visualizations.

\* For all files submitted, name them “FINAL” followed by the last names of all team members in the file name.