



NASHVILLE SOCCER CLUB — INTERNSHIP MLS PROJECT

A short project based upon position strengthening and player selection inside Major League Soccer.

BACKGROUND

Assuming the role of a GM of an MLS team, the task was to choose a team, and identify a position that needs strengthening. After the position has been chosen, a maximum of 3 trade targets from inside the league must be selected, along with a guaranteed salary cap of \$400,000.

1. Choose an MLS team
2. Identify a position to strengthen
3. Identify up to 3 trade targets

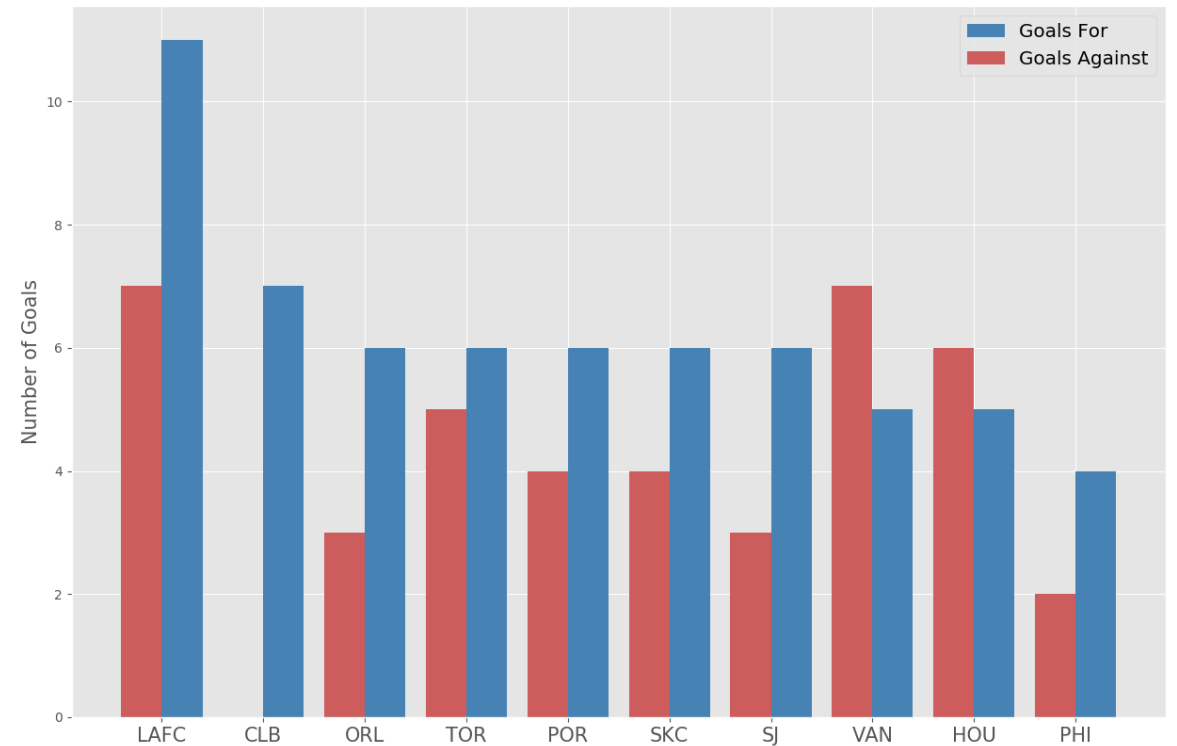


CHOICE OF MLS TEAM

Using web-scraping and MLS.com I was able to grab the standings of all MLS teams during the *MLS is Back* Tournament.

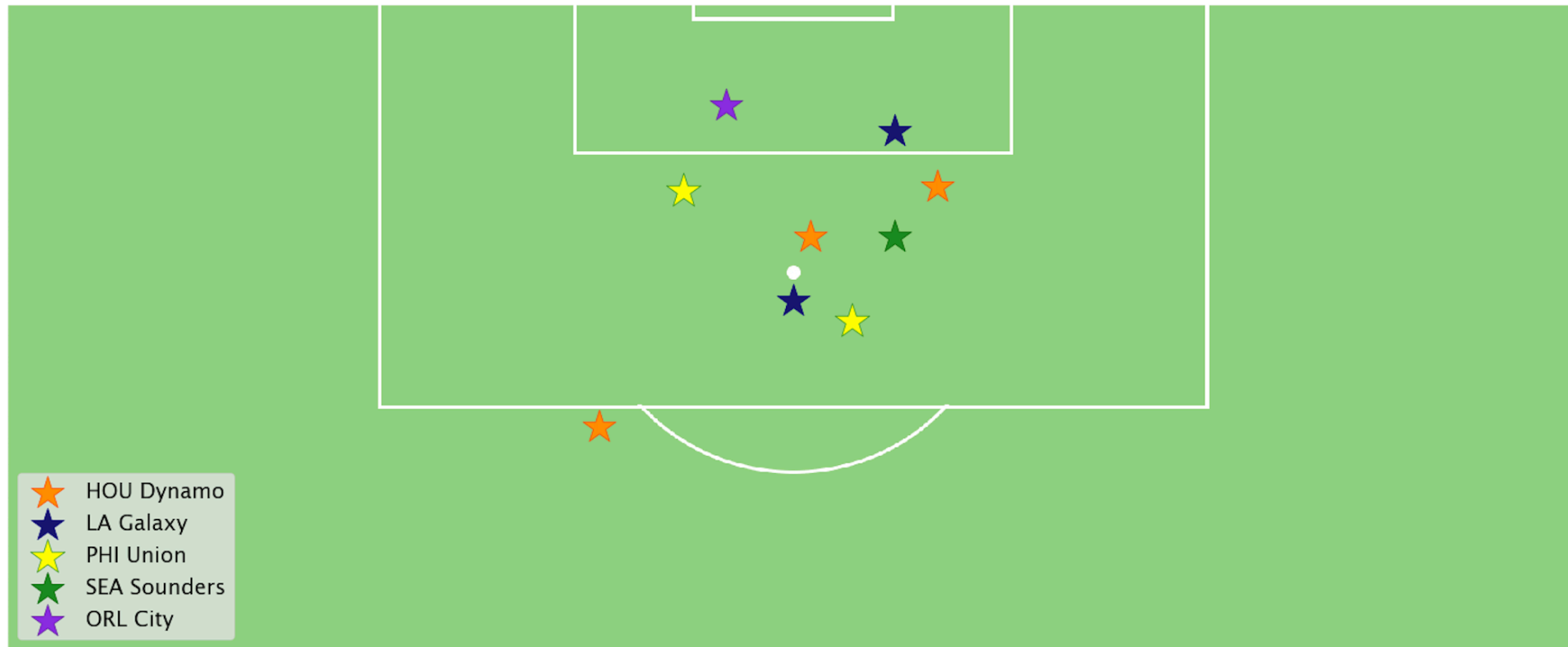
I found that the team with the most goals for was also one of the teams with the most goals against. Based on this I chose to select **LAFC** as my MLS team.

Top 10 Highest Goal Scoring Teams



IDENTIFYING A POSITION

LAFC Location of Conceded Goals

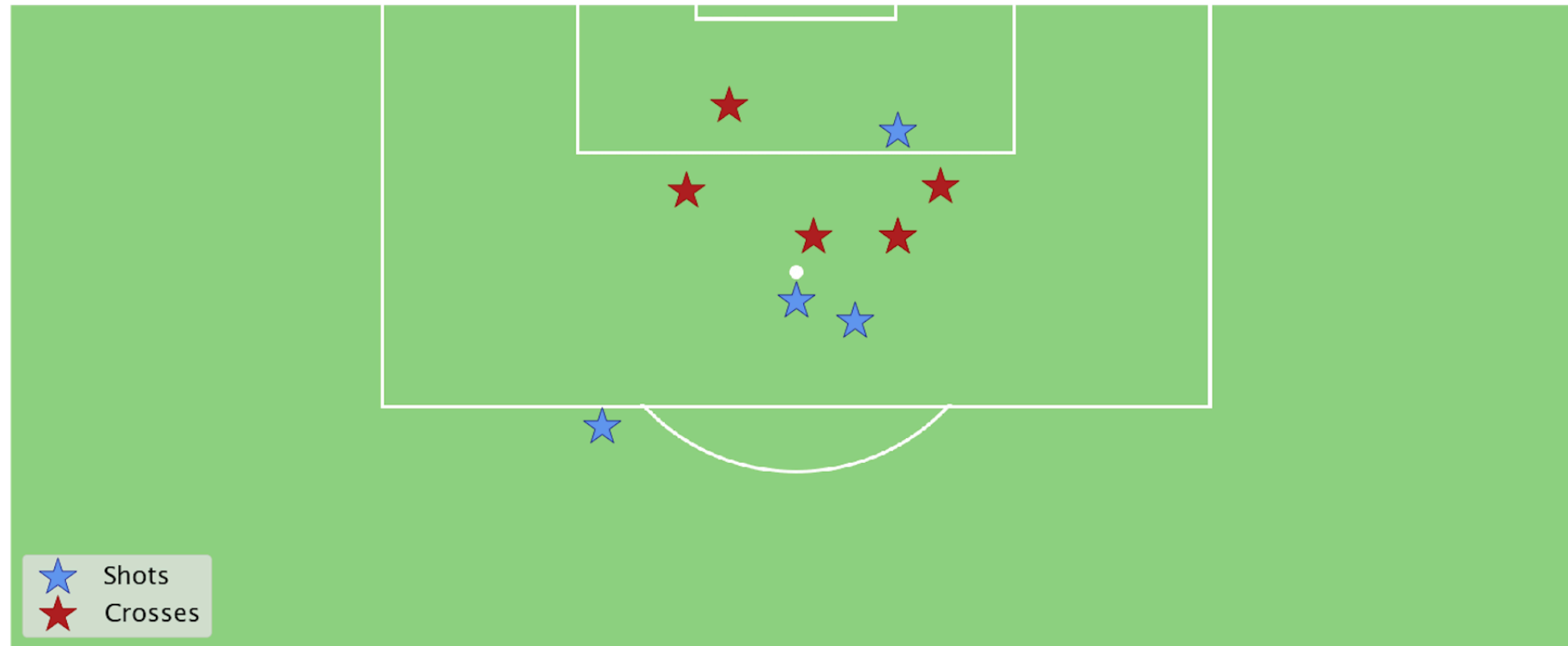


This process included examining LAFC film of the *MLS is Back* Tournament, and finding other statistics around the reasons behind conceding so many goals during the tournament. After analyzing film I found the following field position of all goals conceded.



IDENTIFYING A POSITION

LAFC Location of Conceded Goals: Shots vs Crosses



The most interesting aspect of these conceded goals was that 5 out of 9 goals were aerial goals, this led me to conclude that the position I would be strengthening is the Center Back position.



TRADE TARGET SELECTION

Based on the few statistics around the goals conceded by LAFC, I produced some target metrics that would allow me to select a center back to strengthen this position, here are those constraints:

1. Guaranteed Salary Cap of \$400,000
2. Center Back Defender
3. Large Amount of Professional Experience
4. Strong Aerially



TRADE TARGET SELECTION



Josh Williams
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 192
Age: 32
Columbus Crew



Ike Opara
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 180
Age: 31
Minnesota United



Brent Kallman
Height: 6'2"
Weight: 190
Age: 29
Minnesota United



POTENTIAL TRADE PROPOSALS

Due to time constraints and the absolute **need** to strengthen the LAFC centerback position, we would be willing to trade draft picks along with a potential player swap for Dejan Jakovic.

This is contingent upon negotiation and further analysis.



OTHER INFORMATION

Given more time and more resources, some other directions I would have pursued involve including multiple past season data around each MLS team to make an informed decision around which team to target.

Due to the current Pandemic, performance and the current *MLS is Back* is not a perfect indication of each club.

Along with gathering past season data, I would have liked to observe the goal conceded position of the past few seasons to build a stronger case around strengthening the Center Back position.

I was unable to gather quality data around the current available players in the Center Back position, I would have liked to gather height, weight, playing time, starts, current teammates, salary, and other metrics to make more data driven decisions around the trade targets.

