

Data Description

Data is collected off of wyscout and consists of data through the first half of the NCAA Men's Soccer Season. The data includes all of the teams games they have played so far along with 50+ statistics that help give context on how a team is playing.

Motivation

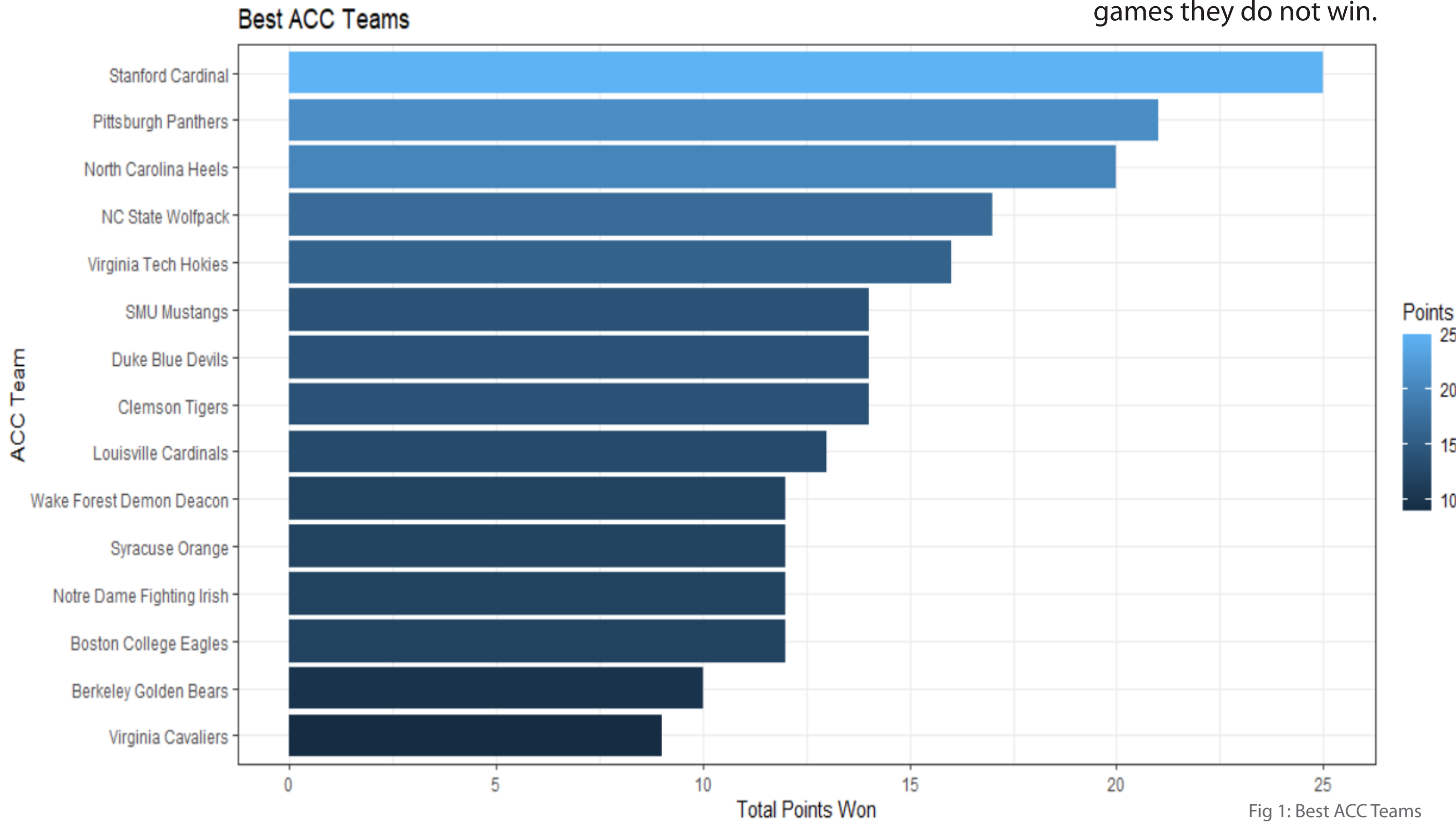
As someone who loves the sport of soccer, college soccer has always fascinated me in how different it is compared to every other league in the world. As a data analyst for the Syracuse Men's Soccer team, I wanted to learn more about the ACC, the most competitive conference in the NCAA.

Story

With Syracuse playing in the ACC, and being a highly regarded program, winning the national championship in 2022, I wanted to analyze performance through this point in the year. I wanted to first see the best teams in terms of overall performance and who has been the most lucky or unlucky. I then compare the difficulty of games in and out of the conference. Last, I took a deeper dive into Syracuse, comparing how they play in wins and in games they do not win.

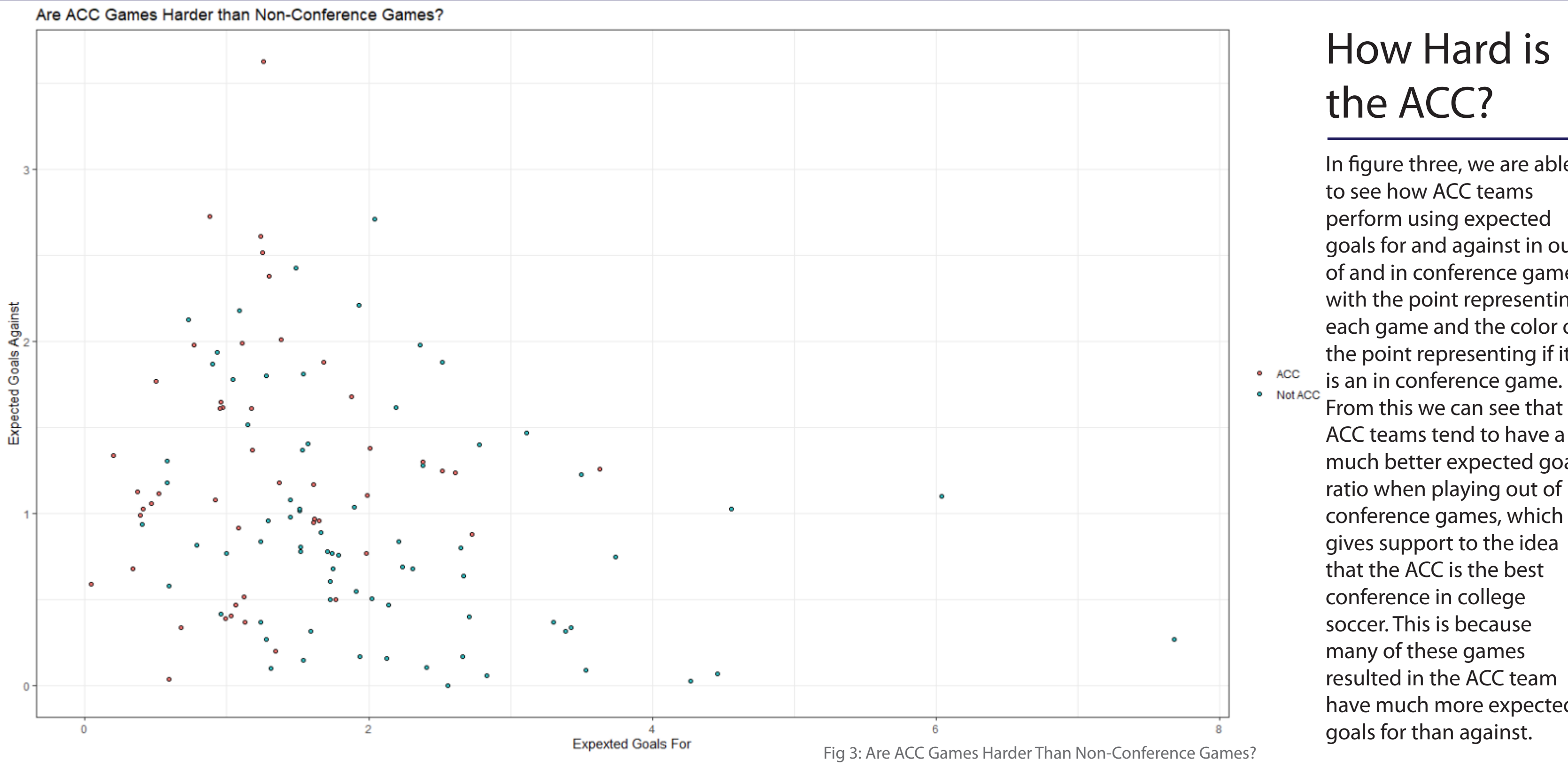
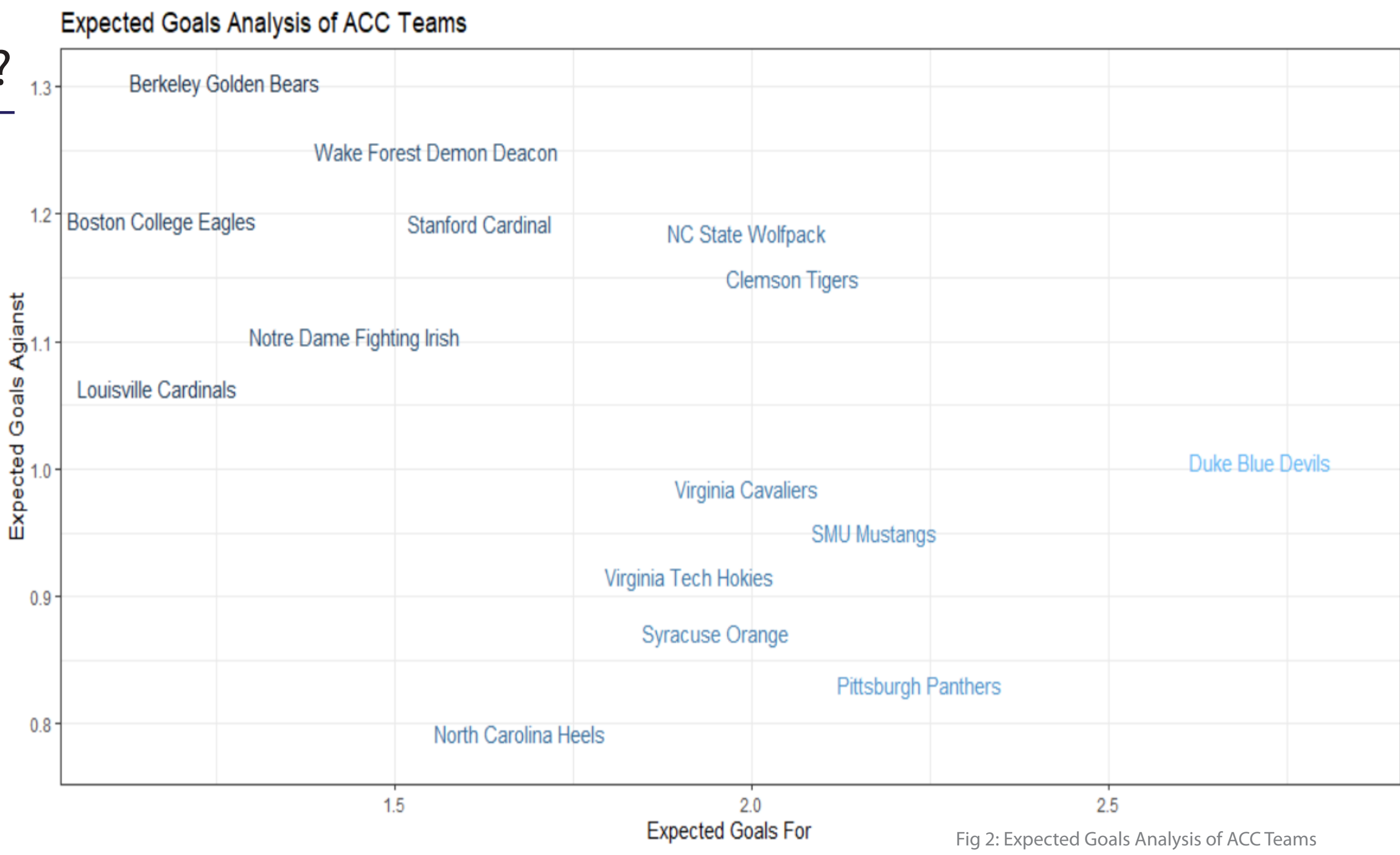
Overall Performance

The first area I looked at was the amount of points each team in the conference have won overall through figure one. A team will get three points for a win, one point for a draw, and zero points for a loss. So far we are able to see that Stanford has been the most successful with Pitt and UNC not being too far behind.



Who is Lucky?

In figure two, we are able to see where teams rank when comparing expected goals for and against. The expected goals statistic is the chance that a shot results in a goal. Every shot is given a number between zero and one. From this graph we are able to see two clusters, one that gives up more than they create, and the other who does the opposite. Syracuse ranks well in this statistic and could make the argument that given this, should have won more points, while Stanford should have won less.



How Hard is the ACC?

In figure three, we are able to see how ACC teams perform using expected goals for and against in out of and in conference games, with the point representing each game and the color of the point representing if it is an in conference game. From this we can see that ACC teams tend to have a much better expected goals ratio when playing out of conference games, which gives support to the idea that the ACC is the best conference in college soccer. This is because many of these games resulted in the ACC team have much more expected goals for than against.

Syracuse in Wins

In figure four we can see how Syracuse performed in wins compared to the rest of the ACC. We can see that they are one of the best in terms of expected goals for and against, PPDA, winning aerial duels, keeping possession, passing the ball forward, and not losing the ball deep.

Syracuse Comparison

We are now able to see what are the main factors in Syracuse being successful or unsuccessful. The two main factors that stuck out the most to me were losing the ball low and keeping possession with those numbers being much improved in wins. In addition, the Syracuse press was fantastic in wins giving up the least amount of passes per defensive action in the ACC. These metrics being higher in wins allowed for much better expected goals statistics.

Syracuse in Non-Wins

When Syracuse draws or loses we can see in figure five that they are very low in a lot of areas compared to other teams in the ACC. The three areas they are the poorest in are losing the ball deep, keeping possession, and crosses. There will be many defensive duels and Syracuse will still win most of their aerial duels.

