

# 2022 MLS SuperDraft Analysis

Eric Wnorowski

Github: <https://github.com/wnorowskie/2022-MLS-SuperDraft-Data-Analysis>

Data Source: <https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/rodgee/2022-mls-superdraft>

## First Round Draft Picks by Position and MLS Club

Ben Bender Charlotte FC Maryland MF 1	Matt Nocita New York Red Bulls Naval Academy DF 7	Oskar Ågren San Jose Earthquakes Clemson DF 13	Ian Murphy FC Cincinnati Duke DF 14	Jojea Kwizera CF Montréal Utah Valley FW 15	Simon Becher Vancouver Whitecaps FC Saint Louis FW 16
Roman Celentano FC Cincinnati Indiana GK 2	Ousseni Bouda San Jose Earthquakes Stanford FW 8				
Isaiah Parker FC Dallas Saint Louis FW 3	Ryan Sailor Inter Miami CF Washington DF 9	Tani Oluwaseyi Minnesota United FC St. John's FW 17	Farai Mutatu LA Galaxy Michigan State FW 21	Esai Easley Sporting Kansas City Grand Canyon DF 22	Mohamed Omar Colorado Rapids Notre Dame MF 23
		Jack Lynn Orlando City SC Notre Dame FW 18			
Thorleifur Úlfarsson Houston Dynamo FC Duke FW 4	Ahmed Longmire Nashville SC UCLA DF 10	Erik Centeno Atlanta United FC Pacific FW 19	Jacob Jackson New England Revolution Loyola Marymount GK 24	Justin Rasmussen Portland Timbers Grand Canyon MF 27	
Kipp Keller Austin FC Saint Louis DF 5	Kendall Burks Chicago Fire FC Washington DF 11	O'Vonte Mullings New York Red Bulls Florida Gulf Coast FW 20	Philip Quinton Columbus Crew Notre Dame DF 25		
Lucas Bartlett FC Dallas St. John's DF 6	Patrick Schulte Columbus Crew Saint Louis GK 12		Anthony Markanich Colorado Rapids NIU DF 26	Tsiki Ntsabeleng FC Dallas Oregon State FW 28	

## Second Round Draft Picks by Position and MLS Club

Kyle Holcomb Charlotte FC Wake Forest FW	Kevin O'Toole New York City FC Princeton FW	Arturo Ordoñez Houston Dynamo FC Pittsburgh DF	Luis Felipe	Roberto Molina Colorado Rapids UC Irvine MF 45	Nathan Dossantos Orlando City SC Marshall DF 46		Tristan Trager Atlanta United FC Air Force FW 47	
Nick Markanich FC Cincinnati NIU FW	Charlie Asensio Austin FC Clemson DF	Jacob Erlandson Columbus Crew Bowling Green State DF			Justin Ingram Inter Miami CF Loyola (MD) MF 48		Ben Reveno New England Revolution UCLA DF 52	Pedro Fonseca Real Salt Lake Louisville FW 53
Luka Gavran Toronto FC St. John's GK	Sofiane Djeffal D.C. United Oregon State MF	Alex Nagy D.C. United Vermont MF	Giovanni Aguilar Vancouver Whitecaps FC CSUN MF					
Paulo Lima Houston Dynamo FC Providence College MF	Lucas Meek Inter Miami CF Washington MF	Callum Johnson LA Galaxy Clemson MF	Brett St. Martin Sporting Kansas City Maryland DF 50		Julian Bravo Portland Timbers Santa Clara DF 55		Kingsford Adjei New York City FC Dayton FW 56	
Charlie Ostrem Chicago Fire FC Washington DF	Will Meyer Nashville SC Akron GK	Achille Robin Seattle Sounders FC Washington DF						

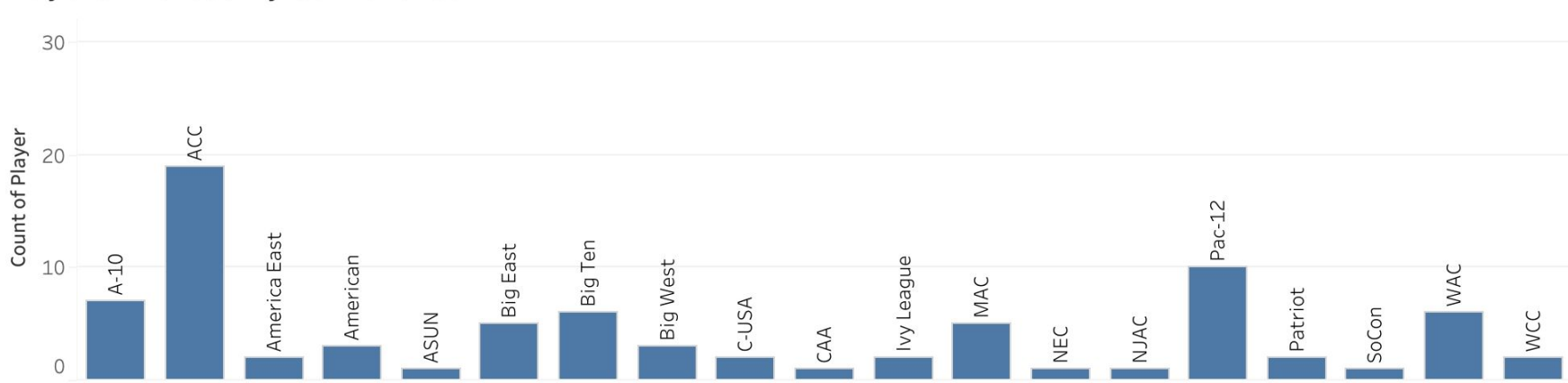
## Third Round Draft Picks by Position and MLS Club

George Marks Charlotte FC Clemson GK 57	Alec Smir FC Dallas North Carolina GK 62	Ivy Brisma CF Montréal NC State FW 67	Théo Collomb Vancouver Whitecaps FC UNC-Greensboro FW	Hal Uderitz Seattle Sounders FC Seattle MF 76	Jasper Löffelsend Real Salt Lake Pittsburgh DF 81	Sivert Haugli Portland Timbers Virginia Tech DF 83
Reshaun Walkes Toronto FC UTRGV FW 59	Carlo Ritaccio Chicago Fire FC Akron DF 63	Chris Donovan Columbus Crew Drexel FW 68	Seth Kuhn New York Red Bulls Penn State MF 73			El Mahdi Youssoufi New York City FC St. Francis College FW
Chandler Vaughn LA Galaxy Saint Louis DF 60	John Martin San Jose Earthquakes Clemson MF 64	Skage Simonsen D.C. United SMU MF 69	Nick Taylor Orlando City SC UCF FW 74	Yanis Leerman Chicago Fire FC UCF DF	Tola Showunmi Atlanta United FC UNH FW 88	
Michael Knapp Austin FC Montclair MF 61	Chase Niece FC Dallas Saint Louis DF 66	Giannis Nikopolidis New York Red Bulls Georgetown GK 71	Daniel Bloyou Atlanta United FC Penn State FW 75	Vitor Dias Vancouver Whitecaps FC Marshall MF		

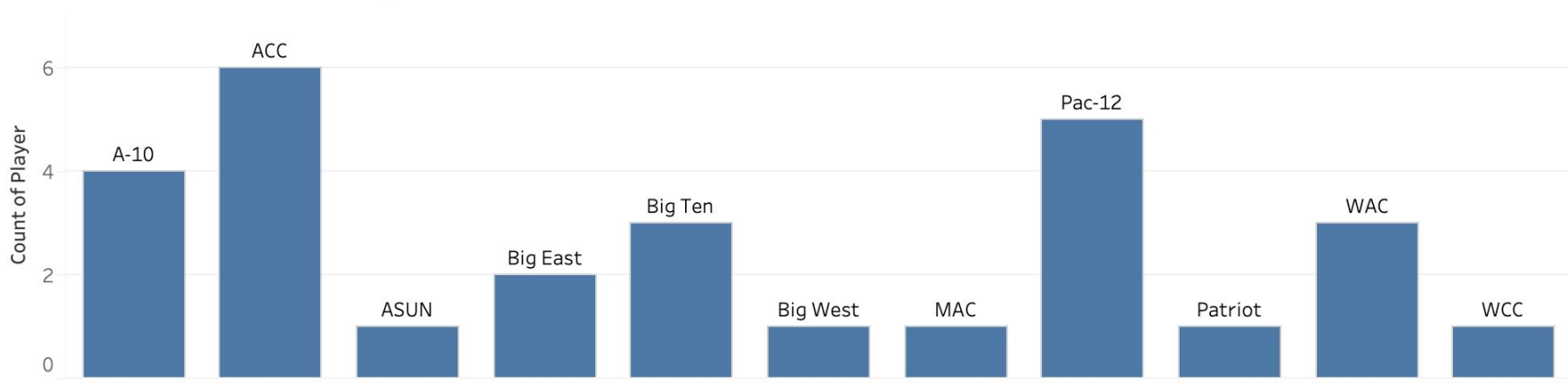
Notes:

- 19 NCAA Conferences represented across two different Divisions. Michael Knapp from Montclair St. representing the NJAC and Division III was drafted 61st overall by Austin FC,
- ACC and Pac-12 rank highly across the entire draft while the non Power-5 conference A-10 outperformed the Big East. The WAC also had a strong year but did not has many top end draftees.
- With 26 active NCAA DI Soccer Conferences, 18 of them had a draftee while 8 did not. Which means there is a fair spread of representation across the board.
- It is also not a surprise that the conferences with the most draftees are highly ranked. However the variety shows that any player in any conference has the chance to be drafted. This shows the depth of scouting by MLS teams that goes into college soccer.

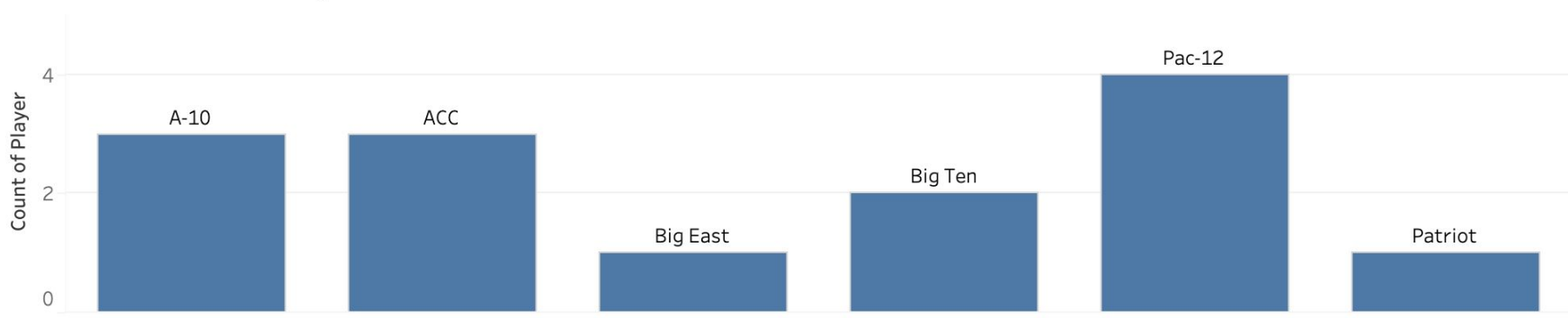
Players Drafted By Conference



First Round Draft Picks By Conference



First 14 Draft Picks by Conference

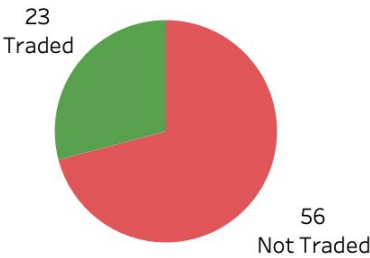




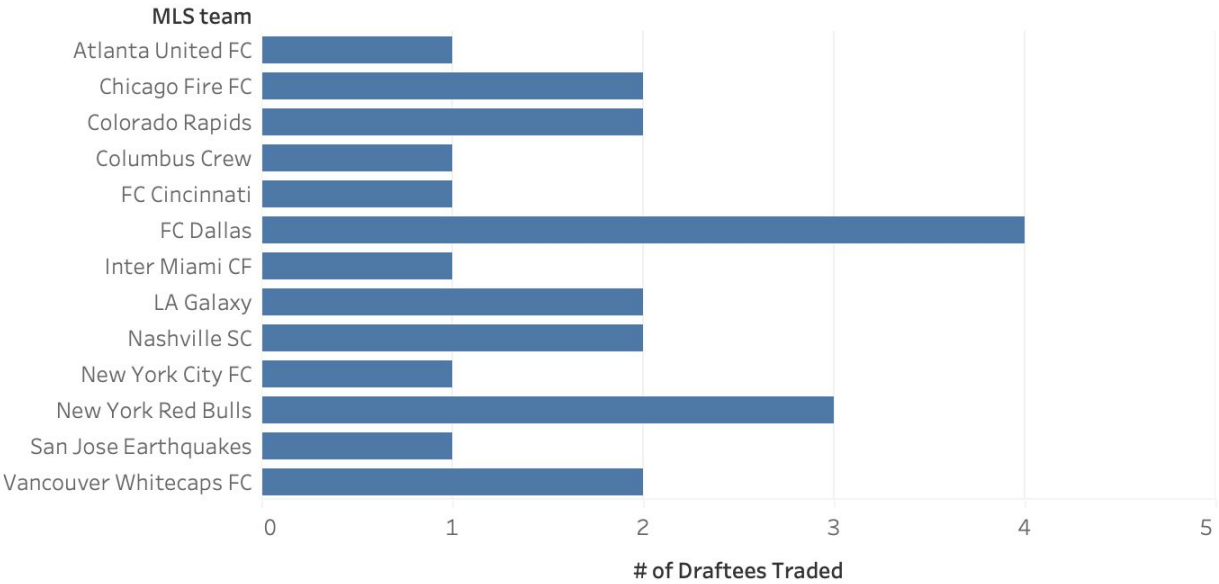
Notes:

- There has been a recent change to the rules regarding eligible draft players, but this data is from 2022 before the change.
- Therefore, there were less players who could be classified as eligible for the draft, making the quantity of quality players decrease in the eyes of MLS clubs. For some time now the draft picks have not been seen as valuable assets.
- There were 10 teams who passed on their draft pick. Rather than drafting an eligible player they simply forgave their draft pick. Many drafted players do not end up signing first team contracts.
- The recent addition of MLS Next Pro has lead to draft picks being more valuable and many players earning at least second team contracts.
- Academy and Amateur Clubs live for MLS draftees as it is great promotion and representation of the club. These clubs span from various youth and amateur leagues.

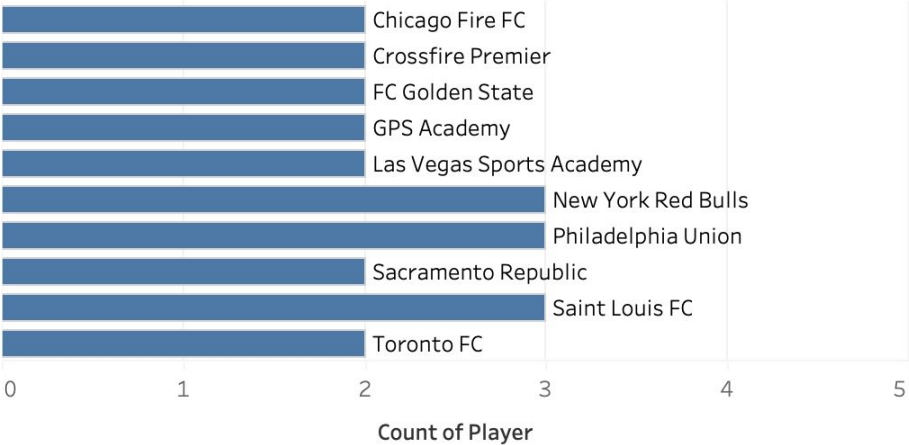
Draftees Traded



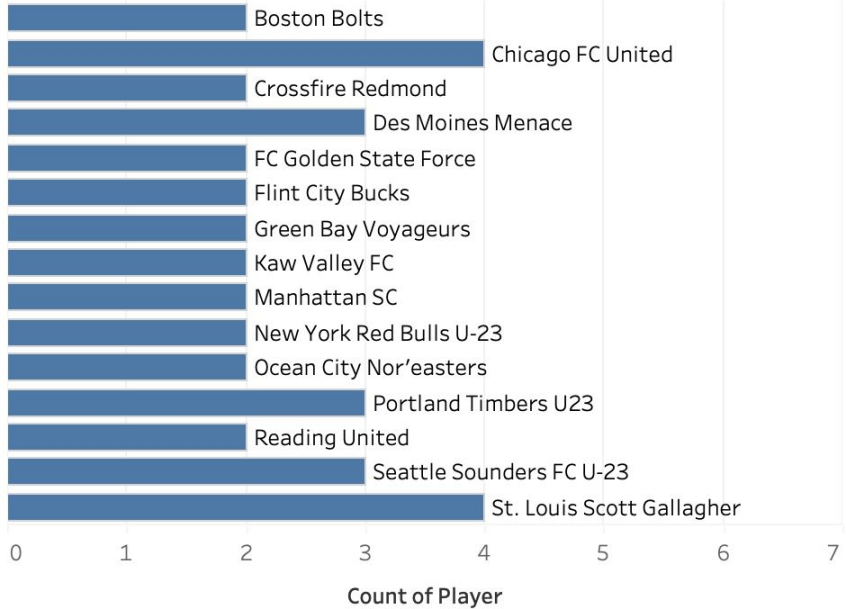
MLS Team That Traded Draft Picks



Academy Teams with Multiple Draftees



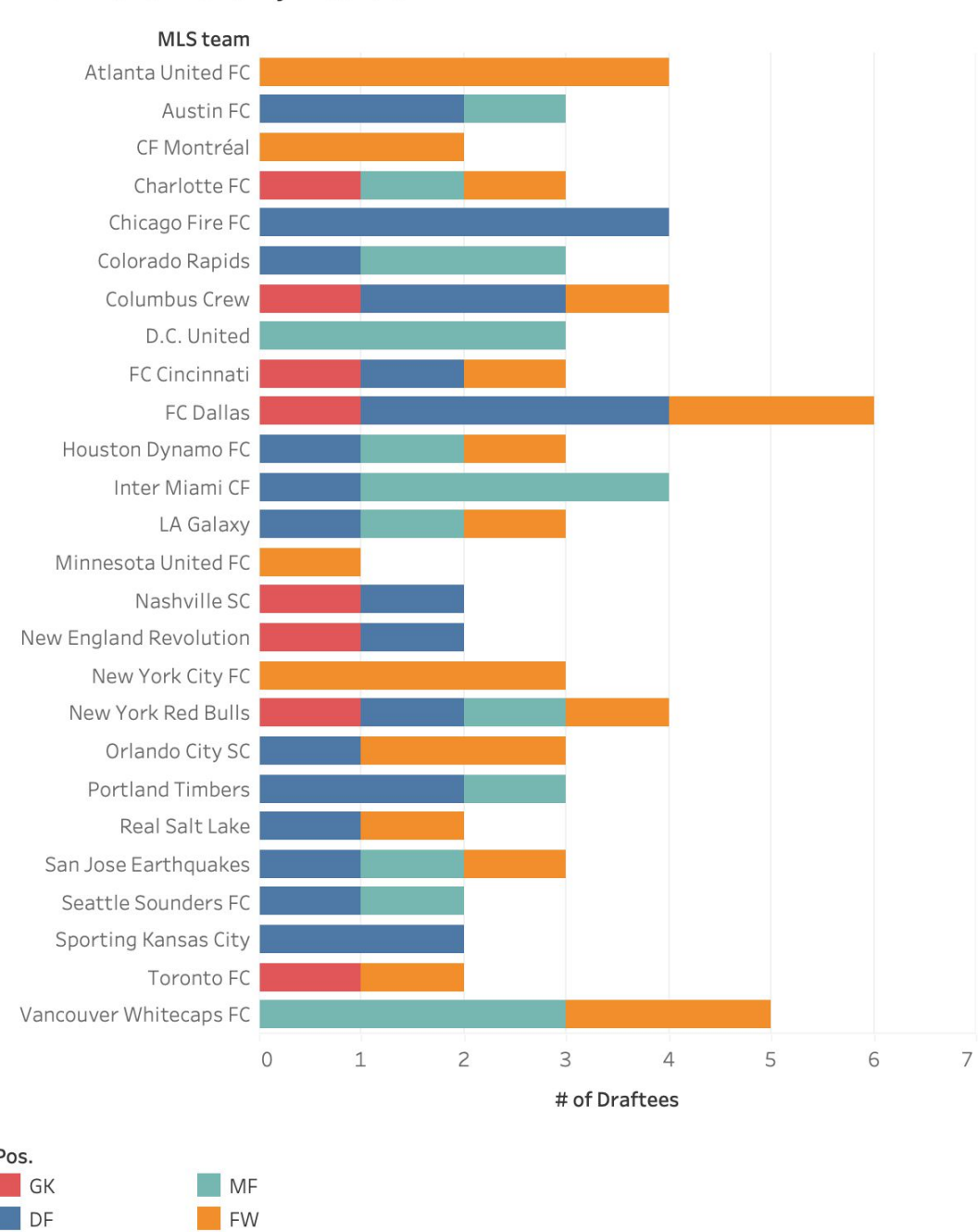
Amateur Clubs with Multiple Draftees



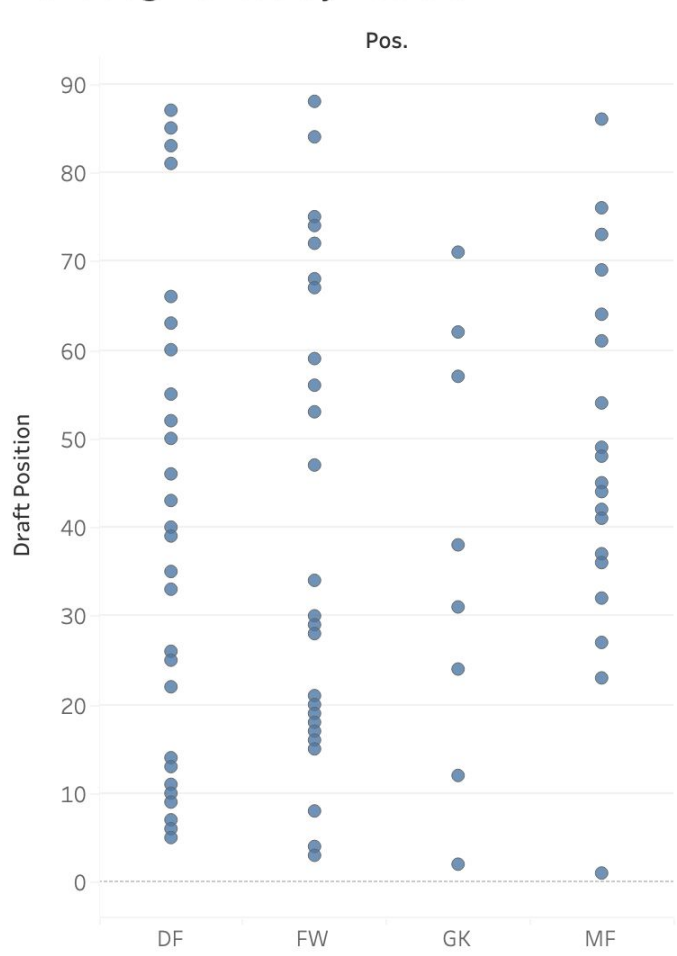
Notes:

- These two graphics show some insight into each MLS clubs drafting strategy, as well as how college players are targeted.
- Each team may have a different strategy from year to year based on the coaching staff and front office, and the needs of the roster. One would likely gain better insight comparing these graphics with data from other drafts, which will be a future project.
- Certain teams like Atlanta, NYCFC, and Montreal seem to be targeting forwards specifically. College soccer can have some dynamic attacking players that can be an instant impact on an MLS roster.
- Meanwhile defenders were drafted the most out of any position. As mentioned in the previous slide with the old draft rules, eligible players were typically on the older side. Which means that top college defenders may seem like solid players and “safe” picks.

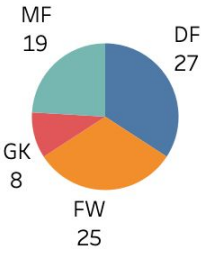
MLS Draft Picks By Position



Draft Segmented by Position



Draftees By Position



Notes:

- One final graphic that concludes nicely with this report and shows how each conference ranks comparative to others across the whole draft and by each position.
- There is a wider distribution of forwards and midfielders than defenders. Forwards were drafted from 15 unique conferences, Midfielders were drafted from 12 unique conferences, while defenders despite having the most drafted out of any position only came from 11 unique conferences.
- From both the data shown on the previous slide and this combined, the trend that this data is emphasizing is that MLS clubs are looking for experienced defenders from the top conferences or a dynamic attacker from a larger pool of conferences.
- This data will be combined with data from other MLS drafts to show how these trends have changed over time in a future project.

Conference Position Breakdown of Draftees

