



January 15, 2009

## Sounders FC Make Steve Zakuani Top Pick

*Seattle selects four players in franchise's first ever MLS SuperDraft*

**RENTON, WASH.** – The Seattle Sounders FC selected University of Akron forward and Generation adidas member Steve Zakuani with the first overall selection in Thursday's Major League Soccer SuperDraft.

"Steve has all the tools, a great pedigree, and grew up in the Arsenal youth system," said Sounders FC Owner and General Manager Adrian Hanauer. "He had a very good college career and we think has the potential to be very explosive and a very exciting player. He is also a very good young man."

Zakuani, who was born in the Congo but raised in England, led the nation in scoring with 20 goals and seven assists in 23 games in 2008, while being named Soccer America's Player of the Year. Zakuani was also a finalist for the M.A.C. Hermann Trophy, awarded to the top collegiate soccer player. Before coming to the U.S., Zakuani, 20, played with the Arsenal's youth teams of the English Premier League from 1997 to 2003.

"I heard a few things a couple of weeks ago, but up until the last second, I had no idea," Zakuani said of being the No. 1 pick. "It's a great honor, and I'm so excited. I'm ready. I'm going to go in there, train hard, catch up to the level of play and hopefully contribute right away."

With the first pick in the second round (16<sup>th</sup> overall), the Sounders FC selected Wake Forest University defender Evan Brown. A top defender in the Atlantic Coast Conference, Brown contributed to 14 shutouts in 2008 and 15 in 2007, a single-season shutout record en route to the NCAA College Cup title. His 89 games played ranks as the sixth-most all-time at Wake Forest.

Azusa Pacific University defender Jared Karkas was chosen with the first pick in the third round (31<sup>st</sup> overall). A 22 year-old native of Upland, Calif., Karkas was an NAIA first-team All-American. He started all 22 contests during Azusa Pacific's 2007 NAIA title run, anchoring a defense that posted program single-season records of 14 shutouts and a 0.49 goals-against average.

Seattle's final selection in the fourth round (46<sup>th</sup> overall) was Harvard midfielder/forward Michael Fucito. An All-Ivy League first-team and Academic All-Ivy League selection as a junior and senior, Fucito compiled 20 goals and 12 assists in his final two seasons for the Crimson.

All SuperDraft selections are expected to report to Seattle later this month for preseason training. The Sounders FC begin its inaugural MLS season by hosting the Red Bull New York Red Bull at Qwest Field on March 19. Season tickets are available by calling the Sounders FC at 877-MLS-GOAL or online at [www.soundersfc.com](http://www.soundersfc.com).

## Sounders FC 2009 SuperDraft Selections

### **Steve Zakuani**

*1<sup>st</sup> Round, 1<sup>st</sup> Pick, 1<sup>st</sup> Overall, Generation adidas*

Position: Forward

Height: 6-0

Weight: 160

Birthdate: 2/9/1988

Birthplace (Citizenship): The Congo (United Kingdom)

College: University of Akron (2007-08)

High School: Gladesmore Community School

Pronunciation: Zak-uh-WAH-nee

### **Evan Brown**

*2<sup>nd</sup> Round, 1<sup>st</sup> Pick, 16<sup>th</sup> Overall*

Position: Defender

Height: 5-11

Weight: 165

Birthdate: 5/1/1987

Birthplace (Citizenship): Raleigh, NC (USA)

College: Wake Forest University

High School: Millbrook HS

### **Jared Karkas**

*3<sup>rd</sup> Round, 1<sup>st</sup> Pick, 31<sup>st</sup> Overall*

Position: Defender

Height: 6-0

Weight: 160

Birthdate: 8/7/1986

Birthplace (Citizenship): Upland, Calif. (USA)

College: Azusa Pacific University

High School: Upland HS

### **Michael Fucito**

*4<sup>th</sup> Round, 1<sup>st</sup> Pick, 46<sup>th</sup> Overall*

Position: Midfielder/Forward

Height: 5-9

Weight: 165

Birthdate: 3/29/1986

Birthplace (Citizenship): Westford, Mass. (USA)

College: Harvard University

High School: Brooks School

Pronunciation: Fuh-see-too

**-SOUNDERS FC-**