USF study finds traffic cameras ineffective

By Roberto Roldan
CORRESPONDENT

The number of red light cameras in use at intersections across Tampa has more than doubled since 2011.
On Jan. 1, the Tampa Police Department (TPD) added 15 more traffic cameras, bringing the number of monitored intersections to nearly 20.
On its website, TPD cites the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) saying the “intersection safety program will be very important to the safety of our local roads.”

However, an analysis recently published by three USF researchers found one of IIHS’s own studies may prove red light cameras ineffective at preventing traffic fatalities.
The analysis, published in “Health Behavior and Policy Review,” was conducted by USF Health professors Barbara Langland-Orban, Etienne Pracht and John Large.
The group had already been examining red light camera studies since 2008 when it received a state grant to look for new sources of revenue for Florida’s trauma system.
After analyzing a large number of comparative studies, the group realized the science behind the traffic safety program was absent.
“What the larger studies at the time showed was quite the opposite to what we all thought,” Pracht said. “These red light cameras are actually associated with higher risks of crashes, particularly rear-end crashes.”

Graduation rates improve as state moves to performance-based funding model

By Divya Kumar
EDITOR IN CHIEF

As the Florida Board of Governors’ (BOG) announced Thursday its latest measure to move toward a method of performance-based funding for higher education, USF had an announcement of its own: its graduation rate, a metric that had come under great scrutiny from the BOG during the last legislative season, had reached 63 percent — a number higher than it has been in the past 15 years.

While state universities competed for a share of $20 million in additional performance-based funding appropriated by state Legislature to their base budgets, USF and UCF topped the recipient list at $1.26 million. This year, the BOG approved a new model of funding that would allow even a university’s base budget to be performance-based.

Based on a 50-point scale, any university that receives below 26 points could lose up to 1 percent in funding and would be ineligible for further funds from the performance-based pot, which will increase from $20 million to $50 million. This amount of money will also now be based on 10 metrics, instead of three. Additionally, if all universities score above 26 points, the bottom three performers would still be ineligible for a share of the $50 million.

Florida State University System Chancellor Marshall Criser said universities shouldn’t think of it as competing against each other for funds, but rather about providing more accountability to taxpayers to justify funding higher education.

“It’s Florida’s money,” Criser said. “It’s about how we can best and most responsibly invest Florida’s money. ... What we establish is credibility for why (legislators) should provide funding ... We have to fight for our seat at the table.”

USF Provost Ralph Wilcox said he thinks USF is positioned well as the allocation season begins, as demonstrated by the 63 percent graduation rate — a number that has increased by more than 20 percent since USF President Judy Genshaft was appointed in 2001.

Performance, he said, has been carefully monitored at USF and “intentional investments” in student success such as funding the SMART lab, 24/5 Library hours, undergraduate research, financial aid and other supplementary facets of an education have been at the forefront of planning.

“Quite frankly, the progress we’ve made over the past decade would make most people skeptical from fans as hiring Holtz in the first place Woolard fired the previous football coach, Jim Leavitt, in January 2010 after he allegedly struck a player at halftime in a 2009 game. Leavitt was USF’s first football coach, hired in 1995, about a decade before Woolard arrived. Leavitt then built the program from the ground up and led them to No.

Woolard leaves legacy of ups and downs

By Adam Fenster and Mike Mallory
SPORTS ANALYSIS

After a decade of serving as USF’s Athletic Director, Doug Woolard announced his retirement Thursday. In 2012, Woolard signed a contract extension that prolonged his role until June 2015 — a date that will now mark his departure from USF, though he could leave his current position sooner if a replacement is found.
The national search for a replacement is already underway and once someone is found, Woolard will be involved in Athletics at an unspecified role until retirement.

While Woolard said in a public statement that he made the decision after talks with his family during the holidays, sources for ESPN have speculated the retirement may have been forced due to the grumblings of unsatisfied fans.

But the legacy Woolard leaves behind is one that is mixed, particularly because of the results of recent years.

Woolard’s contract extension came after a successful men’s basketball season that featured the Bulls making it as far as the third round of the NCAA Tournament.
Likely the biggest success around that time was USF’s softball team, which reached the Women’s College World Series, and a string of NCAA tournament appearances by the men’s soccer team.

But that year also brought about, what some look at as, one of Woolard’s costliest mistakes.

After a 5-7 football season in 2011 under former coach Skip Holtz, Woolard signed Holtz to a five-year contract extension at $2 million annually. The Bulls were ranked in the top 25 early in the season, but Holtz was fired after going 3-9 a year later. USF Athletics is still paying the former coach his $2.5 million buyout, which was recently brought under the scrutiny of a state operational audit that stated severance pay could not equal more than 20 weeks of compensation.
Signing Holtz to a big contract extension and firing him a year later received just as much
PERFORMANCE
Continued from PAGE 1

people at other universities absolutely giddy because of how many balls we’ve been juggling,” Wilcox said. “As Florida continues to follow the national higher education trend of moving toward performance-based funding, Wilcox said USF will continue to change the culture of how education is commonly thought of, starting with the enrollment process.

“We are now making sure we are enrolling students that have demonstrated likelihood for success in Florida based on their high school performances,” he said. “That hadn’t always been the case in Florida, where the incentive until recently was less about how many students exited the backdoor with the skills, competency and degree than about how many students came in the front door.”

BOG Chairman Mori Hosseini said providing performance-based results would be necessary to show Legislature that higher education would have a return on investment. “If you want new money, you have to have skin in the game,” he said.

LEGACY
Continued from PAGE 1

2 national ranking for a brief moment in 2007.

In more than a decade with Leavitt, USF saw two sub-.500 seasons, one being in its inaugural season. Leavitt also led the Bulls to three bowl wins in five appearances compared to Holtz’s one bowl win in one appearance, and accomplished less than Leavitt did with many of the players Leavitt’s staff recruited.

While the football team still manages to make more money than what Athletics pumps into the program, reeling in $16,295,130 to the $12,027,850 that’s put in according to the latest figures USF Athletics reported to the Office of Postsecondary Education, success at Raymond James Stadium has been hard to come by.

After Holtz totaled a 16-21 record upon his firing, current coach Willie Taggart has struggled with a 2-10 season in an ongoing attempt to rebuild the program.

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While Woolard wasn’t able to bring a consistent winner in football and men’s basketball, arguably the two biggest collegiate sports, he was at the helm of a massive athletic facilities renovation project that was approved in December 2010.

The project brought stadiums to men’s and women’s soccer, softball and a new stadium to baseball, which are all capable of housing over 1,000 people. Prior to Woolard, soccer games were played in the track stadium and the softball team played on what looked like an intramural field.

In addition to a new athletics building, the Carol and Frank Morsani Football Complex was built, and the Pam and Les Muma Center was built to house men’s and women’s basketball. The Muma Center was attached to the renovated Sun Dome, another project completed during Woolard’s tenure.

Unfortunately for USF, even with a renovated Sun Dome, men’s basketball averaged 5,389 people per game in 2012-13, or roughly at half capacity, the lowest attendance record in the Big East.

Announced attendance at Raymond James Stadium dropped to the lowest it’s been in seven years, averaging 54,701 fans per game. The actual total tickets scanned at gates were around 20,000 per game.

Through the team’s struggles, fan support has taken a dive in recent years during Woolard’s tenure, as witnessed by attendance figures.

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But much of the support for football, and athletics as a whole, was affected by the recent change in conferences.

After joining a major conference in the Big East in 2005, the conference slowly dwindled, leading to its dismantling last year.

While many teams left to other big name conferences, under the guidance of Woolard, USF became part of the American Athletic Conference (AAC), a startup conference that will take years before it comes close to what the Big East was to football and basketball. The AAC will also lose a major athletic program in Louisville, a school that has reached the NCAA postseason in many sports of late, when it joins the Atlantic Coast Conference next season.

As a result, USF Athletics is no longer in a conference with the prestige and strength of schedule provided in major sports by the likes of a Pac-12, Big 12, Big Ten or SEC.

With Louisville gone, the road to football success in the AAC appears to go through Orlando and the surging UCF Knights, fresh off a Fiesta Bowl win.

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While UCF grabs national attention, USF’s most recent impact across the nation in a major sport was two years ago when the men’s basketball team headed to the mecca of the sport, Madison Square Garden, for the Big East tournament.

USF stood in the shadows of traditional basketball powerhouses like Syracuse, UConn, Georgetown and Notre Dame. But now, at 10-8 this season and 12 wins last season, USF is standing in the shadows of Cincinnati, Louisville, SMU and five other teams for a chance at the AAC tournament in Memphis.

Woolard hired Stan Heath to coach men’s basketball in 2007 after two straight NCAA Tournament appearances at Arkansas and an 82-71 record. So far, Heath led the Bulls to the NIT in his third year and the NCAA Tournament two years ago, compiling an 85-110 record at USF prior to this season.

As a longer tenured coach than Taggart, the basketball program under Heath is sure to be reviewed closely by a new Athletic Director. It will certainly be reviewed closer than sports like soccer and softball, which have head coaches with long tenures and consistent success, while Heath’s squads have been over .500 twice in six years.

Though Heath said Monday he’s completely focused on basketball amid Woolard’s departure, he also said he was initially concerned for Woolard.

“I was sad in a little way because he hired me and gave me an opportunity,” Heath said. “We had a really good relationship. I was a little sad and I’m certainly going to miss him, but after I spent some time with him and we talked, I just saw him have relief and a smile on his face. It’s like he was ready, and I’m happy for him in that way. He was happy so it made me feel better about it.”

While the new athletic director will inherit facilities on par with most universities across the nation, those facilities need to be filled with fans. He or she will also inherit the lack of success in the revenue-producing programs.

Finding a way to win in football and men’s basketball will likely be the next USF Athletic Director’s prime objective.

Bulls cornerback arrested for marijuana

USF redshirt sophomore cornerback Kenneth Durden was arrested Saturday night at his on-campus Holly apartment residence after USF police responded to a complaint of possible drug use.

According to an arrest affidavit, Durden allowed entry to police and handed them a clear bag of cannabis which totaled 21.7 grams. Durden was charged possession of cannabis, a third-degree felony and put on a $2,000 bond.

Durden started 11 games for the Bulls and collected 32 tackles, a fumble recovery, an interception, and returned nine punts for 64 yards.

— Staff report
end collisions. People in the trauma system didn’t want to become dependent on something they were trying to prevent.”

In their most recent analysis, the group looked at the IIHS study conducted in 2011 that claimed red light cameras reduced the risk of fatal red light running crashes by 24 percent.

After looking at more than 99 U.S. cities, researchers from IIHS said their study showed that red light cameras saved 159 lives between 2004 and 2008. They also claimed 845 deaths could have been prevented if cameras were operational in all large U.S. cities during that time.

When the USF researchers began their independent analysis of the data, Pracht said they saw that Phoenix, Ariz. had an astronomically high rate of traffic fatalities during the time IIHS was conducting its study, accounting for more than half the variation in the IIHS study.

When USF researchers attempted to replicate the study leaving out Phoenix as an outlier, the numbers changed dramatically.

“All of a sudden we went from seeing the significant reduction in fatalities that IIHS claimed to seeing no significant change at all,” Pracht said. “Basically their study was a comparison of apples to oranges.”

The problem, researchers said, was in IIHS’s methodology. Many cities that installed red light cameras, like Phoenix, started out with a rate of traffic fatalities much higher than the average. USF researchers also pointed out that many of the cities in the control group started out with less than two fatalities a year.

“It’s very misleading,” Pracht said. “When you look at one group and see that they had an average of 10 or 11 fatalities that dropped to around eight or nine. … (Then) look at their control group who had less than two and see it hasn’t changed and therefore the cameras must be the thing that was effective.”

Pracht said the data collected by IIHS researchers, when interpreted correctly, actually showed there was no tangible benefit to using the technology.

Another issue many researchers have with red light cameras is the reduction of yellow light intervals.

An investigation by 10 News Tampa Bay found that, in 2013, the Florida Department of Transportation approved a rule change allowing for local municipalities to shorten the length of yellow lights.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, a one-second increase in yellow light intervals decreases severe red light related crashes by 40 percent.

Intersections with red light cameras in Tampa were found to have yellow light intervals below the state’s four-second minimum at two intersections.

Pracht said his research into the efficacy of red light cameras over the years has lead him to believe that public officials have chosen to do what is most cost-effective instead of what is in the interest of public safety.

“The objective of these cameras is to generate revenue,” he said. “If it was a safety issue why would they decrease yellow light intervals, which have been shown to cause more accidents? In order to give out more tickets. There are simple solutions, we just aren’t doing them.”

The USF men’s basketball team is under review by the NCAA concerning freshman center John Egbunu and his allegedly falsified age documents and school transcripts, according to ESPN’s Jeff Goodman and Brett McMurphy.

USF did not confirm whether an investigation was taking place, but USF Associate Athletics Director for Communications Brian Siegrest released a statement acknowledging the situation.

“We are aware of potential concerns involving one of our student-athletes,” he said. “We have initiated a review of the matter and have asked the NCAA to assist us. The student-athlete was completely certified and cleared by the NCAA Eligibility Center prior to enrolling.”

The review reportedly started with complaints from AAU coach Linzy Davis, who coached Egbunu as well as his son, and former USF signee, Drew Davis.

Egbunu has started 16 of 17 games for the Bulls this season, averaging eight points and 6.9 rebounds per game.

Linzy Davis told ESPN Egbunu lived with him in his junior year of high school, but hasn’t spoken to him in more than a year. Linzy Davis told ESPN Heath didn’t honor his son Drew’s commitment and Drew went to prep school, while Heath told ESPN that Drew was a non-qualifier and was not admitted to USF.

— Staff report
Contemporary Art Museum celebrates 25 years with new exhibit

By Quincy Walters
STAFF WRITER

Nestled behind the Marshall Student Center is one of USF’s well-regarded assets — one that many students don’t know exists.

For 25 years, USF’s Contemporary Art Museum has been a vanguard for facilitating art in the community, and Friday night it celebrated its anniversary with a sizeable crowd, fancy fare and the opening of “CAM@25: Social Engagement,” the museum’s newest exhibition featuring artists from Latin America.

The museum was established in 1989, and has since showcased the work of artists from around the world, as well as that of USF students.

Margaret Miller, director of the museum, said it seemed like “just the other day” when the museum first opened.

“We’ve been programming from the very beginning ambitious shows that include artists from other parts of the world,” she said. “We started out with Swiss artists, then American artists, and here we are with an artist from Rio, an artist from Mexico City and an artist group from Cuba.”

The artists featured in the museum’s newest exhibit mingled with guests and answered questions about their art.

Alexandre Arrechea, a Cuban-born artist, presented “Transportable City,” an exhibit of large tents shaped and positioned in the manner of Cuban architecture. The tents were arranged outside the museum. The work was done in 2000, while Arrechea was a member of Los Carpinteros, an art collective comprised of other Cuban artists. Three years after “Transportable City,” he decided to embark on a career as a solo artist.

“The piece is inspired by the migrating movement (from Cuba to the U.S.),” Arrechea said. “But then it became a piece that appealed to the movement around the world . . . after 14 years, I think it continues to talk about an issue that is relevant.”

This isn’t the first time Arrechea has been to USF.

In 2004, he said he collaborated with Los Carpinteros and USF’s Graphicstudio to premiere an exhibition called “Inventing the World,” a collection of Los Carpinteros’ work since the 1990s that dealt with “the idea of inventing the world, or designing basic needs for organized human life.”

Pedro Reyes stood next to his exhibit of musical instruments made from guns, conversing with other patrons. Reyes, who was born in and lives in Mexico City, said he piece is art and “a call to action.”

The piece, “Disarm,” was his attempt to deal with that issue, Reyes said.

Reyes obtained the weapons from Mexico’s military. The country’s military regularly destroys old weapons, and then buries them, Reyes said. When he had the weapons, he enlisted the help of musicians, smiths and welders.

There’s a guitar made from machine gun magazine clips and handguns. There’s another guitar made from a helmet. Revolvers uphold an instrument that resembles a xylophone and has what appears to be bell chimes made out of the barrels of large weapons. Six guns, fused together side-by-side appear to make a pan flute.

“In Mexico, we have recently — in the last 10 years — seen an increase in violence, because (of) all the weapons that come from the United States,” he said. “It’s very easy — too easy — to buy weapons in the United States.”

Musical instruments are the opposite of weapons, Reyes said. The process, for him, was “turning an instrument of death into an instrument of life.”

At 7 p.m. on Thursday in Theatre II, there will be a performance of the instruments and a post-performance discussion. The event is called “Amendment to the amendment/understand your ground.”

The discussion, Reyes said, is a democratic exercise where people will be able to voice their opinions about the use of guns in the U.S. and the Constitutional amendment that allows their possession.

“I think the regulation in place the best we can have?” he asked. “Or should there be something that can be changed?”

CAM@25 will be on display until March 8.

Within the next few years, Margaret Miller said she hopes the museum can have a more influential presence and pose relevant questions. The museum, she said, has exhibitions planned for the next two years.

This summer, the museum plans to host artist Duke Riley, who was recently featured in the New York Times for training pigeons to fly from Key West to Havana, Cuba to carry cameras and smuggle cigars. Miller said Riley plans to do a project that encourages community involvement.

“We’ll do projects that are very socially engaged,” she said. “That are about asking the question ‘Can art be transformative — a catalyst for change?’”
SWEAT
Continued from PAGE 8

School when he helped his team earn a state soccer championship.
Delgado, who now coaches at the University of Tampa, said Sweat has grown as a person and a player.
“When I started coaching and meeting him, you could tell that he was immature as far as off-the-field, but his maturity on the field was far beyond,” Delgado said.

As the years went on, Delgado was able to witness Sweat’s development as a well-rounded student athlete.
During their three years together, the team went to back-to-back state championships, winning one, while Sweat became two-time Pinellas County Player of the Year.
It’s these titles that Delgado thinks helped Sweat improve as a player.
“His leadership really grew,” Delgado said. “His mentality changed quite a bit. He set goals for himself at a young age and he realized that he wasn’t far from reaching those goals.”

Delgado said he looks forward to still being a part of Sweat’s professional career, a career that was made from self-determination to constantly train and practice to meet his goals.
Sweat and the Columbus Crew begin their season March 8 against D.C. United.

WEBSTER
Continued from PAGE 8

As one of Jim Leavitt’s (USF’s first football coach) marquee recruits, Webster flourished at USF as a physical corner.

In his last season with USF, on a defense that more than struggled totaling only two interceptions, Webster led the team in tackles with a career high 82 tackles while also recording six pass breakups, two sacks and three forced fumbles.

Ironically enough, Webster will be featured on a Broncos team boasting the top offense in the NFL, while Daniels is on a roster that holds the spot of No. 1 defense in the league.

The Super Bowl is set to take place Feb. 2 at 6:30 p.m. in MetLife Stadium.
— Staff report

BULLS
Continued from PAGE 8

Webster has been seen on the field more with his team. Playing in 14 games, starting in two, Webster finished the regular season with 41 tackles, a forced fumble and an interception.

— Staff report

Contact: oracleopinion@gmail.com

The Oracle needs opinion columnists.
Student-athletes should be held to same academic scrutiny

Student-athletes have been gaining attention in some headlines around the country, not only for their usual wins or losses at tournaments and bowl games, but also for their reading ability — or lack thereof.

Recently, Mary Willingham conducted a study of athletes at the University of North Carolina and found a small percentage whose reading ability fell below a third grade level.

CNN reports that some athletes in question, based on entry exam scores, wouldn’t have been admitted to the university if they weren’t athletes.

UNC reportedly denounced Willingham’s study, with a second independent analysis of her research pending. CNN then requested public records from 37 universities across the country, finding that most schools had between 7 and 18 percent of athletes who could only read at an elementary school level, or the equivalent of 16 on the ACT or 400 on the SAT. The national average for the reading portion of the tests are 500 for SAT and 20 for the ACT.

While these scores are only a small portion of the country’s thousands of athletes, and some universities told CNN that certain athletes only aim for scores high enough for NCAA eligibility and entrance exams are just one factor in accepting student-athletes, these athletes should be held to the same standards as every other student.

The title of “student-athlete” has two parts in a simple sense: First, the athletics part, which these athletes are highly scrutinized for in order to produce a multi-million dollar industry of entertainment that garners donations and attention of alumni and fans across the country. Second, the academics part — but in light of CNN’s findings, this criteria may not be held to the standard it should.

In recent days, the education of other athletes have been questioned, such as that of the USF men’s basketball team following an NCAA review of freshman center John Egbunu’s eligibility, sources reported to ESPN.

Though many college athletic programs offer services for student-athletes, such as USF’s Academic Enrichment Center that offers tutoring and mentoring services, it is shocking to hear that any group of students is skating by, either intentionally and cheating the educational system, or unintentionally and being cheated out of an education for the sake of a football or basketball game.

No matter how well a student-athlete plays, he or she is still a student and should be expected to receive the same education from a university and be held to the same educational standards as every other student at the university.

Alex Rosenthal is a sophomore majoring in mass communications.

Retouching photos leaves bigger issues untouched

When the blog Jezebel, the self-proclaimed “home of shiny happy ladies” of the Internet and known for its pro-women leanings, offered a $10,000 reward for un-retouched photos from Vogue’s photoshoot of the actress Lena Dunham, feminists harkened from all corners and opened up Pandora’s box on the touchy issue of retouching photos of women.

The bounty put out by Jezebel was allegedly an effort to take on the fashion magazine and advertising industry — industries that in the age of Photoshop and the likes have been able to nip, tuck and airbrush away the features that differentiate the body of an average woman from a career supermodel.

The intentions of Jezebel may have indeed been good.

Studies, such as the U.K. based one in 2005 that has since been frequently cited globally, found that exposure to ultra-thin models had a direct correlation on adolescent girls’ negative sense of body image and self-esteem.

But as many critics have pointed out, the reward almost seemed to be a voyeuristic intrusion of privacy to put Dunham’s un-perfected anatomy on display in the limelight.

While Dunham’s un-retouched features are no big secret and can be seen on full display on her HBO show “Girls,” which regularly receives viewership spikes over the controversy generated by the glory of her un-retouched nudity. However, for the website to call for the original images seems to imply that Dunham’s photos had been altered to be more aesthetically pleasing for readers of the magazine, and that there is something inherently inferior about her actual image.

Why these images of celebrities, who are already revered in society, are re-touched in the first place raises an interesting question. It is not really for us to accept them, as they have already forged their way into achieving widespread acceptance.

It seems as though these ideals of a “perfected” anatomy that make us conscious of our bodies’ variations and prey off insecurities are used to sell concepts and lifestyles.

But Jezebel, great as their intentions may be, also seems to be using Dunham’s bodies to sell a concept of its own — one that is perhaps different from the glamorous touched-up images found in fashion magazines, but nonetheless, a sense of identity or cause.

But whether it is OK for the human body — female or male — to be objectified as a canvas of art used to sell things — even positive or empowering messages — is an issue that the call for Dunham photos has left largely untouched.

Divya Kumar is a senior majoring in mass communications and economics.
**Classifieds**

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**Crossword**

**by EUGENE SHEFFER**

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**C R Y P T O Q U I P**


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T o d a y ’ s C r y p t o q u i p C l u e : W ’ e q u a l s S

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

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Men’s Soccer

Sweat’s goals pay off in MLS SuperDraft

By Chris Lemus
CORRESPONDENT

When Alex Delgado, Ben Sweat’s former high school coach at Palm Harbor University High School, first saw the USF defender play, he said he knew he saw potential.

“I’ve seen Ben play when he was younger with his older brother Jamison,” Delgado said. “He was going to be something special playing with those older kids.”

On Thursday, when Major League Soccer (MLS) commissioner Don Garber stepped in front of hundreds of fans at the Philadelphia Convention, an announcement was made that spoke to what Delgado saw: Sweat was the No. 14 overall pick to the Columbus Crew.

Sweat was one of 50 Division I seniors invited to the MLS combine this year, where he was on one of four teams playing for the MLS club staff over the course of five days leading up to the draft.

After losing the first round of the NCAA tournament to North Carolina on Nov. 21, he began his focus on the combine with few days off.

“Since that Monday (after the North Carolina game) I’ve been doing training, fitness and working out non-stop,” Sweat said. “I probably gave myself two or three full days off...I didn’t want to lose anything from the NC game. I was in wonderful shape this year, good form, so I wanted to keep that.”

As a Bull, Sweat helped the team make four straight NCAA tournament appearances and was the nation’s 27th best college soccer player according to TopDrawerSoccer.com.

Sweat completed his collegiate career this past fall by helping the Bulls win the inaugural American Athletic Conference (AAC) championship with a dramatic 0-0 (6-5) penalty kick shootout against UConn.

“Being a professional soccer player, either here or in Europe, has been my main goal since I was a young kid,” Sweat said. “I tried to do everything right leading up to this point.”

Junior midfielder Wes Charpie is one of Sweat’s USF teammates who joined his winter break training sessions and said his love for training is a big reason Sweat has made it to the MLS.

“(His extra work) is definitely the reason why he’s gotten so far in where he is today,” Charpie said. “I hope that I follow in the same footsteps.”

Sweat now joins notable USF Bulls that have gone on to play in the MLS, including Jeff Attinella of Real Salt Lake who was also selected 14th in the draft and MLS champion Dom Dwyer of Sporting KC who was taken 16th.

Dwyer tweeted that he was “buzzing” for Sweat and that Columbus “got themselves a player” after Sweat’s selection.

With the 14th pick in the 2014 MLS SuperDraft, the Columbus Crew selected senior USF defender Ben Sweat, completing his dream of playing soccer on the professional level.