



January 21, 2009

## Sounders FC Signs Defender Taylor Graham

**RENTON, WASH.** – The Seattle Sounders FC has signed defender Taylor Graham to a Major League Soccer contract, the team announced today.

Graham, who was All-USL First Division and finalist for defender of the year in 2008, played three seasons with the USL-1 Sounders, including their championship seasons of 2005 and 2007. He was voted USL-1 defender of the year in 2005 and was twice voted first team all-league. He made the second team in 2007.

The 28-year-old graduate of Stanford University becomes the fourth player on the Sounders FC roster to have played for the USL Sounders, joining Sebastien Le Toux, Sanna Nyassi and Chris Eylander.

“There’s a much greater sense of pride making the leap to the MLS having played for the USL Sounders,” said Graham. “Initially, my goal was to join the team. Now the goal is to help bring a championship to Seattle.”

Originally drafted 33<sup>rd</sup> overall by Kansas City in the 2003 MLS SuperDraft, Graham played two seasons with the Wizards. He appeared in 19 matches, including 17 in 2004 for the MLS Cup finalists and Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup winners.

Graham spent the 2005 season with Seattle before finding his way back into MLS in 2006, signing with the New York Red Bulls. Over a season-and-a-half, he appeared in 15 matches for New York before returning to the Sounders midway through the 2007 season.

“Taylor is a center back with good size and presence,” said Sounders FC head coach Sigi Schmid. “He is very good at organizing and making the players around him better.”

After walking-on his freshman year, Graham helped Stanford reach the NCAA tournament four times, advancing to the NCAA College Cup semifinal as a junior and final as a senior. He was named All Pac-10 first team his senior year, and was voted first team All-Academic Pac-10 twice.

The Sounders FC begin its inaugural MLS season by hosting the New York Red Bulls at Qwest Field on March 19.

Transaction: Seattle Sounders (MLS) – Signed D Taylor Graham

Position: Defender

Height: 6-4

Weight: 190

Birthdate: 6/3/1980

Hometown (Citizenship): Fair Oaks, Calif. (USA)

Previous Clubs: Kansas City (MLS, 2003-04), Seattle (USL, 2005), New York (MLS, 2006-07), Seattle (USL-1/2007-08)

College: Stanford University (1998-2002)

**-SOUNDERS FC-**