



Thorns

# Portland Thorns select Sandra Yu, Gabby Seiler and Bella Geist in 2018 NWSL College Draft

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Portland Thorns draft picks



By [Jamie Goldberg](#) | [The Oregonian/OregonLive](#)

The [Portland Thorns](#) selected midfielders Sandra Yu and Gabby Seiler in the first round of the 2018 NWSL College Draft Thursday and took goalkeeper Bella Geist in the third round.

The Thorns selected Yu out of the University of Notre Dame with the No. 8 overall pick in the draft.

Yu recorded a career-high 21 points with eight goals and five assists in 2017. In 2017, she was also a United Soccer Coaches third-team All-American selection, was named to the first-team All-East Region and earned first-team All-Atlantic Coast Conference honors. She has represented the United States Women's National Team at the U-23 and U-20 levels.

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"Our priority was to get players that are very versatile," Thorns coach Mark Parsons said. "(Yu) is smart, versatile and technical. We were fortunate to get her at No. 8. She can play anywhere in the midfield or on the front line and could even play at fullback if we needed her."

Portland selected Seiler out of the University of Florida with the No. 9 overall pick in the draft.

Seiler transferred to Florida from the University of Georgia in 2015. She led Florida with eight assists and finished second in goals with six in 2017. She was named to the United Soccer Coaches All-American third team and was a first-team All-Southeast Region selection following the 2017 season. She has represented the United States U-23 Women's National Team.

"Gabby is good enough to play in our starting 11 tomorrow. That's how good she is," Parsons said. "She's one of the few players in the draft that we could say that about. She's versatile as well. She can play fullback, holding mid or attacking mid on the left or right side."

Yu and Seiler are not expected to join the Thorns at the start of preseason. Yu is in graduate school at Notre Dame and Seiler is playing basketball at the University of Florida.

"Maybe (Seiler) dropped in the draft because she's going to be playing basketball for Florida," Parsons said. "It will take a little longer for both (Yu and Seiler) to finish school, but we're fortunate to be bringing them in. They are quality players and people."

The Thorns traded their 2019 third round draft pick to the Chicago Red Stars for the No. 29 overall pick in this year's draft. With the No. 29 overall pick, Portland then selected Geist. Geist was a four-year starter for Oregon State. She finished her college career with 392 saves, a .778 save percentage and 18 shutouts in 72 games.

Parsons said that Geist was the only goalkeeper that Portland targeted in the draft and it was a priority for them to bring her in. Geist has spent the last few years working with Thorns goalkeeper coach Nadine Angerer.

The Thorns expect Geist to come in as their third-string goalkeeper behind Adrianna Franch and Britt Eckerstrom. Still, they believe she can develop into a key player in the NWSL in the future.

"She has so much potential," Angerer said. "She's good with her feet. She can control an 18-yard box. She's great on corner kicks... Now, it's up to me to train her and help her reach her potential."

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