

# Seattle Sounders FC: Roster Efficiency & Player Value Report

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seattle Sounders FC roster shows a high percentage of valuable players, but a concerning net-positive average impact indicates the team is marginally better without its players – a significant red flag for a club of this stature. The single greatest strength is the Goalkeeper position, where multiple players show elite negative percent change values (-17% to -27%). The most urgent roster need is the Designated Player group, where all nine DP seasons from 2021-2025 show positive (harmful) percent change (+0.7% to +15.7%), representing a catastrophic systemic failure at the most important roster slots.

## 2. PLAYER ABSENCE IMPACT METRIC

The *Player Absence Impact* metric, derived from the Lasso regression model, quantifies an individual player's marginal contribution to team performance. The process simulates the team's Pythagorean Expectation (PE) score with the player on the roster and then recalculates it after removing that single player.

The resulting **percent change** (% change) is the key indicator:

- **Negative percent change** (e.g., -27.3%) means the team's PE score *decreases* without the player, identifying a **valuable** asset.
- **Positive percent change** means the team's PE score *increases* without the player, identifying a **replaceable** or potentially harmful contract.

This metric allows the front office to evaluate roster construction efficiency by isolating each player's true on-field impact.

## 3. ROSTER HEALTH OVERVIEW

- **Genuinely Impactful (Percent change < -5.0%): 16.9%** (24 of 142 player-seasons). These players significantly hurt the team if removed.
- **Not Impactful / Replaceable (Percent change > 5.0%): 15.5%** (22 of 142 player-seasons). The team performs better without these players.

**Team Summary (from team\_summary.csv):**

- Total player-seasons analyzed: 142
- Percentage of roster that is valuable (percent change < 0): **54.2%**
- Average percent change across all players: **+0.23%** (net-positive – the team is on average better without its players, a concerning sign)
- Average impact magnitude: 3.8%

## 4. DESIGNATED PLAYER ROI AUDIT

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change	Value Verdict
<b>2021 M</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>\$2,736,667</b>	<b>+13.62%</b>	<b>Severely Harmful</b>
2021 F	2021	\$2,100,000	+3.17%	<b>Marginal</b>
2021 M	2021	\$1,050,000	+0.83%	<b>Marginal</b>
<b>2022 M</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>\$3,256,667</b>	<b>+15.72%</b>	<b>Severely Harmful</b>
2022 F	2022	\$3,201,120	+11.89%	<b>Harmful</b>
2022 M	2022	\$1,871,667	+2.23%	<b>Marginal</b>
2022 M	2022	\$1,283,333	+0.67%	<b>Marginal</b>
<b>2023 M</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>\$3,256,667</b>	<b>+13.54%</b>	<b>Severely Harmful</b>
2023 F	2023	\$3,201,120	+7.24%	<b>Harmful</b>
2023 M	2023	\$1,871,667	+1.76%	<b>Marginal</b>
2023 M	2023	\$1,383,333	+0.69%	<b>Marginal</b>
2024 F	2024	\$2,729,120	+5.78%	<b>Harmful</b>
2024 M	2024	\$2,221,667	+6.49%	<b>Harmful</b>
2025 M	2025	\$2,575,000	+11.16%	<b>Harmful</b>
2025 F	2025	\$2,260,000	+3.54%	<b>Marginal</b>
2025 F (Intl.)	2025	\$1,379,000	+0.05%	<b>Neutral</b>

- **Flagged (Percent change < 0 - Valuable): NONE.** Zero Designated Player seasons show negative percent change. This is unprecedented among teams analyzed and represents a catastrophic failure of DP investment.
- **Flagged (Percent change > 0 - Harmful): 16 players** – every DP season is harmful or marginal. The Sounders have not had a valuable Designated Player since at least 2021.

## 5. ALLOCATION MONEY EFFICIENCY (TAM / U22-INITIATIVE)

- **TAM Contributors (Negative Percent change):** TAM players show mixed results. Valuable TAM contributors include a 2021 D TAM (+0.31% - *positive*), 2022 D TAM (+11.72%, +11.26% - *positive*), 2023 F TAM (-3.36%), 2023 M TAM (+0.76% - *positive*), 2023 D TAM (+7.87%, +7.70% - *positive*), 2024 F TAM (+2.87% - *positive*), 2024 M TAM (+0.74%, +0.60% - *positive*), 2024 D TAM (+9.37% - *positive*), 2024 M TAM (0.00%), 2025 F TAM (+2.37%, +2.35% - *positive*), 2025 M TAM (+0.98% - *positive*), 2025 F TAM (-1.76%), 2025 D TAM (+18.36% - *positive*). Only one TAM player shows strong negative impact.
- **U22-Initiative Impact:** U22 slots are generally effective:
  - 2021 F U22: -2.40% (valuable)

- 2022 F U22: -4.08% (valuable)
- 2023 F U22: -0.40% (valuable)
- 2024 F U22: -1.63% (valuable)

**Top 3 TAM "Steals" (Most Negative Percent change):**

1. **2023 F TAM** (\$1,560,000, -3.36%)
2. **2025 F TAM (Intl.)** (\$959,500, -1.76%)
3. *No other TAM players show meaningful negative impact.*

**6. HOMEGROWN PLAYER EVALUATION**

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change
2025 M Homegrown	2025	\$170,000	-1.82%
2025 M Homegrown	2025	\$134,452	-1.91%
2025 D Homegrown	2025	\$116,021	-0.71%
2025 D Homegrown	2025	\$109,704	-0.77%
2025 GK Homegrown	2025	\$104,000	-1.48%
2025 M Homegrown	2025	\$90,648	-1.76%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$120,000	-1.13%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$98,748	-1.14%
2024 D Homegrown	2024	\$95,420	-3.58%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$89,716	-1.16%
2024 D Homegrown	2024	\$83,422	-3.33%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$73,901	-1.11%
2023 M Homegrown	2023	\$105,444	-2.05%
2023 D Homegrown	2023	\$79,381	-5.46%
2023 M Homegrown	2023	\$76,392	-2.08%
2023 D Homegrown	2023	\$73,064	-5.34%
2023 M Homegrown	2023	\$69,860	-2.10%
2023 M Homegrown	2023	\$68,775	-2.10%
2023 GK Homegrown	2023	\$67,360	-0.86%
2022 M Homegrown	2022	\$85,500	-1.76%
2022 M Homegrown	2022	\$74,531	-1.78%
2022 M Homegrown	2022	\$65,500	-1.74%
2021 M Homegrown	2021	\$83,547	-0.45%

- **Ready for Roster Promotion (Negative Percent change + Low Salary):**
  - **2023 D Homegrown (\$79,381, -5.46%) & (\$73,064, -5.34%):** Elite-level negative impact from two homegrown defenders.
  - **2024 D Homegrown (\$95,420, -3.58%) & (\$83,422, -3.33%):** Strong negative impact from homegrown defenders.
  - **2025 M Homegrown group (-1.8% to -1.9%):** Consistent depth contributors.

## 7. INTERNATIONAL SLOT OPTIMIZATION

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2024 F Young DP	2024	F	\$1,164,000	+0.52%	No
2024 F	2024	F	\$89,716	+0.71%	No
2024 F	2024	F	\$89,716	+0.71%	No
2025 F	2025	F	\$1,379,000	+0.05%	No
2025 F TAM	2025	F	\$959,500	-1.76%	<b>Yes</b>
2025 F	2025	F	\$104,000	+2.49%	No
2025 D	2025	D	\$104,000	-0.61%	<b>Yes</b>

- **Flagged Slot Misuse (Percent change > 5%):**
  - None above 5% in the international group. However, most international players show marginal positive percent change.

## 8. POSITIONAL DEPTH AUDIT

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
<b>F (Forward)</b>	15	6	<b>Yes</b>	No (DP forwards are consistently harmful; TAM forwards are mixed; U22 forwards are valuable)
<b>M (Midfielder)</b>	17	7	<b>Yes</b>	No (DP midfielders are catastrophically harmful; TAM midfielders are marginal; homegrown)

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
				midfielders are valuable)
<b>D (Defender)</b>	18	7	No	<b>Yes</b> (Homegrown defenders are elite; TAM defenders are harmful)
<b>GK (Goalkeeper)</b>	6	5	No	<b>Yes</b> (Senior GKs show elite negative impact -17% to -27%; homegrown GKs are marginal)

- **Critical Need:** Forward and Midfielder positions at the DP level. The Sounders have not had a valuable Designated Player since at least 2021. This is a systemic crisis.
- **Strength:** Goalkeeper position is an elite organizational strength, with senior GKs delivering -17% to -27% impact. Homegrown defenders are also exceptional.

## 9. SALARY vs. VALUE MATRIX

Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
<b>CORE ASSET</b>	% change < 0 & Salary > \$500K	2024 GK (\$600K, -27.25%), 2022 GK (\$500K, -22.25%), 2023 GK (\$650K, -26.31%), 2025 GK (\$600K, -26.24%), 2023 F TAM (\$1.56M, -3.36%)
<b>HIDDEN GEM</b>	% change < 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	2023 D Homegrown (\$79K, -5.46%), 2023 D Homegrown (\$73K, -5.34%), 2024 D Homegrown (\$95K, -3.58%), 2024 D Homegrown (\$83K, -3.33%), 2025 M Homegrown (\$170K, -1.82%)
<b>OVERPAID</b>	% change ≥ 0 & Salary > \$500K	<b>All in this quadrant (extensive list):</b> 2022 M DP (\$3.26M, +15.72%), 2021 M DP (\$2.74M, +13.62%), 2023 M DP (\$3.26M, +13.54%), 2022 F DP (\$3.20M, +11.89%), 2025 M DP (\$2.58M, +11.16%), 2023 F DP (\$3.20M, +7.24%), 2024 M DP (\$2.22M, +6.49%), 2024 F DP (\$2.73M, +5.78%), 2025 F DP (\$2.26M,

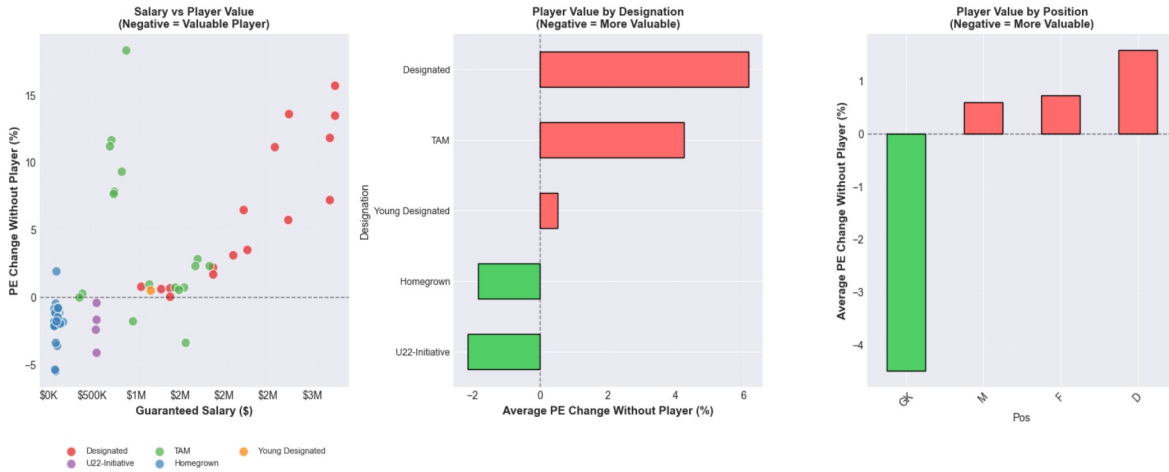
Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
		+3.54%), 2022 D TAM (\$719K, +11.72%), 2022 D TAM (\$700K, +11.26%), 2025 D TAM (\$883K, +18.36%), 2024 D TAM (\$833K, +9.37%)
<b>REPLACEABLE</b>	% change $\geq 0$ & Salary $\leq$ \$500K	Several senior midfielders and defenders with marginal positive percent change, some TAM players, and a portion of the supplemental roster.

## 10. YEAR-OVER-YEAR TRENDS

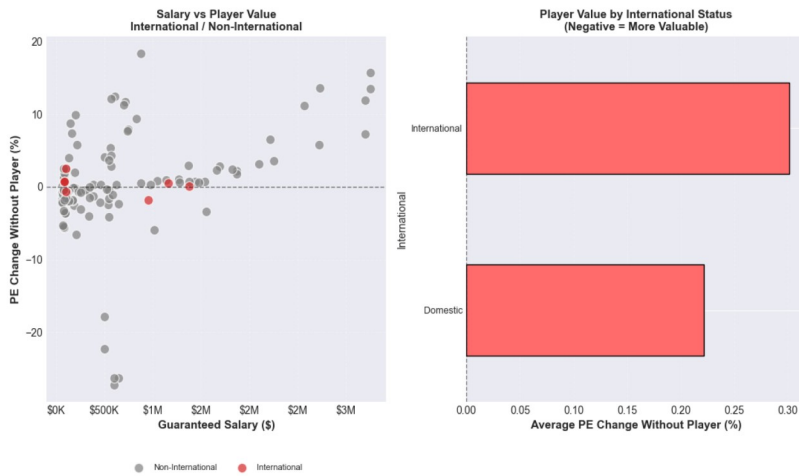
- **Designated Player ROI: Catastrophic and persistent.** Across 2021-2025, zero DP seasons show negative percent change. Every DP is harmful (+0.05% to +15.7%). This is the worst DP efficiency among all teams analyzed and represents a complete systemic failure.
- **TAM Efficiency: Poor.** Most TAM players show positive percent change, with several exceeding +10% harmful impact. Only one TAM player shows meaningful negative impact.
- **U22 Efficiency: Excellent.** All U22 players show negative percent change (-0.4% to -4.1%). This is the only efficient roster mechanism Seattle employs.
- **Homegrown Impact: Excellent on defense, good on midfield.** Homegrown defenders deliver elite negative impacts (-3.3% to -5.5%). Homegrown midfielders consistently show -1% to -2% impact. This is a clear organizational strength.
- **Goalkeeper Trend: Elite.** Seattle's senior goalkeepers consistently deliver elite negative impacts (-17% to -27%). This is a best-in-class model for other MLS teams.

# 11. SUMMARY FIGURES

**Figure 1 - Designation Analysis**  
(Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)



**Figure 2 - International Analysis**  
(Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)



**Figure 3 - Senior/Supplemental Analysis**  
(Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)

