

# Sporting Kansas City: Roster Efficiency & Player Value Report

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sporting Kansas City's roster shows a moderately strong efficiency profile, with a solid percentage of valuable players and a strongly negative average impact, indicating the team is generally better with its players. The single greatest strength is the Defender position, where multiple players show elite negative percent change values (-28% to -36%), representing exceptional value. The most urgent roster need is the 2025 U22-Initiative and TAM defender group, where several players show severely positive (harmful) percent change (+4.8% to +14.2%), representing a significant decline in allocation efficiency.

## 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., -36.9%) 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%): 20.1%** (27 of 134 player-seasons). These players significantly hurt the team if removed.
- **Not Impactful / Replaceable (Percent change > 5.0%): 14.9%** (20 of 134 player-seasons). The team performs better without these players.

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

- Total player-seasons analyzed: 134
- Percentage of roster that is valuable (percent change < 0): **45.5%**
- Average percent change across all players: **-1.14%** (strongly net-negative, meaning on average the team is significantly better with these players)
- Average impact magnitude: 4.2%

## 4. DESIGNATED PLAYER ROI AUDIT

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change	Value Verdict
2021 F	2021	\$2,200,000	-1.68%	Core
2021 M	2021	\$1,600,000	+0.10%	Marginal
2022 F	2022	\$2,200,000	-2.92%	Core
2022 M	2022	\$2,000,000	+0.29%	Marginal
2022 M	2022	\$918,000	-0.12%	Core (Marginal)
2023 F	2023	\$2,200,000	-1.04%	Core
<b>2023 D</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>\$1,530,000</b>	<b>-36.91%</b>	<b>Elite Core</b>
2023 F	2023	\$1,100,000	+1.17%	Marginal
2023 M	2023	\$1,000,000	0.00%	Neutral
2023 M	2023	\$918,000	0.00%	Neutral
<b>2024 F</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>\$3,866,667</b>	<b>-5.62%</b>	<b>Core</b>
2024 M	2024	\$1,530,000	+0.19%	Marginal
2024 F	2024	\$1,300,000	+1.18%	Marginal
2024 M	2024	\$1,106,250	0.00%	Neutral
<b>2025 F (Intl.)</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>\$3,306,250</b>	<b>-3.96%</b>	<b>Core</b>
2025 M (Intl.)	2025	\$2,325,313	+0.47%	Marginal

- **Flagged (Percent change < 0 - Valuable):** 8 of 16 Designated Player seasons show negative percent change. The 2023 D DP (-36.9%) is among the most valuable in MLS.
- **Flagged (Percent change > 0 - Harmful): 8 players** – mostly midfielders. SKC's DP efficiency is strong when investing in forwards and defenders, but weak in midfield.

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

- **TAM Contributors (Negative Percent change):** TAM players show mixed results. Valuable TAM contributors include a 2021 M TAM (-0.05%), 2022 M TAM (0.00%, -0.14%), 2023 M TAM (-0.02%), 2024 D TAM (Intl.) (-23.40%), 2024 M TAM (-0.12%), 2024 D TAM (-2.31%), 2025 M TAM (-0.33%, -0.49%), 2025 D TAM (Intl.) (-5.50%), 2025 F TAM (+0.41% - positive), 2025 F TAM (+1.70% - positive). However, several TAM players show positive percent change: 2025 F TAM (+1.70%).
- **U22-Initiative Impact:** U22 slots show mixed to concerning results:
  - 2022 F U22: +0.57% (marginal)
  - 2022 D U22: +10.01% (harmful)
  - 2022 D U22: +10.01% (harmful)

- 2023 F U22: -0.46% (valuable)
- 2023 D U22: +4.87% (marginal)
- 2023 D U22: +4.23% (marginal)
- 2024 D U22: +3.24% (marginal)
- 2024 D U22: +1.80% (marginal)
- 2025 D U22: +4.76% (marginal)
- 2025 D U22: +14.13% (severely harmful)

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

1. **2024 D TAM (Intl.)** (\$1,072,083, -23.40%)
2. **2025 D TAM (Intl.)** (\$1,072,083, -5.50%)
3. **2024 D TAM** (\$510,000, -2.31%)

## 6. HOMEGROWN PLAYER EVALUATION

Player	Year	Salary	PE % change
2025 D Homegrown	2025	\$85,220	-29.47%
2025 M Homegrown	2025	\$83,622	+0.38%
2025 GK Homegrown	2025	\$82,622	+0.36%
2024 M Homegrown	2024	\$92,716	-0.02%
2023 D Homegrown	2023	\$91,819	-3.15%
2022 D Homegrown	2022	\$70,600	-10.97%
2022 F Homegrown	2022	\$68,500	-0.14%
2021 F Homegrown	2021	\$66,547	-0.15%

- **Ready for Roster Promotion (Negative Percent change + Low Salary):**
  - **2025 D Homegrown (\$85,220, -29.47%):** Elite-level negative impact from a low-cost homegrown defender. Exceptional value.
  - **2022 D Homegrown (\$70,600, -10.97%):** Strong negative impact from a homegrown defender.
  - **2023 D Homegrown (\$91,819, -3.15%):** Solid value approaching the elite threshold.

## 7. INTERNATIONAL SLOT OPTIMIZATION

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2022 F	2022	F	\$246,875	+0.22%	No

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2023 D	2023	D	\$501,050	+4.46%	No
2023 F	2023	F	\$271,875	+0.48%	No
2024 D TAM	2024	D	\$1,072,083	-23.40%	<b>Yes</b>
2024 D	2024	D	\$601,050	-2.62%	<b>Yes</b>
2024 F	2024	F	\$521,875	-0.19%	<b>Yes</b>
2024 D	2024	D	\$99,953	-0.12%	<b>Yes</b>
2024 F	2024	F	\$71,401	+0.70%	No
2025 F	2025	F	\$3,306,250	-3.96%	<b>Yes</b>
2025 M	2025	M	\$2,325,313	+0.47%	No
2025 D TAM	2025	D	\$1,072,083	-5.50%	<b>Yes</b>
2025 F TAM	2025	F	\$915,028	+0.41%	No
2025 D	2025	D	\$422,500	+14.19%	No
2025 D	2025	D	\$114,237	-29.22%	<b>Yes</b>

- **Flagged Slot Misuse (Percent change > 5%):**
  - **2025 D (\$422,500, +14.19%)** – severe international slot misuse
  - **2025 D U22 (\$530,000, +14.13%)** – severe U22 slot misuse

## 8. POSITIONAL DEPTH AUDIT

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
<b>F (Forward)</b>	16	5	No	<b>Yes</b> (DP forwards are consistently valuable; TAM forwards are mixed)
<b>M (Midfielder)</b>	16	6	<b>Yes</b>	No (DP midfielders are marginal to harmful; TAM midfielders are generally neutral)
<b>D (Defender)</b>	18	8	<b>Yes</b>	Mixed (Elite defenders from 2021-2023; 2025 defenders are catastrophically harmful)

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
GK (Goalkeeper)	6	4	No	Yes (Senior GKs show strong negative impact -7% to -14%)

- **Critical Need:** Defender position in 2024-2025 (severe decline), Midfielder position at DP level.
- **Strength:** Forward position is an organizational strength. Goalkeeper position also shows consistent negative impact.

## 9. SALARY vs. VALUE MATRIX

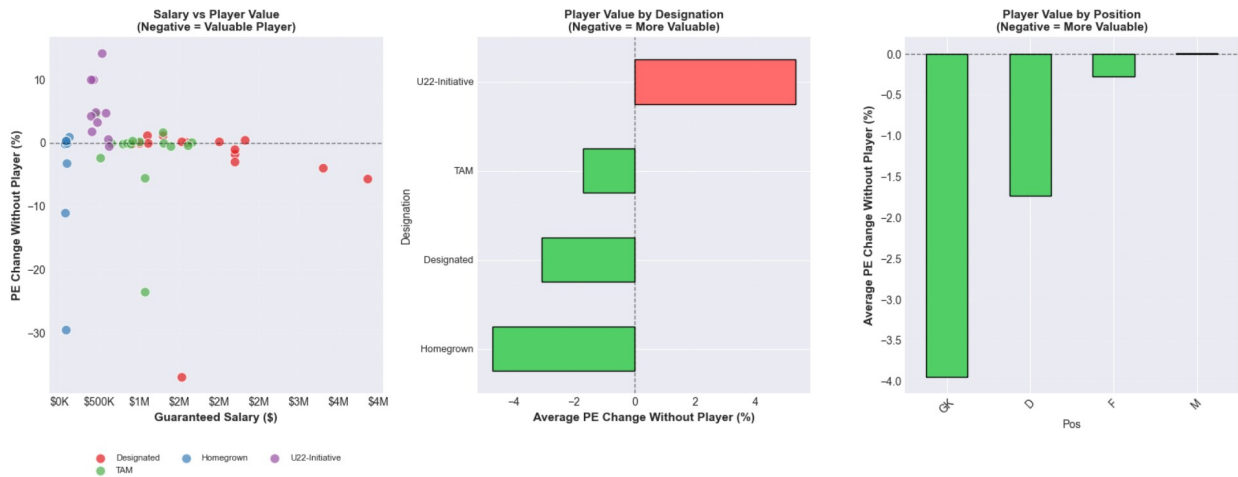
Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
<b>CORE ASSET</b>	% change < 0 & Salary > \$500K	2023 D DP (\$1.53M, -36.91%), 2024 D TAM (\$1.07M, -23.40%), 2024 F DP (\$3.87M, -5.62%), 2025 D TAM (\$1.07M, -5.50%), 2025 F DP (\$3.31M, -3.96%)
<b>HIDDEN GEM</b>	% change < 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	2025 D Homegrown (\$85K, -29.47%), 2025 D (\$114K, -29.22%), 2022 D Homegrown (\$71K, -10.97%), 2021 GK (\$504K, -9.48%), 2022 GK (\$529K, -14.08%)
<b>OVERPAID</b>	% change ≥ 0 & Salary > \$500K	<b>All in this quadrant:</b> 2025 D U22 (\$530K, +14.13%), 2025 D (\$423K, +14.19%), 2022 D U22 (\$428K, +10.01%), 2022 D U22 (\$396K, +10.01%), 2023 D (\$450K, +4.98%), 2025 D U22 (\$578K, +4.76%), 2023 D TAM (\$456K, +4.52%), 2025 F TAM (\$1.30M, +1.70%)
<b>REPLACEABLE</b>	% change ≥ 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	Most senior midfielders with marginal positive percent change, several TAM players, and a portion of the supplemental roster.

## 10. YEAR-OVER-YEAR TRENDS

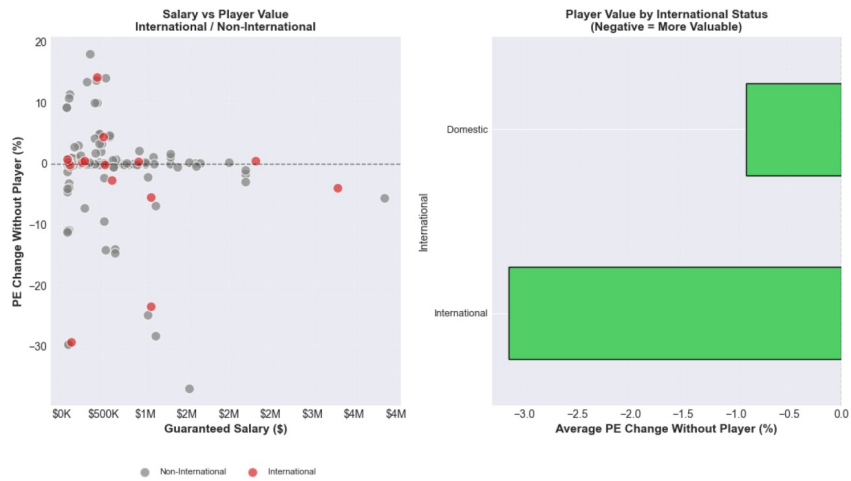
- **Designated Player ROI: Strong for forwards and defenders, weak for midfielders.** Forward DPs are consistently valuable (-1% to -5.6%). Defender DPs are elite when used (-36.9%). Midfielder DPs are marginal to harmful. SKC should restrict DP investment to forwards and defenders.
- **TAM Efficiency: Excellent when used on defense, poor elsewhere.** TAM defenders deliver elite negative impacts (-2.3% to -23.4%). TAM forwards and midfielders are mixed to positive.
- **U22 Efficiency: Declining and concerning.** Early U22 players (2022-2023) were harmful (+0.6% to +10%). 2024 U22 players were marginal to slightly positive. 2025 U22 players are severely harmful (+4.8% to +14.1%). This suggests a systemic decline in U22 targeting.
- **Homegrown Impact: Excellent on defense, marginal elsewhere.** Homegrown defenders deliver elite negative impacts (-3.2% to -29.5%). Homegrown players in other positions are marginal. This suggests positional strength in defensive development.
- **Defender Trend: Bimodal collapse.** 2021-2023 defenders delivered elite negative impacts (-28% to -36%). 2024-2025 defenders are catastrophically harmful (+4% to +14%). This represents a complete reversal in defensive roster construction efficiency.

# 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)

