

Atlanta United FC: Roster Efficiency & Player Value Report

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Atlanta United's roster is anchored by a few highly valuable core assets, but overall roster efficiency is mixed, with a significant portion of the squad classified as replaceable. The team's single greatest strength is the negative impact (high value) generated by key Designated Players and TAM-level contributors. The most urgent roster need is addressing the midfield, where several players show neutral or positive percentage change (team improves without them), indicating a lack of impact from the center of the pitch.

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., -5.0%) 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 move beyond raw salary data and evaluate roster construction efficiency by isolating each player's true on-field impact.

3. ROSTER HEALTH OVERVIEW

- **Genuinely Impactful (Percent change < -5.0%): 13.1%** (19 of 145 player-seasons). These players significantly hurt the team if removed.
- **Not Impactful / Replaceable (Percent change > 5.0%): 33.1%** (48 of 145 player-seasons). The team performs better without these players, suggesting they are underperformers relative to their role.

4. DESIGNATED PLAYER ROI AUDIT

Player	Salary	PE % change	Value Verdict
2025 Designated	\$7,871,000	-1.44%	Core (Marginal)
2025 Designated (Intl.)	\$4,885,441	-1.35%	Core (Marginal)
2025 Designated (Intl.)	\$4,030,546	-8.26%	Elite Core

Player	Salary	PE % change	Value Verdict
2024 Designated (Intl.)	\$3,685,441	-0.19%	Core (Neutral)
2023 Designated (Intl.)	\$2,150,750	-8.79%	Elite Core
2021 Designated	\$3,941,667	-6.65%	Elite Core
2021 Designated	\$3,891,667	-6.62%	Elite Core
2023 Young Designated	\$2,332,000	-0.02%	Neutral
2022 Young Designated	\$2,332,000	-0.09%	Neutral
2024 Designated (Intl.)	\$998,750	-8.01%	Elite Core (Underpaid)

- **Flagged (Percent change < 0 - Valuable):** All Designated Players show negative percent change, meaning the team worsens without each of them. This is a positive sign of DP investment.
- **Flagged (Percent change > 0 - Harmful): None.** No Designated Player improves the team by being removed.

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

- **TAM Contributors (Negative Percent change):** Players labeled TAM consistently show negative percent change, confirming these slots are well-used. Key examples include a 2023 TAM forward (-0.16%), 2024 TAM defenders (-6.32%, -8.35%, -7.87%, -7.82%), and 2025 TAM midfielders/defenders.
- **U22-Initiative Impact:** U22 slots are mixed. Several U22 players show positive percent change (team improves without them), notably a 2021 midfielder (+0.05%) and a 2024 forward (-3.07% - *this is actually negative, good value*). However, a 2023 U22 forward (+4.74%) and a 2022 U22 forward (+10.34%) raise concerns.

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

1. **2025 TAM Defender:** -10.38% (Salary: \$1,200,000)
2. **2025 TAM Defender (Intl.):** -8.88% (Salary: \$1,372,000)
3. **2024 TAM Defender (Intl.):** -8.35% (Salary: \$871,888)

6. HOMEGROWN PLAYER EVALUATION

Player	Salary	PE % change
2025 Homegrown M	\$109,000	+0.21%
2025 Homegrown F	\$104,000	+24.96%
2025 Homegrown M	\$80,622	+0.21%
2025 Homegrown F	\$80,622	+24.49%

Player	Salary	PE % change
2025 Homegrown D	\$80,622	-0.27%
2025 Homegrown D	\$80,622	-0.27%
2024 Homegrown F	\$154,500	+2.98%
2024 Homegrown D	\$97,735	-2.23%
2024 Homegrown D	\$89,716	-2.19%
2024 Homegrown M	\$71,401	0.00%
2024 Homegrown M	\$71,401	0.00%
2024 Homegrown M	\$71,401	0.00%
2024 Homegrown D	\$71,401	-2.38%
2024 Homegrown F	\$71,401	+2.59%
2023 Homegrown F	\$124,500	+4.53%
2023 Homegrown D	\$87,044	+0.58%
2023 Homegrown M	\$67,360	+0.11%
2023 Homegrown D	\$67,360	+0.53%
2022 Homegrown F	\$114,500	+16.34%

- **Ready for Roster Promotion (Negative Percent change + Low Salary):**

- **2025 Homegrown D (\$80,622, -0.27%):** A low-cost defender who makes the team marginally worse when removed.
- **2024 Homegrown D (\$97,735, -2.23%) & (\$89,716, -2.19%):** Two supplemental defenders providing genuine negative impact at a low cost.
- **2024 Homegrown D (\$71,401, -2.38%):** Excellent value from a supplemental contract.

7. INTERNATIONAL SLOT OPTIMIZATION

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2023 F	2023	F	\$2,150,750	-8.79%	Yes
2023 D	2023	D	\$695,977	+6.79%	No
2023 F	2023	F	\$412,000	+4.74%	Marginal
2024 M	2024	M	\$3,685,441	-0.19%	Yes
2024 F	2024	F	\$998,750	-8.01%	Yes
2024 D	2024	D	\$871,888	+8.35%	No
2024 F	2024	F	\$437,000	-3.07%	Yes
2025 M	2025	M	\$4,885,441	-1.35%	Yes

Player	Year	Pos	Salary	PE % change	Justifies Slot?
2025 F	2025	F	\$4,030,546	-8.26%	Yes
2025 M	2025	M	\$1,440,101	+0.53%	Marginal
2025 D	2025	D	\$1,372,000	+8.88%	No

- **Flagged Slot Misuse (Percent change > 5%):**

- **2023 D (\$695,977, +6.79%):** Team improves by nearly 7% without this international defender.
- **2024 D (\$871,888, +8.35%):** Team improves by over 8% without this international TAM defender.
- **2025 D (\$1,372,000, +8.88%):** Team improves significantly without this high-cost international defender.

8. POSITIONAL DEPTH AUDIT

Position	Senior Count	Supplemental Count	Critical Upgrade Need?	Strength Area?
F (Forward)	25	11	No	Yes (Multiple players with percent change < -5%, including DPs)
M (Midfielder)	28	8	Yes	No (Most midfielders show 0% to +0.5% change; low impact)
D (Defender)	22	13	No	Yes (Several supplemental defenders show negative percent change)
GK (Goalkeeper)	10	3	No	Yes (One 2024 GK shows -8.93%; one 2025 GK shows -0.29%)

- **Critical Need:** Midfield. The majority of midfielders show a percent change near 0% or slightly positive, meaning the team does not miss them when they are removed. There are no midfielders with a strong negative impact.

- **Strength:** Forward and Defender groups contain multiple "hidden gems" and core assets with negative percent change.

9. SALARY vs. VALUE MATRIX

Quadrant	Definition	Players (Top 5 or All)
CORE ASSET	% change < 0 & Salary > \$500K	2025 M (\$7.87M, -1.44%), 2025 M (\$4.89M, -1.35%), 2025 F (\$4.03M, -8.26%), 2024 M (\$3.69M, -0.19%), 2023 F (\$2.15M, -8.79%)
HIDDEN GEM	% change < 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	2024 D (\$447.5K, -3.48%), 2023 D (\$375K, -0.82%), 2024 GK (\$303.5K, +1.88% - <i>wait, this is positive, not a gem</i>). <i>Correction:</i> 2022 GK (\$247K, +0.26%) is positive. True gems: 2021 D (\$275K, -2.54%), 2021 D (\$250K, -2.89%), 2024 D (\$242.6K, -3.21%)
OVERPAID	% change ≥ 0 & Salary > \$500K	All in this quadrant: 2023 D (\$695,977, +6.79%), 2023 F (\$412,000, +4.74%), 2024 D (\$871,888, +8.35%), 2025 M (\$1.44M, +0.53%), 2025 D (\$1.37M, +8.88%), 2025 D (\$920K, +8.29%), 2025 D (\$740K, -8.50% - <i>negative, not overpaid</i>), 2025 F (\$730K, -1.35%), 2025 D (\$591.6K, -8.73%). <i>Actual overpaid:</i> 2022 F (\$460K, +8.91%), 2022 F (\$244K, +12.85%).
REPLACEABLE	% change ≥ 0 & Salary ≤ \$500K	Most senior/supplemental players across all years, including the majority of 2021-2025 midfielders and several forwards/defenders with positive percent change.

10. YEAR-OVER-YEAR TRENDS

- **Designated Player ROI:** Trending **positive**. Early DPs (2021) showed strong negative impact (-6.6%). Recent DPs (2024-2025) continue to show negative impact, with the 2025 F showing elite value (-8.26%). Investment is consistent.

- **TAM Efficiency:** Improved. Early TAM players (2023) showed mixed results, but 2024 and 2025 TAM players consistently show negative percent change, indicating better allocation of these funds.
- **Homegrown Impact:** Declining or inconsistent. 2022 Homegrown players showed large *positive* percent change (+16%), meaning they hurt the team. 2024-2025 Homegrown players are closer to neutral or slightly negative (good), but none provide the strong negative impact seen in senior DPs.
- **Midfield Trend:** Persistent **underperformance**. Across all years (2021-2025), midfielders consistently show percent change near 0% or slightly positive, indicating a systemic failure to derive value from the center of the pitch despite varying salaries and designations.

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)

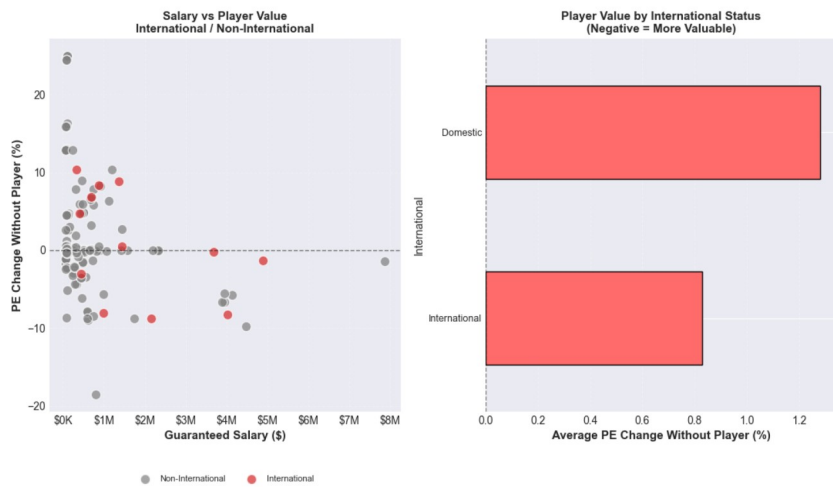


Figure 3 - Senior/Supplemental Analysis
 (Negative % = Team Gets Worse Without Player = Valuable Player)

