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REPORT CARDS — ANALYSIS + OPINION — NEW YORK CITY FC

2025 Midterm Report Card: Strahinja Tanasijević

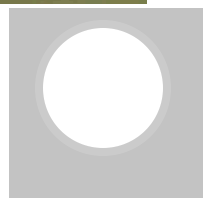
The Serbian center-back brings a toughness to NYCFC's defense. But his lack of discipline – and knack for earning cards – remains a liability.

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NYCFC's hard man | Courtesy newyorkcityfc.com



Strahinja Tanasijević hasn’t seen much of the field in 2025, logging just six appearances across MLS and the U.S. Open Cup. Unfortunately, his limited time on the pitch has done more harm than good. Brought in as a depth option behind Thiago Martins and Birk Risa at the start of 2023, Tanasijević is an inconsistent player, and has yet to show he can be relied upon when called.

He’s earned a reputation as the “tough guy” on the squad, and is reportedly the subject of good-natured locker-room jokes about being the dude you don’t want to take on in a fight. But his on-field contributions have been underwhelming.

Leading in the wrong stats

The Serbian center-back has played only 222 out of a possible 1,530 MLS minutes this year and hasn’t completed a full 90 minutes all season. His highest [FotMob](#) rating was the 6.7 (in the [1-0 loss](#) to LAFC), and his average rating sits at 6.53 in MLS — good for 14th out of 18 NYCFC players with significant minutes:

New York City FC | 2025 FotMob Ratings Through MD17

	Name	Rating
1.	Alonso Martínez	7.35
14.	Strahinja Tanasijević	6.53
15.	Agustín Ojeda	6.51
16.	Nico Cavallo	6.51
17.	Andrés Perea	6.43

	Name	Rating
18.	Mounsef Bakrar	6.40

Among MLS defenders, Tanasijević ranks near the bottom of the pack in most per-90 defensive stats. He does perform relatively well in recoveries, and possession won in the final third. Also, in fouls committed: Tanasijević [averages](#) 2.4 fouls per 90 minutes, which puts him in the 39th percentile in MLS –you can see how aggressive he plays when he’s on the field.

He shows flashes in possession stats, and is solid in fouls won, passes completed, and successful dribbles. But has only won 57.7 percent of his duels, which puts him in the 51st percentile per [FotMob](#), a poor mark for a defender. For someone built to win physical battles, that’s a red flag.

That US Open Cup game

The most memorable moment of his 2025 season came in the US Open Cup match [against the Pittsburgh Riverhounds](#). He was sent off in the 78th minute after committing a denial of an obvious goal-scoring opportunity, and he left New York City down a player when they were already struggling.

New York City FC went on to lose 1-0 after Pittsburgh scored a stoppage-time goal on a set piece. While his red card didn’t directly lead to the goal, it left the team shorthanded at a crucial moment.

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Strahinja Tanasijević earns a red card in the US Open Cup | [Courtesy CBS](#)

If Tanasijević can clean up his mental lapses and avoid unnecessary bookings, he could make this New York City backline even more challenging to get past. With his pace and physicality, the tools are there.

So far, however, his performances have lacked discipline and consistency.

2025 Midterm Grade: D

Comments

