STADIUM & STREET

THE 2027 ROSTER PROJECT / ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS

Protect Arizona's pitching gains

Preserve the pitching. Repair first base.

86	+9	3
WINS	RUN MARGIN	COSTED PATHS

An independent review of the roster, defense, pitching, farm system and financial choices.

A preferred plan. Two tested alternatives. A clear account of what could go wrong.

Richard Brown | November 3, 2026

Completed 2026 regular season. Roster and market checks November 3.

Independent analysis. Proposed prices and workloads are scenarios.

stadiumandstreet.com

READING GUIDE

Start with the decision. Then test the evidence.

The opening brief states the recommendation and its price. The main analysis tests the roster and the alternatives. The back of the report preserves the player register, definitions and sources.

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A single public edition is suitable for forwarding. The analysis makes no claim of club affiliation or access to private baseball information.

ANALYSIS / 01

Buy enough depth to protect the progress

Arizona allowed 55 fewer runs in 2026 and won six more games. That was real progress. The offense, however, scored 52 fewer runs, leaving the Diamondbacks with only a plus-9 run differential. An 86-win finish gives the club a reason to improve carefully. It does not give the next roster much room to absorb another offensive decline. [1]

The preferred plan adds Nathaniel Lowe at first base and retains Michael Soroka, Jonathan Loaisiga and Kevin Ginkel. Including a $6-8 million reserve, those choices require $33-43 million in annual additions and a total player-allocation envelope of about $191.48-205.48 million. The proposed new commitments total $41-53 million, because Loaisiga's proposed deal spans two years. These are S&S negotiating limits and planning assumptions, not reported offers or an authorized club budget.

The plan pays Corbin Burnes in full but does not require his recovery to supply the initial 162-start budget. A separate return scenario gives him 16 starts and 80 innings while reducing young pitchers' assignments. That approach costs more than simply assuming the expensive veteran will return to form. It also makes the principal risk visible: Arizona needs a complete pitching staff whether Burnes is ready or not.

ANALYSIS / 02

The six-win improvement needs a stronger foundation

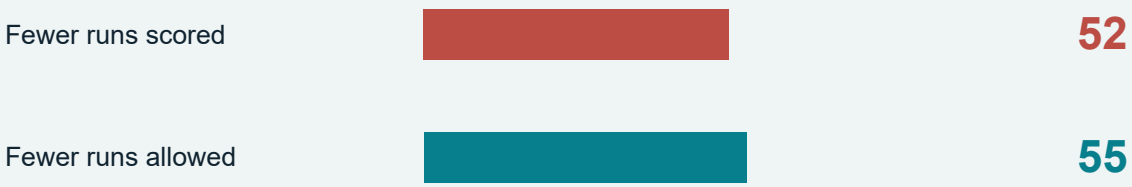
The three-year record shows two different versions of Arizona's problem. The 2024 club scored 886 runs and allowed 788. The 2026 team scored 739 and allowed 730. Better prevention has been accompanied by a much smaller offensive cushion. The winter should protect the defensive and pitching progress while repairing identifiable weaknesses in the lineup. [1]

Season	Record	Runs for / against	Margin	OPS / ERA
2024	89-73	886 / 788	+98	.777 / 4.62
2025	80-82	791 / 785	+6	.758 / 4.49
2026	86-76	739 / 730	+9	.720 / 4.18

The 2026 starting pitchers supplied 864.1 innings with a 4.28 ERA. Relievers added 577.2 innings with a 4.07 ERA. That bullpen contained several excellent individual performances, but the aggregate was not so strong that Arizona can replace every departing veteran with an untested arm. The preferred plan retains two relievers and still asks a substantial group of internal pitchers to contribute. [1,6]

52 FEWER RUNS, 55 FEWER ALLOWED

2025 margin: +6 / 2026 margin: +9



The run margin improved by 3; the win total rose by 6.

Source: MLB regular seasons. November 3, 2026 edition.

A simple squared-run ratio converts 739 scored and 730 allowed into about 82 wins over 162 games. Arizona actually won 86. The formula does not capture every feature of how those games unfolded. Its useful warning is that a narrow run margin leaves little protection against injuries, weaker sequencing or the departure of productive players.

ANALYSIS / 03

The roster after the option and free-agent decisions

The current official roster page and data feed both contain 33 names. Soroka is a free agent after declining his mutual option. Smith was outrighted on November 2 and elected free agency, as confirmed by the current MLB transaction record and Arizona's November 3 update. Neither player belongs in the retained roster without a new agreement. [2,3,7,8,9,15]

Player / MLB ID	Feed status	Reconciled treatment
Adrian Del Castillo / 680728	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Andrew Saalfrank / 685314	Injured 60-Day	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Blake Walston / 686796	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Brandon Pfaadt / 694297	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Brandyn Garcia / 805299	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Corbin Burnes / 669203	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Corbin Carroll / 682998	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Cristian Mena / 691441	Injured 60-Day	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Drey Jameson / 686753	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Dylan Ray / 691009	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Eduardo Rodriguez / 593958	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Gabriel Moreno / 672515	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Geraldo Perdomo / 672695	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Gerardo Carrillo / 672629	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Jordan Lawlar / 691783	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Jose Cabrera / 703615	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Jose Fernandez / 699912	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Juan Burgos / 686228	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Juan Morillo / 666661	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Justin Martinez / 679885	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Kade Strowd / 669704	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Ketel Marte / 606466	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Kohl Drake / 684442	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Lars Nootbaar / 663457	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate

Player / MLB ID	Feed status	Reconciled treatment
LuJames Groover / 694410	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Merrill Kelly / 518876	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Mitch Bratt / 683352	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Nolan Arenado / 571448	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Ryan Waldschmidt / 814439	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Ryne Nelson / 669194	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Tim Tawa / 694374	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Tommy Troy / 694371	Active	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate
Tyler Locklear / 682988	Injured 60-Day	Retained research pool; medical clearance separate

Smith receives no plate appearances or projected 2027 arbitration salary in the preferred roster. His confirmed free agency removes the $2.5 million prospective salary provision. This changes the modeled allocation, not a claim about payment of any prior-year obligation.

The raw feed also contains injured-list designations for Cristian Mena, Andrew Saalfrank and Tyler Locklear. An administrative restoration does not establish readiness. Mena and Saalfrank have no innings in the opening plan. Locklear receives a limited, conditional first-base opportunity with a complete replacement branch if his thumb recovery prevents it. Four proposed signings or retentions would take the 33-name research pool to 37 before any additional prospect selections.

ANALYSIS / 04

The lineup has a valuable center

Gabriel Moreno produced a .874 OPS in 549 plate appearances, with 16 home runs, 61 walks and 80 strikeouts. Geraldo Perdomo walked 96 times against 86 strikeouts. Corbin Carroll and Ketel Marte each hit 22 home runs. Those are different ways to sustain an offense, and they give Arizona several players around whom to arrange the next lineup. [1]

Player / MLB ID	ARI PA	AVG / OBP / SLG	HR	BB / K; treatment
Geraldo Perdomo / 672695	680	.262 / .370 / .377	9	96 / 86; SS
Corbin Carroll / 682998	671	.239 / .328 / .467	22	73 / 151; RF
Ketel Marte / 606466	624	.249 / .316 / .432	22	51 / 86; 2B
Nolan Arenado / 571448	599	.255 / .331 / .475	30	52 / 120; 3B
Gabriel Moreno / 672515	549	.311 / .388 / .486	16	61 / 80; C
Ildemaro Vargas / 545121	486	.254 / .298 / .377	9	27 / 49; Free agent
Tim Tawa / 694374	351	.240 / .297 / .393	11	27 / 84; Utility

Player / MLB ID	ARI PA	AVG / OBP / SLG	HR	BB / K; treatment
Ryan Waldschmidt / 814439	284	.256 / .325 / .368	3	22 / 85; CF/LF
Jose Fernandez / 699912	222	.255 / .300 / .343	3	11 / 51; IF
Lourdes Gurriel Jr. / 666971	201	.210 / .254 / .290	2	10 / 38; Released September 18
Adrian Del Castillo / 680728	197	.193 / .246 / .309	5	13 / 56; C/DH
James McCann / 543510	166	.282 / .311 / .455	7	6 / 42; Free agent
Lars Nootbaar / 663457	151	.244 / .353 / .409	5	22 / 30; Acquired from St. Louis
Tommy Troy / 694371	143	.217 / .289 / .349	4	13 / 34; OF/2B
Jordan Lawlar / 691783	136	.258 / .319 / .460	6	5 / 39; CF/LF; health review
Pavin Smith / 656976	122	.183 / .262 / .294	3	12 / 25; Departed free agent
LuJames Groover / 694410	54	.167 / .259 / .271	1	5 / 11; 1B/3B
Tyler Locklear / 682988	42	.278 / .357 / .444	1	4 / 9; Thumb recovery

Nolan Arenado's 30 home runs and .806 OPS were important to the 2026 offense. His season also illustrates why historical results and expected future contribution require separate treatment. The contact data in the next section are considerably less enthusiastic than his actual slugging percentage. The roster can retain his role while creating enough rest and corner-infield depth to avoid relying on a repeat of every home run.

Lars Nootbaar's Arizona segment was only 151 plate appearances. The .762 OPS in that segment should not silently replace his full-season record when evaluating the player. The same distinction applies to departed players in the historical table. Ildemaro Vargas, James McCann, Lourdes Gurriel Jr. and Max Kepler help explain how Arizona assembled its 2026 totals; none is assigned a retained regular job here.

ANALYSIS / 05

Moreno's production is supported; Arenado's needs caution

Moreno's .380 wOBA exceeded his .363 expected mark, but both describe strong offensive production. Carroll's actual and expected wOBA were both .341. Perdomo's .336 and .333 were also close. Those comparisons support a lineup built around the existing core without treating every difference between actual and expected results as a future correction. [4]

Batter	wOBA	xwOBA	SLG / xSLG	Reading
Gabriel Moreno	0.380	0.363	0.486 / 0.451	Strong actual and contact-based production
Corbin Carroll	0.341	0.341	0.467 / 0.446	Actual and expected wOBA agree
Ketel Marte	0.323	0.349	0.432 / 0.461	Expected contact stronger than results

Batter	wOBA	xwOBA	SLG / xSLG	Reading
Nolan Arenado	0.349	0.300	0.475 / 0.366	Large gap below actual results
Geraldo Perdomo	0.336	0.333	0.377 / 0.355	Actual and expected closely aligned
Lars Nootbaar	0.320	0.343	0.379 / 0.437	Contact-based estimate stronger
Ryan Waldschmidt	0.309	0.297	0.368 / 0.356	Young hitter; use full sample
Jordan Lawlar	0.340	0.314	0.460 / 0.401	Short MLB sample
Nathaniel Lowe	0.329	0.335	0.444 / 0.437	Affordable left-handed first-base candidate
Josh Bell	0.323	0.335	0.419 / 0.445	Alternative with similar expected wOBA
Ty France	0.373	0.327	0.502 / 0.421	Strong actual season; smaller expected edge

Arenado's .349 wOBA was well above his .300 expected mark, and his .475 slugging percentage exceeded a .366 expected figure. Marte presents the opposite case: .323 actual wOBA against .349 expected. Nootbaar also had a stronger contact-based estimate than actual result. The useful response is to investigate which skills remain stable, rather than adding projected rebounds and subtracting projected declines with false precision.

Expected statistics describe observed contact and related inputs. They do not provide a complete forecast of health, playing time, baserunning or team run production. Arizona's preferred first-base purchase is deliberately modest because the club already has plausible internal offensive improvement. The purchase should cover a weak job, not consume the resources needed to keep the pitching staff functional.

ANALYSIS / 06

Use the matchup evidence without building a fragile platoon

The three-year table places the current season in a larger sample. A good year from a veteran is more convincing when supported by repeated skills. A young hitter's short major-league opportunity is informative, but it does not become a dependable 600-plate-appearance projection because the club needs a convenient answer. [5]

Hitter	2024 MLB PA / OPS	2025 MLB PA / OPS	2026 MLB PA / OPS
Gabriel Moreno	351 / .733	309 / .786	549 / .874
Corbin Carroll	684 / .750	642 / .884	671 / .795
Ketel Marte	583 / .932	556 / .893	624 / .748
Nolan Arenado	635 / .719	436 / .666	599 / .806
Geraldo Perdomo	388 / .718	720 / .851	680 / .747
Lars Nootbaar	405 / .759	583 / .686	334 / .721
Nathaniel Lowe	565 / .762	609 / .688	429 / .761

Hitter	2024 MLB PA / OPS	2025 MLB PA / OPS	2026 MLB PA / OPS
Josh Bell	603 / .724	533 / .742	631 / .738
Ty France	535 / .670	490 / .680	500 / .865
Ryan Waldschmidt	No MLB season	No MLB season	284 / .693

Batter / full MLB season	LHP: PA / OPS	RHP: PA / OPS
Gabriel Moreno	148 / .780	401 / .909
Corbin Carroll	210 / .944	461 / .727
Ketel Marte	156 / .930	468 / .687
Nolan Arenado	157 / .894	442 / .775
Geraldo Perdomo	200 / .710	480 / .762
Lars Nootbaar	51 / .455	283 / .767
Nathaniel Lowe	49 / .296	380 / .822
Josh Bell	209 / .734	422 / .741
Ty France	138 / .853	362 / .869
Tim Tawa	91 / .646	260 / .704
Ryan Waldschmidt	86 / .747	198 / .670
Jordan Lawlar	59 / .854	77 / .722

Lowe's 2026 splits were sharply uneven: a .296 OPS in 49 plate appearances against left-handers and .822 in 380 against right-handers. That small left-handed-pitching sample should not determine his entire career valuation. It does support a practical initial deployment: give him the larger share of work against right-handers and preserve opportunities for right-handed corner alternatives.

Carroll hit left-handers exceptionally well in the 2026 split, while Marte also produced far more against left-handers than right-handers. Neither observation requires removing them from regular roles. Nootbaar's smaller left-handed sample was weak. The point of the bench is to improve selected matchups and provide rest without creating more simultaneous jobs than the roster can hold.

ANALYSIS / 07

Preserve the defensive middle

Perdomo's plus-16 Outs Above Average and Carroll's plus-10 were substantial defensive contributions. Marte finished at plus-4 and Arenado at plus-2. Those results make the existing middle and right-field alignment worth protecting. A first-base addition should fit around that strength rather than force several players into less familiar positions. [4,6]

Fielder	2024 OAA	2025 OAA	2026 OAA	2026 opportunities
Geraldo Perdomo	-1	+5	+16	566
Corbin Carroll	+10	+10	+10	380
Ketel Marte	+8	+1	+4	439
Nolan Arenado	+10	+3	+2	416
Lars Nootbaar	+1	-1	+1	161
Ryan Waldschmidt	No row	No row	+1	223
Jordan Lawlar	No row	-5	+1	83
Tim Tawa	No row	+1	+1	244
Jose Fernandez	No row	No row	+3	115
Nathaniel Lowe	+7	-5	-3	152
Josh Bell	-9	-4	-1	31
Ty France	-11	+10	+8	330

The first-base comparison is meaningful but not absolute. Lowe finished at minus-3 OAA, Josh Bell at minus-1 and Ty France at plus-8. France's advantage is part of the case for the more expensive alternative. It is not permission to carry an eleven-out difference forward as a guaranteed future result. Opportunities, positioning, health and year-to-year variation remain relevant.

Player	2026 ARI defensive innings	2027 assignment
Geraldo Perdomo	SS 1372.0	SS
Corbin Carroll	RF 1314.1	RF
Ketel Marte	2B 989.2	2B/DH
Nolan Arenado	3B 1223.2	3B/DH
Lars Nootbaar	RF 13.0; LF 160.0	LF/RF; full-season record includes STL
Ryan Waldschmidt	CF 436.2; LF 210.2	CF/LF
Jordan Lawlar	2B 1.0; LF 52.0; CF 260.0	CF/LF; not automatic starting SS
Tim Tawa	3B 33.0; 1B 406.0; CF 137.1; LF 159.1; RF 22.0; 2B 3.2	1B/OF/IF utility
Tommy Troy	2B 1.0; LF 187.2; CF 120.1	LF/CF; 2B supported by minor-league work
Jose Fernandez	1B 152.1; 3B 152.1; SS 38.0	1B/3B/SS depth
LuJames Groover	1B 73.0; 3B 7.0	1B/3B
Tyler Locklear	1B 82.0	1B after thumb clearance

Jordan Lawlar played 260 major-league innings in center field in 2026. Ryan Waldschmidt played 436.2 there, and Tommy Troy played 120.1. Their center-field assignments are grounded in actual positional work. Troy's reserve second-base role also has support from 211 Triple-A innings at the position. This is a more useful depth plan than assuming that every former shortstop can immediately fill every defensive vacancy.

ANALYSIS / 08

Keep Moreno behind the plate and manage the workload

Moreno caught 886 innings and supplied about plus-5.1 framing runs. Savant's overall catching value placed him at approximately plus-6.7 runs. Those measures overlap, so they must not be added together as if they were independent contributions. They do reinforce the value of a catcher who also hit well. [4,6]

Catcher	2026 ARI catching IP	Framing runs	Overall catching value
Gabriel Moreno	886.0	+5.1	+6.7 runs
Adrian Del Castillo	138.1	+0.2	No qualified row
James McCann	367.2	-5.4	No qualified row
Aramis Garcia	50.0	+0.8	No qualified row

The preferred assignment is 115 catching starts for Moreno, 40 for Adrian Del Castillo and seven for Aramis Garcia. Moreno also receives 15 designated-hitter starts. The total 500-PA budget is slightly below his 2026 opportunity. Del Castillo receives 250 plate appearances across catching, designated hitter and reserve work, rather than being asked to replace Moreno's offensive production immediately.

Garcia is organizational depth and would need the appropriate roster transaction before occupying a major-league spot. McCann is a free agent. His prior catching innings cannot be included in the retained plan without a new contract. If Del Castillo cannot handle the backup role, the club must use part of the unassigned reserve on an actual replacement and revise the roster map.

ANALYSIS / 09

The rotation cannot be financed with optimism

Eduardo Rodriguez supplied 189.2 innings with a 2.89 ERA. Merrill Kelly supplied 162 with a 4.94 ERA and 70 walks. Brandon Pfaadt worked 136 innings with a 3.77 ERA. Those three pitchers provide a substantial starting point, but their results and workloads do not justify treating the remaining starts as a small administrative problem. [1,4]

Pitcher / MLB ID	GS / ARI IP	ERA / full MLB xERA	K / BB / HR	Treatment
Eduardo Rodriguez / 593958	32 / 189.2	2.89 / 4.30	143 / 62 / 19	Retained; do not assume another 2.89 ERA
Merrill Kelly / 518876	29 / 162.0	4.94 / 6.35	113 / 70 / 28	Retained; age and walks limit workload
Brandon Pfaadt / 694297	19 / 136.0	3.77 / 3.92	94 / 32 / 14	Retained rotation role
Michael Soroka / 647336	21 / 116.0	3.41 / 4.12	114 / 29 / 10	Free agent; proposed retention
Zac Gallen / 668678	20 / 105.1	6.07 / 6.64	64 / 35 / 19	Free agent; evaluated, not funded
Ryne Nelson / 669194	15 / 87.1	4.95 / 5.30	66 / 24 / 18	Flexor/UCL history; conditional workload
Corbin Burnes / 669203	3 / 10.1	7.84 / 6.85	8 / 4 / 5	Shoulder and elbow review; separate return branch
Mitch Bratt / 683352	10 / 44.0	4.70 / 4.12	30 / 27 / 5	Developmental depth
Jose Cabrera / 703615	5 / 28.1	5.72 / 5.23	20 / 11 / 6	Developmental depth
Kohl Drake / 684442	5 / 20.2	6.53 / 7.91	17 / 7 / 5	Developmental depth

Soroka's 3.41 ERA over 116 innings was valuable. His 4.12 expected ERA offers a more cautious reading of the contact, and his season included an August right-arm injury-list stint. The preferred plan offers $8-10 million for one year and budgets 24 starts and 130 innings, subject to medical review. It is a retention decision with a limited commitment, not an assertion that another low ERA is assured.

Zac Gallen's 105.1 innings, 6.07 ERA and 6.64 expected ERA make a rebound purchase harder to price confidently. He is evaluated as a free agent but is not included in the preferred budget. Chris Bassitt is also evaluated without a funded offer. Arizona already has veteran risk and should not add a second uncertain rebound simply to avoid giving young pitchers any work.

ANALYSIS / 10

Burnes' contract and Burnes' innings are separate decisions

Burnes stayed in his contract, leaving four seasons at $35 million annually, including $11 million deferred each year. His return from elbow surgery lasted three starts before shoulder inflammation. [8,10] The financial model includes the full $35 million annual allocation. The deferral affects payment timing; it does not turn that obligation into a $24 million player cost.

The main workload plan gives Burnes no opening allocation. That is a conservative planning choice, not a prediction that he will miss 2027 or a medical judgment from outside the club. If he is cleared and builds the necessary workload, the alternative supplies 16 starts and 80 innings. Mitch Bratt, Jose Cabrera, Kohl Drake and Dylan Ray surrender exactly that amount of work.

Mena and Saalfrank also remain outside the opening innings plan after shoulder procedures. [11] Justin Martinez and Drey Jameson receive smaller conditional relief assignments with named replacements. The report distinguishes a verified past injury, a current roster designation and a proposed future workload. None of those alone establishes what a pitcher can safely handle next spring.

ANALYSIS / 11

Retain the relievers whose skills fit the job

Juan Morillo posted a 2.24 ERA in 64.1 innings, and Brandyn Garcia posted a 1.93 ERA in 51.1. Their success gives Arizona useful internal leverage options. Justin Martinez contributed only 13.1 innings after his recovery, so the plan limits his initial projected role rather than asking him to replace every departing veteran. [1,3]

Pitcher	2026 ARI IP	ERA / full MLB xERA	K / BB	Treatment
Juan Morillo	64.1	2.24 / 2.45	74 / 23	Retained late-inning candidate
Brandyn Garcia	51.1	1.93 / 2.11	60 / 11	Retained left-handed leverage option
Justin Martinez	13.1	2.03 / 2.18	18 / 10	Limited post-surgery workload
Jonathan Loáisiga	67.0	2.42 / 3.01	48 / 13	Free agent; preferred retention
Kevin Ginkel	67.2	4.12 / 3.55	72 / 17	Free agent; preferred retention
Taylor Clarke	73.0	2.96 / 4.42	45 / 14	Free agent; alternate retention
Gerardo Carrillo	17.1	4.15 / 3.76	21 / 16	Walk reduction needed
Kade Strowd	2.2	3.38 / 13.17	1 / 5	Tiny MLB sample
Juan Burgos	4.1	2.08 / 3.13	0 / 0	Tiny MLB sample

Pitcher	2026 ARI IP	ERA / full MLB xERA	K / BB	Treatment
Blake Walston	3.0	3.00 / 4.45	2 / 3	Depth
Drey Jameson	19.1	5.12 / 5.02	13 / 10	Hip recovery; limited allocation
Ryan Thompson	40.2	4.43 / 4.09	29 / 13	Free agent; back recovery
Dennis Santana	15.0	4.20 / 4.69	12 / 4	Free agent
Paul Sewald	39.0	6.23 / 4.12	44 / 9	Released; historical contribution

Loaisiga's 67 innings, 2.42 ERA, 3.01 expected ERA and 13 walks support a two-year, $16-20 million proposal. The annual allocation is $8-10 million. Ginkel's 4.12 ERA looks less attractive, but his 3.55 expected ERA, 72 strikeouts and 17 walks in 67.2 innings support a one-year, $5-7 million retention. Each receives 60 innings in the preferred plan.

Clarke is a real alternative at $4-6 million for one year. His 2.96 ERA was better than Ginkel's, but his 4.42 expected ERA and 45 strikeouts in 73 innings make the comparison less obvious than the ERA column suggests. Choosing Ginkel at a $1 million higher annual ceiling is a judgment about the job and underlying evidence. It is not a requirement to choose a different name from another club's analysis.

ANALYSIS / 12

The next wave should earn specific opportunities

LuJames Groover hit .825 in 440 Triple-A plate appearances, walking 53 times against 67 strikeouts. Locklear had an .872 OPS in 302 Triple-A plate appearances before his late-season thumb injury. Troy produced an .878 OPS in 261 Triple-A plate appearances. These are credible candidates for major-league opportunities, with the usual need to account for level, environment and the smaller major-league samples. [12]

Player / MLB ID	2026 level and sample	Readiness decision
LuJames Groover / 694410	AAA: 440 PA, .825 OPS, 6 HR; 53 BB / 67 K	Corner opportunity; translation from Reno matters
Tyler Locklear / 682988	AAA: 302 PA, .872 OPS, 10 HR; 34 BB / 57 K	Thumb recovery before regular first-base work
Tommy Troy / 694371	AAA: 261 PA, .878 OPS, 5 HR; 36 BB / 60 K	Utility opportunity; retain positional flexibility
Kristian Robinson / 677565	AAA: 501 PA, .815 OPS, 15 HR; 67 BB / 145 K	Strikeout and roster decisions before MLB commitment
Yu-Min Lin / 801179	AAA: 129.0 IP, 5.16 ERA; 97 K / 59 BB	Depth; must earn selection and MLB role
Dylan Ray / 691009	AAA: 81.2 IP, 6.06 ERA; 70 K / 29 BB	Starting depth; AAA run prevention must improve
Mitch Bratt / 683352	AAA: 63.0 IP, 3.43 ERA; 60 K / 22 BB	Useful upper-minors evidence, still limited MLB success
Spencer Giesting / 801517	AAA: 52.2 IP, 4.61 ERA; 68 K / 27 BB	Left-handed depth; no automatic major-league floor

Player / MLB ID	2026 level and sample	Readiness decision
Druw Jones / 702258	AA: 510 PA, .735 OPS, 7 HR; 61 BB / 146 K	AA development; no 2027 MLB PA assumed
Slade Caldwell / 815154	A+: 465 PA, .672 OPS, 6 HR; 75 BB / 129 K	A+ development; no immediate OF vacancy
David Hagaman / 701908	A+: 71.1 IP, 3.03 ERA; 86 K / 33 BB	A+ to AA progression; no immediate MLB workload
Daniel Eagen / 811666	AA: 87.1 IP, 4.95 ERA; 109 K / 34 BB	AA development; not a guaranteed starter
Kayson Cunningham / 815617	A: 207 PA, .977 OPS, 1 HR; 30 BB / 38 K	Longer-term development

The preferred lineup gives Groover 250 plate appearances, Troy 300 and Locklear a conditional 100. It leaves a much larger internal first-base route if no acquisition occurs. Kristian Robinson's 501 Triple-A plate appearances included 145 strikeouts; his next step requires more than citing the .815 OPS. The presence of several candidates creates choices, not a guaranteed replacement for every departing hitter.

Pitching depth is less comfortable. Yu-Min Lin's Triple-A ERA was 5.16, and Ray's was 6.06. Bratt's 3.43 ERA in 63 Triple-A innings is more encouraging, but his major-league record was still limited. The model assigns modest initial roles and shows how sharply they expand if outside pitching is not retained. Lower-level prospects, including Druw Jones, Slade Caldwell and David Hagaman, receive developmental discussion rather than automatic 2027 major-league production.

ANALYSIS / 13

Test the first-base purchase against the alternatives

Lowe's full 2026 major-league season comprised 429 plate appearances, 17 home runs and a .761 OPS, with .329 actual and .335 expected wOBA. At $6-8 million for one year and 450 planned plate appearances, he offers a defined left-handed role without requiring a major long-term commitment. His Cleveland affiliation is historical after his October 29 free-agent election. [3,4,5]

Candidate / MLB ID	Full 2026 MLB evidence	S&S ceiling / decision
Nathaniel Lowe / 663993	429 PA, .761 OPS, 17 HR; 0.329/0.335 wOBA/xwOBA	Preferred: 1 year / $6-8M
Ty France / 664034	500 PA, .865 OPS, 21 HR; 0.373/0.327 wOBA/xwOBA	Plan B: 2 years / $24-28M
Josh Bell / 605137	631 PA, .738 OPS, 21 HR; 0.323/0.335 wOBA/xwOBA	Alternative: 1 year / $8-10M
Rhys Hoskins / 656555	317 PA, .682 OPS, 13 HR; 0.305/0.297 wOBA/xwOBA	Evaluated; no preferred purchase
Jake Bauers / 641343	578 PA, .873 OPS, 26 HR; 0.381/0.371 wOBA/xwOBA	QO pending; no funded purchase
Michael Soroka / 647336	116.0 IP, 3.41 ERA, 4.12 xERA; 114 K / 29 BB	Retain: 1 year / $8-10M

Candidate / MLB ID	Full 2026 MLB evidence	S&S ceiling / decision
Jonathan Loáisiga / 642528	67.0 IP, 2.42 ERA, 3.01 xERA; 48 K / 13 BB	Retain: 2 years / $16-20M
Kevin Ginkel / 656464	67.2 IP, 4.12 ERA, 3.55 xERA; 72 K / 17 BB	Retain: 1 year / $5-7M
Taylor Clarke / 664199	73.0 IP, 2.96 ERA, 4.42 xERA; 45 K / 14 BB	Alternate: 1 year / $4-6M
Andrew Kittredge / 552640	48.1 IP, 3.54 ERA, 4.01 xERA; 40 K / 11 BB	Alternate: 1 year / $5-7M
Steven Okert / 595345	67.2 IP, 2.13 ERA, 3.13 xERA; 68 K / 14 BB	Alternate: 1 year / $8-10M
Chris Bassitt / 605135	102.0 IP, 4.41 ERA, 4.92 xERA; 74 K / 38 BB	Evaluated; no preferred purchase

Bell supplies the principal different-candidate test. He had a .738 OPS in 631 plate appearances and the same .335 expected wOBA as Lowe. A proposed $8-10 million one-year ceiling would cost $2 million more at either end. Bell's switch-hitting profile is useful, but the available evidence does not compel that premium for this particular job. His October 30 free-agent election supersedes a lagged Minnesota label.

France is the more expensive Plan B: two years and $24-28 million, or $12-14 million annually. His .865 OPS and plus-8 OAA are attractive, but his .373 actual wOBA was above a .327 expected mark. Arizona should pay for the full offensive and defensive case, not simply buy last season's OPS. Jake Bauers is also evaluated, but his pending qualifying offer and substantially different price requirements keep him outside the funded plan.

ANALYSIS / 14

Compare repeated targets by the work they would do

Soroka also appears in Cleveland's prepared analysis at an $8-10 million one-year ceiling. Arizona's job is retention for 24 starts and 130 innings. Cleveland's proposed job was a larger outside rotation assignment. The shared price range does not mean both clubs can obtain him, or that familiarity gives Arizona an automatic discount. Both cases depend on the same current medical and market review. [20]

France receives the same $12-14 million annual ceiling used in the prepared Padres and Guardians alternatives. San Diego assigned him 500 plate appearances, replacing work otherwise carried by Sheets, Harris, Wagner, Song and Taylor. Cleveland assigned 450 in place of Goldschmidt and portions of Velazquez and Manzardo's work. Here he takes Lowe's exact 450-PA assignment and the same first-base and designated-hitter starts. Those are different jobs at a common proposed price, not three independently obtainable rosters.

Clarke's repeated appearances elsewhere do not make him the preferred Arizona choice. Ginkel has a clearer current contact-quality case for this bullpen, while Loaisiga supplies a separate 60-inning job. Kittredge and Steven Okert remain alternatives. Their prices are tied to actual innings and handedness needs: $5-7 million for Kittredge or $8-10 million for Okert, with a fresh workload review before assigning either 60 innings.

All proposed additions are free-agent transactions. No outgoing player package is invented. The cost is the stated contract, roster space and any applicable actual compensation rule, not a fictional trade package. The report also tests the internal first-base group and the no-acquisition pitching staff. Those alternatives expose the workload Arizona would need to absorb if its preferred players sign elsewhere.

ANALYSIS / 15

Start with the existing obligations

The nine listed contracts carry approximately $133.675 million in 2027 salary-plus-allocated-bonus amounts before the Cardinals' $9 million contribution toward Arenado. That contribution is subtracted once, producing $124.675 million for these contracts on the working allocation basis. The table is not a cash-flow schedule or an official competitive-balance-tax calculation. [13]

Player / MLB ID	2027 allocation	Basis
Corbin Burnes / 669203	$35.000M	$11M deferred annually; full allocation retained
Nolan Arenado / 571448	$15.000M	Before $9M Cardinals contribution
Eduardo Rodriguez / 593958	$19.000M	Future 2028 option and $6M buyout separate
Merrill Kelly / 518876	$22.000M	Future 2028 vesting option separate
Ketel Marte / 606466	$12.000M	Allocation; deferral cash timing separate
Corbin Carroll / 682998	$12.625M	Salary and allocated bonus
Geraldo Perdomo / 672695	$9.250M	Salary and allocated bonus
Brandon Pfaadt / 694297	$5.400M	Salary and allocated bonus
Justin Martinez / 679885	$3.400M	Salary and allocated bonus
GROSS TOTAL	$133.675M	Subtract $9M Cardinals contribution once

Burnes' deferrals, Marte's payment timing and allocated signing bonuses require separate treatment in an actual treasury budget. Subtracting a deferral from a salary allocation and then treating the later payment as nonexistent would understate the obligation. The model instead preserves one consistent annual planning basis.

Kelly's agreement includes a 2028 vesting option. [16] Rodriguez also has a future 2028 option and potential buyout. Those future contingencies are not silently added to the 2027 current-buyout line. Gurriel's $5 million buyout and Soroka's $1 million buyout are included in that current provision. A return contract for Soroka would be a new agreement; it would not erase the already-triggered obligation without explicit terms.

ANALYSIS / 16

Arbitration and uncertainty still consume money

The three retained arbitration estimates total $15.8 million: Nootbaar at $6.3 million, Moreno at $6.1 million and Nelson at $3.4 million. These are published estimates, not signed salaries or official awards. The range for the full roster also includes $12-16 million for pre-arbitration players, minor-league depth and callups. [14]

Player	Estimate, $M	Treatment
Lars Nootbaar	6.30	Published estimate; unsigned salary
Gabriel Moreno	6.10	Published estimate; unsigned salary
Ryne Nelson	3.40	Published estimate; unsigned salary
TOTAL	15.80	Three retained cases; Smith excluded

Component	Annual allocation	Definition
Nine contracts	$133.675M	Salary-plus-allocated-bonus basis
Cardinals contribution	-$9.00M	Arenado annual allocation becomes $6M net
Arbitration	$15.80M	Three retained cases
Current buyouts	$6.00M	Gurriel $5M; Soroka $1M
Pre-arb, minors and callups	$12-16M	S&S planning allowance
Existing-roster envelope	$158.48-162.48M	Allocation, not cash or official CBT

With Smith's prospective arbitration salary removed after his free-agent election, the existing-roster allocation is approximately $158.48-162.48 million. The same $2.5 million reduction applies to every scenario; the proposed acquisitions and their individual ceilings are unchanged.

The reserve in each acquisition plan is additional to that baseline depth allowance. It is meant for a specific need that emerges after the planned roster is assembled. No unassigned reserve dollar is credited with a hit, out or inning. Once the club uses it, the actual player, contract, roster transaction and displaced workload must be recorded.

ANALYSIS / 17

Three plans with different costs

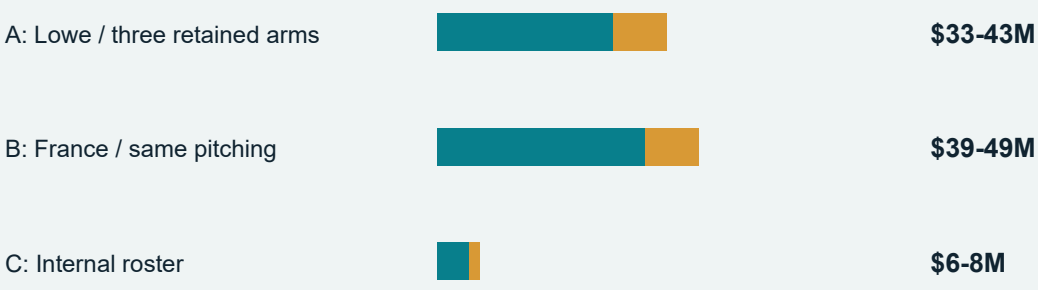
Plan A combines Lowe at $6-8 million, Soroka at $8-10 million, Loaisiga at $8-10 million annually, Ginkel at $5-7 million and the $6-8 million reserve. The annual additions total $33-43 million. The two-year Loaisiga proposal makes total new commitments $41-53 million. The preference is to buy a defined first-base job while retaining enough pitching to avoid exposing all of the young depth at once.

Plan	Annual additions	Total allocation	New commitment
A: Lowe / Soroka / Loaisiga / Ginkel	$33-43M	$191.48-205.48M	$41-53M
B: France replaces Lowe; same pitching	$39-49M	$197.48-211.48M	$59-73M
C: Internal roster	$6-8M	$164.48-170.48M	$6-8M

Plan B replaces Lowe with France and changes nothing else. Annual additions rise to $39-49 million, with $59-73 million in new commitments. This is the case for paying more for first-base defense and a stronger recent offensive result. The countercase is that France's contact-based offensive estimate was less impressive than his actual season and the extra commitment reduces flexibility elsewhere.

Plan C adds only the $6-8 million unassigned reserve, bringing the total envelope to approximately $164.48-170.48 million. It does not retain Soroka, Loaisiga or Ginkel and does not buy a first baseman. The next sections assign their work to actual internal candidates. A lower bill is a clear advantage; the additional developmental and performance burden is its cost.

THREE ANNUAL SPENDING PLANS



S&S annual additions. Each includes a $6-8M depth reserve.

Proposed ceilings and reserve. No signing, health or performance guarantee.

ANALYSIS / 18

Show what changes when one decision changes

The Bell alternative raises Plan A's annual additions to $35-45 million. Substituting Clarke for Ginkel lowers them by $1 million at both ends. Substituting Okert for Ginkel raises them by $3 million. These comparisons exchange one defined role rather than adding every attractive name to the same budget.

Condition	Cost treatment	Workload consequence
Bell instead of Lowe	A annual additions $35-45M; total $193.48-207.48M	Same 450 PA; switch-hitting alternative
Clarke instead of Ginkel	Annual additions fall $1M at both ends	Same 60 relief IP; different expected-contact risk
Kittredge instead of Ginkel	Same $5-7M one-year ceiling	Same 60 IP would exceed his 2026 workload
Okert instead of Ginkel	Annual additions rise $3M at both ends	Same 60 IP; a second established left-handed option
Burnes returns	No additional salary; already in base	Separate 16-start / 80-IP branch displaces young depth
Burnes unavailable	Keep all $35M in annual allocation	Main plan already covers all 162 starts
No acquisition	Only $6-8M unassigned reserve	No production credited to unused reserve

Burnes' return changes the workload map, not the existing contract line. The preferred budget already contains his full annual allocation. If he is unavailable, the club still owes the contract and still needs the innings shown in the main plan. If he returns, the young pitchers' assignments shrink by the same 80 innings and 16 starts that he receives.

The main free-agent list also requires actual compensation checks at signing. Bauers' qualifying-offer situation is an evaluated, unfunded branch. It is not imported into Lowe's proposed cost or used to imply that a player without an offer carries the same penalty. Current rules and the player's actual transaction history govern. [7,8,19]

ANALYSIS / 19

A complete 6,200-plate-appearance lineup

The lineup budget gives the established core regular work and creates meaningful opportunities for Waldschmidt, Lawlar, Troy and Groover. Lowe receives 450 plate appearances rather than an unrestricted everyday promise. That leaves a route for Locklear and other right-handed first-base alternatives to earn work while preserving lineup flexibility.

Player	PA	Opportunity
Perdomo	650	SS
Carroll	650	RF
Marte	600	2B/DH
Arenado	550	3B/DH
Moreno	500	C/DH
Nootbaar	500	LF/RF
Waldschmidt	450	CF/LF
Lowe	450	1B/DH only if signed
Tawa	350	Utility
Lawlar	350	CF/LF; hamstring clearance
Del Castillo	250	C/DH
Troy	300	OF/2B
Groover	250	1B/3B
Fernandez	200	IF depth
Locklear	100	1B after thumb clearance
Aramis Garcia	50	C depth; selection needed
TOTAL	6,200	Season coverage, not 16 simultaneous active hitters

The sum is 6,200 plate appearances. These are season-wide assignments, not sixteen hitters simultaneously occupying active roster places. Options, selection decisions, health and actual performance determine how those opportunities are distributed through the year. No prospect receives major-league output merely because a table needs to reach its total.

Change	PA adjustment	Consequence
B: France for Lowe	450 PA exchanged	Same first-base and DH starts; stronger recent defense, greater cost
Bell for Lowe	450 PA exchanged	Same positions; no extra PA created
C: no first baseman signed	Lowe -450; Groover +150, Locklear +150, Tawa +100, Del Castillo +50	1B: Groover75/Locklear55/Tawa32. Lowe DH25 becomes Groover10/Locklear10/Tawa5
Locklear unavailable in A	-100; Groover +60, Tawa +40	His 20 first-base starts become Groover12/Tawa8
Lawlar unavailable in A	-350; Waldschmidt +150, Troy +100, Tawa +100	CF Waldschmidt130/Troy32; his DH15 becomes Tawa15
TOTAL	6,200 in each branch	Multiple absences require integrated review; no salary savings presumed

Without Lowe, Groover receives 150 additional plate appearances, Locklear 150, Tawa 100 and Del Castillo 50. If Locklear cannot play in the preferred plan, Groover and Tawa replace his limited assignment. If Lawlar is unavailable, Waldschmidt, Troy and Tawa absorb his 350 plate appearances. Those branches preserve the totals while making the increased dependence on young hitters visible.

ANALYSIS / 20

Cover all 162 starts before counting a recovery

The preferred rotation budgets 30 starts for Rodriguez, 28 each for Kelly and Pfaadt, 24 each for Nelson and Soroka, and 28 combined for Bratt, Cabrera, Drake and Ray. That supplies 162 starts and 870 starter innings. Kelly's proposed 155 innings are below his 2026 total. Pfaadt's 150 are an increase from 136, and Nelson's 125 require a meaningful increase from 87.1.

Pitcher	Starts / IP	Workload condition
Rodriguez	30 / 175	Below 189.2 prior innings; performance may regress
Kelly	28 / 155	Below 162 prior innings; review age and walks
Pfaadt	28 / 150	Expansion from 19 starts and 136 total innings
Nelson	24 / 125	Flexor/UCL review after 87.1 prior IP
Soroka	24 / 130	Only if retained; arm history and 116 prior IP matter
Bratt	10 / 50	Developmental depth; not guaranteed league-average innings
Cabrera	8 / 40	Developmental depth

Pitcher	Starts / IP	Workload condition
Drake	6 / 30	Developmental depth
Ray	4 / 15	Developmental depth
TOTAL	162 / 870	Burnes, Mena and Saalfrank have no opening allocation

These are coverage assignments with medical and performance conditions, not forecasts of what each pitcher will deliver. Soroka's 130 innings exceed his 2026 total by 14. Bratt, Cabrera, Drake and Ray still need to earn their opportunities. The club should review the distribution again after actual signings and spring health information rather than treating a balanced spreadsheet as a cleared staff.

Burnes' separate 80-inning return branch reduces Bratt by 30 innings, Cabrera by 20, Drake by 20 and Ray by ten. Their starts decline by six, four, four and two. The reduction exactly matches his addition. A stronger Burnes return would permit another revised allocation; it is not assumed in this initial plan.

ANALYSIS / 21

Fund the bullpen and expose the internal fallback

The relief budget is 570 innings, bringing the combined staff total to 1,440. Morillo, Garcia, Loaisiga and Ginkel receive 60 each. Justin Martinez receives 45, with a replacement branch if he cannot supply them. Jameson's 25 innings are also conditional. The remaining work is spread across controlled major-league and organizational depth.

Pitcher	IP	Condition
Morillo	60	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Garcia	60	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Justin Martinez	45	Post-surgery progression; fallback listed
Loaisiga	60	Only if retained
Ginkel	60	Only if retained
Carrillo	35	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Strowd	35	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Burgos	35	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Walston	40	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Jameson	25	Hip clearance; fallback listed
Yu-Min Lin	35	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Giesting	25	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Cabrera	20	Health, performance, selection and workload review

Pitcher	IP	Condition
Ray	20	Health, performance, selection and workload review
Drake	15	Health, performance, selection and workload review
TOTAL	570	870 starter + 570 relief = 1,440 IP

The no-acquisition staff replaces Soroka's 24 starts and 130 innings with additional work for Bratt, Cabrera, Drake and Ray. It replaces Loaisiga and Ginkel's combined 120 relief innings with 20 each for Carrillo, Strowd, Burgos, Walston, Lin and Giesting. That is a considerable increase in responsibility for a group with limited or uneven major-league evidence.

Change from A	IP / starts adjustment	Consequence
C: no Soroka	-24 starts / -130 IP	Bratt +8/45; Cabrera +8/45; Drake +4/20; Ray +4/20
C: no Loaisiga or Ginkel	-120 relief IP	Carrillo, Strowd, Burgos, Walston, Lin and Giesting +20 each
Burnes medically cleared	Add 16 starts / 80 IP	Bratt -6/30; Cabrera -4/20; Drake -4/20; Ray -2/10
Jameson unavailable	-25 relief IP	Burgos +10; Strowd +10; Walston +5
Justin Martinez unavailable	-45 relief IP	Carrillo +15; Walston +15; Giesting +15
Both Jameson and Martinez unavailable	-70 relief IP	Combine the two named replacement branches; review expanded workloads
TOTAL	162 starts; 870 + 570 IP	Internal plan balances coverage; it does not prove performance

The internal map closes mathematically, but its weak points are concrete. Lin's Triple-A control and run prevention need improvement. Carrillo walked 16 in 17.1 major-league innings. Several other relievers have only tiny MLB samples. That is the strongest argument for retaining two established relief options, even when the headline ERA of one of them is less attractive than a cheaper alternative's.

ANALYSIS / 22

Assign the field and test the run consequences

The defensive map totals 162 starts at every position, including designated hitter, and does not give any individual more than 162 starts across positions. Perdomo remains the regular shortstop. Carroll stays in right field. Waldschmidt and Lawlar share center-field responsibility, with Troy available for coverage. The arrangement gives the younger players defined work without disrupting the club's strongest defensive jobs.

Pos.	162-start allocation	Purpose
C	Moreno 115; Del Castillo 40; Aramis Garcia 7	Protect Moreno with scheduled rest
1B	Lowe 110; Groover 20; Locklear 20; Tawa 12	Acquisition plus young alternatives
2B	Marte 125; Troy 25; Tawa 12	Minor-league 2B work supports Troy reserve role

Pos.	162-start allocation	Purpose
3B	Arenado 125; Groover 20; Fernandez 17	Keep development opportunities
SS	Perdomo 145; Fernandez 17	Preserve strongest infield defender
LF	Nootbaar 115; Waldschmidt 20; Troy 27	No additional expensive corner outfielder
CF	Waldschmidt 90; Lawlar 62; Troy 10	Young players have actual center-field experience
RF	Carroll 145; Nootbaar 17	Established corner strength
DH	Marte 25; Arenado 15; Lowe 25; Moreno 15; Lawlar 15; Tawa 45; Del Castillo 17; Troy 5	Rest and development, not an extra full-time signing

Illustrative change from 2026	RS / RA	Margin	Simple run-ratio wins
Unchanged runs	739 / 730	+9	82.0
Score 25 more; prevent 25	764 / 705	+59	87.5
Same offense; prevent 40	739 / 690	+49	86.5
Score 40 more; allow 20 more	779 / 750	+29	84.1
Score 25 fewer; allow 30 more	714 / 760	-46	75.9

Scoring 25 more runs and preventing 25 would move the simple run-ratio estimate from about 82 wins to 87.5. Scoring 40 more while allowing 20 more reaches only about 84.1. Those are arithmetic illustrations, not player projections or a postseason probability. They show why repairing the offense while allowing the pitching gains to disappear would be an incomplete solution.

The strongest counterargument to Plan A is that Arizona could obtain enough improvement internally, especially from Marte, Nootbaar and the young first-base candidates, while Burnes returns successfully. That path is plausible. Its uncertainty is precisely why the preferred plan keeps the first-base purchase modest and spends the larger share of its additions on preserving pitching coverage.

ANALYSIS / 23

The decisions that would change the recommendation

Arizona should begin by updating the medical and workload outlooks and confirming the remaining arbitration and option obligations. It should then test Soroka, Loaisiga and Ginkel against the stated price ceilings and alternatives. If the market exceeds those limits, the club needs a revised player-specific plan rather than quietly increasing every estimate until the preferred roster appears affordable.

Player / MLB ID	Current reconciliation	Roster consequence
Michael Soroka / 647336	Free agent; mutual option declined	Only proposed retention
Pavin Smith / 656976	Free agent after November 2 outright	No PA or projected arbitration salary
Lourdes Gurriel Jr. / 666971	Released September 18	No roster place; $5M buyout provision
Alek Thomas / 677950	Free agent after Dodgers outright	Not current Arizona CF depth
Jorge Barrosa / 678489	Houston organization	Not retained Arizona CF depth
Max Kepler / 596146	Released September 8	No retained PA
Yilber Díaz / 700270	Detroit Tigers	Not current Arizona pitching depth
Zac Gallen / 668678	Free agent	No automatic retained starts
James McCann / 543510	Free agent	No retained catching starts
Ildemaro Vargas / 545121	Free agent	No retained infield PA
Jonathan Loáisiga / 642528	Free agent	Retention requires new deal
Kevin Ginkel / 656464	Free agent	Retention requires new deal
Taylor Clarke / 664199	Free agent	Alternative, not funded with Ginkel

The analysis uses information checked November 3. Later roster, medical and contract decisions can change both the cost and the available players. Smith's free agency is confirmed, and specific free-agent elections govern when a player still carries his former team label. Historical contributors remain in the evidence tables so the past season can be understood accurately.

The recommendation is to protect the pitching gains and buy a modest improvement at first base. Moreno, Perdomo, Carroll and Marte give the club a credible core. A complete innings plan, honest treatment of Burnes' recovery and defined opportunities for the next group of hitters give that core a better chance to convert another competitive season into a more durable run advantage.

[1] MLB completed team and player statistics

2024-26 completed regular seasons; club-specific and full-player samples separated.

Open source

[2] MLB Diamondbacks roster

November 3 release check: both official roster surfaces contain 33 names. Soroka and Smith are confirmed free agents and receive no retained roster workload.

Open source

[3] MLB individual and team transactions

Dated player-ID histories; free-agent elections supersede lagged team labels.

Open source

[4] Baseball Savant expected statistics and defense

2024-26 expected batting/pitching, OAA, framing and fielding value.

Open source

[5] MLB player histories and matchup splits

Full MLB histories and left/right matchup samples.

Open source

[6] MLB defensive innings and pitching roles

Position innings and team starter/reliever splits.

Open source

[7] MLB free-agent register

Target status reconciled with individual elections.

Open source

[8] MLB option and opt-out register

Completed and pending decisions; Burnes and Soroka treated separately.

Open source

[9] MLB Players Association free-agent list

Current union free-agent list, updated November 2.

Open source

[10] Associated Press via Sportsnet: options and qualifying offers

Burnes contract decision, deferrals and return; Soroka option/buyout.

Open source

[11] MLB D-backs injury and roster updates

Dated medical reports; not future workload clearance.

Open source

[12] MLB affiliate statistics and rosters

Reno, Amarillo, Hillsboro and Visalia; each level remains identified.

Open source

[13] FanGraphs RosterResource Diamondbacks payroll

2027 salary-plus-allocated-bonus columns, contributions and buyouts, separate from cash and CBT.

Open source

[14] MLB Trade Rumors arbitration estimates via Yardbarker

Three retained arbitration estimates total $15.8M; departed Smith excluded from prospective 2027 salary.

Open source

[15] CBS Sports Diamondbacks transaction register

November 2 Smith outright reporting, reconciled with the official free-agent transaction and November 3 club update.

Open source

[16] MLB: Merrill Kelly contract

Two-year agreement with 2028 vesting option.

Open source

[17] MLB Pipeline Diamondbacks prospects

Identity and organizational context, checked against official player and affiliate records.

Open source

[18] S&S planning calculations

Cross-club comparisons by exact job, displaced workload, price ceiling and internal alternative. Shared candidates are competing scenarios.

Open source

[19] MLB qualifying-offer rules

Current eligibility and actual player circumstances govern any signing compensation.

Open source

[20] Stadium & Street MLB team-analysis series

Cross-club comparisons by exact job, displaced workload, price ceiling and internal alternative. Shared candidates are competing scenarios.

Open source