STADIUM & STREET

THE 2027 ROSTER PROJECT / BOSTON RED SOX

Boston needs more offense without losing its pitching edge

Add a bat. Protect the innings. Price the alternatives.

87	+78	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.

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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

The decision

Boston allowed 65 fewer runs in 2026 and won two fewer games. Its offense lost 97 runs. The next move should address that imbalance while protecting the pitching that kept an 87-win club in the postseason. Our preferred plan buys an established second-base bat and brings Sonny Gray back on a new agreement. It also places a firm limit on how much recovery work the rotation can assume. [1,4]

Offer Brandon Lowe three years and $66-75 million for a defined second-base job. Offer Gray one year and $20-24 million for 28 starts and 160 innings. Include a separate $6-8 million depth reserve. Annual additions total $48-57 million. With existing commitments and the roster pool, the resulting player-allocation envelope is about $269.11-282.11 million. These are S&S negotiating ceilings, not reported offers or an approved ownership budget.

That cost is the strongest argument against the recommendation. Boston already carries substantial commitments to players with limited recent availability, and the reconstructed 2027 base is higher than the headline payroll estimate. The preferred plan is defensible only if ownership accepts that allocation without requiring an unsupported salary dump or an undisclosed medical bet. The cheaper alternatives are complete rosters with identifiable compromises.

Plan B replaces Gray with Nick Martinez at two years and $26-30 million. Annual additions fall to $41-48 million, but the club buys a second guaranteed year and a different performance profile. Plan C signs neither outside player and retains only the $6-8 million reserve. Campbell, Durbin, Sogard and Mead absorb Lowe's proposed work; Bello, Bennett and the depth starters absorb Gray's. Neither branch receives imaginary production from an unfilled allowance.

ANALYSIS / 02

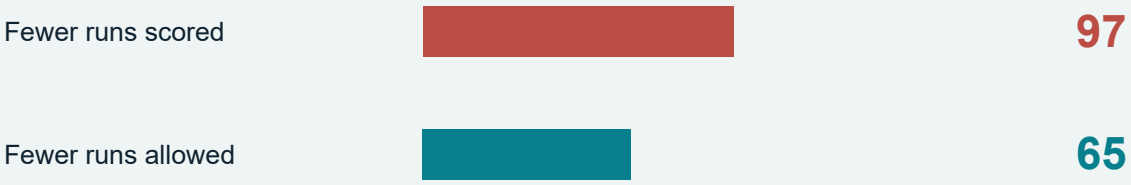
A good season with a shrinking margin

The Red Sox moved from 81-81 in 2024 to 89-73 in 2025, then finished 87-75 in 2026. Runs allowed declined in each season, from 747 to 676 to 611. Runs scored moved in the opposite direction in the most recent year, falling from 786 to 689. The result was a plus-78 run differential, down from plus-110. That is a strong starting position, but a thinner one. [1]

Season	Record	Runs for / against	Margin	OPS / ERA
2024	81-81	751 / 747	+4	.742 / 4.04
2025	89-73	786 / 676	+110	.745 / 3.70
2026	87-75	689 / 611	+78	.717 / 3.54

A 32-RUN DECLINE IN MARGIN

2025 margin: +110 / 2026 margin: +78



Offense lost97 runs; pitching allowed65 fewer.

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

Boston went 21-21 in one-run games and 7-4 in extra innings, counted from 162 unique official regular-season finals. There is little basis for making bad close-game fortune the central explanation. The simple squared-run formula puts 689 runs scored and 611 allowed at roughly 91 wins. That describes the season's run balance; it does not establish a four-win entitlement for the next club. [2]

The postseason ended with two clear defeats: Yankees 9, Red Sox 0, followed by Yankees 9, Red Sox 2. Those games matter as the actual end of the season, but two games cannot diagnose every winter need. The full-season offensive decline supplies the more durable case for improvement. Gray's departure and the rotation's medical uncertainty supply the reason not to spend every available dollar on hitters. [2]

Date / MLB game	Verified final, winner first	Scope
2026-09-29 / 849851	New York Yankees 9, Boston Red Sox 0	Wild Card; separate from regular-season tables

Date / MLB game	Verified final, winner first	Scope
2026-09-30 / 849848	New York Yankees 9, Boston Red Sox 2	Wild Card; separate from regular-season tables

ANALYSIS / 03

The roster changed while the season was being evaluated

The November 3 official major-roster snapshot contains 40 names. Marcelo Mayer and Connelly Early are no longer Boston development solutions. Mayer went to San Francisco in the August 3 transaction involving Erik Miller; Early went to Washington in the July 26 Curtis Mead trade. Carlos Narvaez departed in the August 3 Baltimore deal that brought Adley Rutschman. Historical Boston statistics remain in the evidence tables, with no retained workload assigned to those departures. [3,4]

Gray elected free agency after his option was declined. Patrick Sandoval and Isiah Kiner-Falefa are also free agents. Zack Kelly was designated for assignment on November 2, with his outcome still requiring reconciliation. Eduardo Rivera was designated and then traded to St. Louis on November 3. Nate Eaton's Athletics trade and Tsung-Che Cheng's Detroit trade further change the depth list. A familiar name on an old depth chart does not fill a current job. [4]

Player / MLB ID	Latest relevant transaction	Treatment
Sonny Gray / 543243	2026-10-30: RHP Sonny Gray elected free agency.	Proposed new agreement only
Patrick Sandoval / 663776	2026-10-29: LHP Patrick Sandoval elected free agency.	No retained principal workload
Isiah Kiner-Falefa / 643396	2026-10-29: SS Isiah Kiner-Falefa elected free agency.	No retained principal workload
Marcelo Mayer / 691785	2026-09-21: San Francisco Giants activated 2B Marcelo Mayer from the 10-day injured list.	No retained principal workload
Connelly Early / 813349	2026-09-26: Washington Nationals activated LHP Connelly Early from the 60-day injured list.	No retained principal workload
Carlos Narváez / 665966	2026-08-04: Baltimore Orioles activated C Carlos Narváez.	No retained principal workload
Ryan Watson / 670245	2026-08-09: Los Angeles Angels activated RHP Ryan Watson.	No retained principal workload
Zack Kelly / 677161	2026-11-02: Boston Red Sox designated RHP Zack Kelly for assignment.	DFA outcome pending; no role
Eduardo Rivera / 700842	2026-11-03: Boston Red Sox traded LHP Eduardo Rivera to St. Louis Cardinals.	No retained principal workload
Nate Eaton / 681987	2026-10-29: Athletics traded RHP Jareth Rayo to Boston Red Sox for LF Nate Eaton.	No retained principal workload

Player / MLB ID	Latest relevant transaction	Treatment
Tsung-Che Cheng / 691907	2026-10-29: Boston Red Sox traded SS Tsung-Che Cheng to Detroit Tigers for cash.	No retained principal workload
David Sandlin / 689818	2026-09-13: Chicago White Sox recalled RHP David Sandlin from Charlotte Knights.	No retained principal workload

There is no presumed empty 40-man place for Lowe, Gray, Franklin Arias or Blake Wehunt. Their proposed additions and selections require a legal roster plan at the time of execution. Kelly's uncertain cost remains a financial contingency without a baseball role. The analysis does not solve roster pressure by silently waiving a useful player or assuming a non-tender has already occurred.

ANALYSIS / 04

The offense has a small group of dependable anchors

Wilyer Abreu supplied 681 plate appearances, 24 home runs and a .773 OPS. His three-year OPS sequence of .781, .786 and .773 shows why he should retain a substantial role. Willson Contreras was the most productive established bat in the 2026 lineup, with 27 home runs and a .902 OPS in 535 plate appearances. The plan assigns him 550, while preserving his first-base job and some designated-hitter work. [5]

Player / MLB ID	BOS PA	AVG / OBP / SLG	HR	BB / K
Wilyer Abreu / 677800	681	.248 / .327 / .446	24	71 / 141
Jarren Duran / 680776	608	.207 / .266 / .361	20	41 / 165
Caleb Durbin / 702332	586	.248 / .332 / .378	13	51 / 79
Ceddanne Rafaela / 678882	576	.285 / .321 / .444	16	22 / 117
Willson Contreras / 575929	535	.275 / .386 / .516	27	59 / 135
Andruw Monasterio / 655316	347	.233 / .295 / .371	6	26 / 68
Masataka Yoshida / 807799	297	.274 / .347 / .399	5	28 / 33
Nick Sogard / 686765	277	.255 / .342 / .385	5	31 / 56
Trevor Story / 596115	266	.235 / .271 / .351	5	11 / 86
Roman Anthony / 701350	242	.245 / .339 / .396	5	29 / 66
Connor Wong / 657136	238	.233 / .308 / .348	4	17 / 57
Marcelo Mayer / 691785	228	.220 / .282 / .312	3	16 / 44
Mickey Gasper / 681508	225	.251 / .357 / .466	10	27 / 39
Carlos Narváez / 665966	197	.187 / .260 / .275	3	14 / 66

Player / MLB ID	BOS PA	AVG / OBP / SLG	HR	BB / K
Isiah Kiner-Falefa / 643396	183	.242 / .322 / .311	2	19 / 27
Anthony Seigler / 678011	173	.247 / .327 / .400	3	18 / 28
Adley Rutschman / 668939	126	.222 / .278 / .410	5	9 / 28
Jahmai Jones / 663330	76	.308 / .408 / .585	4	7 / 23
Curtis Mead / 678554	2	.000 / .500 / .000	0	0 / 1
Romy Gonzalez / 663853	73	.185 / .264 / .308	1	5 / 21

Ceddanne Rafaela's .765 OPS was another real gain. Jarren Duran's .627 was a major loss of production compared with .834 in 2024 and .774 in 2025. The proposed 450 plate appearances for Duran preserve his speed, range and rebound opportunity while recognizing that his recent offensive decline cannot simply be erased. His role spans all three outfield positions, giving the club a way to rest or replace another outfielder without creating an entirely new defensive arrangement.

Trevor Story's 266-plate-appearance season and .622 OPS do not support planning around an uninterrupted full season at shortstop. Roman Anthony's .735 OPS in 242 plate appearances was below his 2025 debut performance. His wrist and hand history makes both workload and recovery relevant. The plan preserves a meaningful place for each, then names the players who absorb their work if that place cannot be filled.

Hitter	2024 MLB PA / OPS	2025 MLB PA / OPS	2026 MLB PA / OPS
Wilyer Abreu	447 / .781	417 / .786	681 / .773
Jarren Duran	735 / .834	696 / .774	608 / .627
Caleb Durbin	No MLB season	506 / .721	586 / .710
Ceddanne Rafaela	571 / .664	587 / .709	576 / .765
Willson Contreras	358 / .848	563 / .791	535 / .902
Masataka Yoshida	421 / .764	205 / .695	297 / .746
Trevor Story	106 / .734	654 / .741	266 / .622
Roman Anthony	No MLB season	303 / .859	242 / .735
Adley Rutschman	638 / .709	365 / .673	410 / .741
Curtis Mead	132 / .569	264 / .620	329 / .851

ANALYSIS / 05

Expected statistics sharpen the offensive argument

Abreu's .335 wOBA and .346 expected wOBA support continued confidence. Contreras's .391 and .376 remain strong even after acknowledging that his actual outcome exceeded the expected measure. Anthony's .326 and .341 suggest a more encouraging underlying sample than the raw decline alone. These measures describe contact and plate appearances through a particular model; they are not guaranteed future slash lines. [6]

Full MLB season	wOBA	xwOBA	SLG / xSLG
Wilyer Abreu	0.335	0.346	0.446 / 0.468
Jarren Duran	0.274	0.301	0.361 / 0.388
Caleb Durbin	0.317	0.291	0.378 / 0.316
Ceddanne Rafaela	0.332	0.285	0.444 / 0.362
Willson Contreras	0.391	0.376	0.516 / 0.484
Andruw Monasterio	0.293	0.287	0.371 / 0.352
Masataka Yoshida	0.330	0.318	0.399 / 0.372
Nick Sogard	0.325	0.311	0.385 / 0.355
Trevor Story	0.272	0.248	0.351 / 0.317
Roman Anthony	0.326	0.341	0.396 / 0.424
Connor Wong	0.295	0.281	0.348 / 0.327
Marcelo Mayer	0.258	0.257	0.295 / 0.295
Mickey Gasper	0.361	0.353	0.466 / 0.444
Carlos Narváez	0.219	0.260	0.226 / 0.303
Isiah Kiner-Falefa	0.290	0.297	0.311 / 0.319
Anthony Seigler	0.321	0.312	0.400 / 0.370
Adley Rutschman	0.323	0.327	0.426 / 0.412
Jahmai Jones	0.299	0.328	0.369 / 0.428
Curtis Mead	0.370	0.358	0.498 / 0.457
Romy Gonzalez	0.258	0.289	0.308 / 0.335

Rafaela's .332 wOBA against .285 expected wOBA is a reason to temper offensive extrapolation, even while preserving his exceptional range. Durbin's .317 against .291 creates a similar caution. Duran's .274 against .301 leaves room for a better outcome without supplying evidence for a full return to his 2024 peak. Story's .272 and .248 make availability only one part of his question.

Mead presents a particularly important split between sample and affiliation. His full MLB season covered 329 plate appearances with a .851 OPS, .370 wOBA and .358 expected wOBA. Only two of those plate appearances came for Boston. The acquired player brings encouraging evidence, but Boston has almost no direct major-league sample of him after the trade. His wrist recovery and defensive fit remain necessary parts of the recommendation. [4,5,6]

ANALYSIS / 06

Handedness should guide specific lineup choices

Lowe's 2026 split is large: a .648 OPS against left-handed pitching in 211 plate appearances and .910 against right-handers in 445. Buying him does not mean ignoring that distinction. Campbell, Mead and Durbin provide ways to reduce his most difficult matchups while preserving 550 total plate appearances. The proposed position schedule includes only 120 starts at second base, plus ten at designated hitter. [5]

Batter / full MLB season	LHP PA / OPS	RHP PA / OPS
Wilyer Abreu	217 / .854	464 / .735
Jarren Duran	141 / .608	467 / .633
Caleb Durbin	164 / .696	422 / .716
Ceddanne Rafaela	154 / .824	422 / .743
Willson Contreras	146 / .966	389 / .878
Masataka Yoshida	30 / .774	267 / .743
Trevor Story	76 / .636	190 / .615
Roman Anthony	83 / .588	159 / .817
Adley Rutschman	143 / .649	267 / .792
Curtis Mead	141 / .897	188 / .815
Brandon Lowe	211 / .648	445 / .910
Gleyber Torres	128 / .785	292 / .702

Anthony also had a meaningful split, .588 against left-handers and .817 against right-handers, with much smaller samples. Rutschman produced .649 and .792. Abreu, however, hit left-handers well in this season, with an .854 OPS in 217 plate appearances. A rote platoon assumption based on reputation would discard useful current evidence. The manager should combine these samples with longer history, health and actual player development.

Yoshida's 30 plate appearances against left-handers are too few to establish a broad conclusion. Mead's results against both sides were encouraging, but his total role must account for defensive cost and recovery. This is a flexible lineup with specific matchup choices, not a promise that every right-handed hitter will solve every left-handed pitcher.

ANALYSIS / 07

Protect the center of the field

Rafaela's Outs Above Average moved from minus-2 in 2024 to plus-21 in 2025 and plus-16 in 2026. His 2024 work included different positions, so the sequence is not a pure three-year center-field rating. The recent positive range is nevertheless a strong reason to preserve 135 center-field starts. Duran's plus-5 in 2026 and Abreu's plus-2 help support the outfield arrangement. [7]

Fielder	2024 OAA	2025 OAA	2026 OAA	2026 opportunities
Wilyer Abreu	+6	+8	+2	326
Jarren Duran	+10	-4	+5	288
Ceddanne Rafaela	-2	+21	+16	375
Caleb Durbin	No row	+0	+6	499
Willson Contreras	No row	+6	+1	324
Trevor Story	+2	-9	-2	231
Roman Anthony	No row	+6	-2	61
Curtis Mead	-3	+0	-9	230
Andruw Monasterio	-4	+1	-15	293
Nick Sogard	+1	+0	+3	202
Kristian Campbell	No row	-9	No row	No row
Brandon Lowe	+0	-14	+15	507
Gleyber Torres	-5	-5	-5	256

The infield is less settled. Durbin's plus-6 is useful. Mead's minus-9 and Monasterio's minus-15 limit the appeal of simply filling offensive vacancies with more of their defensive innings. Sogard's plus-3 supports a utility role, subject to position and sample. Story's minus-2 followed minus-9 in 2025, which argues for evaluating his movement rather than assuming the old defensive reputation has returned.

Lowe's minus-14 in 2025 followed by plus-15 in 2026 illustrates how uncertain a one-season range estimate can be. The purchase is not credited with an automatic 15-run defensive dividend. He must hold the position well enough that the offensive upgrade survives its full cost. The comparison with Torres later in the report explicitly includes range rather than comparing only their OPS figures.

Fielder	2026 BOS position	Starts / innings
Mickey Gasper	C	14 / 115.0
Curtis Mead	2B	1 / 4.0
Andruw Monasterio	1B	5 / 69.0
Andruw Monasterio	2B	9 / 109.1
Nick Sogard	2B	37 / 302.0
Nick Sogard	SS	4 / 33.0
Mickey Gasper	1B	10 / 86.0
Nick Sogard	1B	16 / 170.2
Caleb Durbin	3B	147 / 1302.0
Andruw Monasterio	SS	51 / 459.0
Trevor Story	SS	62 / 544.0
Anthony Seigler	2B	40 / 354.0
Nick Sogard	3B	7 / 60.0
Andruw Monasterio	3B	3 / 26.0
Anthony Seigler	3B	0 / 6.0

ANALYSIS / 08

Rutschman changes the catching calculation

Rutschman's 126 Boston plate appearances produced a .688 OPS. His full MLB season was 410 plate appearances at .741. The distinction matters: evaluating only the Boston sample would overlook most of the season being purchased through his retained arbitration rights. His full-season framing value was plus-6.42 runs and total catching value plus-12.24. The broader catching measure includes components beyond framing and should not be added to it. [5,8,9]

Catcher	2026 BOS catching IP	Full MLB framing	Full MLB catching value
Adley Rutschman	241.0	+6.42	+12.24
Connor Wong	570.0	-7.72	-9.11
Mickey Gasper	115.0	-0.22	Unknown
Carlos Narváez	492.0	+2.03	+4.58

Wong caught 570 innings for Boston, with minus-7.72 framing and minus-9.11 total catching value across his MLB sample. That does not remove his practical value as the established backup, but it makes a

Rutschman-led workload sensible. The plan assigns 105 catching starts to Rutschman, 45 to Wong and 12 to Gasper, with separate first-base and DH work where specified.

Gasper's biceps surgery carries a reported four-to-six-month recovery window from the September procedure. His 100 proposed plate appearances and 12 catching starts are conditional. If he is unavailable, Wong receives 50 additional plate appearances and the 12 catching starts; Romy Gonzalez receives the other 50 plate appearances and ten first-base starts. No new signing is required for that individual branch. [11]

ANALYSIS / 09

A strong rotation result contains several different stories

Boston starters worked 837.2 innings with a 3.92 ERA, 813 strikeouts and 263 walks. Gray's 169 innings at 2.72 ERA were a major contribution. Payton Tolle supplied 148.2 innings at 3.03, and Ranger Suarez delivered 148.1 at 3.22. Jake Bennett added 113.1 innings at 3.65. The club has credible starters to build around, but it cannot retain Gray's work merely by retaining his name in a historical table. [5]

Pitcher / MLB ID	GS / BOS IP	ERA / full MLB xERA	K / BB / HR	Planning treatment
Payton Tolle / 801139	26 / 148.2	3.03 / 2.70	171 / 40 / 15	30 starts / 170 IP
Ranger Suarez / 624133	28 / 148.1	3.22 / 3.63	140 / 46 / 10	28 / 160
Sonny Gray / 543243	29 / 169.0	2.72 / 3.87	149 / 46 / 16	FA; proposed new 28 / 160 agreement
Jake Bennett / 687562	19 / 113.1	3.65 / 3.42	91 / 21 / 12	24 / 135
Brayan Bello / 678394	11 / 116.1	4.33 / 4.89	92 / 36 / 12	20 / 110; performance review
Garrett Crochet / 676979	6 / 30.0	6.30 / 5.12	37 / 11 / 5	20 / 100 conditional shoulder recovery
Alec Gamboa / 687941	3 / 33.0	1.91 / 3.08	23 / 11 / 1	6 / 30 plus 45 relief IP
Raymond Burgos / 670103	0 / 21.1	4.22 / 3.15	16 / 1 / 3	4 / 20 plus 45 relief IP
Connelly Early / 813349	17 / 91.2	3.44 / 4.27	93 / 34 / 15	Traded to Washington; zero retained IP
Patrick Sandoval / 663776	13 / 70.1	5.12 / 4.86	73 / 32 / 7	Free agent; no principal purchase
Tanner Houck / 656557	1 / 3.0	9.00 / 11.13	1 / 0 / 2	Recovery; zero principal IP
Kutter Crawford / 676710	0 / 0	No MLB sample / No row	0 / 0 / 0	Recovery; zero principal IP
Johan Oviedo / 670912	0 / 3.2	9.82 / 12.25	3 / 1 / 2	Recovery; zero principal IP

The expected figures distinguish those seasons. Tolle's 2.70 xERA and Bennett's 3.42 support the quality of their results. Suarez's 3.63 and Gray's 3.87 are less dominant than their actual ERAs but still useful starting points. Bello's 4.33 ERA and 4.89 xERA support a more cautious 20-start, 110-inning assignment. More work for Bello is an explicit consequence of the cheaper plan, not a free improvement.

Crochet made six starts and worked 30 innings with a 6.30 ERA. The plan assigns him only 20 starts and 100 innings, conditional on shoulder recovery and a genuine starting progression. That is already a substantial increase. It cannot be described as the conservative certainty that makes a second outside starter unnecessary. Houck, Crawford and Oviedo receive no principal innings because their recovery evidence does not establish reliable 2027 workloads. [11,15]

ANALYSIS / 10

The bullpen earned credit, but cannot absorb every uncertainty

The bullpen worked 602.1 innings at a 3.00 ERA. Chapman and Whitlock were central to that success: Chapman struck out 71 in 51.2 innings with a 1.92 ERA; Whitlock struck out 59 and walked nine in 52.1 innings with a 1.72 ERA. Their expected ERAs of 2.64 and 2.62 still support important roles while suggesting that repeating the exact run prevention should not be assumed. [5,6]

Pitcher	BOS IP	ERA / full MLB xERA	K / BB	Treatment
Aroldis Chapman	51.2	1.92 / 2.64	71 / 23	50 IP; vested option carried
Garrett Whitlock	52.1	1.72 / 2.62	59 / 9	50 IP; exercised option
Greg Weissert	60.2	3.26 / 3.60	60 / 20	65 IP
Jovani Morán	65.2	3.15 / 3.35	73 / 33	75 IP; command risk
Tyron Guerrero	40.2	3.10 / 2.68	41 / 8	50 IP conditional shoulder review
Erik Miller	18.2	3.38 / 3.15	29 / 12	60 IP; full-season evidence separately
Raymond Burgos	21.1	4.22 / 3.15	16 / 1	45 relief IP; 65 combined
Alec Gamboa	33.0	1.91 / 3.08	23 / 11	45 relief IP; 75 combined
Wyatt Olds	15.2	1.15 / 3.47	20 / 8	45 IP
Tyler Samaniego	20.1	2.66 / 4.82	17 / 8	35 IP
Jedixson Paez	8.2	8.31 / 8.21	8 / 2	25 IP
Justin Slaten	31.1	4.60 / 2.94	39 / 8	Zero principal IP; flexor rehabilitation
Zack Kelly	16.1	3.31 / 5.99	14 / 7	DFA; no principal IP
Ryan Watson	55.2	4.53 / 4.69	43 / 19	Departed; no retained IP

The next tier matters because the plan reduces the relief burden to 545 innings without pretending the starters will become unusually durable. Weissert receives 65, Moran 75 and Miller 60. Moran's 33 walks in 65.2 Boston innings are a clear command risk. Miller's full-season evidence is separate from his 18.2 Boston innings. Olds's low ERA came in only 15.2 innings, with a 3.47 xERA; the proposed 45 innings is an opportunity to test, not an established performance floor.

Guerrero's 50 innings depend on a shoulder review. If he cannot supply them, Miller receives 15 more, Weissert ten, Olds 15 and Samaniego ten. Slaten receives no principal innings while his flexor condition remains unresolved. Kelly's designation removes him from the workload model. The club should preserve

bullpen flexibility rather than spending its reserve on a named closer role already supported by multiple retained pitchers.

ANALYSIS / 11

Administrative activation is not a recovery forecast

Anthony's hand and wrist discomfort, Story's sports-hernia history, Mead's wrist injury and Gasper's surgery all affect the position-player schedule. The latest injury update expects Anthony to recover for 2027, but an expectation remains different from demonstrated readiness. The plan gives him 450 plate appearances and an explicit replacement branch. Story receives 350 and 80 shortstop starts, leaving Arias and Sogard real work rather than merely listing them as insurance. [11]

Crawford's current flexor reporting differs from older wrist-related transaction language. Oviedo's flexor reporting and elbow-list wording also need careful treatment. Casas is the most obvious unresolved source conflict: the team page's heading, body text and API injury description refer to different body areas and recovery histories. This report does not choose one unsupported medical narrative. Casas keeps his estimated cost but receives no principal plate appearances until the record and readiness are reconciled. [4,11]

Crochet's September activation followed a long shoulder absence. Houck's rehabilitation and Slaten's flexor treatment do not justify filling the remaining pitching budget with optimistic returns. Whitlock's knee and elbow interruptions also warrant current review despite his excellent final statistics. These are baseball-planning limitations, not diagnoses or claims about private medical information.

ANALYSIS / 12

The farm can fill defined jobs

Arias's Double-A line was .994 OPS in 332 plate appearances; his Triple-A line was .894 in 188. The plan gives him 250 major-league plate appearances and 60 shortstop starts after a roster selection and readiness decision. It does not translate those minor-league OPS figures directly into an MLB projection. Campbell's 462 Triple-A plate appearances at .763 OPS support continued development, but his 126 strikeouts and prior defensive difficulty require a real evaluation before expanding his role. [16,17]

Player / MLB ID	2026 level and sample	Readiness decision
Franklin Arias / 808265	AAA: 188 PA, .894 OPS, 6 HR; 16 BB / 28 K	250 PA after selection; 60 SS starts
Franklin Arias / 808265	AA: 332 PA, .994 OPS, 19 HR; 37 BB / 46 K	AA success separate from AAA and MLB
Kristian Campbell / 692225	AAA: 462 PA, .763 OPS, 8 HR; 73 BB / 126 K	250 PA; 2B and DH, earned role
Mikey Romero / 702540	AAA: 490 PA, .680 OPS, 12 HR; 40 BB / 103 K	Development reserve; no main MLB quota
Allan Castro / 691369	AAA: 505 PA, .722 OPS, 15 HR; 51 BB / 92 K	Development reserve; no main MLB quota
Brooks Brannon / 703477	AA: 398 PA, .915 OPS, 22 HR; 39 BB / 115 K	Catching development; no immediate MLB guarantee

Player / MLB ID	2026 level and sample	Readiness decision
Johanfran Garcia / 703190	AA: 348 PA, .833 OPS, 18 HR; 22 BB / 103 K	Catching development; no immediate MLB guarantee
Blake Wehunt / 687762	AAA: 46.2 IP, 3.47 ERA; 32 K / 20 BB	2 starts / 10 IP after selection
Blake Wehunt / 687762	AA: 53.2 IP, 3.52 ERA; 72 K / 16 BB	AA/AAA total100.1 IP; command review
Gage Ziehl / 695721	AAA: 41.0 IP, 4.17 ERA; 33 K / 7 BB	Explicit conditional depth after selection
Gage Ziehl / 695721	AA: 81.0 IP, 4.33 ERA; 96 K / 18 BB	Combined122 IP; level-specific results
Hayden Mullins / 683093	AA: 92.2 IP, 3.98 ERA; 132 K / 49 BB	132 K and49 BB; no main MLB quota
Raymond Burgos / 670103	AAA: 70.0 IP, 5.14 ERA; 58 K / 29 BB	15 AAA starts support swing role
Alec Gamboa / 687941	AAA: 51.1 IP, 3.68 ERA; 47 K / 13 BB	8 AAA starts support swing role

Wehunt worked 100.1 innings across Double-A and Triple-A. His 20 walks in 46.2 Triple-A innings make command an important promotion condition. The preferred plan asks only for two starts and ten innings; the internal plan expands that to eight starts and 45. Gamboa and Burgos have actual Triple-A starting experience, allowing their swing roles to be tested against evidence rather than invented after the budget is written.

Ziehl's combined 122 innings make him a possible conditional depth source after selection. Mullins's 132 strikeouts and 49 walks in 92.2 Double-A innings present both promise and risk. Romero, Castro, Brannon and Johanfran Garcia remain development reserves without automatic major-league quotas. Protecting those players from a premature assignment is compatible with giving Arias and Campbell substantial opportunities.

ANALYSIS / 13

Why Lowe, and why not another familiar name

Lowe supplies the most direct offensive fit among the candidates tested here: 35 home runs, an .824 OPS and a legitimate second-base role in 656 plate appearances. His .355 wOBA and .331 expected wOBA call for a restrained projection, while 189 strikeouts and the handedness split define the risks. Three years and $66-75 million is a ceiling for a meaningful everyday job, not a price for a bench complement. [5,6]

Candidate / MLB ID	Full2026 MLB evidence	S&S decision
Brandon Lowe / 664040	656 PA, .824 OPS, 35 HR; 0.355/0.331 wOBA/xwOBA	A/B:3 years / $66-75M;550 PA,120 2B/10 DH; QO/compensation gate
Gleyber Torres / 650402	420 PA, .727 OPS, 8 HR; 0.328/0.325 wOBA/xwOBA	Alternative:2 years / $24-28M; same550 PA; less power, weaker range
Eugenio Suárez / 553993	498 PA, .740 OPS, 26 HR; 0.324/0.303 wOBA/xwOBA	26 HR but169 K; no principal offer
Alec Bohm / 664761	629 PA, .698 OPS, 15 HR; 0.309/0.327 wOBA/xwOBA	15 HR and negative range; no principal offer

Candidate / MLB ID	Full2026 MLB evidence	S&S decision
Luis Arraez / 650333	655 PA, .764 OPS, 6 HR; 0.331/0.307 wOBA/xwOBA	Contact alternative;6 HR and crowded1B/DH; no main offer
Sonny Gray / 543243	169.0 IP, 2.72 ERA, 3.87 xERA; 149 K/46 BB	A:1 year / $20-24M;28 starts/160 IP; new agreement
Nick Martinez / 607259	180.0 IP, 3.10 ERA, 3.98 xERA; 109 K/26 BB	B:2 years / $26-30M; same28/160
Trevor Rogers / 669432	169.2 IP, 4.03 ERA, 3.60 xERA; 157 K/39 BB	Separate inquiry:169.2 IP; no simultaneous purchase
Michael Wacha / 608379	200.2 IP, 3.32 ERA, 4.01 xERA; 158 K/54 BB	Contracted Royal; no assumed trade availability
Lucas Giolito / 608337	29.2 IP, 5.16 ERA, 5.62 xERA; 18 K/23 BB	29.2 IP, elbow IL; no principal purchase

Torres is a real lower-cost alternative at two years and $24-28 million, with the same proposed 550 plate appearances and 120 second-base starts. His .727 OPS, 57 walks and eight home runs in 420 plate appearances offer a different offensive shape. His minus-5 OAA and lower power make the compromise visible. Replacing Lowe with Torres reduces annual additions by $10-11 million at the paired endpoints, but the club should not claim equivalent run production or range.

Suarez's 26 home runs came with 169 strikeouts and negative range. Bohm's 15 home runs and minus-11 OAA do not make him the preferred solution to this particular roster. Arraez adds contact but creates a less useful first-base and DH overlap with Contreras, Yoshida and other retained players. Trevor Rogers remains a separate pitching inquiry; Wacha is a contracted Royal whose availability is not assumed. Giolito's small sample and elbow history exclude him from the principal purchase.

ANALYSIS / 14

Repeated targets must have repeated scrutiny

The private Pittsburgh analysis also proposes three years and $66-75 million for Lowe. In Pittsburgh that is a retention decision for an established role; in Boston it is an external purchase that reduces second-base opportunities for Campbell and Durbin and reshapes Mead's work. The same negotiating band does not mean both clubs can sign him. Boston must accept the failed-negotiation branch if Pittsburgh, another club or the player chooses a different outcome. [21]

Martinez has appeared in the private Washington and Colorado preparations. Washington asks for 30 starts and 165 innings as a primary purchase; Boston's alternative asks for 28 and 160. Colorado uses him as a more expensive replacement for Fedde. The common two-year, $26-30 million ceiling reflects the same underlying candidate evidence, not three independently obtainable pitchers. His 3.10 ERA alongside a 3.98 xERA and 109 strikeouts in 180 innings argues for workload value without selling an ace profile.

Gray's proposed return is a new free-agent agreement after the option decision. The plan does not credit him with both retained salary and new salary, or treat the historical Cardinals credit as a repeatable source of money. These are free-agent proposals with no outgoing talent. Any later trade inquiry must name the

outgoing players, control, replacement workload and resulting payroll before it can replace one of these branches. No player is added merely to make Boston's candidate list look different.

ANALYSIS / 15

The contract bridge changes the apparent room

The retained contract allocations total $146.408 million across 11 players, including Chapman's $13 million and Whitlock's $8.25 million. Whitlock's option exercise is confirmed by the November 1 team announcement. Chapman's option is marked vested in the current payroll record after the reported innings trigger; potential award escalators still require a final check. The allocations include prorated bonuses in several cases and are not identical to either base salary cash or competitive-balance-tax AAV. [10,12,13]

Player / MLB ID	2027 allocation	Basis
Garrett Crochet / 676979	$28.667M	Allocation includes prorated bonus; health separate
Ranger Suarez / 624133	$15.600M	Allocation; future years rise sharply
Trevor Story / 596115	$25.000M	Final guaranteed year; future option separate
Willson Contreras / 575929	$17.000M	Gross allocation; Cardinals credit separate
Masataka Yoshida / 807799	$18.600M	Guaranteed; no assumed trade savings
Roman Anthony / 701350	$4.625M	Allocation; $16.25M contract AAV differs
Aroldis Chapman / 547973	$13.000M	Vested in current source; awards escalators recheck
Brayan Bello / 678394	$8.667M	Allocation includes prorated bonus
Kristian Campbell / 692225	$3.250M	Guaranteed despite minor-league development
Ceddanne Rafaela / 678882	$3.750M	Guaranteed through2031
Garrett Whitlock / 676477	$8.250M	2027 option exercised November1
TOTAL	$146.408M	Allocation, not tax AAV or cash timing

The 16 current-roster arbitration estimates total $47.9 million. No non-tender saving is assumed. Kelly's separate $0.8 million contingency remains until his designation resolves. Houck, Crawford, Oviedo and Casas retain estimated costs despite receiving no principal workload. A player can occupy a payroll obligation without being a dependable part of the baseball plan. [10,18]

Player	Estimate, $M	Treatment
Tanner Houck	4.10	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Johan Oviedo	1.80	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Adley Rutschman	9.10	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Jarren Duran	11.10	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Eli White	1.40	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed

Player	Estimate, $M	Treatment
Kutter Crawford	2.80	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Connor Wong	2.00	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Romy Gonzalez	1.80	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Triston Casas	1.70	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Andruw Monasterio	1.60	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Greg Weissert	1.20	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Wilyer Abreu	4.60	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Erik Miller	1.50	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Justin Slaten	1.20	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Jahmai Jones	0.90	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
Tyron Guerrero	1.10	Unsigned; no non-tender saving assumed
TOTAL	47.90	16 current-roster cases
Zack Kelly	0.80	Separate contingency while DFA outcome unresolved

The bridge also carries a $10 million Gray buyout reserve, $4 million Hicks obligation, $2 million Devers bonus allocation and a $4 million Cardinals credit for Contreras. Gray's current settlement and timing need reconciliation before public release. The earlier reported contractual provision and current payroll table support preserving the $10 million reserve; a conflicting secondary snippet is not a basis for quietly cutting it in half. [10,14]

ANALYSIS / 16

Three budgets, with cash and tax kept separate

The RosterResource 2027 headline of $186.358 million is not the complete operating base used here. It excludes the Chapman and Whitlock salaries while carrying their potential $0.3 million and $1 million buyouts. Adding $13 million and $8.25 million and removing those two buyouts produces a $19.95 million correction. Add Kelly's contingency and a $14-18 million pre-arbitration, minor-league and callup pool to reach $221.108-225.108 million. [10]

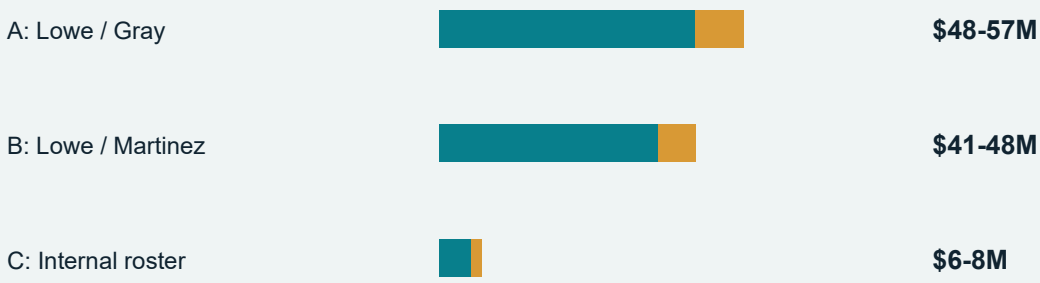
Component	Annual allocation	Definition
11 retained contract allocations	$146.408M	Includes Chapman and Whitlock; excludes Gray option
16 arbitration estimates	$47.90M	No non-tender savings
Kelly contingency	$0.80M	DFA outcome unresolved; no innings credited
Gray buyout reserve	$10M	Source contractual provision; reconcile actual timing/settlement
Hicks obligation / Devers bonus	$4M / $2M	Separate retained obligations

Component	Annual allocation	Definition
Cardinals Contreras credit	-$4M	2027 source allocation; no Gray credit repeated
Pre-arb, minors, callups	$14-18M	S&S roster pool; no settled new minimum assumed
Existing-roster envelope	$221.11-225.11M	Excludes benefits and tax
RR2027 headline	$186.358M	Excludes exercised/vested salaries; contains potential buyouts
Option reconciliation	+$19.95M	Add13+8.25, remove1.0+0.3 potential buyouts
2026 RR estimate	$203.398M	Historical comparison, not2027 budget

Plan A adds Lowe at $22-25 million annually, Gray at $20-24 million and the $6-8 million reserve. New multiyear commitment, including the first-year reserve, is $92-107 million. Plan B's lower annual Martinez allocation produces $98-113 million of new commitment because it buys a second pitching year. A lower first-year total therefore does not mean a smaller total obligation.

Plan	Annual additions	Total allocation	New commitment
A: Lowe / Gray	$48-57M	$269.11-282.11M	$92-107M
B: Lowe / Martinez	$41-48M	$262.11-273.11M	$98-113M
C: Internal roster	$6-8M	$227.11-233.11M	$6-8M

THREE ANNUAL SPENDING PLANS



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

Proposed ceilings and reserve. Independent negotiating ceilings.

The preferred allocation is substantially above the historical 2026 estimate of $203.398 million. The 2026 tax estimate was a different figure, $271.752 million, under a different calculation. Benefits, actual payment timing, future labor terms, tax rates and roster adjustments prevent a responsible exact 2027 tax bill here. The recommendation requires an explicit budget decision; it does not assume revenue, ownership approval or a new labor outcome. The reserve earns no plate appearances or innings until an actual player is identified.

ANALYSIS / 17

Every proposed plate appearance has a job

The principal plan allocates 6,200 plate appearances across a season. That is a planning convention, not a prediction of an exact team total or a simultaneous active roster. Abreu receives 600; Contreras, Lowe and Rafaela 550 each; Rutschman and Durbin 500 each. Anthony and Duran receive 450 each. Story, Mead, Yoshida, Arias and Campbell have smaller but meaningful roles. [5]

Hitter	PA	Condition
Adley Rutschman	500	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Connor Wong	150	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Willson Contreras	550	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Brandon Lowe	550	Proposed signing
Caleb Durbin	500	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Trevor Story	350	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Franklin Arias	250	Selection and readiness
Roman Anthony	450	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Jarren Duran	450	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Ceddanne Rafaela	550	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Wilyer Abreu	600	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Masataka Yoshida	300	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Curtis Mead	350	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Kristian Campbell	250	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Mickey Gasper	100	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Andruw Monasterio	25	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Anthony Seigler	50	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Romy Gonzalez	75	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Eli White	75	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
Nick Sogard	75	Health, performance and seasonal rotation
TOTAL	6200	Season-long, not simultaneous active roster

Casas receives zero principal plate appearances. Jones remains retained at an estimated arbitration cost without a guaranteed quota in this plan; his short Boston offensive surge does not compel a role ahead of the fuller-season evidence. Utility players move through active-roster combinations over time. The club must

manage actual options, selections and roster limits rather than assume all 20 planned hitters are active together.

The positional schedule makes the crowded areas visible. Contreras has 125 first-base starts and 15 at DH. Rutschman has 105 catching starts and 25 at DH. Campbell has 30 second-base and 30 DH starts. Anthony has 85 in left and 17 at DH. Those assignments prevent the report from treating designated hitter as an unlimited outlet for every player who needs rest or lacks a defensive position.

Pos.	162-start allocation	Condition
C	Rutschman 105; Wong 45; Gasper 12	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
1B	Contreras 125; Gonzalez 20; Gasper 10; Mead 7	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
2B	Lowe 120; Campbell 30; Seigler 12	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
3B	Durbin 120; Mead 42	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
SS	Story 80; Arias 60; Sogard 22	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
LF	Anthony 85; Duran 60; White 17	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
CF	Rafaela 135; Duran 27	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
RF	Abreu 140; Duran 20; White 2	Season plan; failure branches separately costed
DH	Yoshida 45; Contreras 15; Lowe 10; Mead 20; Rutschman 25; Anthony 17; Campbell 30	Season plan; failure branches separately costed

ANALYSIS / 18

A rotation budget with a recovery limit

The preferred staff allocates 162 starts and 895 starter innings. Tolle receives 30 starts and 170 innings; Suarez and Gray 28 and 160 each; Bennett 24 and 135; Bello 20 and 110; Crochet 20 and 100. Gamboa, Burgos and Wehunt cover the remaining 12 starts. Tolle's increase over 2026 and Crochet's recovery workload require monitoring rather than a claim of automatic durability.

Pitcher	GS / IP	Condition
Payton Tolle	30 / 170	Workload, health and performance
Ranger Suarez	28 / 160	Workload, health and performance
Sonny Gray	28 / 160	Proposed new agreement
Jake Bennett	24 / 135	Workload, health and performance
Brayan Bello	20 / 110	Workload, health and performance

Pitcher	GS / IP	Condition
Garrett Crochet	20 / 100	Shoulder recovery required; explicit failure branch
Alec Gamboa	6 / 30	Workload, health and performance
Raymond Burgos	4 / 20	Workload, health and performance
Blake Wehunt	2 / 10	Selection and readiness
TOTAL	162 / 895	No principal IP from Houck, Crawford or Oviedo

If Crochet cannot provide any of his 20 starts and 100 innings, the branch assigns Bello four starts and 20 innings, Bennett two and ten, Tolle two and ten, Suarez two and ten, Wehunt six and 30, and Ziehl four and 20 after selection. That branch also works arithmetically after the no-Gray plan. It still raises the developmental and workload risks, particularly for the depth pitchers.

If Wehunt is unavailable in the preferred plan, Gamboa takes his two starts and ten innings. Gamboa's relief assignment falls by ten and Olds's rises by ten, keeping the total workload intact. Houck, Crawford and Oviedo can improve the choices if their recovery becomes demonstrable. They are not necessary anonymous names used to make the current arithmetic balance.

ANALYSIS / 19

Relief innings must survive the starter alternatives

The 545-inning relief plan leaves Chapman and Whitlock at 50 each, while spreading the rest across nine pitchers. Gamboa's 30 starting and 45 relief innings total 75. Burgos's 20 and 45 total 65. Counting those combined assignments prevents the common mistake of using a swing pitcher twice at full capacity. [5]

Pitcher	IP	Condition
Aroldis Chapman	50	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Garrett Whitlock	50	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Greg Weissert	65	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Jovani Morán	75	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Tyron Guerrero	50	Shoulder review required
Erik Miller	60	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Raymond Burgos	45	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Alec Gamboa	45	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Wyatt Olds	45	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Tyler Samaniego	35	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
Jedixson Paez	25	Combined starting and relief workloads checked
TOTAL	545	895 starting +545 relief =1,440 IP; Slaten excluded

If Gray is not signed, Gamboa adds 30 starter innings and Burgos adds 15. Their relief work falls by the same amounts. Weissert adds five relief innings, Moran 20, Miller ten and Olds ten. The no-Gray branch therefore preserves 1,440 planned staff innings without quietly enlarging Gamboa's or Burgos's total workload. It relies more heavily on less established pitchers, which is the actual price of saving the salary.

The 1,440-inning staff total is a planning convention, not the innings in 162 nine-inning games. Actual schedules include road losses, extra innings and other variation. If several pitchers fail together, the individual replacement branches require a fresh combined workload and roster review. The report does not assume that a reserve of dollars can pitch an inning.

ANALYSIS / 20

The internal plan has a complete cost

Without Lowe, Campbell adds 200 plate appearances, Durbin 150, Sogard 100 and Mead 100. Campbell takes 50 additional second-base starts and ten at DH; Durbin takes 40 at second and gives up 40 at third; Sogard adds 30 at second; Mead takes those 40 third-base starts. The arithmetic preserves 550 plate appearances, 120 second-base starts and ten DH starts. The baseball tradeoff is a greater dependence on Campbell's development and Mead's defense.

Change from A	Removed workload	Named replacement
B: Martinez for Gray	28 starts /160 IP	Same role; Gray removed, not also retained
C: no Gray	28 starts /160 IP	Bello+8/45; Bennett+6/35; Gamboa+6/30; Wehunt+6/35; Burgos+2/15
C: swing-pitcher relief shift	45 relief IP	Gamboa-30; Burgos-15. Weissert+5; Moran+20; Miller+10; Olds+10
C: no Lowe	550 PA;120 2B/10 DH	Campbell+200PA/50 2B/10 DH; Durbin+150/40 2B; Sogard+100/30 2B; Mead+100/40 3B. Durbin sheds40 3B
No Crochet, including after C	20 starts /100 IP	Bello+4/20; Bennett+2/10; Tolle+2/10; Suarez+2/10; Wehunt+6/30; Ziehl+4/20 after selection
No Wehunt in A	2 starts /10 IP	Gamboa+2/10; Gamboa relief-10; Olds relief+10
No Guerrero	50 relief IP	Miller+15; Weissert+10; Olds+15; Samaniego+10
No Anthony	450 PA;85 LF/17 DH	Duran+200PA/45 LF; White+150/40 LF; Yoshida+100/17 DH
No Arias	250 PA;60 SS	Sogard+150PA/35 SS; Monasterio+100/25 SS
No Gasper	100 PA;12 C/10 1B	Wong+50PA/12 C; Gonzalez+50/10 1B
No Mead	350 PA;42 3B/7 1B/20 DH	Durbin+100PA/22 3B; Monasterio+100/20 3B; Gonzalez+50/7 1B; Yoshida+100/20 DH
Multiple position-player failures	Combined replanning	Single branches are not additive; reserve earns no anonymous production

Without Gray, Bello adds eight starts and 45 innings, Bennett six and 35, Gamboa six and 30, Wehunt six and 35, and Burgos two and 15. The corresponding relief shifts appear above. This is a real lower-cost path, not

evidence that Gray has no marginal value. It turns several uncertain depth cases into more important parts of an 87-win team's attempt to improve.

The individual hitting failures are also explicit. Anthony's 450 plate appearances go to Duran, White and Yoshida. Arias's 250 go to Sogard and Monasterio. Gasper's 100 go to Wong and Gonzalez. Mead's 350 go to Durbin, Monasterio, Gonzalez and Yoshida. These branches are not additive without recalculation. Losing several of those players together could exceed the retained roster's practical capacity even when each isolated branch is numerically complete.

ANALYSIS / 21

What would make the recommendation wrong

Lowe could decline, cost more than the ceiling, attach draft compensation that materially changes the value, or lose enough defensive range that his bat no longer justifies the full package. Gray could prefer another club or require a second guaranteed year Boston should not grant at this price. Crochet's shoulder and the other recovery cases could leave a larger pitching gap than the principal plan anticipates. Those are concrete reasons to retain the alternatives rather than sell the preferred roster as inevitable.

Illustration, not forecast	RS / RA	Margin	Simple run-ratio wins
2026 baseline	689 / 611	+78	90.7
Score40 more; same prevention	729 / 611	+118	95.2
Score60 more; allow30 more	749 / 641	+108	93.5
Same offense; allow60 more	689 / 671	+18	83.1
Score80 more; allow30 more	769 / 641	+128	95.6

The run examples isolate the scale of the problem. Forty more runs scored with the same prevention improves the descriptive run-ratio result, while allowing 60 more with unchanged offense gives away much of Boston's current advantage. These are not projections assigned to Lowe or Gray. Adding their past production to the team total would ignore displaced players, playing time, park, age, opponents and uncertainty.

The decision should be revisited if ownership's actual budget cannot support the reconstructed base plus the additions, if medical evidence changes the workload assumptions, or if a genuinely available trade produces a better fully costed outcome. An internal season can still be defensible if Campbell, Arias and the young starters advance. It should be chosen for that developmental and financial case, with the offensive risk acknowledged.

ANALYSIS / 22

The retained roster and the recommendation

Boston has enough established pitching and defensive strength to justify an attempt to improve now. Its most useful purchase is an offensive role the current roster has not securely filled, accompanied by a defined replacement for Gray's departed innings. The preferred plan is expensive because the existing commitments are expensive. Concealing that starting point would make the recommendation easier to sell and less useful to evaluate.

Player / MLB ID	Pos.	Snapshot treatment
Adley Rutschman / 668939	C	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Alec Gamboa / 687941	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Andruw Monasterio / 655316	SS	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Anthony Seigler / 678011	2B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Aroldis Chapman / 547973	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Brayan Bello / 678394	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Caleb Durbin / 702332	3B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Ceddanne Rafaela / 678882	CF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Connor Wong / 657136	C	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Curtis Mead / 678554	3B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Eli White / 642201	CF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Erik Miller / 669062	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Garrett Crochet / 676979	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Garrett Whitlock / 676477	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Greg Weissert / 669711	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Jahmai Jones / 663330	DH	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Jake Bennett / 687562	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Jarren Duran / 680776	LF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Jedixson Paez / 699151	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Johan Oviedo / 670912	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Jovani Morán / 663558	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Justin Slaten / 686580	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Kristian Campbell / 692225	OF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed

Player / MLB ID	Pos.	Snapshot treatment
Kutter Crawford / 676710	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Masataka Yoshida / 807799	DH	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Mickey Gasper / 681508	DH	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Nick Sogard / 686765	2B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Payton Tolle / 801139	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Ranger Suarez / 624133	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Raymond Burgos / 670103	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Roman Anthony / 701350	LF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Romy Gonzalez / 663853	DH	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Tanner Houck / 656557	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Trevor Story / 596115	SS	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Triston Casas / 671213	1B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Tyler Samaniego / 701719	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Tyron Guerrero / 594027	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Willson Contreras / 575929	1B	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Wilyer Abreu / 677800	RF	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed
Wyatt Olds / 681544	P	40-name dated roster; no empty place assumed

Keep the strongest core roles, preserve the cost of injured players, and make the younger players earn defined opportunities. Buy Lowe only within the stated ceiling and with current compensation and health review. Re-sign Gray only through a new agreement that fits the one-year limit. If either negotiation fails, use the named alternative and recalculate the combined roster. The goal is a better offense that leaves Boston's hard-won pitching advantage intact.

ANALYSIS / 23

Definitions and sources

The report separates Boston-only 2026 contributions from full MLB seasons, current roster from departed players, and major-league from minor-league levels. Innings notation counts outs: 46.2 means 46 innings and two outs. Expected statistics and OAA are descriptive measures with sampling and model limitations. Catching run value overlaps framing and must not be summed with it. Handedness samples are dated evidence, not fixed future platoon identities.

Contract allocations, cash payments and tax AAV are distinct. Arbitration is estimated until agreed. Proposed prices, plate appearances, starts, innings, reserves and run sensitivities are S&S scenarios. No reported offer, confidential medical finding, trade availability, tax outcome or ownership budget is inferred. Research and roster checks are dated November 3, 2026; public release requires a fresh current-source review.

[1] MLB: Boston regular-season statistics

Completed2024-26 seasons; full-league records saved separately.

Open source

[2] MLB: Boston completed game log

162 regular-season finals and two Wild Card games.

Open source

[3] MLB: dated Boston major roster

40 current names; no empty roster places assumed.

Open source

[4] MLB: Red Sox transactions

Individual transaction histories, trades and free agency reconciled.

Open source

[5] MLB: player statistics and splits

Boston-only samples separated from full MLB seasons and handedness splits.

Open source

[6] Baseball Savant: expected statistics

2024-26 batter and pitcher files saved. Expected measures are descriptive.

Open source

[7] Baseball Savant: Outs Above Average

Three-year range evidence and opportunities.

Open source

[8] Baseball Savant: catcher framing

Full MLB framing, separate from Boston innings.

Open source

[9] Baseball Savant: fielding run value

Catching values overlap framing; do not sum.

Open source

[10] FanGraphs RosterResource: Red Sox payroll

2027 allocations, options, buyouts, credits and arbitration. Headline reconciled explicitly.

Open source

[11] MLB: Red Sox injury and roster update

Dated recovery reports, administrative activations and source conflicts separated.

Open source

[12] Red Sox: Whitlock option exercised

November1 primary confirmation; $8.25M allocation also checked against option register.

Open source

[13] MLB: Chapman option trigger

Reported innings trigger and conditions; current payroll marks option vested.

Open source

[14] MLB: Gray agreement terms

Historical2027 buyout provision and2026 Cardinals credit; current settlement requires release review.

Open source

[15] MLB: Crochet recovery and potential relief return

September shoulder recovery context, separate from later activation.

Open source

[16] MLB: Worcester statistics

Triple-A batting and pitching records saved separately.

Open source

[17] MLB: Portland statistics

Double-A samples kept separate; developmental levels are not MLB forecasts.

Open source

[18] MLB Trade Rumors, syndicated by Yardbarker: arbitration estimates

Unsigned estimates, reconciled with current RosterResource and roster.

Open source

[19] MLB:2027 options and opt-outs

Gray departure, Whitlock exercise and other option context.

Open source

[20] MLB: Boston organizational roster

Major roster, organizational minors and departures classified separately.

Open source

[21] Stadium & Street: cross-club series

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

Open source

Research, roster and candidate checks were completed November 3, 2026. Individual source dates and statistical periods are preserved above.