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HW10: Finding Sue Bird's True Value in 2021

Thousands of athletes coming to the end of their respective careers dream about managing a franchise in their favorite sport- convinced they're borderline omniscient in the realm of their sport. It takes a very, very small amount of looking into some of the decisions and conversations a GM needs to make to see this job, while appearing fun and engaging, is one not many could handle on their best day. The WNBA's inclusion of a salary cap adds parity to the league- ensuring the richest owners don't end up with the best teams as seen almost exclusively in sports like world football (excluding a few leagues like the MLS). This makes the job of a GM even more difficult in the sense that one needs to accurately determine how much an individual player contributes to a team's win total and how much a contract should be worth relative to the number of wins added in order to set a team up for success. WNBA great Sue Bird is a model case study for seeing where GM's can actually generate some value on rosters. Using Basketball-Reference's calculations for a player's win share, we can see Sue Bird accounted for three wins in the 2021 WNBA season. There was a total of \$15,887,036 paid out to athletes in the 2021 season, with Bird earning \$215,000 respectively. With a 32 game season and 192 wins across all teams in the league in the regular season, we can find a win to be worth about \$82744.98. With Bird contributing three wins to the Seattle Storm, we can find the true value she generated to be \$248,234.94- all of \$33,234.94 more than she was paid for the year- not including playoffs. The 2021 WNBA Salary Cap was \$1,339,000, so to save that much in value

on just one player for a roster of twelve shows that the Seattle Storm are in good hands and likely a good position to continue winning games moving forward after a 21-11 record in 2021.

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