



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL

# AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF ACC MEN'S BASKETBALL AND THE TRANSFER PORTAL IN THE PAST 5 YEARS.

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## BACKGROUND

- The NCAA works in partnership with over 1,200 colleges and universities in the United States.<sup>1</sup>
- Each year, the NCAA invests about 60% of its profits to be returned to its colleges.<sup>2</sup>
- The NCAA is a non-profit organization that makes millions of dollars if not billions each year. In 2021, the NCAA made \$1.16 billion dollars in revenue.<sup>2</sup>
- Amazingly, 85% of this total revenue was made from the NCAA Men's Basketball Championship, "March Madness®."<sup>2</sup>
- The majority of the revenue – \$986 million dollars – was made from television sales with networks like CBS and Turner Sports, while roughly 21% of it was generated from ticket sales at the games.<sup>2</sup>
- 60% of its revenue is returned to its collegiate members.<sup>3</sup>
- However, the money the NCAA invests in its members is not distributed evenly among divisions or sports. In particular, 35% of the 60% of revenue that goes back to its collegiate members is earmarked for Division One Men's Basketball.<sup>3</sup>
  - Translated to dollars, in 2021, \$696 million dollars was allocated to member schools. Of that, \$243.6 million dollars was destined for Division One Men's Basketball for the next year. The remaining 65% of the money – \$452.4 million dollars – was divided up into funds that support tutoring and scholarships for all other sports.
- The Transfer Portal was created on October 15th, 2018.<sup>4</sup>
- Simply put, the Transfer Portal is, "A compliance tool that systematically manages the transfer process from start to finish, adds more transparency to the process among schools, and empowers student-athletes to make known their desire to consider other programs."<sup>4</sup>
- Before the Transfer Portal was established in 2018, there were only 689 athletes who transferred schools.<sup>5</sup>
- In comparison, after the Transfer Portal was established, it was reported that 1,138 male NCAA basketball players transferred.<sup>6</sup>
  - This indicated that there was a 165% increase in men's basketball players transferring once the Transfer Portal was established.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to describe the characteristics of Division One men's basketball players in the ACC who choose to enter the transfer portal. This study is limited to the ACC as it is historically one of the best and most competitive conferences for Division One men's basketball.

## METHODS

- Study Design:** This was a longitudinal exploratory analysis that examined what factors influenced ACC men's basketball players to stay with their team or enter the Transfer Portal over a five-year study period.
- Subjects:** This study investigated roughly two hundred and twenty-five NCAA Division One basketball players per regular basketball season. This study considered five consecutive years and studied approximately one-thousand one-hundred twenty-five athletes. Subjects qualified for this study if they were male student-athletes on the roster of an ACC men's basketball team from 2018 to 2022 (IRB approved).
- Protocol:**
  - An individual Microsoft Excel sheet was created for each College or University in the ACC.
  - On each sheet, five sections were provided, one for each basketball season.
  - Within each section, there were fourteen columns added, each describing a potential factor:
    - Player name; position; height; weight; remaining eligibility; playing time; recruitment rank in stars; average points scored; the average number of rebounds; the average number of assists; the average number of blocks; end of season team rank (in the NCAA); and school. Additionally, another column was added which reflected the player's outcome.
  - Player outcomes were classified into four categories – staying with their team, transferring through the Transfer Portal, going pro, and others (generally retiring from sport).
  - The data was collected from ESPN.com, 247Sports.com, and the respective schools' basketball websites.
  - All data was compiled into excel sheets and compiled for each year.
  - Please note that all columns consist of numerical values. Qualitative factors, like the player's outcome, the player's school, and the player's position were turned into numbers.
    - For player outcome, staying was given the number value of 1, transferring was given 2, entering the NBA was given 3, and "other" i.e., retiring from basketball was given 4. Additionally, for an athlete's position, playing guard was assigned the value 1, forward was given 2, and center was given 3. Finally, each school was assigned a number, and that assigned number would be entered into the school column.

## RESULTS

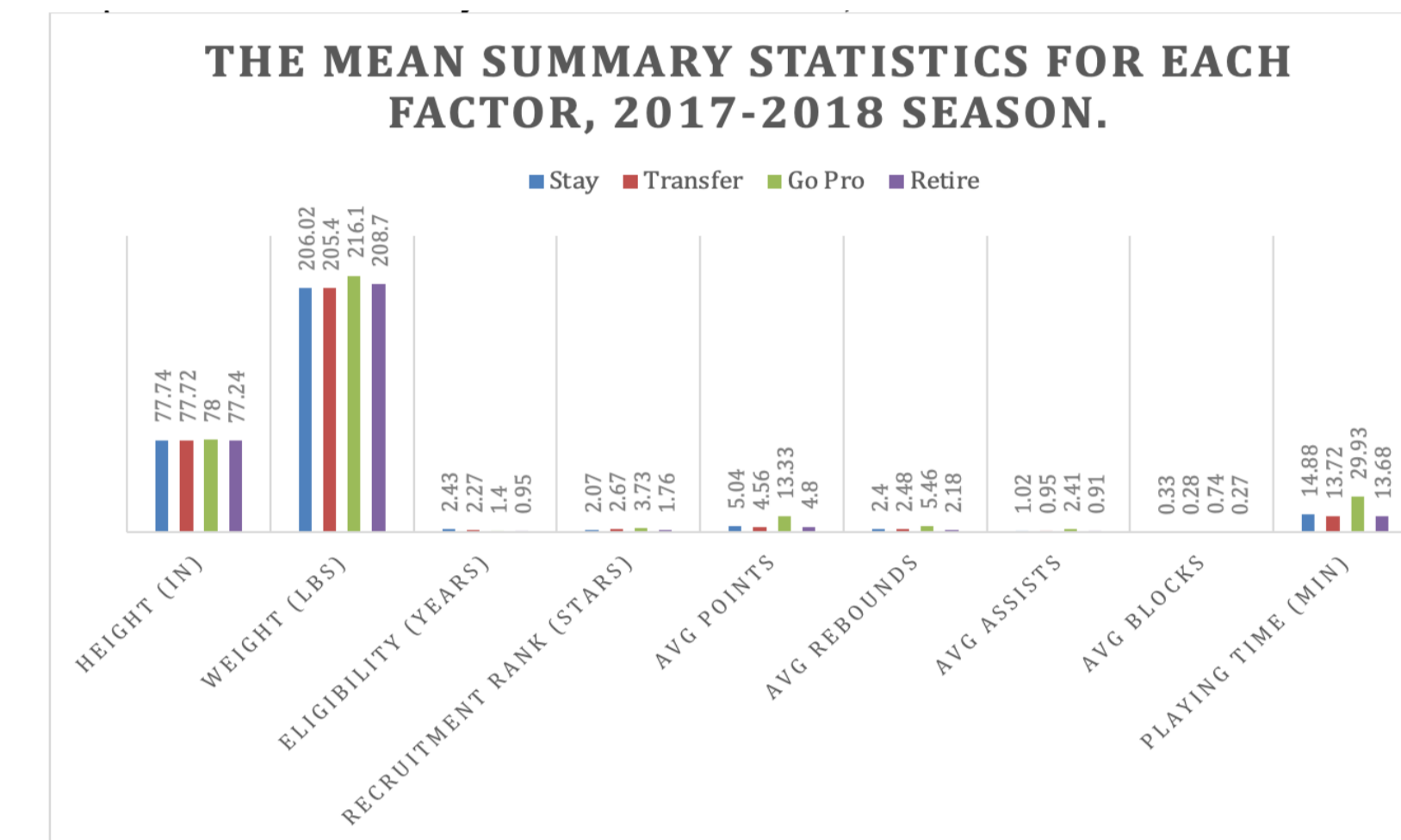


Table 1. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2017-2018

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	1	1
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	12	5	2	15

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

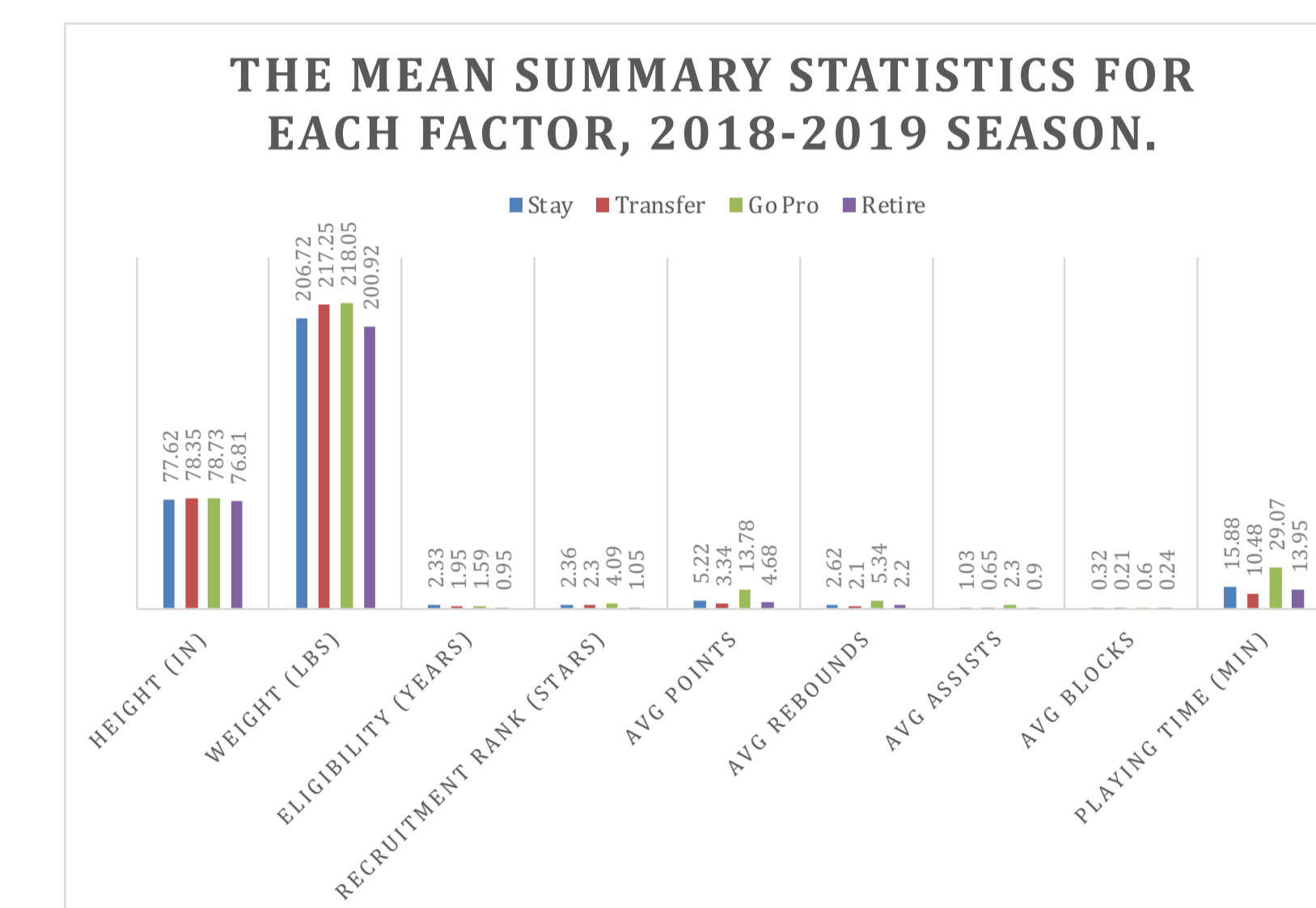


Table 2. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2018-2019

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	1	1
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	3	13	1	9

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

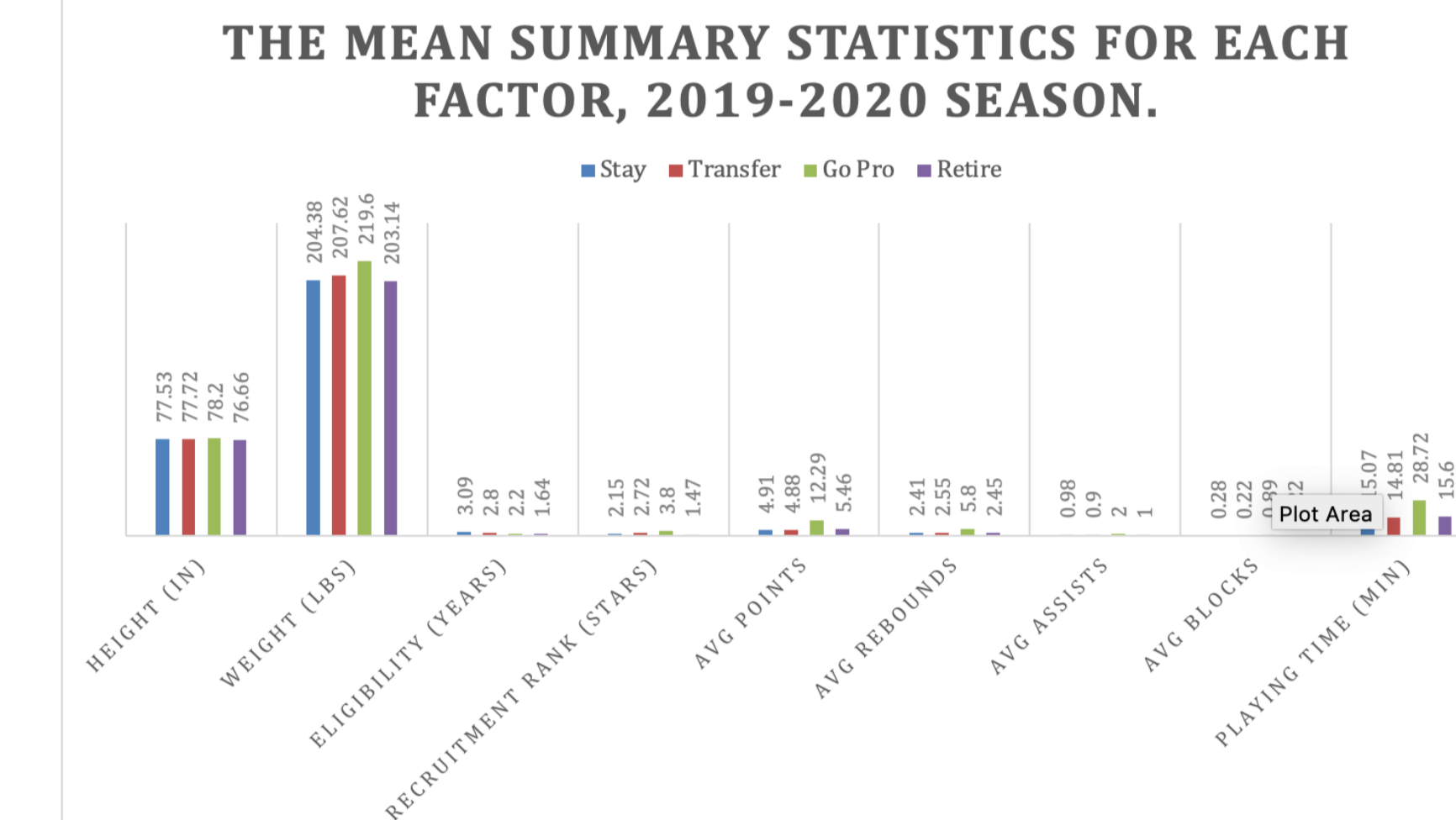


Table 3. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2019-2020

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	2	1
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	8	5	2	1

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

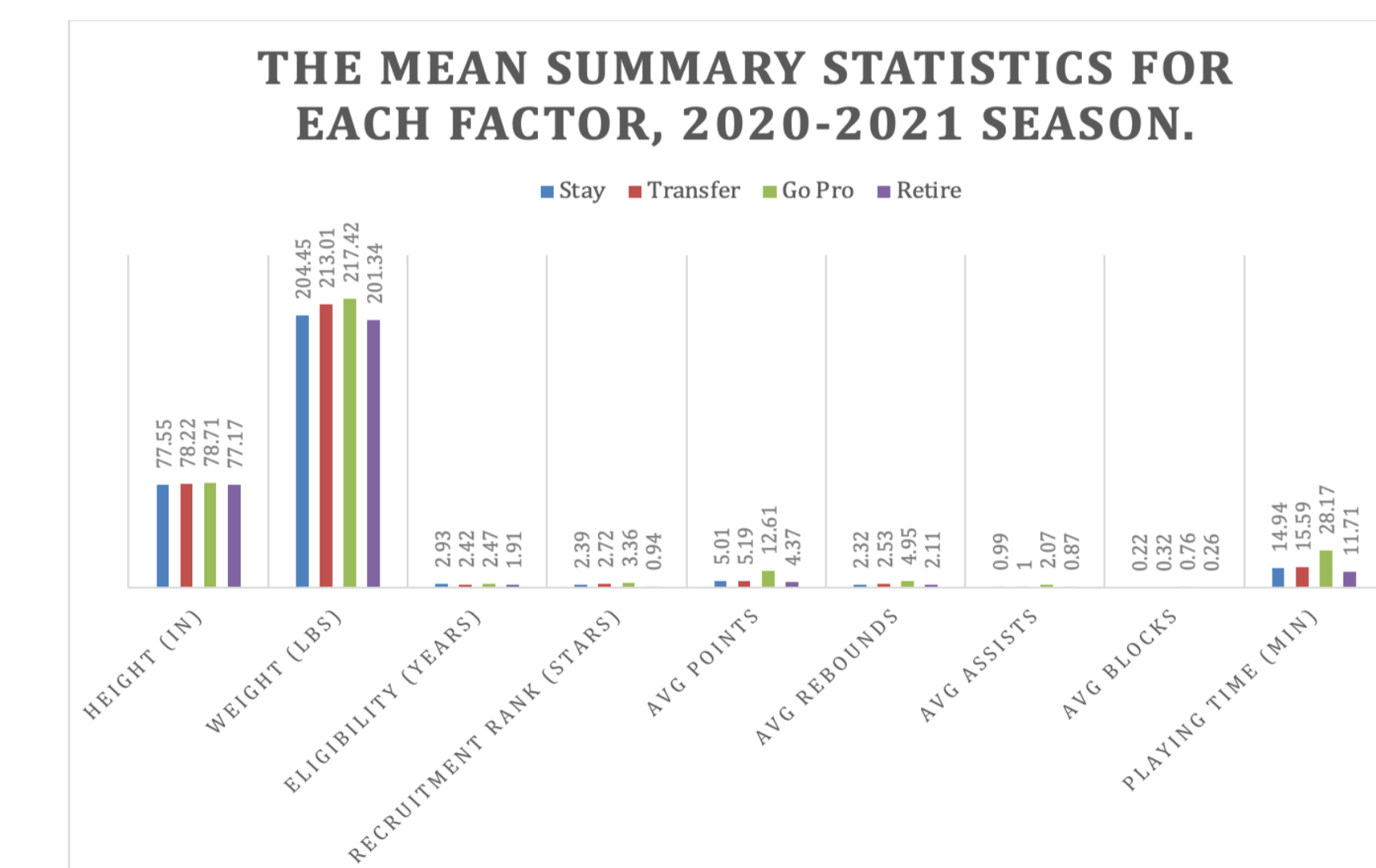


Table 4. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2020-2021

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	1	1
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	1	5	0	2

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

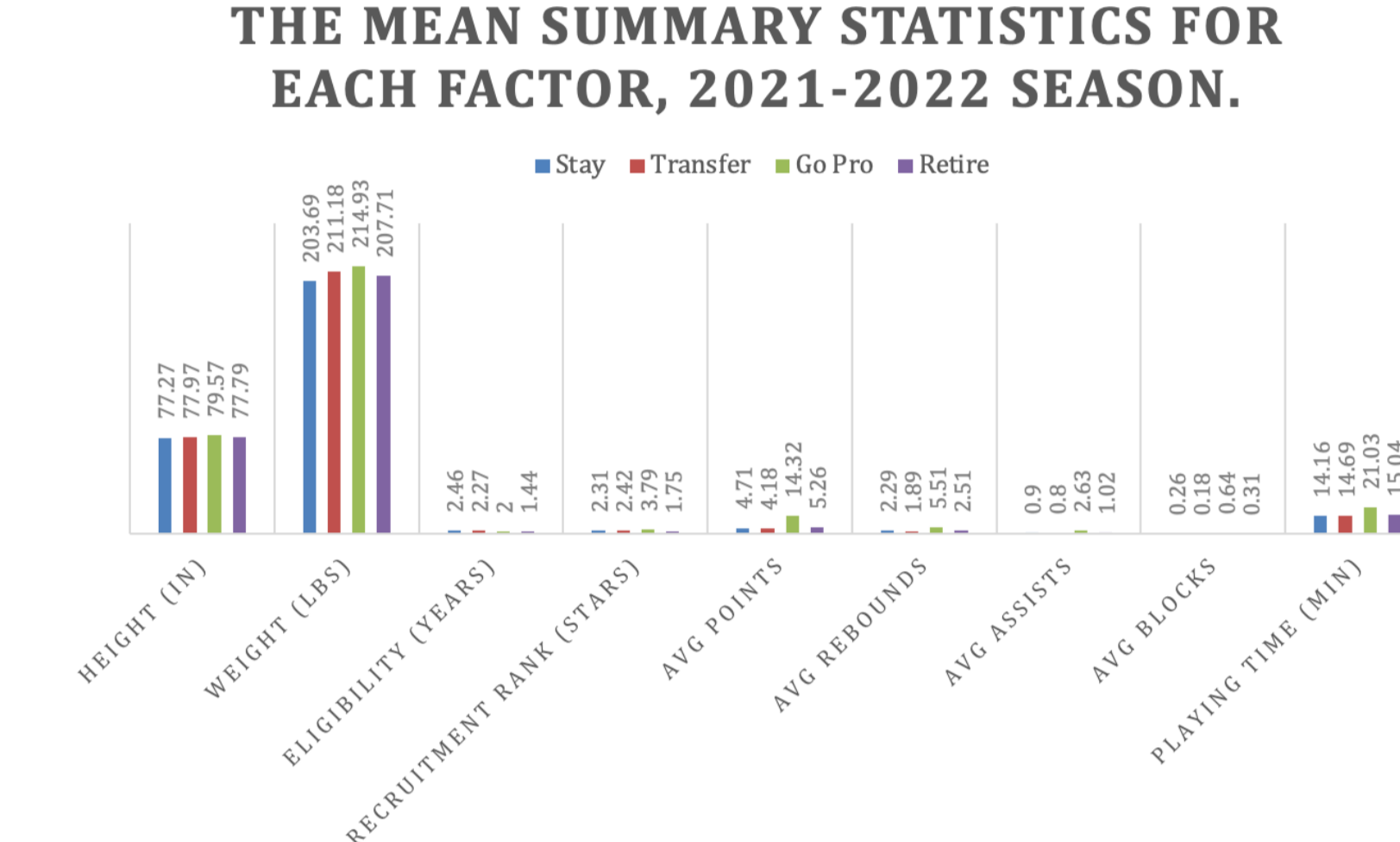


Table 5. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2021-2022

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	2	2
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	1	13	2	5

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

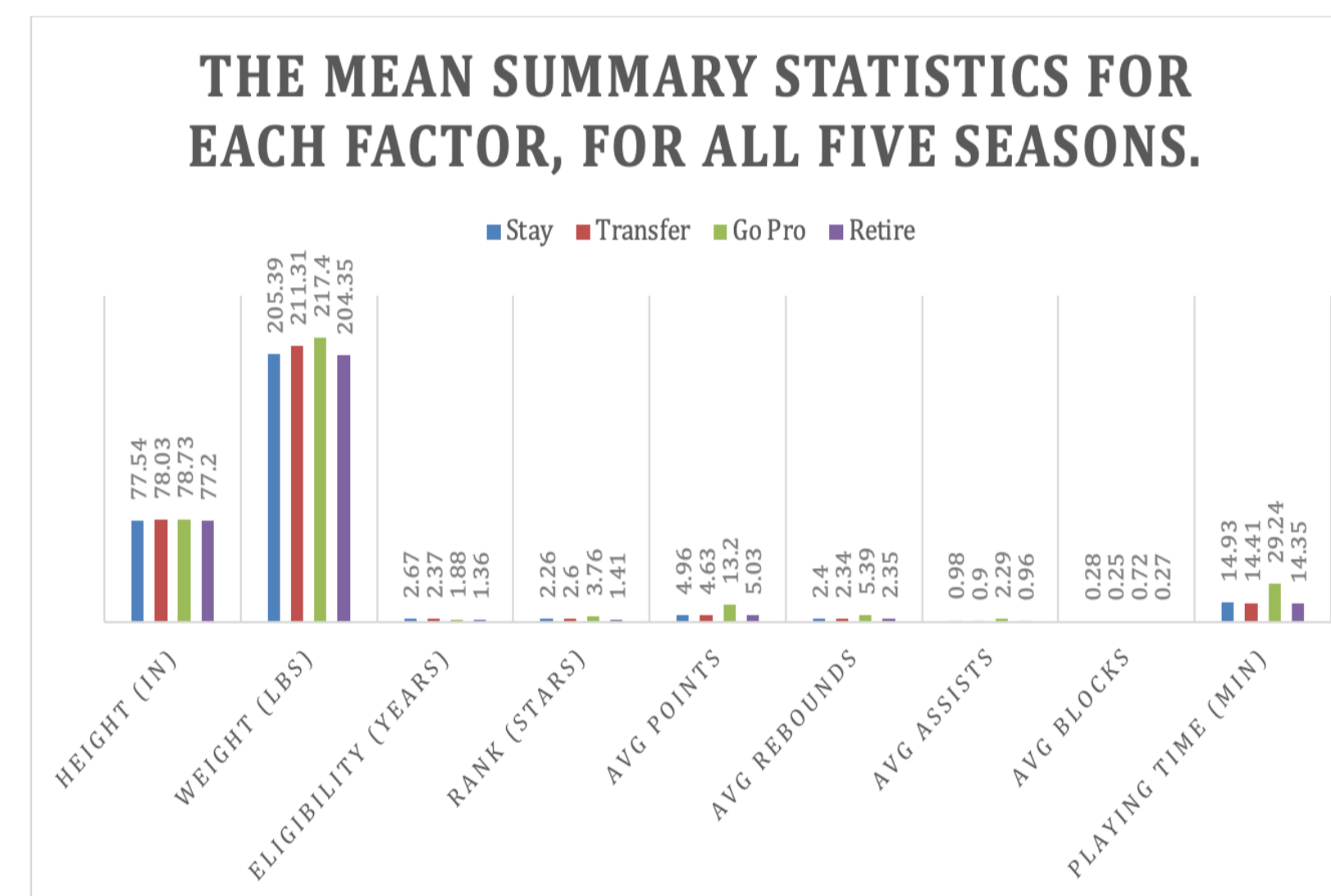


Table 6. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for All Five Years

Variable	Stay	Transfer	Go Pro	Retire
Position	1	1	1	1
School Rank	0	0	0	0
School ID	8	13	2	5

Positions: 1 = Guard, 2 = Forward, 3 = Center, School ID: 1 = UNC, 2 = Duke, 3 = Notre Dame, 4 = U Miami, 5 = Wake Forest, 6 = Virginia Tech, 7 = UVA, 8 = Florida State, 9 = Syracuse, 10 = Clemson, 11 = Louisville, 12 = Boston College, 13 = Pittsburgh, 14 = Georgia Tech, 15 = NC State

## CONCLUSIONS

- This study found that the primary factor that leads athletes to enter the Transfer Portal is an athlete's remaining eligibility but the likelihood is also affected by those who weigh more and have a higher high school recruitment ranking than the players who stayed at their schools.
  - Additional Findings:
    - There were 8 factors that lead to ACC players going pro
      - Increased weight, decreased eligibility, increased recruitment rank, 2 times the average points, 2 times the average rebounds, 2 times the average assists, 2 times the average blocks, and higher average playing time.
    - For the first 3 years of the study (2017-2020) there were between 20-25 athletes who transferred.
    - In 2020-2021, there was a large influx of athletes entering the portal → 55 athletes transferred.
    - 2021-2022, there were still more athletes entering the portal → 33 athletes

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