



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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Senior Honors Thesis under the direction of Dr. Kristin Ondrak and Dr. Ed Shields



BACKGROUND

- In 2021, the NCAA made \$1.16 billion dollars in revenue.¹
 - \$986 million dollars in TV sales of March Madness.¹
- Each year, the NCAA invests about 60% of its profits to be returned to its colleges, but not all money is distributed equally.²
- In particular, 35% of the returned revenue goes to Division One Men's Basketball programs.²
 - 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, 2018.³
- 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."³
- Before the Transfer Portal was established in 2018, there were only 689 athletes who transferred schools.⁴
- After the Transfer Portal was established, 1,138 male NCAA basketball players transferred.⁵
 - This indicated that there was a **165% increase** in men's basketball players transferring after the Transfer Portal was created.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to describe the characteristics of Division I Men's basketball players in the ACC who choose to enter the transfer portal.

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 included 225 NCAA Division I basketball players per basketball season. This study considered 5 consecutive years for a total of 1,125 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.
 - 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.

RESULTS

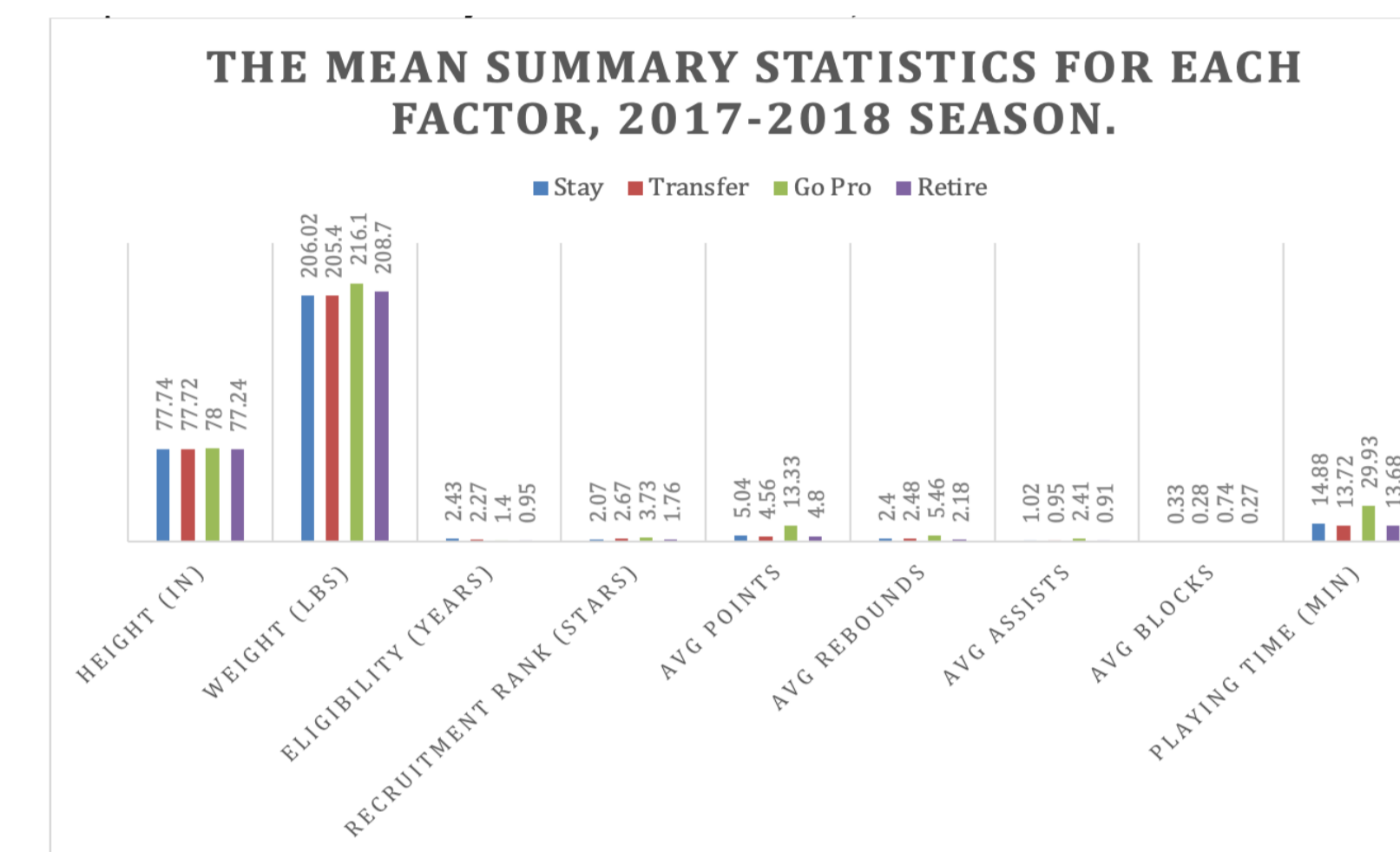


Table 1. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2017-2018

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

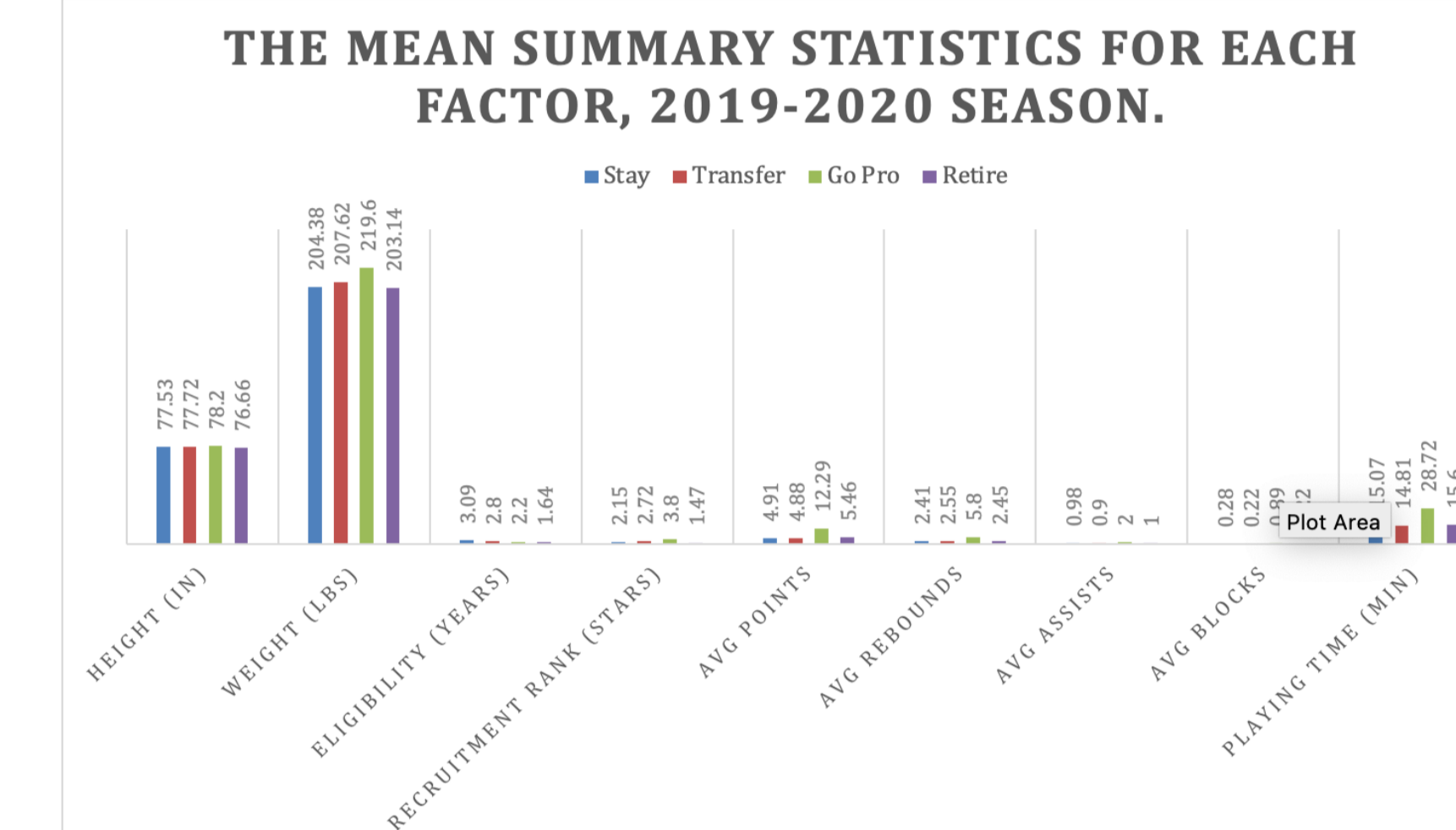


Table 3. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2019-2020

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

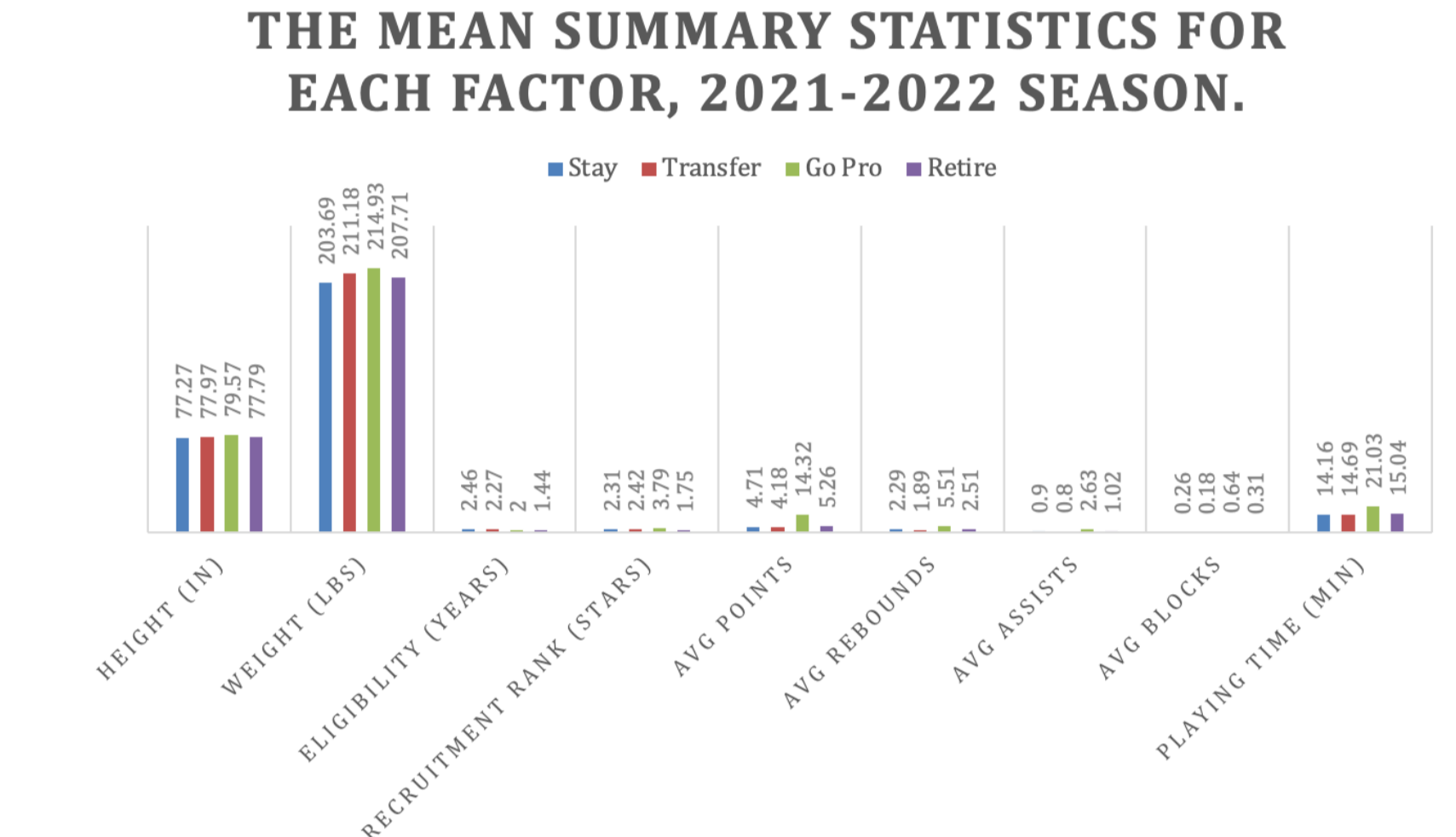


Table 5. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2021-2022

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

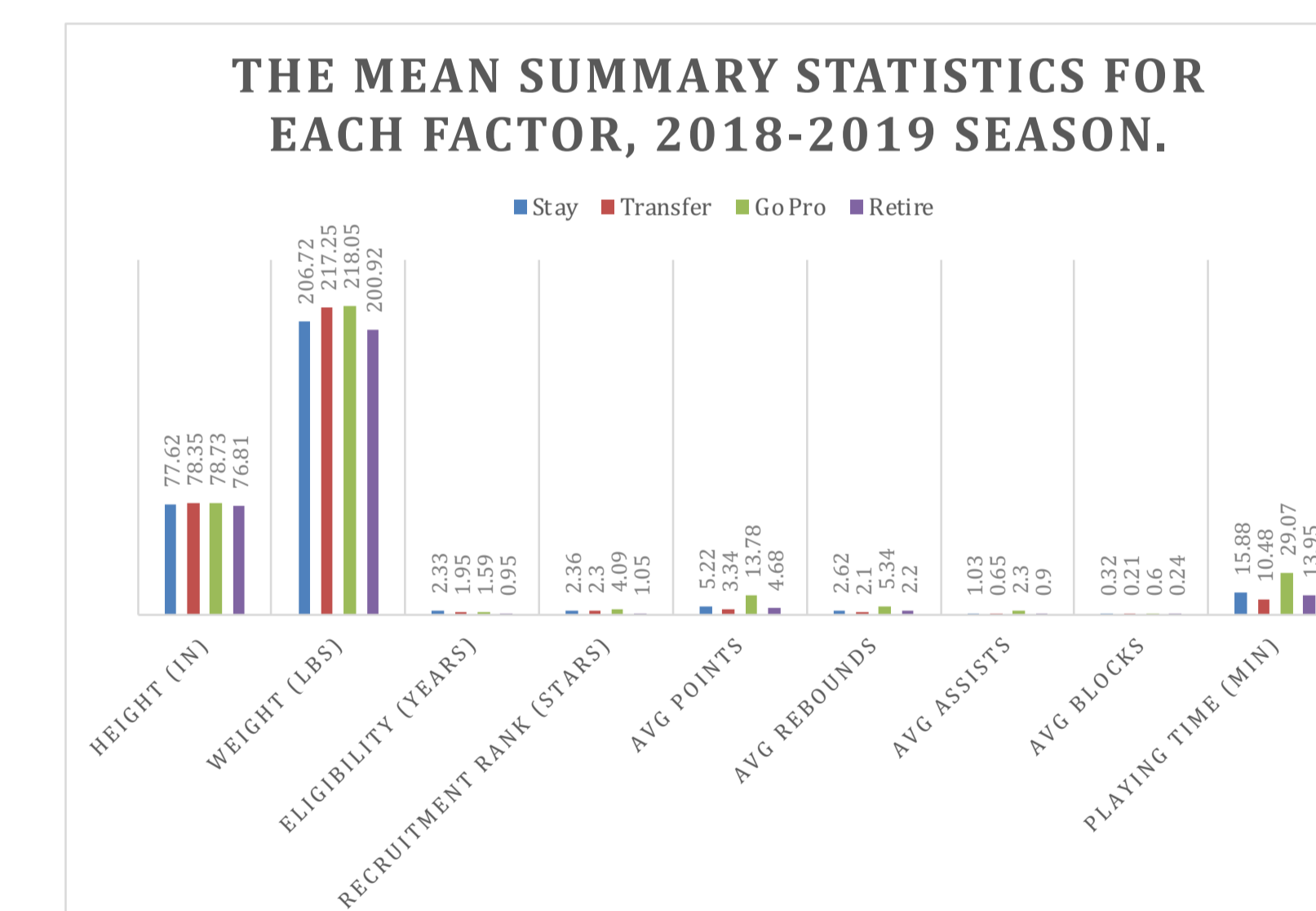


Table 2. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2018-2019

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

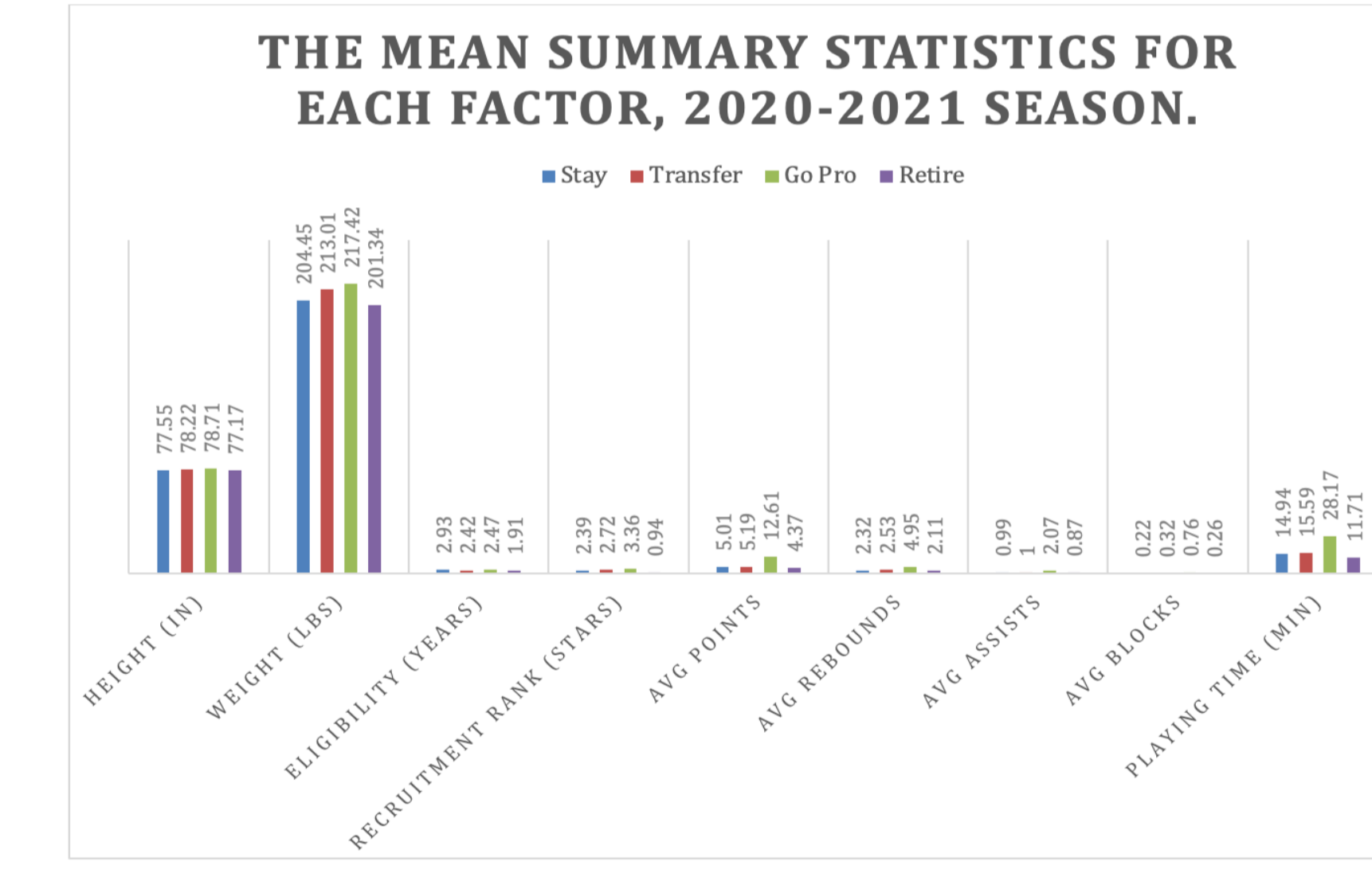


Table 4. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for 2020-2021

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

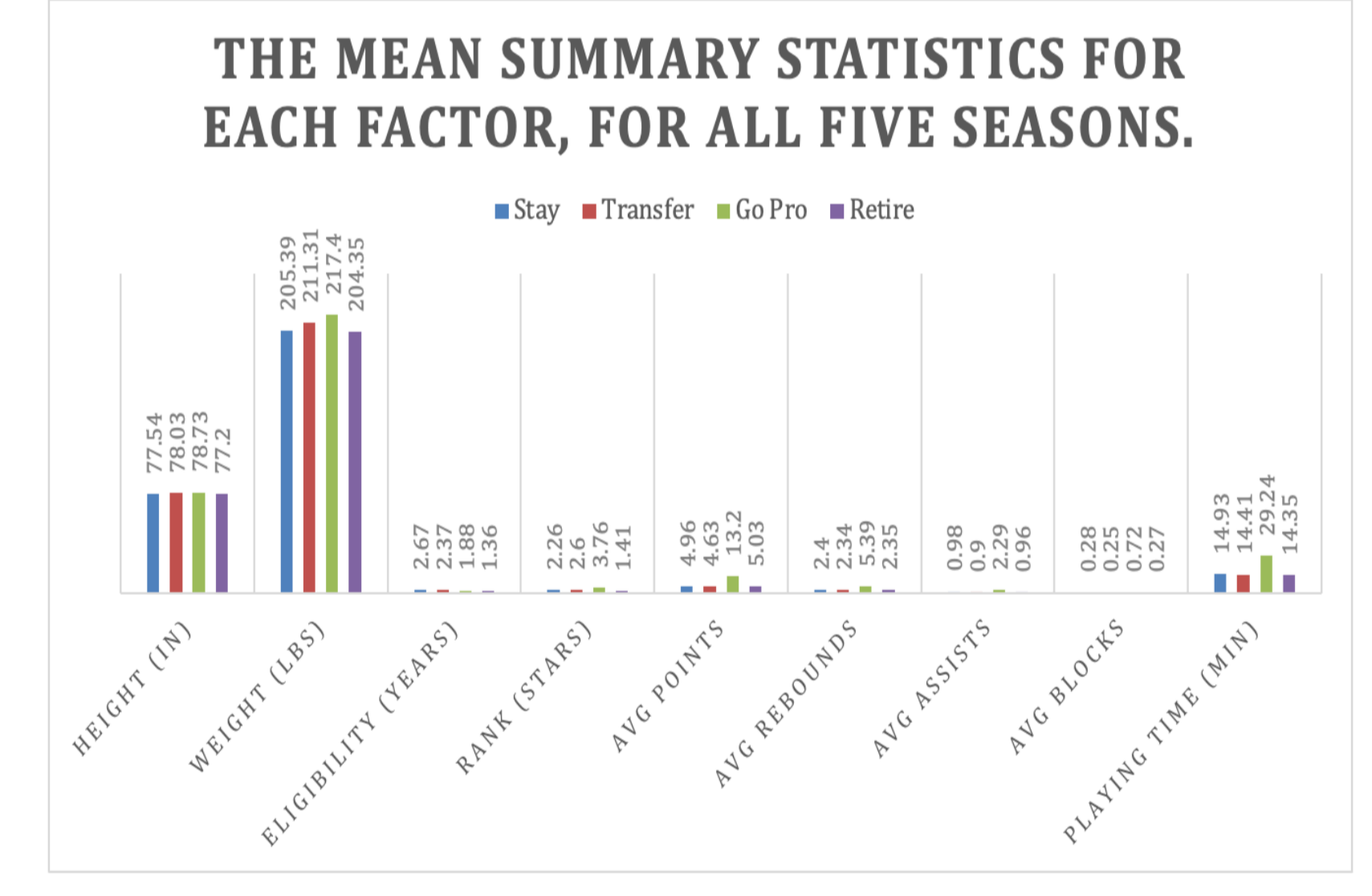


Table 6. Overview of the Modes Position, School Rank, and School ID for All Five Years

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

- The primary factor associated with athletes entering the Transfer Portal is an athlete's remaining eligibility. The likelihood is also affected by weight and high school recruitment rank.
- There were 8 factors associated with ACC players going pro:
 - Increased weight, decreased years of eligibility, increased recruitment rank, twice the average number of points, twice the average rebounds, twice the average assists, twice the average blocks, and higher than average playing time.
- For the first 3 years of the study (2017-2020) there were 20-25 athletes who transferred.
- In the last 2 years of the study (2020-2021), 55 athletes transferred.
- In the final year (2021-2022), 33 athletes transferred.

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