

SUMMARY MEMBERSHIP ANALYSIS FOR

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Trends of first-time 4 to 8 year-old male ice hockey players – 1998-99 to 2007-08

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USA HOCKEY MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT



Background

USA Hockey's Membership Development Department has been conducting comprehensive research to gain a deeper understanding as to why certain segments of USA Hockey membership – most notably the core male ice hockey segment – have been shrinking in recent years.

This study isolated the behavior of first-time 4 to 8 year olds in determining the likelihood of returning for a second season. The data stretches back a full 10 years beginning in the 1997-98 season and runs through the most recent season 2007-08. The data is further segmented by state enabling us to analyze trends based on geography and in light of historical strengths and weaknesses. For example, the state of Massachusetts has been a consistent leader in attracting new hockey players especially in this age group. Yet like most states, acquisition numbers have been sliding for at least a decade accompanied by a parallel drop in retention numbers.

It is important to note however, that one of the key metrics of this study focuses on the *rate of retention* – that is the *percentage* of retained members from the universe of acquired members from the prior year. For example, if a state signs up 1,000 first-time players this season and 700 players return the next season, then the retention rate for that state is 70 percent. If in three years the same state signs up only 800 first-time players and 560 players return the next season, then the retention rate would also be 70 percent.

In many cases within the USA Hockey family, retention rates have been remarkably consistent in recent years averaging close to 70 percent across the country. It has been a drop in the acquisition of new first-timers that has been the primary cause of membership slippage in recent years. Such conditions require USA Hockey's Membership Development Department to travel concurrent paths in mounting future growth initiatives:

- A comprehensive *retention strategy* to insure that we keep as many members as possible from one season to the next; and
- A comprehensive *acquisition strategy* to insure that we attract as many prospective new members every season

Clearly, this two-pronged approach requires a coordinated effort with USA Hockey's Membership Development Department and youth hockey volunteers at the grass roots level across the country.

The following analysis based on secondary data provided by Assistant Executive Director of Member Services Rae Briggie and her staff in the national office of USA Hockey. We anticipate that additional research including additional quantitative as well as qualitative studies all the way down to the local program level will be conducted over the coming months in order to determine the best course of action in order to insure the future health of the game of hockey.

Methodology

This study focused on the very youngest age groups – boys ages 4 through 8 – and further isolated those members that signed up to play ice hockey for the very first time. The sample, then, is made up of first-time 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 year olds in each of the last 10 seasons beginning with the 1998-99 season through the 2007-08 season. This methodology allows us to measure the (a) number of NEWLY ACQUIRED players (the ONES); (b) number of RETAINED players (the TWOS); (c) the number of LOST players; as well as (d) the RETENTION RATE of players by age segment in each of the last 10 seasons.

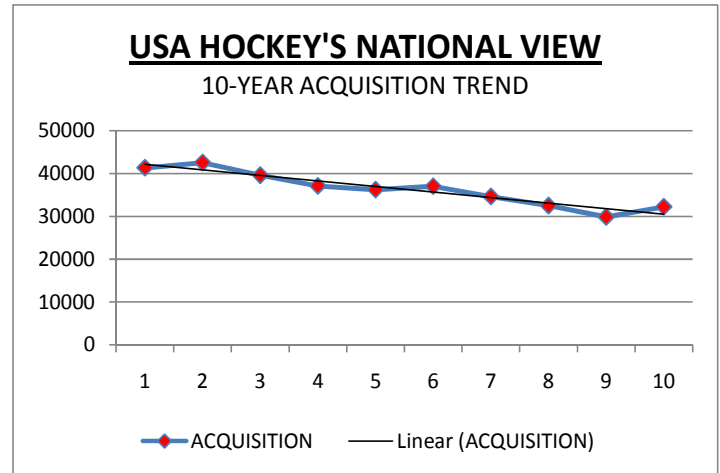
The study further allows us to isolate these results on a state-by-state basis to determine behavioral trends based on geography and in light of historical results based on decades of registration figures.

National View

ACQUISITION

- Acquisition of first-time players is down **22.1%** over the last 10 years
 - Acquired 32,270 first-time players in 2006-07 – down from 41,380 in 1997-98
- Acquisition has steadily declined over the last 10 years but was up **7.9%** in 2006-07

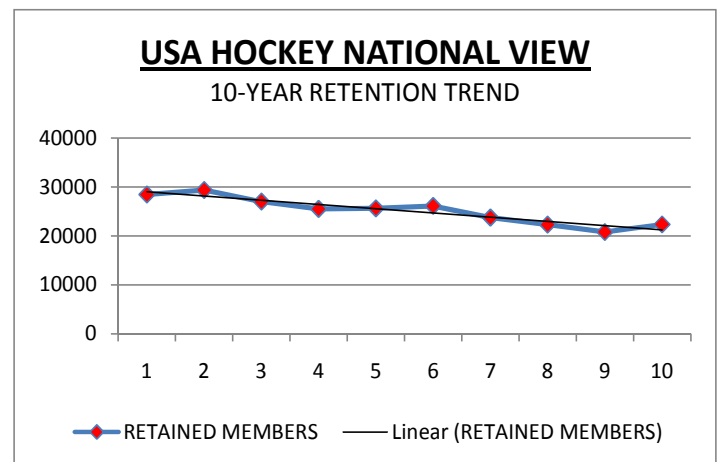
USA HOCKEY ACQUISITION OF NEW PLAYERS				
Season	NEW	vs PY#	*+/-	vs PY%
1997-98	41380	N/A	N/A	N/A
1998-99	42587	41380	1207	2.9%
1999-00	39629	42587	(2958)	-6.9%
2000-01	37124	39629	(2505)	-6.3%
2001-02	36260	37124	(864)	-2.3%
2002-03	37050	36260	790	2.2%
2003-04	34668	37050	(2382)	-6.4%
2004-05	32536	34668	(2132)	-6.1%
2005-06	29901	32536	(2635)	-8.1%
2006-07	32270	29901	2369	7.9%



RETENTION

- Retention of first-time players was down **21.6%** over the last 10 years
 - Retained 22,373 first-time players in 2007-08 – down from 28,470 in 1998-99
 - Retention has mostly declined over the last 10 years but was up **7.5%** in 2007-08.

USA HOCKEY RETENTION OF NEW PLAYERS				
Season	RET	vs PY#	*+/-	vsPY%
1998-99	28470	N/A	N/A	N/A
1999-00	29390	28470	920	3.2%
2000-01	27038	29390	(2352)	-8.0%
2001-02	25547	27038	(1491)	-5.5%
2002-03	25653	25547	106	0.4%
2003-04	26151	25653	498	1.9%
2004-05	23767	26151	(2384)	-9.1%
2005-06	22342	23767	(1425)	-6.0%
2006-07	20811	22342	(1531)	-6.9%
2007-08	22373	20811	1562	7.5%



RETENTION RATE

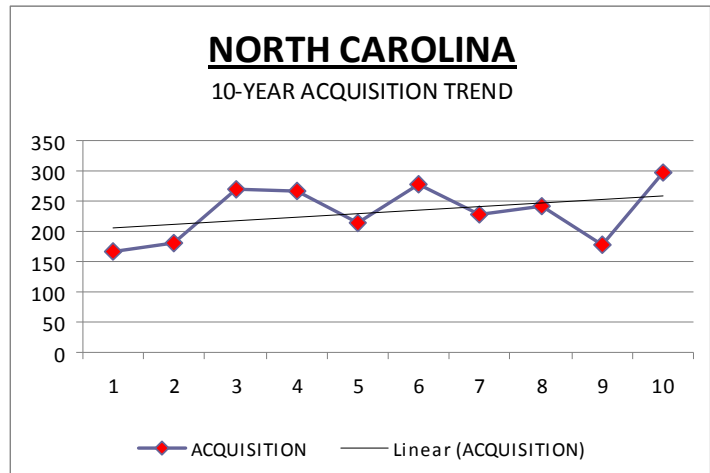
- Retention rate has averaged **69.0%** over the last 10 years – up slightly in 2007-08 to **69.1%**
- On average, USA Hockey retains **7 of every 10 players** it acquires.

North Carolina

ACQUISITION

- Up **23.9%** over the past 10 years, compared to a national average of down **22.1%**
- Acquired **296** first-time players in 2006-07, up from **168** in 1997-98
- Acquisition rank: **26TH** in the country in 2006-07

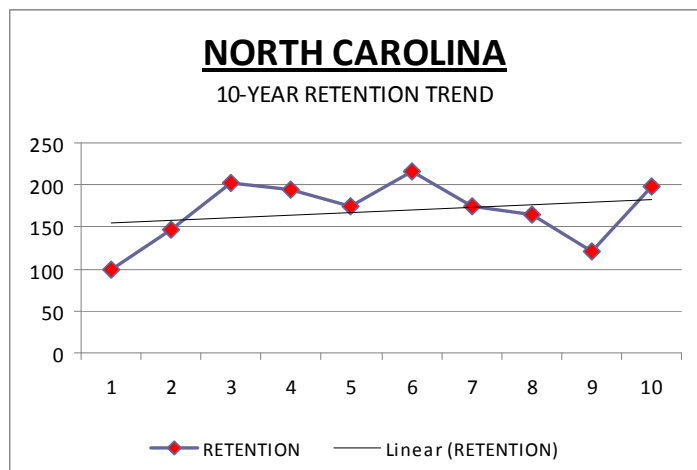
North Carolina Acquisition of New Players				
SEASON	NEW	vs PY#	*+/-	vs PY%
1997-98	168	N/A	N/A	N/A
1998-99	180	168	12	7.1%
1999-00	270	180	90	50.0%
2000-01	267	270	(3)	-1.1%
2001-02	214	267	(53)	-19.9%
2002-03	279	214	65	30.4%
2003-04	229	279	(50)	-17.9%
2004-05	241	229	12	5.2%
2005-06	177	241	(64)	-26.6%
<u>2006-07</u>	<u>296</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>67.2%</u>



RETENTION

- Up **100%** over the last 10 years, compared to a national average of down **21.6%**
- Retained **198** first-time players in 2007-08, up from **99** in 1998-99
- Retention rank: **26TH** in the country in 2007-08

North Carolina Retention of New Players				
SEASON	RET	vs PY#	*+/-	vsPY%
1998-99	99	N/A	N/A	N/A
1999-00	146	99	47	47.5%
2000-01	203	146	57	39.0%
2001-02	195	203	(8)	-3.9%
2002-03	174	195	(21)	-10.8%
2003-04	216	174	42	24.1%
2004-05	175	216	(41)	-19.0%
2005-06	165	175	(10)	-5.7%
2006-07	122	165	(43)	-26.1%
<u>2007-08</u>	<u>198</u>	<u>122</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>62.3%</u>



North Carolina

RETENTION RATE

- Retention rate of **66.9%** in 2007-08, compared to a national average of **69.1%**
- Retention rate rank: **32nd** in the country in 2007-08

North Carolina Rate of Retaining New Players		
SEASON	RATE	NATIONAL RANK
1998-99	58.9%	N/A
1999-00	81.1%	N/A
2000-01	75.2%	N/A
2001-02	73.0%	N/A
2002-03	81.3%	N/A
2003-04	77.4%	N/A
2004-05	76.4%	N/A
2005-06	68.5%	N/A
2006-07	68.9%	N/A
<u>2007-08</u>	<u>66.9%</u>	32
	72.8%	13

KEY TAKEAWAY POINTS

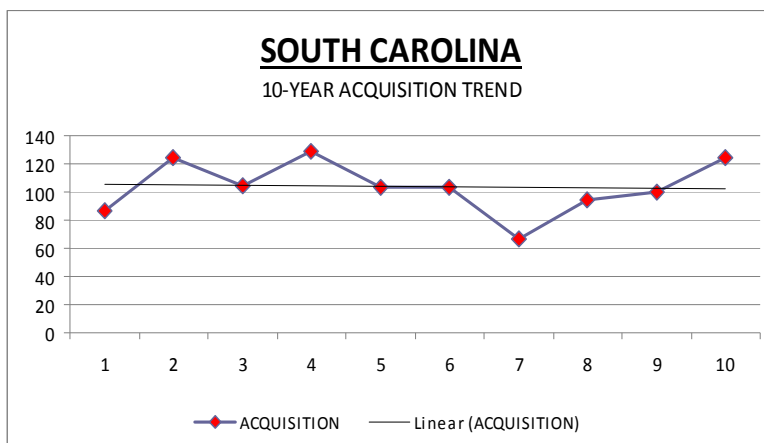
- Acquisition has steadily increased over the last 10 years
 - Significant increase from 2006-07 to 2007-08 (Hurricanes Stanley Cup?)
- Retention numbers have also increased consistently with acquisition
- North Carolina has an above-average retention rate, averaging 72.8% (13th in country over last 10 years)

South Carolina

ACQUISITION

- Up **43.6%** over the past 10 years, compared to a national average of down **22.1%**
- Acquired **125** first-time players in 2006-07, up from **87** in 1997-98
- Acquisition rank: **37TH** in the country in 2006-07

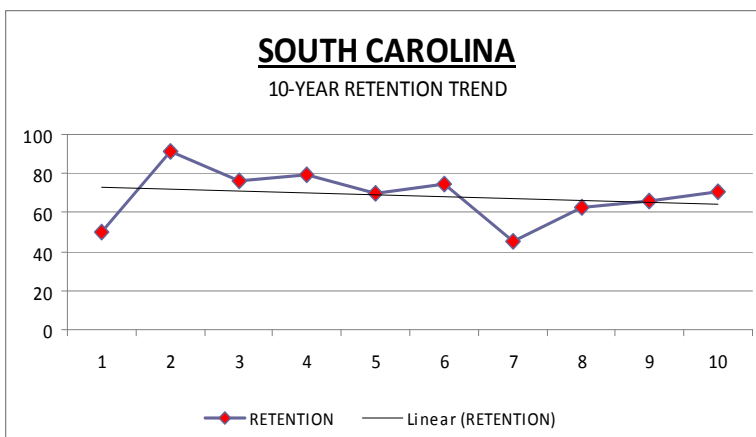
South Carolina Acquisition of New Players				
SEASON	NEW	vs PY#	*+/-	vs PY%
1997-98	87	N/A	N/A	N/A
1998-99	125	87	38	43.7%
1999-00	105	125	(20)	-16.0%
2000-01	129	105	24	22.9%
2001-02	103	129	(26)	-20.2%
2002-03	103	103	0	0.0%
2003-04	67	103	(36)	-35.0%
2004-05	95	67	28	41.8%
2005-06	100	95	5	5.3%
<u>2006-07</u>	<u>125</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>25.0%</u>



RETENTION

- Up **42%** over the last 10 years, compared to a national average of down **21.6%**
- Retained **71** first-time players in 2007-08, up from **50** in 1998-99
- Retention rank: **37TH** in the country in 2007-08

South Carolina Retention of New Players				
SEASON	RET	vs PY#	*+/-	vsPY%
1998-99	50	N/A	N/A	N/A
1999-00	91	50	41	82.0%
2000-01	76	91	(15)	-16.5%
2001-02	79	76	3	3.9%
2002-03	70	79	(9)	-11.4%
2003-04	75	70	5	7.1%
2004-05	45	75	(30)	-40.0%
2005-06	63	45	18	40.0%
2006-07	66	63	3	4.8%
<u>2007-08</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7.6%</u>



South Carolina

RETENTION RATE

- Retention rate of **56.8%** in 2007-08, compared to a national average of **69.1%**
- Retention rate rank: **45th** in the country in 2007-08

South Carolina Rate of Retaining New Players		
SEASON	RATE	ARANK
1998-99	57.5%	N/A
1999-00	72.8%	N/A
2000-01	72.4%	N/A
2001-02	61.2%	N/A
2002-03	68.0%	N/A
2003-04	72.8%	N/A
2004-05	67.2%	N/A
2005-06	66.3%	N/A
2006-07	66.0%	N/A
2007-08	56.8%	45
	66.1%	31

KEY TAKEAWAY POINTS

- Acquisition has increased over the last 10 years
 - Each of the last four years has seen an increase in acquisition
- Retention numbers have also increased consistently with acquisition
- 2004-05 season saw a significant drop in both acquisition and retention
- South Carolina has a below-average retention rate, averaging 66.1% (31st in country over last 10 years)

State By State Rankings

The following is a summary of each state's ranking in acquisition, retention and retention rate for the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons, as well as a 10-year cumulative retention rate ranking. For the purpose of this graph, a player who was counted as an "acquisition" in 2006-07 would be "retained" for the 2007-08 season. This is the most up-to-date information available, as the retention figures from 2008-09 are still being compiled.

For example: In 2006-07, Alaska was 17th of 50 states in acquisition. The following season, they were 18th of 50 states in retention and 40th of 50 states in retention rate. Over the past 10 years, Alaska has retained 66.1% of first-year participants, which is 30th of 50 states.

STATE	2006-07 and 2007-08			10-year Average	
	2006-07	2007-08		1997-98--2007-08	
	ACQ RANK	RET. RANK	RET.RATE RANK	RETENTION RATE	RETENTION RANK
AK	17	18	40	66.1%	30
AL	40	39	9	72.0%	16
AR	47	46	4	63.4%	41
AZ	30	30	41	62.2%	43
CA	10	10	16	63.9%	38
CO	12	11	3	77.5%	2
CT	8	8	37	65.1%	37
DE	45	44	1	75.8%	4
FL	18	19	39	65.3%	34
GA	33	33	24	72.2%	15
HI	50	50	50	49.6%	50
IA	28	28	30	66.8%	28
ID	34	34	7	71.1%	18
IL	6	6	12	70.0%	19
IN	25	25	20	73.4%	10
KS	42	42	2	77.6%	1
KY	35	40	49	63.7%	39
LA	49	49	47	55.2%	49
MA	2	2	43	61.2%	45
MD	23	23	8	73.3%	11
ME	13	15	27	68.3%	23
MI	4	4	10	75.6%	5
MN	1	1	6	75.3%	7
MO	22	22	22	72.4%	14
MS	48	48	25	56.5%	48
MT	32	32	34	65.3%	35
NC	26	26	32	72.8%	13
ND	21	17	13	72.9%	12
NE	38	36	28	75.8%	3
NH	15	14	15	68.1%	24
NJ	9	9	36	68.7%	22
NM	41	41	18	69.8%	20
NV	46	47	44	57.2%	47
NY	3	3	23	67.9%	25
OH	11	11	19	75.5%	6
OK	44	45	46	66.0%	32
OR	43	43	26	65.3%	36
PA	7	7	5	75.3%	8
RI	16	16	29	60.7%	46
SC	37	37	45	66.1%	31
SD	29	27	14	69.6%	21
TN	27	29	48	67.8%	26
TX	14	13	17	62.7%	42
UT	31	31	11	61.7%	44
VA	24	24	21	71.5%	17
VT	19	20	38	66.6%	29
WA	20	21	35	63.6%	40
WI	5	5	33	67.2%	27
WV	39	38	31	73.5%	9
WY	36	35	42	65.9%	33