

Junior Hockey in Madison, Wisconsin: Predicting the Capitols' Success

Abstract:

The Madison Capitols, located in Madison, Wisconsin, are a first-year team in the United States Hockey League, the premier junior hockey league in the United States. In this paper, we analyze the Capitols' potential to be successful in Madison through studying the site setting, the history of hockey in Madison, and conducting a survey at a Capitols' home game. We also take an in-depth look at the Capitols' marketing and social media strategies by writing an extensive literature review as well as interviewing a member of the front office staff. Finally, we use Central Place Theory to determine if Madison is the ideal setting for a USHL team in Wisconsin, and make a prediction on the team's overall future success.

Introduction

Predicting the outcome of a sports game has continually proven to be a difficult task. Analysts spend their careers watching countless hours of film, diving into history, listening to players and coaches in press conferences, just to calculate who will win a game the following week. Looking into the potential success of a franchise is just the same. Every detail needs to be brought out and studied, combined and thought upon. In our quest to foretell the future of the Madison Capitols, we have focused on a few major indicators that we believe to be most telling. Research will include comparing and contrasting similar markets, taking a further look into previous expansion franchises, marketing strategies, collecting primary data through surveys and interviews, and finally predicting the future success for the Madison Capitols.

What is the USHL?

The United States Hockey League, or USHL, is a tier I junior hockey league within the United States. Consisting of 16 teams situated throughout the Midwestern United States in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio. Located below is a map of the current USHL teams with the team logos sized proportional to the population of the city it is located in. See Figure 10 in the appendix for the game attendance per team. The USHL is the only tier I junior hockey league currently active. There are tier II and tier III leagues throughout the United States as well. Therefore, the USHL is the highest level of junior hockey within the country. This league is strictly amateur, meaning players are not paid for their play on the ice, and are allowed to compete in NCAA college hockey further on in their

multiple obligations. Many of the team's games fall on the weekend giving players more time to fulfill their busy schedules (from USHL website).

As mentioned above, the USHL is strictly amateur, and players are not compensated for their services. This means that they aren't directly paid for their play, although they do live with a host family (providing housing and food) as well as receiving 'head-to-toe' outfitting with the best hockey equipment available. It is important to note that the concept of the 'student-athlete' is contested though, as many sources like Frank DeFord, a long-time editor for Sports Illustrated, have arguments against this concept. DeFord says that the concept of the 'student-athlete' "was essentially created for no educational reasons — but only as a smokescreen to keep players from being able to sue for worker's compensation if they are injured." With that said, under the current regime and policies, these players are in fact amateur and sets them up the most important goal of all for the USHL, a pathway to an NCAA education and a chance to compete at the next level of hockey.

Unlike some other leagues within North America, like the Canadian Junior hockey leagues, players play in the USHL with the goal to receive a shot at Division I NCAA hockey. While maintaining their amateur status throughout their USHL tenure, they make the jump and hopefully receive a NCAA scholarship for hockey. Other Canadian Junior hockey leagues like the OHL (Ontario Hockey League) and QMJHL (Quebec Major Junior Hockey League) pay their players, therefore deeming them ineligible to compete in the NCAA. Players within the Canadian Junior hockey leagues

put all of their intentions into a shot to compete at the professional level. College hockey in the Canadian leagues isn't even in the equation.

The goal of the USHL is to pipeline players to the NCAA ranks, while providing them with an extremely high level of play and still putting emphasis on education. They refer to this as the 'education path' where education is never put on the back burner. According to the USHL website, 84% of all NCAA hockey players graduate from their respective universities. In the Canadian Hockey Leagues, under 20% of their players graduate from college due to the lack of emphasis and accountability. Due to this very emphasis on education and almost informal alliance with the NCAA, over 300 division I hockey commitments were made from the USHL last year. Almost forty-four percent of Division I college hockey players are USHL alumni, according to the USHL website. Taking a step even further than that, the USHL had 35 players drafted into the NHL in the 2014 NHL draft. Current NHL stars that have played in the USHL include David Backes (St. Louis Blues), T.J. Oshie (St. Louis Blues), Max Pacioretty (Montreal Canadiens), Joe Pavelski (San Jose Sharks), Paul Stastny (St. Louis Blues), and Thomas Vanek (Minnesota Wild).

As you can see, the USHL provides the highest level of junior hockey in the United States while still emphasizing education. With the end goal of turning players over the NCAA Division I hockey level, the USHL does an extremely good job of pipelining extremely talented players with an emphasis on individual character and education sometimes not seen in other junior leagues.

Methodology

The possibility of a pro sports team surviving in a particular area has been a subject of interest for many studies. Professional hockey has been one of those subjects studied quite a few times. While looking into whether a certain area can support a professional team, there are many factors that are taken into account. Some of the factors can be measured quantitatively and others are more qualitative. Many of the scholarly articles that we reviewed take mostly into account the quantitative factors. This is because there were equations identified that measure the potential for an area to be successful in supporting a professional sports team. The location of a sports team can be very important to its long term survival and ability to generate revenue for an area.

One of the most quantitative ways to determine an ideal location for a professional sports team is through central place theory, urban hierarchy, and threshold. The method described by Gober, P.; Harner, J.; and Kuby, M. uses GIS and the ideas of central place theory to determine, using the location of other teams, whether or not the area is far enough away from another. Central place theory is used to describe a city or town which people are willing to travel to for a good.(Kuby, 2004, p.248) The threshold and range describe how large of an area is needed for a good or service and how far people are willing to travel for it. Central place theory is used to determine how appropriate a specific city is for supporting a particular good and service, in our case it will be used for a USHL team in Madison. To do this there are a few assumptions that need to be made. It is assumed that population and wealth distribution is uniform throughout the area that is being looked into. It is also assumed that the terrain is

uniform without any natural barriers. Using these assumptions the good that is being provided is then looked at to see how high of an order the good and service is. Certain goods and services are able to be supported by a larger market area because they are less common and people are willing to travel farther for them. After these assumptions are made, the cities which already contain the goods and services that is being researched are placed on a map. Thiessen polygons are then drawn around the cities and where the lines between the cities land are the areas are considered the areas that the new location for the goods and service would be able to thrive based on central place theory. Using central place theory we can take into account the distance from other cities that have USHL teams. This will help us determine if Madison is the ideal setting for a USHL team based on the Central place theory. Using this method for market area geographical analysis, and comparing the factors from the equations in other readings, we should be able to get qualitative and quantitative data on whether Madison can support a junior league hockey team.

Another method we will use for collecting primary data are distributing surveys and conducting interviews. To distribute our surveys, we will set up a booth at a Madison Capitals' game and ask attendees to participate in our study by offering ticket vouchers in exchange. Our goals with this survey is to get a clearer idea of who is really attending the games, where they come from, and what is important to them in terms of attracting them to the games. Our interview will be with the Director of Media Relations, Ryan Smith. Our main purpose with the interview is to get more qualitative data and an inside look into their organization. We will be able to get a better grip on the front office's

goals, strategies, and the obstacles that they have faced. By combining our results from all three sources (central place theory, survey results, and the interview), we can make a prediction by comparing it to all of the past data we have collected through literary sources.

The main way that the hockey team will be able to be supported, is through the amount of revenue that it can generate from sales of tickets and merchandise. Studies have been done on the particular subject of how ticket pricing not only affects attendance, but also how to set ticket prices to get the maximum profit from them. One study by Daniel R. Marburger has concluded that in order for teams to make a maximum profit without driving fans away, ticket prices need to be set in the inelastic part of the demand curve. The equations used, however, are assuming that all the profits are going directly to the team and the team's owner. The weakness of this idea is that team profits go to more than just the team and their owner, there is also money that is delegated to running of the facility including maintenance of the arena. It will be important for our group to find out if pricing the tickets for the Madison Capitals was based off of profit maximization, or if there is a standard ticket price set by the USHL.

Although ticket pricing may be a driving factor in attendance, there are other factors that go into the equations to determine whether a team can survive in a particular area. The equations that have been used in past studies are almost all based off of the equation from the J.C.H Jones and D.G. Ferguson article "Location and Survival in the National Hockey League". This equation takes into account the short term and long term revenue. These revenues are calculated using many factors, such

as location attributes and team attributes. The problem with this method is that it can be difficult to determine exactly how much the location encourages attendance at the games. The location of a facility can provide a boost in attendance to events and therefore increase the overall revenue. The direct link between specific attributes over others can be skewed by other factors including the overall team performance. The findings in the article have concluded that locational attributes have a large influence on attendance at the games, and in turn, the overall revenue.

The locational attributes of an area brings up another interesting subject, where can teams generate enough revenue to stay in the area? Recently there have been stadiums built for teams, that was payed for by the taxpayers. This is an interesting concept, because the thought behind this, is that it will bring in more people to the area and generate more revenue for other businesses in the area. This can allow teams to be in cities that may not normally be viewed as an ideal location. The ideals portrayed by David Swindell and Mark S. Rosentraub shows that the major beneficiary of teams in the area are businesses that are directly affiliated with the team.(Swindell, 1998, p.14) This finding is the opposite of popular opinion today about starting up professional sports teams. The belief is that it will not only create jobs but also increase revenue for other businesses in the area, this has proven to be false.(Swindell, 1998, p. 14-15) The findings show that although a sports team can create more jobs, it is an incredibly inefficient way to do so. The impact a sports team has on other businesses coming to an area is shown to have very little to no effect as well. This can be attributed to the fact that not many businesses locate themselves in the heart of downtown, which is

generally where sports arenas and stadiums are. Therefore public money, going towards the creation of a new stadium or arena, does not seem very practical because the main beneficiary of the profits is the team itself.

The creation of a new stadium can have an effect on people which is known as the honeymoon effect. This is evidenced in an increase of fan attendance following the building of a new stadium. This effect can also occur when a sports team is new to the area. This increase in attendance, according to a study done by John C. Leadley and Zenon X. Zygmunt, can last for up to eight years. The attendance has a large impact on the revenue for teams, and can help them in the short run. In order for a team to continue to thrive in the long run, however, other characteristics also need to be present. Previous studies have all shown that attendance is one of the largest driving factors of a team generating enough revenue to stay in an area.(Jones et al, 1988, p.445) Team success, general interest in the sport, and type of play have also been shown to be important aspects for fan attendance. The ideas of increasing attendance for a new team, or a team with a new stadium, will be very helpful with the evaluation of the Madison Capitals, and whether they will be able to generate enough revenue to stay in Madison.

The methods and equations that were used in the articles are very informative and quite useful for evaluating the possibility of the Madison Capitols being successful here in Madison. Using the central place theory, along with aspects from the equations mentioned above, it will be possible to evaluate Madison as a possible location for the team. We will also be assessing the overall interest and potential attendance for the

team, paired with interviewing and surveying the public all to determine how realistic it is for Madison to support an USHL team.

Determinants to Attendance

As discussed briefly above, there are factors that affect attendance for sports teams. From “The Demand for Minor League Baseball” by Siegfried and Eisenberg we learn about 11 key contributors that affect attendance for minor league baseball (Siegfred, 1980, p. 63). These factors can be extended to just about any sport really in my opinion, which makes it a great reference when it comes to the Madison Capitols.

1. *Average ticket price* – This factor plays a huge role in demand. While ticket prices at times can be low due to promotions, teams recoup that difference in concessions, parking, programs, etc.
2. *Per capita income* – This was mainly aimed at what other entertainment options are available in the area. What kind of crowd would minor league baseball draw? The authors argued it would draw more working class people due to it small town feel and relatively cheap prices.
3. *Number of home games* – An interesting factor to look at is how many home games a team actually has. They argued that it really wouldn't matter to the fan if a team had 53 home games or 64 home games because they like will get 'their fill' of baseball in far less games. More games however would increase fans flexibility to potentially attend game when trying to coordinate which games would work.
4. *Consecutive years in the City* – An interesting concept is brought and in my opinion very relevant to our research. The so-called “honey-moon effect” is when a brand new team experiences high attendance in the first years of existence only to see declining attendance with time. This is definitely something new franchises need to account for and hopefully combat.
5. *Population* – Larger cities have more potential competitors when it comes to varying recreational opportunities for residents. Conversely, a large population leads to more potential customers and profit. A double-edged sword that businesses need to account for.
6. *Team Performance* – As discussed in other papers, team performance is often unrelated to demand surprisingly. Team demand often has more to do with fan loyalty and tradition.
7. *Game Excitement* – Home runs are referenced in this article as 'exciting' features of a baseball game that can draw more people. In terms of hockey, things like fights, shootouts, and slap shots could be seen similarly.

8. *Quality of play* – Levels of minor league baseball are referenced such as AAA, AA, A, and rookie ball. They argue that higher levels of play should draw more demand.

9. *Promotions* – Reduced ticket prices can be seen for nights like ‘family night’ or ‘ladies night’. Or merchandise promotions can be seen for things like free bats or ballcaps.

10. *Advertising* – Many minor league teams essentially get ‘free’ advertising from local news and radio coverage. Often extra money spent on ads doesn’t pan out to equal more demand.

11. *Excluded Variables* – Sort of a catch-all final category that includes things like stadium capacity, weather (big for baseball games), and the time of the year.

Similar ideas can be seen in the piece by Paul and Weinbach, where they explore the factors at play in attendance for all the teams within the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL). This league is of the highest quality junior hockey that pipes players straight to the pros, as opposed to inferior junior hockey leagues in the U.S. (like the United States Hockey League) that pipe players into collegiate hockey (NCAA). The data used was from the 2009 to 2010 season as a regression model was used to determine which factors played a part in attendance (Paul and Weinbach, 2011, pg. 310).

In particular, the authors were interested in goals, fights, and overall winning percentage. Also, they were interested in how attendance fluctuated throughout the year, as well as throughout a week. Their findings suggested that increased winning resulted in increased attendance, not surprisingly (Paul and Weinbach, 2011, pg. 305). What was interesting was that goals and fights did not have an effect on attendance. They say that fighting is often thought of as a major draw for fans, but encourage the reader to remember that these players are just teenagers. No one should really support teens bloodying other teens for their entertainment, no matter what the circumstance. A

certain instance that the author's reference that may have kicked this feeling off was a highly televised and media covered fight that took place in the QMJHL. Jonathan Roy, son of a famous hall of fame NHL goaltender, brutally beat an opposing goalie. It was quite terrible as the way it was described by the authors. Since, very strict rules and suspensions have been put in place to discourage fighting in this league. It is believed that the violence in hockey is what many of the fans go to see. This, in turn, has been a topic of conversation when it comes to the sport itself, and whether or not it has an effect on the areas that there are teams. It has been shown that there is a direct correlation between violence in games, and attendance (Jones, 1996, 238). This is the case for the United States at least, in Canada there is little to no correlation between the violence and attendance, as stated by Paul and Weinbach. This analysis is done through a close look at game-by-game statistics of the penalty minutes, followed by those particular teams' attendance. The presence of violence in the sport is a concern to some, because they fear that it may encourage violence in the cities in which the teams call home. The article findings on this subject conclude that the assumption is false, that there is inherent violence among people regardless of the sports played around them, and that trying to tie aggression to the sport or team is unjustified. The findings from this article, regarding violence and the correlation with attendance, will be useful in evaluating the possibility of supporting the Madison Capitols, and determining if a fairly consistent attendance can be expected or not.

Finally, the authors alluded to the cultural link to hockey in Canada. Hockey is simply their lifeblood up there. A direct quote that I really love was, "Hockey is part

sport and recreation, part entertainment, part business, part community-builder, social connector, and fantasy-maker.” The small-town (or big city) teams have a particular connection with their respective teams. This may result in fans not attending more games with more goals and fights. Their allegiance to the team won’t waver either way. Interestingly, this does contrast with increase attendance with winning, when you might expect that same unwavering allegiance to shine through. One particular fact that was hoped to be found, but due to data constraints, was not able to be found was optimal size and income per capita of cities for major junior hockey. Longer than a season’s worth of data would be needed to produce these kinds of results.

In summary, a whole range of factors will go into determining the attendance at USHL hockey games. This is quite important for figuring out how the Madison Capitols will fit into the city of Madison and how they find their niche (in terms of space and place) (Bale, 2003, pg. 94). The Capitols need to maintain a decent enough attendance to sustain their business for the long term (Bale, 2000, pg. 22). Fans need to feel connected to the game and the team, and this will hopefully bring sustained success for the Capitols. (Kennett, 2001, pg. 135).

History

When making a prediction about the future, it is always important to look into the past. Madison has been home to many junior level and minor professional ice hockey teams. Since the 70’s, when the Madison Blues came to be the city’s first minor league professional hockey team, there has always been a demand to keep hockey in Madison. By simply using the online hockey database to look at each of Madison’s

failed franchises in terms of team success and any other data we can find about them will help paint a clearer picture of what we can expect for the new Madison Capitols.

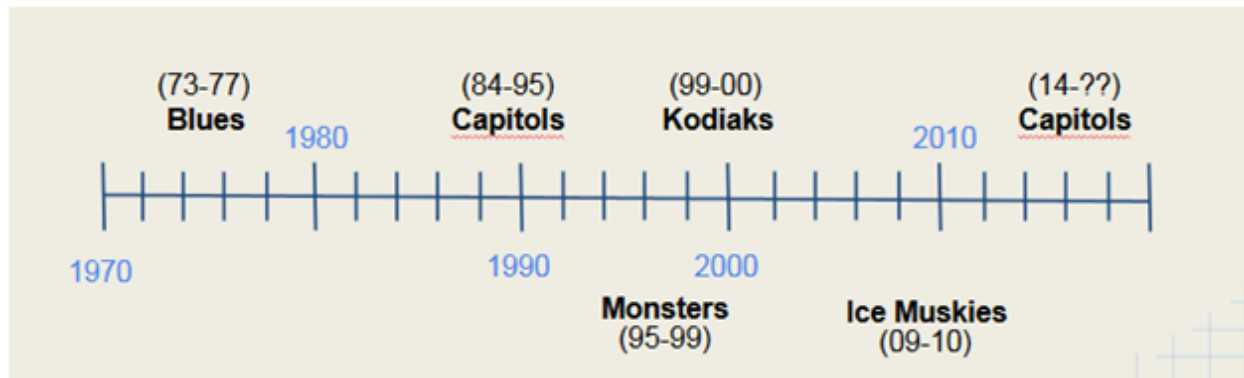


Figure 2

The Madison Blues, formed in 1973 were part of the USHL for only one year before they were absorbed into the Continental Hockey League. They played three years in the league until 1977 when the team collapsed. There is not too much information to be found on the Madison Blues besides spotty records of their wins and losses. The only two years with complete records were their inaugural 1973 season and their last season. Both of which showed an over .500 winning percentage. While we cannot draw huge inferences from this franchise, it is interesting to note that, even with their last season being a successful one, they were not able to stay in business while the rest of the league kept going.

Perhaps the city of Madison just wasn't ready to be a hockey city. It took seven more years to bring hockey back with the Madison Capitols in 1984, coached by recent "Miracle on Ice" Olympian Bob Suter. The Capitols were by far the most successful Madison hockey franchise, surviving in the USHL for 11 consecutive years (Fig. 2). They played at the Hartmeyer Ice Arena which holds up to 3,500 spectators. The

Hartmeyer Ice Arena was originally built to bring back varsity hockey at the University of Wisconsin-Madison but has since been used as home to multiple minor professional hockey teams. The Madison Capitols started with double the amount of losses than wins, but quickly turned it around and had a winning record for the next 5 years (Fig. 11). After changing their name to the Wisconsin Capitols in 1991, they posted a combined winning percentage of only 21.9% in their last four years before their collapse. Recent surveys have shows team performance is not a major factor in USHL attendance (Fig. 3). However just looking at this team's trajectory, the city seemed to fall out of love with them during their consecutive losing seasons.

Madison took no time in keeping hockey in the city, however, they made the switch to minor professional. The Madison Monsters called the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum home in 1995, the same year the Capitols left town. The Monsters survived four years (Fig. 2). The first two years they competed in the Colonial Hockey League, where they made the first round of playoffs both years. During their first year, they were coached by another "Miracle on Ice" team member and current UW Women's hockey head coach, Mark Johnson. Another big name in the Madison community no doubt had a positive influence in the Monster's creation. Their attendance numbers for the first two years were around the 2,500 range which placed them in 4th and 5th in the league in crowd size (Fig. 12). The last two years they made the switch to play in the United Hockey League where they got back into the first round of the playoffs their first year and just missed in their second. However their yearly attendance dropped significantly

to around 2,000 per game and earned them last in the league in crowd size during their final season (Fig. 12).

Madison once again wasted no time in bringing another minor professional franchise, the Madison Kodiaks in 1999 (Fig. 2). They took the Monsters place in the same UHL league and surpassed their success by getting to the second round of the playoffs. Their attendance numbers only slightly improved to 2,300 but still earned them dead last in the category throughout the league (Fig. 13).

Nine more years passed before hockey returned to Madison in the form of the Madison Ice Muskies. They moved back to Hartmeyer Arena and played in the All American Hockey League at the minor professional level. They only played in 24 games, had a winning record, but due to the arena, attendance was not taken. In 2010, the team relocated to Wooster, Ohio and Madison had to wait until this year for the Capitols to join the USHL once again (Fig. 2).

Simply by looking at the few teams in Madison's history, there is a lot of information we can gather. No team has ever won a championship in their respective leagues, but winning records did have a positive correlation with the length of the team's stay (Fig. 11). Perhaps the two most successful franchises, the Capitols and Monsters, had big name coaches to help them begin their franchises and generate excitement. The reformation of the Capitols does bring Ryan Suter into the mix as an owner. The team proudly displays jerseys of the late Bob Suter throughout stadium (Photo 2). Watching their inaugural season and collecting data will no doubt help in predicting their outcomes through means of these comparisons.

Site Setting

While we do need to look at the size of Madison's hockey market overall, the specific site setting of our research is in the Capitol's stadium itself, the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum. The Veteran's Memorial Coliseum is a 10,231 seat venue that was built in 1967 but was completely renovated in 2004. It is a multi-purpose venue that is home to many different sporting events like bull riding, indoor football, basketball, and hockey. Comedy and musical acts often play in the venue as well. It also has 5,800 on-site parking stalls for patron use.

The venue for a sports franchise shows a direct correlation with how fans enjoy their experience and the team's product (Greenwell, Fink & Pastore, 2002, pg.129). Because of limited venue options in the Madison area for a hockey team, the fans' perception of the Coliseum is crucial. Greenwell et al. (2002) further showed that fan satisfaction relies mostly on the physical facility itself and not one or two individual aspects. This could potentially be a very large problem looming over the Capitols. The physical structure of the Coliseum is outdated as it was built in the late 60's. The renovation helped address concerns over certain aspects like the video board, padded seats, and sound system but the stadium itself was not rebuilt. This could cause accessibility and ease of navigation issues because the floor plan wasn't designed for modern sports. For example, the stadium was not even accessible to wheelchairs until a few years ago when an elevator was put in.

Keeping with stadium accessibility, their parking situation is a definite bright spot. Since the Coliseum is only one of the multiple buildings in the Alliant Energy Center, the

on-site parking is more massive than it would have otherwise needed to be just for the 10,000 seat arena. Parking is one of the biggest variables on how far a fan is willing to travel to attend a game (Smith, 2007, pg. 172). Accessibility to concessions and their service quality is an important factor to consider once within the stadium. The concourse was quite spacious and filled with concession options and the lower level had plenty of room, too (Photo 1). This too bodes well for the Capitols since food and beverage service was found to be a top reason for repeat attendance (Smith, 2007, pg 172). On top of just the food and beverage, the extra space in the concourse is used to sell memorabilia and fan apparel, which is a good predictor of fan loyalty (Madrigal, Mahoney, Howard, 2000, pg. 22).

Like most stadiums today, Veteran's Memorial Coliseum is publicly owned in hopes to keep a successful, revenue-making franchise in town. This being the case, the Capitol's do not have much control over the operations of their own home ice. They didn't have to shell out the money to build the stadium, but that does not mean it doesn't come with some negative side-effects. Firstly, the rate that the Capitol's have to pay to rent out the venue for their home games tends to be higher than other stadiums. Secondly they will be less flexible with payment breaks to keep them from relocating (Johnson, 1990, pg. 94). This also means they have less influence on what they can and can't do inside the stadium when it comes to promotions like dollar beer nights (Smith Interview, 2014).

In regards to capacity, the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum has one of the highest numbers of seats available in comparison to the rest of the league (Fig. 14). This can

work for and against a franchise. The obvious upside to the large capacity is that the more seats available, the more tickets can be sold, and the more revenue the team can produce (Cebula, 2009, pg. 38). However, if the attendance is much smaller than its capacity, the stadium feels much emptier than it would with the same amount of people in a smaller arena. This can give fans a worse experience as the game does not seem to be in high demand. So a high number of open seats can result in even less seats being sold and a continual decline in attendance numbers (Smith, 2007, pg. 174).

To address some of these problems individually is often times not the cure (Greenwell et al., 2002, pg. 142). Building a new stadium that fits the Capitol's needs specifically would be preferable, but is it plausible? New stadiums have been especially on the rise in the last 10 years, but a publicly funded one very rarely brings a positive return on the taxpayers' investment (Johnson, 2011, pg. 18). Money is available at the ownership level and a non-university hockey arena has not been built in the area in sometime, but with a poor track record for hockey franchises in the recent past, public support will be tougher to find. The Capitol's would likely have to prove themselves for multiple years in the older Coliseum before the city would take the risk on a new rink.

Marketing

One of the most important aspects of any sports teams' success is how they utilize different marketing strategies to attract spectators to games. Many teams have to be more and more creative in something as simple as getting people off their comfortable couches and actually purchase a ticket. With technology continuing to improve, many would-be customers are turning to high definition televisions from the

comfort of their own homes to enjoy games, as opposed to leaving home and dealing with intangibles like crowds, weather, and high ticket and concession prices that come with attending a live sporting event. In this section, we will discuss how marketing strategies such as social media, in game promotions, and utilizing consumer psychology to get spectators to games and to get them to remain loyal.

In their article “Social Media and Sports Marketing,” authors Witkemper et al. examine how social media sites, specifically Twitter, can be used for fans to follow their favorite athletes and sports teams. Twitter is a free social media platform that allows users to create profiles and communicate with other accounts using public or private messages of 140 characters or less. Although the short length of the messages could be seen as detrimental to transmitting information, Twitter’s most powerful characteristic is its ability to get a large amount of information across quickly, simply, and efficiently. The efficiency aspect is especially useful; as Twitter utilizes many parts of other social media elements, such as direct messaging (like email), picture sharing (like Facebook), and blogging (Witkemper et al., 2012, pg. 3).

As more and more sports teams are using social media to communicate information to fans, the handful of popular platforms are each used in different ways. Facebook, for example, is used primarily for posts with larger amounts of content, such as photo albums and detailed descriptions of promotions and upcoming events. YouTube is clearly used for sharing video content. What these platforms have in common is that they both require more time and effort by both the provider and the fan, whereas Twitter does not require as much of a commitment. This makes it perhaps the

most important platform for teams to use, as it enables the user and follower to combine the content of Facebook and YouTube into one efficient website (Witkemper et al., 2012 pg. 3).

Witkemper et al. also note that by using Twitter, sports teams are taking additional measures to keep consumers aware and attached to their brand, whatever that may be. By using Twitter, teams and leagues are increasing their brands' strength by decreasing any disconnect between fans and the organization, which ultimately leads to stronger brand loyalty. Social media also allows for communication on multiple levels: from consumer to organization and consumer to consumer. Twitter especially enables for fan-to-fan interaction, which helps the consumer's experience with the organization grow, furthering the brand relationship. In this sense, something as simple as a social media account could be the stepping-stone or missing link necessary for a casual fan to form a more permanent relationship with an organization or team (Witkemper et al., 2012, pg 4).

In discussing social media, specifically Twitter, in the case of the Madison Capitols, a key point to discuss is the fan's actual motivation in using Twitter to follow the team. In a literature review, Witkemper et al. discuss four different motivations behind fan's use of social media in sports: Information Motivation, or using social media to obtain information on organizations and athletes, Pass-Time Motivation, or using Twitter to simply check up on organizations and athletes in their free time, "Fanship" motivation, or measuring to what degree a user considers himself a fan as a motivating factor to use Twitter, and finally, Entertainment Motivation, or using Twitter as a source

of entertainment, much like television. For the Capitols, one would probably assume that the typical follower would use the team's twitter account to access information about the team.

As of this writing on October 25, 2014, the Madison Capitols Twitter page (@MadCapsHockey) has 2,475 followers and 1, 673 tweets. A large proportion of the tweets have some sort of picture or graphic included, usually either promoting some sort of special or highlighting players. They also have links to videos, including a virtual tour of the locker room and a highlight reel of goals scored so far this season. However, their title graphic, which is the main focus at the top of the screen, is promoting a special for one-dollar beers for a game that has already taken place. We will look more in depth into the Capitols' Twitter page in our primary data, and it will be interesting to see what they do consistently correctly and what they can improve upon.

In addition to social media, there are other factors that play into what makes sports fans choose to attend a game. In their study, Zhang et al. looked deeper into sociomotivational factors that may or may not have an influence on possible game-day spectators. Traditionally, most studies have been focused on things like game attractiveness, economics, sociodemographics, and audience preference, but here, the authors broaden the spectrum of study. Two theories included in their article are salubrious effects theories and achievement-seeking theories. (Zhang et al., 2001, pg 10).

Salubrious effects theories states that people like to attend sporting events for a sort of escape from real life. At the games, they have a diversion from their daily routine

and have their energies recharged. In general, this theory claims that people attend sporting events to better their mental health. In order for people to achieve this, Zhang et al. propose that games be presented like a vacation. This is mainly done through marketing strategies, such as in-game promotions, halftime entertainment acts, and souvenir shops. From the arrival of the fan to the exit after the game, the fan should be constantly entertained, even if they are not watching the game the entire time.

Additionally, there must be some sort of social benefit that comes from attending games, and this can come from having ticket packages that encourage spectators to come in larger groups with friends. The Madison Capitols have introduced several different ticket packages like this, and it will be interesting to discover through our research how many spectators take advantage of these deals (Zhang et al, 2001, pg 11).

Achievement seeking theories suggest that people attend sporting events in order to feel a sense of accomplishment that is felt through a team being successful. When this occurs, fans feel like they have gained knowledge and experiences that can be beneficial to their own lives. This usually happens through team identification, and forming loyalties with players and coaches. These alliances can be strengthened by the use of social media. If teams efficiently use their social media accounts to provide information about players and coaches, they can help guide fans into wanting more, and thus attending games. Additionally, Zhang et al. notes that fans should be complimented and thanked for “contributing” to the team atmosphere, which can also be accomplished through the use of social media. By doing so, organizations can help form

groups of very loyal fans, which can help teams recover in times of defeat or any other sort of negative situation (Zhang et al., 2001, pg 14).

Following this theory, Zhang et al. claim that for sports products, 80% of consumption comes from 20% of the consumers. They state that most spectators take their time in developing their fondness for a team, and will gradually consume more and more over time. This makes the need for some sort of die-hard fan base important, as they can boost ticket and merchandise sales initially, before a larger fan base develops. This could be crucial for the Madison Capitols, as they are essentially a brand new franchise. The team promoting game elements such as season ticket packages critical for initial revenue, and could greatly assist in keeping fans loyal and attending games regularly. Additionally, the Capitols could use the extra help forming alliances with the team, as because of the nature of junior hockey, there is a high turnover rate for players. This makes it harder for fans to become attached to them, furthering the team's need for additional help for getting fans to games (Zhang et al., 2004, pg 10).

Finally, in a separate study, Zhang et al. discuss more sociodemographics factors that play into a spectator's willingness to attend games. For example, game attractiveness is usually positively related to game attendance. These types of things generally include how well the team is doing, any tournament or championship wins, or simply the level of competition within games. In addition, audience preferences to game times, such as 7:00 p.m. on weeknights and Saturdays and afternoon games on Sundays factor into how many people attend games and what demographic of people they actually are. Weeknight games probably attract more young adults and

middle-aged people, while larger families might prefer a Sunday afternoon game. Something as simple as game time might have a large effect on the types of fans that attend games, which would then affect what and how much fans consume while there (Zhang et al., 2004, pg 10).

For a young junior hockey team like the Madison Capitols, correctly marketing their brand will be crucial to their success in the Madison community. Use of social media platforms will absolutely help the Capitols in expanding their brand, and getting larger amounts of information out to the public. How the Capitols actually market their team once the fans attend the games is also critical, especially when considering sociomotivational factors for game attendance. Finally, selling tickets and merchandise in a way that promotes fan loyalty will further help the Capitols in securing a large and permanent fan base.

Data Results

After conducting an in-depth literature review and formulating our methodologies, the time came to actually carry out our data collection. All of our data collection looped back to our original research question, “What kind of potential does Madison have to support a USHL expansion franchise?” With a particular focus on surveys and interviews, we gathered information via survey distribution at a Capitol’s home game, as well as a detailed interview with a high-ranking Capitol’s front office member. In addition, we attended multiple home games and took in a range of observational and qualitative data. Finally, a few original graphics have been created to further support our argument and story.

Central Place Analysis Results

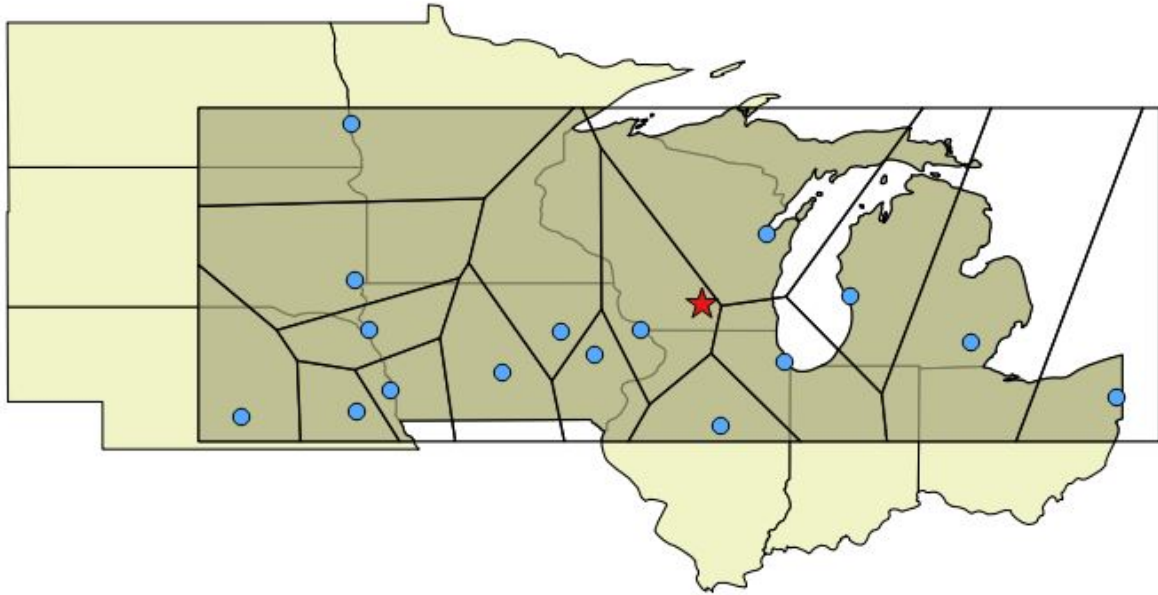


Figure 15

This graphic (figure 15) displays our GIS work creating Thiessen Polygons around each of the current (present prior to the Capitols) USHL franchises, not including Madison as a point in the analysis. The purpose of this is to, according to central place theory, find the ideal location for an expansion franchise based on the surrounding teams. This of course assumes nothing other than the point locations of the other franchises and does not take account for population or any of our outlined “determinants to attendance.” Central place theory suggests, with all other factors being equal, the locations near the polygon boundaries will be better locations for expansion franchises. Madison is shown as a red star, very close to the border of three intersecting team markets (Dubuque, Green Bay, and Chicago). The exact intersection falls near Cambridge and Deerfield Wisconsin, or the east suburbs of Madison. For fairly obvious reasons, those two towns would be highly unlikely to sustain an USHL franchise. Other

cities close to the ideal location with decent population numbers include Kenosha and Rockford, which are likely too close to the existing franchise, The Chicago Steel. Prairie du Chien is likely to close to the Dubuque Fighting Saints. The Fox Valley cities are too close to the existing Green Bay Gamblers. This leaves us with Madison, and from this graphic we can conclude that solely based on central place theory, the location of Madison as a new USHL expansion franchise fits fairly well. This fits especially well, since the exact location of the intersection is about 25 miles from Madison, which will be discussed further on in our survey results, which showed that almost all people at the game came from within 25 miles (figure 7).

Observational/Qualitative Data and Analysis

Part of our research for this project was attending Madison Capital games in order to get a feel for the type of atmosphere as well as collect qualitative data on the overall experience. During our trips to the games, we have discovered that there was very little downtime between play and other forms of entertainment. The fan experience for each of the games had no shortage of entertainment. Right away when one arrives to the game there are multiple booths, from entry to win free tickets to a future game, to games for children. During the intermissions, there is all kinds of entertainment. One of the biggest sources of entertainment during intermission is the 'chuck a puck' for a buck. This is at every game, the fans can purchase foam pucks to throw onto the ice during the intermission between the second and the third period and the fan whose puck lands on the target wins five hundred dollars. There are other prizes as well that can be won by being closest to the other targets. In the intermission between the first

and second period there is entertainment as well. The games we had gone to had dance teams perform. This is not only a marketing tactic to bring in groups such as the dance teams, it is also to make the fan experience the best that it possibly can be, according to Ryan Smith, the broadcasting and media relations director. Another group that performed on the ice was a 'mighty mite' hockey team from the Madison area. The team was allowed to play for a couple of minutes between periods before the chuck a puck for a buck. This not only entertains the fans and brings groups in, it also encourages the youth hockey programs in the Madison area. Although the Dane County Coliseum is a larger arena, especially for a team in the USHL, the fans can get fairly loud. Both of the games that we went to, had a good fan base, there was at least 2000 to 3000 fans. The Madison Capitols have already jumped to second in attendance for the USHL (Ryan Smith). The concern of how much of a hockey town is Madison can be seen throughout the attendance numbers that the Capitols have had already even though this is their first season.

Madison has a proud history of junior hockey. This can be seen just by looking around at the fans on game day for the Madison Capitols. Not only are there fans there who are wearing hockey jerseys and sweatshirts from their own teams, they are also a decent number of fans wearing Madison Capitol's gear. There was a good variety of hockey jerseys at the game from NHL to college, to personal jerseys, to international teams. The amount of different jerseys at the game just goes to show that there is quite a hockey culture here in Madison. At the game the fans all seem to be very caught up in the game and appreciate the sport of hockey itself. The fans are very into the game

cheering and fully aware of what is going on with the game. Overall the fan base that has been at the games for the most part seem to be fans who have a great potential of being returning fans for other games.

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4

Survey Results and Analysis

Below are various graphs that depict the most telling responses we got with our survey questions at the Madison Capitol's game. The questions that the graphs answer are bolded immediately above the graphs. The paragraph beneath each graphic will explain how to read the results and what that means to us and our question of Madison's USHL potential.

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being of most importance and 1 being of least importance, please rate the following aspects on how strongly they affect your desire to attend Madison Capitol's games.

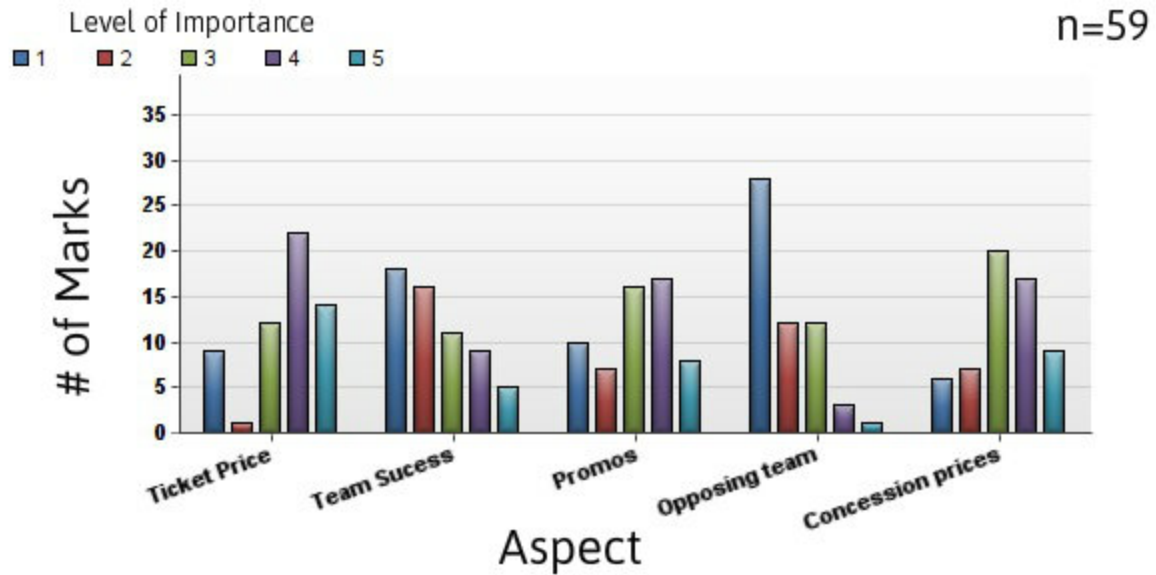


Figure 3

This was a multi-level question as we asked fans how important each aspect of the game was to them. By looking at the slope of the bars, you can see the general trend of importance placed on each item. Where the five bars slope upward from left to right, the factor is seen as more important, as the higher numbers got marked more often. Through this strictly visual analysis, we can see that ticket prices and concession prices have the highest positive slope. Team success and opposing team are at a negative slope and promos sit somewhere in the middle. The two lowest rated aspects are the two areas where the Madison Capitol's have little to no influence. For a more condensed view, the table below shows the mean score of each factor. The higher the mean equals the more important factor in the eyes of the survey participants.

#	Factor	Mean
1	Ticket Price	3.53

2	Team Success	2.44
3	Promos	3.10
4	Opposing team	1.88
5	Concession prices	3.27

Figure 4

What best describes your status as a ticket buyer?

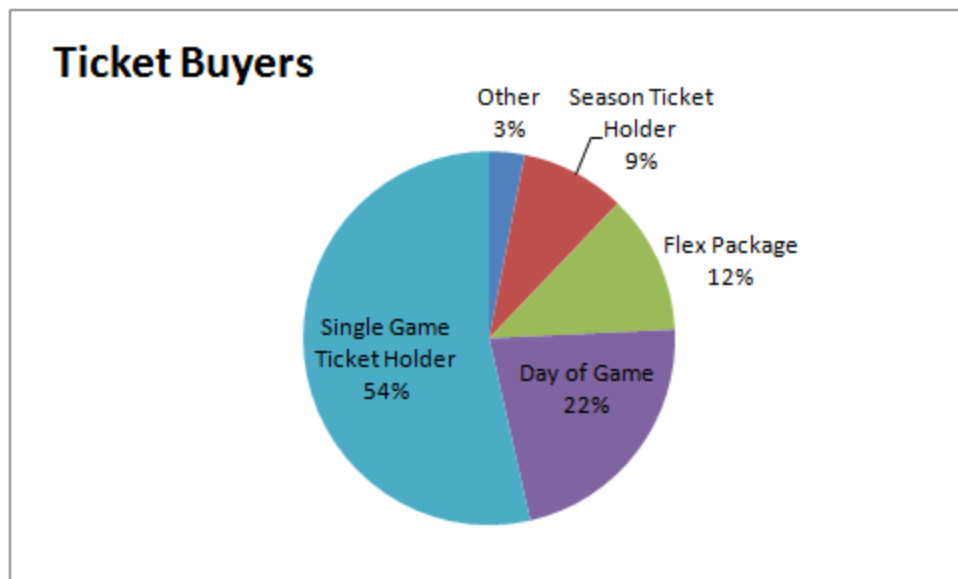


Figure 5

While the amount of season ticket holders isn't the only measure of fan loyalty. It is a source of a more consistent income along with flex packages. The pie chart above shows a huge portion, almost 75%, of their ticket sales are from single game ticket holders and day of game buyers. It is only the first season, but with such a high portion, factors like Badger hockey games can have a huge impact on an event's income.

How likely are you to attend another Capitol's game?

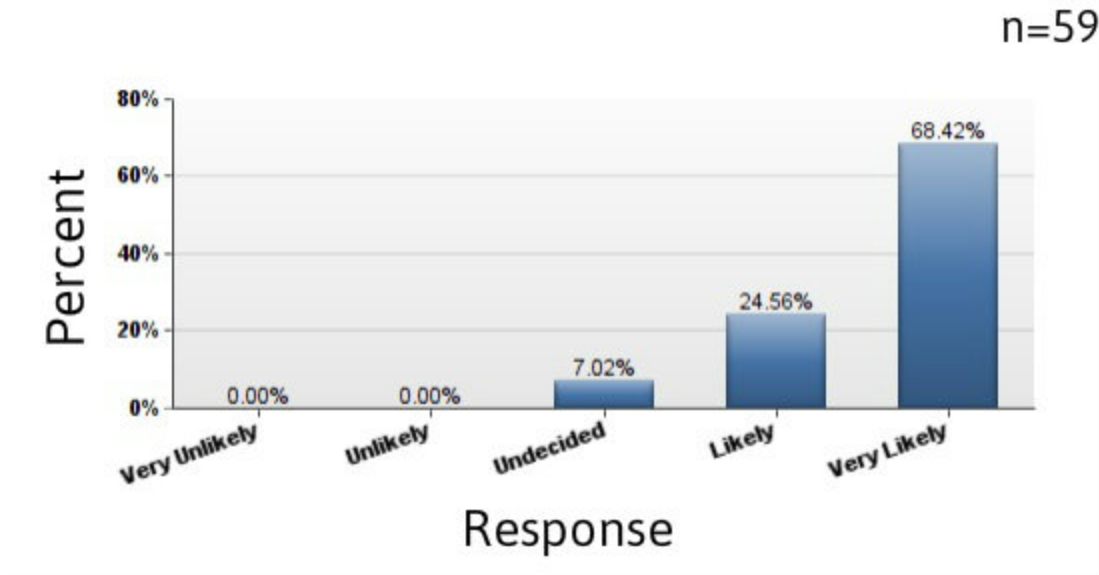


Figure 6

A positive light that counteracts the pie graph is shown by this question. Even though most of the customers were only here for a single night, many expressed interest in coming back. Nearly 93% of fans surveyed stated that they were likely or very likely to attend another Capitals' game. No one said that they were unlikely to return. This could very well turn into a major increase in season ticket holders and flex package buyers going into future years.

How far did you travel to today's game?

#	Answer	%
1	0 to 25 miles	95%
2	25 to 50 miles	5%
3	50+ miles	0%
n=59	Total	100%

Figure 7

Another straight forward question shows the geographic range of fans that the event attracts. Almost every response was marked within our shorter range option. The closest franchise to Madison is Dubuque, IA which is about 90 miles away. This does create some overlap at around the 45 mile range, however, the table shows that they don't face too much competition from any teams as the travel range is much more confined to the Madison area

The picture to the right is just a simple graphic showing a 50 mile radius around each of the three closest teams to Madison in order to note the overlap between Madison and Dubuque as well as the lack of overlap between the other two franchises.

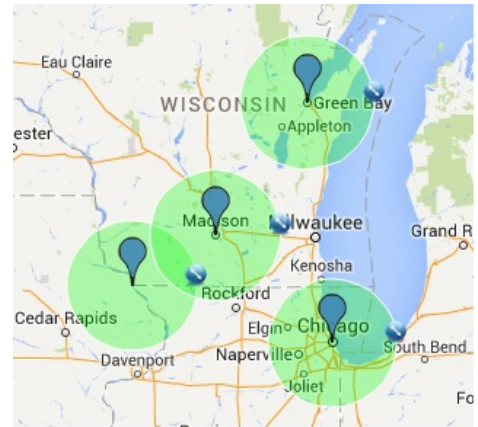


Figure 8

Age

n=59

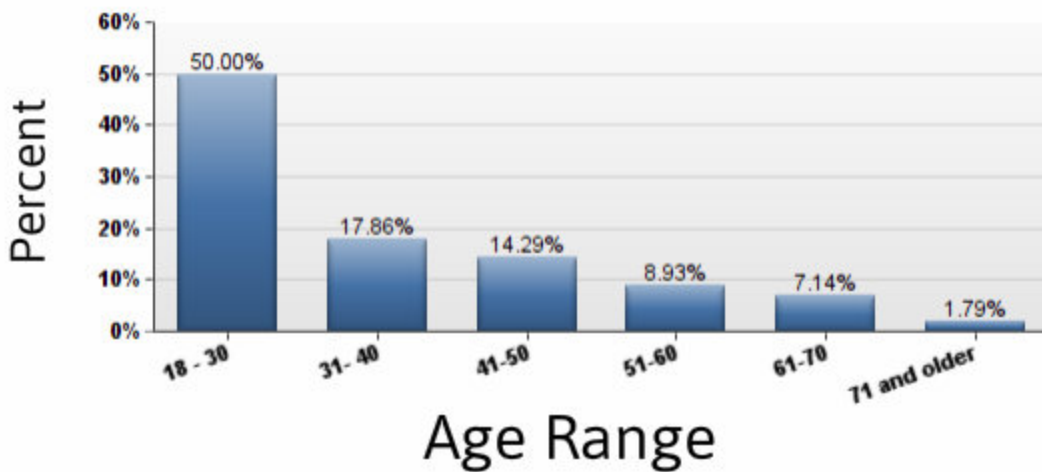


Figure 9

The Madison Capitols' age demographic is shown here to be a fairly young crowd. It is important to note however, the survey was conducted on a \$1 beer night promotion aimed to attract the younger, college community in Madison. Another follow-up question asked if they came to the game with any kids under the age of 18. Exactly one-third of the fans surveyed did attend the game with at least one minor, with the most participants bringing 2 or 3 children.

Interview Results and Analysis

On November 17, our group sat down with Ryan Smith, the Director of Media Relations for the Madison Capitols to discuss the team's first few months, some positive notes as well as challenges, and the team's future. Smith's first point was that in the grand scheme of things, the organization has come a long way in just ten months. He noted that the team was given a bit of a disadvantage at first; because of scheduling conflicts that came with sharing the building, the team had to start off their first season with five games on the road. In addition to this, the team did not have much of a choice for home games, as the building's schedule essentially dictated when games could be played. However, Smith also noted that the Capitols' schedule only conflicts with the Wisconsin Badgers' hockey team's schedule five times this season.

Smith continued on by giving a detailed explanation of the organization's goals for attendance. Their target market is aimed at families, especially at youth hockey families in the Madison area. Smith noted that the first year of a team is obviously the toughest for attendance and ticket sales, as you don't have the opportunity for renewals from ticket buyers. Therefore, the first year of sales is focused on familiarizing people

with the brand, and once established, the all-important loyalties from ticket buyers will form. A second key market for the Capitols is college students, and this is to whom the “Dollar Beer Nights” are marketed towards. The Capitols put in extra effort to get hockey fans from campus to games by providing free shuttles from the Kollege Klub, located downtown. Regardless of the age or overall demographic of the ticket buyer, Smith emphasized that the Capitols never take shortcuts on the fan experience, and they try their hardest to make every fan’s trip to the arena a positive experience.

When asked about the differences between promoting and marketing a junior hockey team as opposed to a college or pro team, Smith emphasized that the nature of the players actually help them out. Smith claimed that 90% of junior hockey players go on to play Division I college hockey, and many on to the National Hockey League. Smith continued by saying that they try to promote the fact that these players are between sixteen and twenty years old, and that the fans are not going to see better players at that age group anywhere else. Additionally, Smith noted that because the Capitols are not affiliated at all with the NCAA, they had more leniency with their marketing, and they could be a little more edgy with promotions.

We also asked Smith about the team’s social media usage, and he responded by saying that Facebook and Twitter are huge tools for communication, especially with the college demographic. Before the season, Smith worked with an outside social media firm to learn tactics and tricks for effectively using the tool, and he there has to be a balance between over and underutilizing the platforms. Smith is quick to note, however, that at the end of the day, sales are the most important thing, and social media is for

increasing sales. The Capitols have worked to come up with promotions enabled through social media, such as clickable links or a contest where you “retweet” a link to win something.

Smith concluded by claiming that the biggest challenge to the Capitols through their first season is by far the arena. Because the Alliant Energy Center is city-owned, it comes with its own rules and protocols as well as staff. For example, Smith says it’s very frustrating when a fan complains about an usher or concessions worker, and the Capitols are unable to do anything about it because those people are employed by the arena. Additionally, the Alliant Energy Center is by far the largest arena in the USHL, which on one hand allows more fans to attend games, but more often, just looks empty. Smith claims that the average attendance this season thus far is around 3,000 fans, which is actually second only to Sioux Falls in the USHL (see Figure 1). However, because of the size of the arena, it usually feels mostly empty. Smith notes that this makes the game environment feel less intimate, which makes the atmosphere not as welcoming to fans. Unfortunately, Smith says, expanding or moving to another venue is not an option at this point, and the Capitols will just have to live with this environment for now.

Conclusion/Prediction

After conducting an in-depth literature review, an analysis of location using central place theory, conducting surveys and an interview, and analyzing our data, we predict that the Capitols will be successful for the long-term in Madison. The history of hockey in Madison also contributes to this prediction, as it has created a strong

atmosphere surrounding the Madison hockey scene. The data, atmosphere, and backing from majority owner Ryan Suter, the Madison Capitols will be a successful USHL franchise. A lot of USHL franchises simply don't make it, but we think that Capitols will not be one of those teams. One particular quote that we overheard from a fan at Capitols game was "This was not the hockey game I was expecting to see, it was better! It had fights, it had puppies, it had beer, and people were rowdy!" This quote demonstrates how far the Capitols have come in just half a season, and we believe this passion will fuel the Capitols' success in Madison.

Future Research

Although we saw our research as comprehensive enough to draw a conclusion regarding the Capitols' future success, we recognize the need for future research. Due to time limitations, we had to draw our conclusion from just half a season's worth of data collection. Obviously, half a season's worth of data is not truly representative, so in order to test our findings, a similar study could be conducted three or so years down the road. This would negate any "honeymoon phase" effects, and simply allow for more time for the Capitols to get established in Madison. A similar study could include interviews with Capitols' front office members, as well as surveys with similar questions to ours, but with some additional ones regarding how people see the Capitols growing and weaving into the fabric of the city.

Next, more analysis and thought could be put into the Capitols' place within the hockey community in Madison. As mentioned earlier, Madison has an extremely rich hockey history, and the Capitols have the potential to add to that history. The question

is whether they will actually become a key contributor to the Madison hockey community. They are off to a great start, due to the iconic presence of Bob Suter and son Ryan Suter, as well as the diverse group of youth hockey families attending the games. We see the Capitols finding a place within the Madison hockey scene, but whether that happens or not remains to be seen.

Appendix

Figure 10

2014 USHL Average Attendance	
Sioux Falls	6,083
Madison	3,389
Fargo	3,253
Green Bay	3,155
Omaha	3,090
Lincoln	3,041
Sioux City	2,563
Waterloo	2,387
Cedar Rapids	2,244
Dubuque	2,202
Des Moines	2,170
Tri-City	2,134
Muskegon	1,810
Bloomington	1,722
Chicago	1,286
Youngstown	1,080
Team USA	301
Total	2,414

Source: *Pointstreak.com*

Figure 11

Season	Team	GP	W	L	I	OTL	SOL	Pts	Pct	Coach
1984-85	Madison Capitols	48	15	30	1	2	0	33	0.344	Bob Suter
1985-86	Madison Capitols	48	20	18	2	8	0	50	0.521	Bob Suter
1986-87	Madison Capitols	48	33	14	0	1	0	67	0.698	Scott Owens

1987-88	Madison Capitols	48	24	22	0	2	0	50	0.521	Scott Owens
1988-89	Madison Capitols	48	33	10	3	2	0	71	0.74	Scott Owens
1989-90	Madison Capitols	48	25	16	2	5	0	57	0.594	Scott Owens
1990-91	Madison Capitols	48	21	23	4	0	0	49	0.479	Scott Owens
1991-92	Wisconsin Capitols	48	11	37	0	0	0	26	0.229	Steve Huglen
1992-93	Wisconsin Capitols	48	6	39	2	1	0	15	0.156	Dibble, Andringa {+}
1993-94	Wisconsin Capitols	50	9	37	1	3	0	22	0.22	Andringa, Granato, Duffy {+}
1994-95	Wisconsin Capitols	48	10	32	1	5	0	26	0.271	Duffy, Semplice {+}

Figure 12

Season	Team	League	GP	W	L	I	OTL	SOL	Pts	Pct	Atten.	Atten. Rank	Coach	Result
1995-96	Madison Monsters	CoHL	74	37	30	0	0	7	81	0.547	2655	4 of 9	Mark Johnson	Lost in round 1
1996-97	Madison Monsters	CoHL	74	46	21	0	0	7	99	0.669	2510	5 of 10	Dave Schultz	Lost in round 1
1997-98	Madison Monsters	UHL	74	39	24	0	0	11	89	0.601	2190	7 of 10	Kent Hawley	Lost in round 1
1998-99	Madison Monsters	UHL	74	29	40	0	0	5	63	0.426	1896	11 of 11	Kent Hawley	Out of Playoffs

Figure 13

Season	Team	League	GP	W	L	I	OTL	SOL	Pts	Pct	Atten.	Atten. Rank	Coach	Result
1999-00	Madison Kodiaks	UHL	74	35	33	0	0	6	76	0.514	2395	13 of 13	Kent Hawley	Lost in round 2

Figure 14

Team	Stadium	Capacity	Year Opened
----------------------	-------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------------

Bloomington Thunder	U.S. Cellular Coliseum	7,000	2006
Cedar Rapids RoughRiders	Cedar Rapids Ice Arena	4,000	2000
Chicago Steel	Edge Ice Arena	3,000	1997
Dubuque Fighting Saints	Mystique Ice Center	3,079	2010
Green Bay Gamblers	Resch Center	8,709	2002
Madison Capitols	Veteran's Memorial Colliseum	10,231	1967
Muskegon Lumberjacks	L.C. Walker Arena	5,100	1960
USA National Development	Ann Arbor Ice Cube	1,000	1995
Youngstown Phantoms	Covelli Centre	5,717	2005
Des Moines Buccaneers	Buccaneer Arena	3,408	1961
Fargo Force	Scheels Arena	5,000	2008
Lincoln Stars	Ice Box	4,212	1951
Omaha Lancers	Ralston Arena	3,319	2012
Sioux City Musketeers	Gateway Arena	6,731	2003
Sioux Falls Stampede	Denny Sanford PREMIER Center	10,450	2014
Tri-City Storm	Viaero Event Center	5,000	2000
Waterloo Black Hawks	Young Arena	3,500	1994

Ryan Smith Interview Transcript

- Come along way in 10 months
- started with 5 games on the road, world dairy expo came into the Colliseum
- home ice has helped with the team's record
- things coming together from the ticket standpoint, home opener was successful
- definitely a challenge to share the building, essentially had to choose dates for home dates because of that
- only conflict with Badger hockey 4 or 5 times this season
- started to work with outside media buyers
- focus on being a family environment, have different nights geared toward different demographics
- particularly geared toward families, youth hockey families

- average attendance: 3500-4000 is the goal
- Sioux Falls is the leader in attendance in the league, brand new facility, nothing else to do in Sioux Falls

- Loyalty: really important, year one always the toughest, don't have the opportunity to have renewals, want to get as many people involved in the fan experience as possible
- don't take shortcuts on the fan experience
- year one: start to get people familiar with the brand, once established, they can start spreading the word, start getting season ticket holders to renew, will reward people for renewing
- for example, dollar beer nights, emphasis on dollar beer nights, have shuttles from KK and brats, emphasis on college kids, FREE
- upsell people who are buying single game tickets, upper level tickets for 10 dollars a ticket (100 dollars) save money on ticket fees, taxes compared to walk up prices
- once an account is created for a customer, you have their information on hand, you can contact them for feedback, etc, selling more tickets
- trying to market themselves like the Mallards, they have better players than the Mallards, works to their advantage
- huge focus: groups. Holiday parties, corporate outings, youth hockey, dance teams, national anthem choirs, etc. Give them a fan experience as well
- Mallards: GROUPS. Again, trying to be like them
- They do have one suite
- they do extend a fairly large margin outside of Dane County, ie, Sauk, Waunakee, halfway to Milwaukee
- encouraging other teams fans to travel to Madison---interesting
- Marketing minor league team: JUNIOR hockey. Over 90% will play D1 college hockey, many to NHL
- try to promote that these are 16-20 years old, not going to see better players at this age group in the US, try to promote the players more than anything
- try to do more promotions that college hockey can't do with NCAA, can be more edgy with promotions
- again, biggest hurdle: the arena, biggest frustration, they have their own staff, sometimes those staff members aren't nice to fans, say its not our staff, etc
- Social media: Twitter and Facebook huge for the college demographic
- worked with an outside firm to actually learn social media tactics
- biggest flaw: need to promote some creative content with tweets, if a tweet doesn't have some sort of outside link, it fails
- do giveaways, retweet this and win...
- at the end of the day: its strictly on sales. Try to come up with promotions/tweets that generates data collections. If they want to be at a game bad enough to enter to win, might be able to sell them things
- Try to find a balance between over and under utilizing it

- links: click through to their website for advertising dollars
- don't need huge results, only really need 1-2% of the population of Madison out on game nights
- Arena: expanding not an option at this point. Wish: they could curtain off 300 level sections, gives it a more intimate feeling (LaBahn?)
- fans; feels like nobody's here, even though there actually are a lot of fans in the building
- long term plan: week to week, essentially
- don't want to sell themselves short, already are second in the USHL in attendance, believe they do have the capacity to sell 4000+ tickets a night
- constantly looking for ways to make the building their own
- Capitols do dictate their own ticket prices, not parking fees or ticketmaster fees
- overall in league: most teams start off at lowest price point, 8-12 dollars. They started at the 10 dollar window, offer discounts week to week. Military: got in free with IDs, families got discounted tickets
- establishing good PR for themselves, while getting people in the building
- Team's overall record: Mallards: don't remember a single player when they go to games, trying to be like them. Does matter, but as fan experience more important than result on the ice

Ryan Suter: majority owners, largely involved. Constantly in touch with the president, very important for \$\$\$\$\$\$. Feel very fortunate to have a very high paid NHL player as their main funder, not quite a security blanket, but kind of. Trying to make Ryan feel like his investment is worth it. Big role is good, nice to know directly from the source what they're looking for

-History of hockey: Ryan was really excited to bring junior hockey back to Madison, gives players a potential to play for Badgers, like to think of themselves of compliments to badgers, give 24 additional hockey nights in Madison per year. Gives more opportunities for hockey in many aspects. Bob had such an impact on making kids want to play, don't take that for granted. KIDS

Bibliography

Bale, John. "Five." In *Sports geography*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2003. 84- 107.

Bale, John. "Three." In *Sportscapes*. Sheffield: Geographical Association, 2000. 19-29.

Bale, John. "Two." In *Sports geography*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2003. 7- 35.

Cebula, R. (2009). The potential role of marketing in promoting free enterprise in the US: A study involving minor league baseball and ticket-sales revenue maximization. *Journal of International and Global Economic Studies*, 2(1), 31-45.

Greenwell, T. C., Fink, J. S., & Pastore, D. L. (2002). Assessing the influence of the physical sports facility on customer satisfaction within the context of the service experience. *Sport Management Review*, 5(2), 129-148.

Gober, P., Harner, J. , and Kuby, M. 2004. Human Geography In Action. *Take Me Out to the Ball Game: Market Areas and the Urban Hierarchy*, ed. 3. 247-273: Danvers, MA John Wiley & Sons, Inc

Johnson, A. T. (1990). Professional Baseball at the Minor League Level: Considerations for Cities Large and Small. *State & Local Government Review*, 90-96.

J.C.H Jones and D.G Ferguson. 1988. Location and Survival in the National Hockey League. *The Journal of Industrial Economics*, Vol 36, No.4 pp. 443-457.
From the Arena Into the Streets: Hockey Violence, Economic Incentives and Public Policy

J. C. H. Jones, K. G. Stewart and R. Sunderman
The American Journal of Economics and Sociology, Vol. 55, No. 2 (Apr., 1996), pp. 231-243

Kennett, Pamela, Julie Sneath, and Steve Henson. "Fan satisfaction and segmentation: A case study of minor league hockey spectators." *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing* 10, no. 2 (2001): 132-142.
<http://www.palgrave-journals.com/jt/journal/v10/n2/pdf/5740040a.pdf> (accessed October 7, 2014).

When Is the Honeymoon over? National Hockey League Attendance, 1970-2003
John C. Leadley and Zenon X. Zygmunt
Canadian Public Policy / Analyse de Politiques, Vol. 32, No. 2 (Jun., 2006), pp. 213-232
Published by: University of Toronto Press on behalf of Canadian Public Policy
Article DOI: 10.2307/4128729

Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association, Vol. 38, No. 2 (Spring, 1997), pp. 185-202

Daniel R. Marburger

Managerial and Decision Economics, Vol. 18, No. 5 (Aug., 1997), pp. 375-381

Published by: Wiley

Mahony, D. F., Madrigal, R., & Howard, D. (2000). Using the psychological commitment to team (PCT) scale to segment sport consumers based on loyalty. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 9(1), 15-25.

Siegfried, John J., and Jeff D. Eisenberg. "The Demand For Minor League Baseball." *Atlantic Economic Journal* 8, no. 2 (1980): 59-69.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/BF02299864> (accessed October 3, 2014).

Smith, A. C., & Stewart, B. (2007). The travelling fan: Understanding the mechanisms of sport fan consumption in a sport tourism setting. *Journal of sport & tourism*, 12(3-4), 155-181.

Who Benefits from the Presence of Professional Sports Teams? The Implications for Public Funding of Stadiums and Arenas

David Swindell and Mark S. Rosentraub

Public Administration Review, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 1998), pp. 11-20

Paul, Rodney, and Andrew Weinbach. "Determinants of Attendance in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League: Role of Winning, Scoring, and Fighting." *Atlantic Economic Journal* 39, no. 3 (September 2011): 303-311. Business Source Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed October 9, 2014).

Witkemper, C., Lim, C. H., & Waldburger, A. (2012). Social media and sports marketing: Examining the motivations and constraints of Twitter users. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 21(3), 170-183.

Zhang, J. J., Lam, E. T., Connaughton, E. P., Bennett, G., Pease, D. G., Pham, U. L., ... & Duley, A. R. (2004). Variables affecting spectator enjoyment of minor league hockey games. *Int J Sport Manage Market*, 5, 1-26.

Zhang, J. J., Pease, D. G., Lam, E. T., Bellerive, L. M., Pham, U. L., Williamson, D. P., ... & Wall, K. A. (2001). Sociomotivational factors affecting spectator attendance at minor league hockey games. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 10(1), 43-54.

www.twitter.com/MadCapsHockey

<http://www.ushl.com/>