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Analysis of the IHK Comet youth ice hockey LTP

Gareth Miller

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| <p>Author(s) Gareth Miller</p> | <p>Group or year of entry DPXII</p> |
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| <p>IHK Comet went through associational bankruptcy in 2010. A large number of members left the association during that period, but numbers have continued to decline up till now. The recruitment program has had inconsistent attention, even though the national federation provides the format. The format originates from Stavanger Hockey association, who boasts great success in recruitment.</p> <p>The first purpose of this document will be to serve to analyse the efficiency of the Get Skoyte og Hockeyskole (GSH) format, when being implemented in IHK Comet's hockeyschool, and therefore produce possibilities to develop the format provided by the national association. The associational and environmental differences between Stavanger Hockey and IHK Comet bredde are vast. The second purpose is to analyse the efficiency of IHK Comet hockeyschool.</p> <p>Entry-level recruitment programs fall into the context of youth development and marketing. How the customer is attracted, how the customer is retained, and how the child is prepared for stepping into the actual sport need to be catered for.</p> <p>To analyse the effectiveness of the Get Skoyte og Hockeyskole (GSH) format, which is implemented at IHK Comet's hockeyschool, all customers from the last four seasons were requested to complete a survey. The questions gave insight into the customer's perceived satisfaction, channels of marketing, retention of customers, and transition into the association. An interview with the individual responsible for creating the format was also conducted.</p> <p>For some time now, Norwegian Ice Hockey Federation (NIHF) has been encouraging their member associations to implement the GSH format. The interest towards this was inconsistent, as well as the information made available seems lacking. Ice hockey is also a very expensive sport to provide, as well as participate in, yet the effort in many countries to recruit is substandard when comparing to other major sports.</p> <p>The results from the interview and survey show that certain key factors, while mentioned in the literature provided from the national association, are not given the notable importance they should have. The channels of marketing used were mostly ineffective, yet transitioning into the association was satisfactory. The area of coaching was unsatisfactory, yet the attitude towards the children was seen as positive.</p> <p>There are multiple things should be added to the format, but the concept is the product of a passionate heart, with hockey experience and marketing education. IHK Comet will use the results from this to manipulate their recruitment program for a smaller city population, target a larger age bracket (to spread recruitment, and target athlete dropout/burnout in the other sports within the city), adjust on-ice structure for a faster transition into teams, renovate equipment made available to children, and reduce requirements in terms of personnel.</p> | |

Keywords

Recruitment, Learn to play, ice hockey, youth development

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1 Introduction

For a sport to grow, the youth must be given the chance to try it. Without a good image, parents will not bring their children to play the sport. In years past, ice hockey has had an image of brutality. As of late, countries such as Canada, Finland, USA, and Sweden have done much work to change this. In some areas in Norway, the hockey culture is taking time to follow. Much work is needed to change the imagery the customer sees this sport to be.

Stavanger Hockey in Norway boasts over 400 four to eight years old children signing up to play ice hockey in their recruitment program. When considering that Norway only have 6629 registered players (IIHF. 2016), this is a large number. As Appendix 4 shows, only four associations in Norway recorded over 200 sign ups. IHK Comet only recorded 76 in the 2015/2016 season. In previous years, Comet averaged approximately 100 signups, but the association struggles to maintain the same personnel for multiple years, and therefore reduces the likelihood of developing the service provided.

The purpose of this study two fold. The first purpose of this document will be to serve to analyse the efficiency of the Get Skoyte og Hockeyskole (GSH) format, when being implemented in IHK Comet's hockeyschool, and therefore produce possibilities to develop the format provided by the national association. The format provided from the national association is a great start, yet potential changes to how appropriate it is for associations in different circumstances are available. Expansion on topics such as personnel should be included, so as to highlight the importance of locating specific personalities to certain positions. The level of importance should be listed for each position to accommodate limited volunteers. Some different on ice structures may also be provided to accommodate limited coaches. Tools to analyse the effectiveness of each marketing channel advised, so as to understand what works in the environment surrounding the association implementing the format. Currently, the format gives one way of operating a recruitment program, with no variation to adapt. This should be changed. Some aspects that came up in the interview with Ernst Falch were very clear from him of their importance, yet not as much in the literature provided.

Secondly, to give an insight into what has been done well inside IHK Comet hockeyschool this season, and what should be changed/worked on to be better next season. The association is targeting developing their recruitment program for the next few years, and this is the starting point. Analysis comes before planning, and then execution. Repeat. To build from the bottom takes time, but if stuck to, can develop great results in the future.

2 Youth Development in Sports Literature

Current literature on youth development is extensive, yet with many unanswered questions, conflicting opinions, and short-term research. For a more universally supported structure to come to light, more longitudinal research is required (Bailey, Collins, Ford 2010). Yet it should be noted that Excellence in sports, activity for life, and Physical literacy should be the main outcomes for youth in sports (Balyi, Higgs & Way 2013.)

2.1 How individuals mature

The process from prenatal to postnatal maturity occurs over approximately the first 20 years of an individual's life. The individual in sports develops holistically where 3 major areas are biological, social, and psychological (Bouchard, Malina & Bar-Or 2004.)

The biological area represents changes in body shape and structure caused by the integrated development or use of genes, hormones, nutrition, and environmental factors. These cause anatomical, neurological, muscular, and metabolic/hormonal changes (Bailey, et al 2010.)

The social area represents the social and environmental factors such as family, socioeconomic status, educational background, geographical location, gender, ethnicity, peers, and identity (Bailey, et al 2010.)

The psychological area represents the mental skills, attitudes, emotions, and desires of the individual. The individual must employ these when facing situations such as developmental opportunities, adaptation to setbacks, and negotiation of key transitions encountered through their path to adult sports (Bailey, et al 2010.)

2.2 Problems with current frameworks

Due to inappropriate guidance and developmental activities, the complexity of developing athletic competency is industrialised, and consideration towards promoting life-long participation quickly falls away for performance-based training. This mind-set contributes to a low rate of youth sport to elite sport success, and to dropout rates. The variable developmental pathways on biological, psychological and social areas are not individualised, yet these pathways are non-linear (Bailey et al. 2010). A framework that does not individualise to each athlete is stuck in the Stone Age, where the conceptual view for reproducing

the same process, expecting a consistent outcome is considered correct. Human beings develop differently, and different speeds, towards different potentials.

An example of not individualising is how the Long-term Athlete Development model (Stafford 2005) incorporated “optimal windows of trainability”. Stafford explains that these windows of sensitive and critical periods in maturation increased efficiency of development on specific physical and movement skills pertaining to each window. Current discussion regarding this is that there is insufficient Longitudinal, well-controlled empirical research on effectiveness of said windows (Lloyd et al, 2016.)

2.3 Coaching capability

Though supporting groups surrounding the athlete are all important, coaches play a pivotal role in providing guidance towards reaching potential (both sport-specific, and personal), and providing the environment that promotes life-long participation.

Coaches’ effectiveness should be based on the understanding that: coaching knowledge is multidimensional; key athlete assets exist to develop multiple athlete outcomes; and effective coaching is contextual. It is widely understood that a required component of coaches is sport-specific instruction, yet equally important qualities are relationship maintenance, and self-evaluation. Therefore, professional knowledge (sport-specific skills, physical training, injury prevention, and pedagogical techniques), interpersonal knowledge (athlete-coach relationship, parent and community interaction), and intrapersonal knowledge (reflection and introspection) are qualities of effectiveness in coaching (Bergeron et al. 2015), and application of these qualities to develop competence, confidence, connection and character define effective coaching (Côté & Gilbert 2009.)

Jean Côté’s Developmental Model on Sports Participation (Figure 1) highlights two sides of sports, recreational and competitive. This model describes two pathways athletes will go through dependant on their eventual outcome and desire from the sport. Through understanding of this model, the need for four contexts of coaches seems evident.

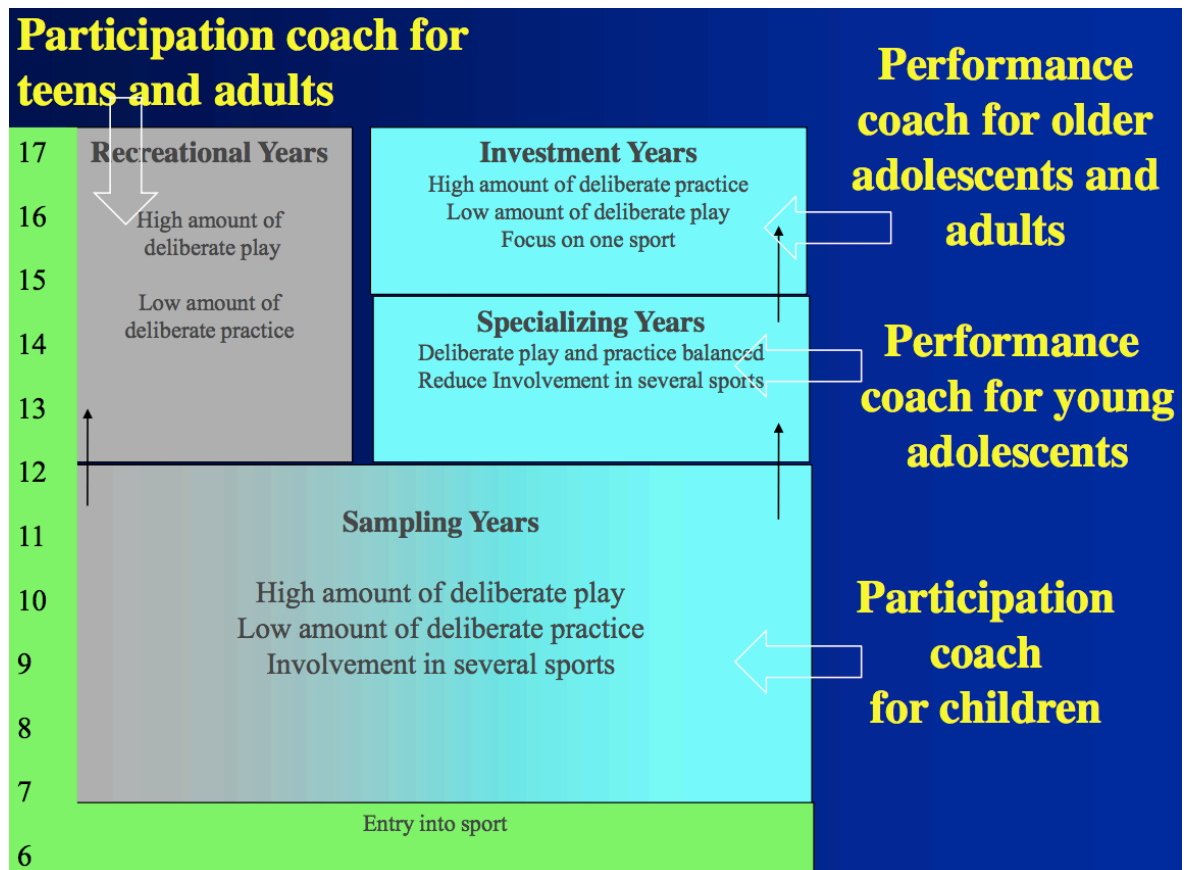


Figure 1. Jean Côté's Developmental Model on Sports Participation including representation of participation and performance coaching allocation (Côté & Gilbert 2009)

According to Côté & Gilbert (2009) a participation coach for children should focus on 5 main tasks:

- Adopt an inclusive focus as opposed to an exclusive selection policy based on performance
- Organise a mastery-oriented motivational climate
- Set up safe opportunities for athletes to have fun and engage playfully in low-organization games
- Teach and assess the development of fundamental movements by focusing on the child first
- Promote the social aspect of sports and sampling

Similarly, a participation coach for adolescents and adults should:

- Provide opportunities for athletes to interact socially
- Afford opportunities for athletes to have fun and playfully compete
- Promote the development of fitness and health-related physical activities
- Teach and assess sport-specific skills in a safe environment for long-term sport involvement
- Teach personal and social assets through sport

A performance coach for young adolescents should:

- Organise the sport experience to promote a focus on one sport
- Teach "rules of competition"
- Offer opportunities for fun with increasingly greater demands for deliberate practice

- Present positive growth opportunities through sport (i.e., civil engagement, responsibility)

A performance coach for older adolescents and adults should:

- Set up training regime grounded in deliberate practice
- Allow athletes appropriate mental and physical rest
- Prepare athletes for consistent high-level competitive performance
- Teach and assess physical, technical, perceptual, and mental skills in a safe environment
- Provided opportunities for athletes to prepare for "life after sport"
-

It should be noted that every relationship between athlete and coach constitutes a specific coaching context due to the multitude of dynamics that occur, yet these are presented as four generic settings to guide policies and research (Côté & Gilbert 2009.)

3 Marketing Literature

According to (Kotler 1996. 10), the offered definition of marketing:

A social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and values with others.
(Kotler 1996. 10)

When considering entry-level recruitment of youth into ice hockey, there is a service the association wishes to sell, an intangible activity (Kotler 1996. 12). In other words, the participation in a sport is not something that can be owned or taken home.

Following on the marketing proposed by the GSH module, the defining and cross analysing of the markets segmented and targeted, consumers and the four p's.

In a thesis written on developing a youth basketball association in Finland (Hirvonsalo 2011), methods of marketing for recruitment were analysed (along with other aspects), and it should be noted that visits on the part of the association to schools merited minimal results, though the exact content of the visit was not covered. Other than an outside program cooperating with them to promote sports, their main sources of recruitment were friends joining through word of mouth, and individuals locating them online.

3.1 Segmenting Markets

When considering the sport industry, 3 sectors of the sport industrial activities are defined by (Smith 2008. 15). The first is the public sector that encompasses the governing bodies within and surrounding the sporting industry. The second is the voluntary sector. The third is the professional sector that deals with the commercial side of sports, such as professional clubs, leagues, and major events. The first level recruitment is considered within the voluntary sector where local sport associations, social and leisure clubs, and service clubs reside (Smith 2008. 15-19.)

When segmenting the market to target a specific age (as the GSH format describes), and there on niche marketing, the association attempts to identify a specific group they wish to target for their service (Kotler 1996. 380, 381). In this case, the target markets are 4-8 years old children. Considering population size of Halden, and therefore annual fertility rate, this narrows the target market to approximately 1250 children. A study done between 1997 to 2007, showed an increase from 16% to 39% for children aged 6-8 years old, who regularly (three to four times per week) participated in sports (K Green 2016. 74). That would mean that approximately 500 six to eight years old children participating in sports, in Halden. Difficulty in locating numbers on participants in each sport within the city of

Halden creates difficulty in narrowing the number further, yet it should be noted that sport Halden is known for their success are orienteering, bicycling, and swimming (Halden Kommune 2016.)

3.2 Targeting Markets and Consumers

Once a selection of markets is segmented, an analysis must take place to define the attractiveness of each segment. An association with a large reputation can target a major market as they control the majority vote for their service. On the other hand, a minor association competing against stronger associations within the same sport (or other sports) will struggle in the major market, and therefore should consider less targeted segments to acquire their customers (Kotler 1996. 412). As mentioned above, considering the average signups to Comet hockeyschool over the past 4 years (average of approximately 110), and the competition of 5 other sports over a market of approximately 500 four to eight year olds, the market being target could be seen as unattractive due to the competition.

According to (Smith 2008. 34), sports consumers can be categorised into four major areas. The first is sporting goods consumers, who purchase physical products of the sporting nature (ie. Equipment, supplements, merchandise, etc.). The second is sport service consumers. Sports-related services include education, gambling, specialised coaching, medical services, and recreational and health activities. The third is sport participants and volunteers. These include those involved in school, recreational, and organised sport. Lastly, there are sport supporters, spectators, and fans (Smith 2008. 34.)

First level recruitment can be categorised into the third area, the sport participants and volunteers. Mentioned in chapter 4.1, part of the GSH format, and first level recruitment is to also locate new volunteers to be utilised by the association. We attract these individuals by providing the sport to their children. There are, of course, other means to locate volunteers also.

3.3 Four P's

When marketing to the consumer, it is logical to assume that the customer for the target market (four to eight years old) is the parent. A central question from marketers is: How do consumers respond to various marketing stimuli that the company might use (Kotler 1996. 229)? Marketing stimuli consist of the four P's: product, price, place, and promotion. How

the parent reacts to these stimuli will account for the choices made on whether their child will join the association, or prefer to join another.

3.3.1 Product

A product (physical object, service, person, place, organisation and idea) is defined as anything offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a need or want. In Kotler's illustration of the three levels of product (Figure 2), he demonstrates that at the core stands the function of the product (Kotler 1996. 561). It is vital to understand the core benefit the consumer acquires when purchasing your product. In the case of entering hockeyschool, that stated value for signing a child up to the GSH format follows the lines of physical, social, and psychological development, all the time focused on creating the feeling of success.

Next is creating the actual product. This can include up to five components. These are quality level, features, styling, brand name, and packaging (Kotler 1996. 561). In the case of the GSH format, from the moment they step in the door, they must feel welcome. Every bit of information required until they step out of the door at the end of the session must be readily available. It should be clear that the service is of high quality when the equipment is not 10 years old. The ice time is well organised and it is clear there is a plan. The coaches are well mannered and appropriate to working with youth.

Lastly, an augmented product is created to surround the core (Kotler 1996. 561). This refers to additional benefits surrounding the product. For example, the support staff is in uniform, and in vision of the customer or at a consistent location if their assistance is needed. Some type of beverage and snack is available to the parents while they watch their child on the ice, as well as a representative nearby to answer any questions. It should be clear throughout the session what the hockeyschool's brand is. Any additional features should be well informed as well.

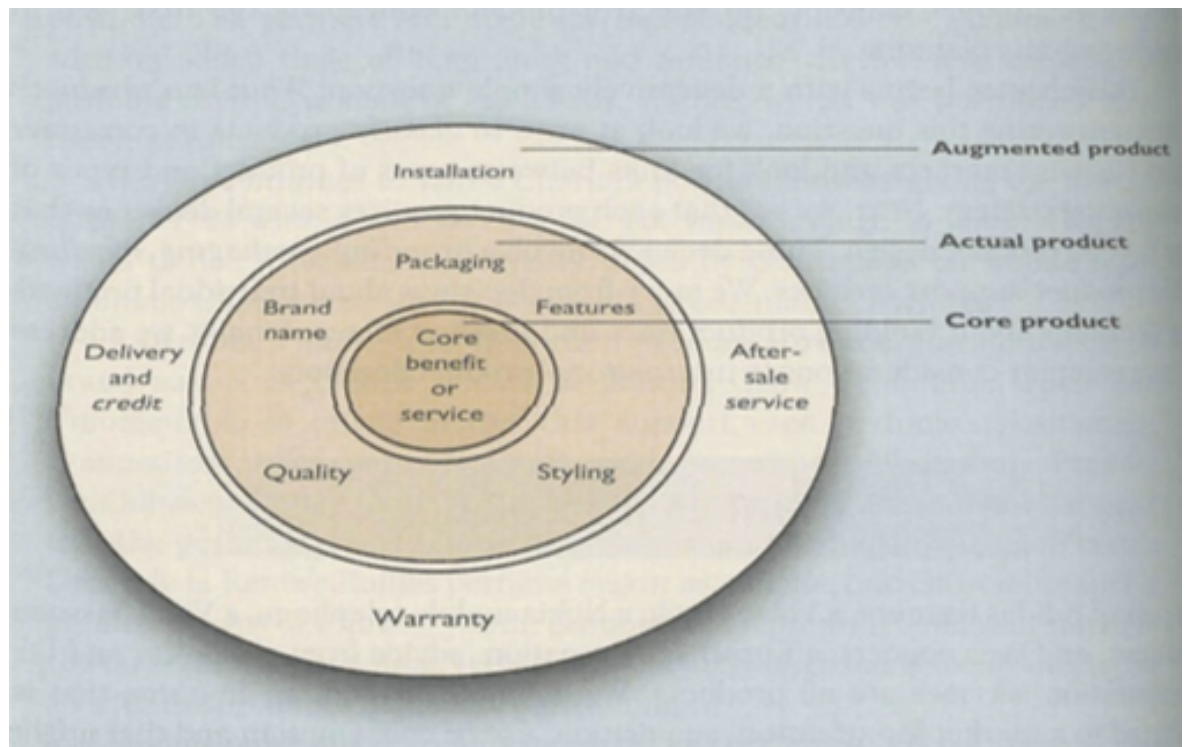


Figure 2. Kotler's Three levels of Product (Kotler 1996. 562)

3.3.2 Place

This section is to signify the decisions and actions taken by associations to bring the service to the customer (Kotler 1996. 891). Marketing channels used by the GSH format show word of mouth, newspaper articles, cooperation with local institutes, and social media as the main forms of reaching the customer. As a voluntary youth sports club, financially backing up scaled marketing is borderline impossible.

3.3.3 Price

As a struggling non-profit association, I feel this is fairly simple. Comet hockeyschool charges very little to join. This is in turn due to the association wanting to attract as many as possible. The promotions involved will be covered shortly.

3.3.4 Promotion

Promotion mix is the specific mix of advertising, personal setting, sales promotion and public relations that a company uses to pursue its advertising and marketing objectives (Kotler 1996. 756). Promotions involved within the GSH format include the first 3 sessions are completely free. This is to allow for a taste, and promote initial attendance. Another promotion is the consideration for reduced charge for siblings. As Norway is an moderate-

ly expensive country, even though salaries are above standard, families with multiple children are given assistance as the association sees that we are acquiring more members which is beneficial considering our history, and current state.

4 Norwegian Hockey school format

This style of hockey school is used through Norway to develop recruitment programs around the country. Associations such as Stavanger Oilers (where the format was developed) have had great success through this program. The guidelines developed by Ernst Falch (Head of the hockeyschool at Stavanger Oilers youth association) have been made available through the national association to assist the rest of the country.

4.1 Background and Aim

Nowegian hockeyschool format was called Den Norske Skøyte og Hockeyskolen (DNSH). At the beginning of this season (2016/2017), the name was changed to Get Skøyte og Hockeyskole (GSH), favouring the main ice hockey sponsor, Get (the leading broadband and service provider in Norway). GSH was developed by NIHF to increase focus on and improve recruitment, share experience, and to create better hockey players (NIHF 2009. Module 1.)

GSH is based on known principles regarding introduction-training methods, extensive experience in the field of recruitment, and Norwegian culture. GSH is focused on all ages, with emphasis on the youngest (4-6 years old). Using NIHF's understanding of the demands of ice hockey, GSH lists physical, technical, tactical, psychological and social skills as demands of the sport. At the initial time of implementation (08/09), approx. 3000 sign-ins were registered national wide. Not the entire country implemented GSH. Areas that did implement were Oslo, Østfold, Tonsberg, Stavanger, Nærbø, Bergen, and Trondheim (NIHF 2009. Module 1.)

Children aged 4-5 years old are considered mature enough for starting ice hockey (by GSH), yet specify motivation and parent's opinion as other factors bring children to GSH. There is focus on skating and puck control. Deliberate play and physical activity are also designated training methods, with the target being the joining of a team. GSH focuses on creating the feeling of success inside the child. Ice structure and content later in this document. Pedagogical and methodological methods include play-oriented, coping support, high activity, custom challenges, Stair model (6 levels), progressive exercises, social inclusion of parents as potential managers, coaches, sponsors, volunteers (NIHF 2009. Module 1.)

4.2 Content and Organisation on the ice

On-ice structure consists of 6 stations or levels. As GSH is a Stair Model, children progress from level 1 to 6. Level 1 to 3 are only skating levels. Children only require skates and a helmet. From level 4 to 6 are hockey levels, and children practice some more challenging skating techniques, as well as puck control. Consider appendix 1 for a breakdown of level content. Skill progression through the 6 levels appears logical. Equipment requirements take into consideration to general expense of buying equipment for ice hockey, which tends to turn many away from starting the sport. Levels 1-2 only require a helmet (can be a skateboarding/bicycle helmet) and waterproof gloves. Skates can be borrowed from the association. This takes the cost of equipment out of trying ice hockey. This may still be a potential reason why children leave before starting in a team. Notice also the guidelines on trainers. No drastic requirements of experience or qualifications. After all, the material provided easily arms the trainer with the knowledge needed to run the station (NIHF 2009. Module 2.)

4.3 Organisation off the ice

While the on ice structure and content serves to grip the children into hockey, the off ice organisation serves a responsibility equal to that of on the ice. Off the ice, functionality of the supporting areas in an efficient manner presents a professional image of the association, while failure to do this can negatively effect impressions on the program, reducing retention of participants (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

Registration of participants is important to keep track of all the participants and to transmit important information using a good filing system. The easiest method is to use a spreadsheet and register participants and guardians with name, phone number, email address and other important information. However, there are currently systems or programs that have the membership as part of the total registration fee. If the club has this system, the member registration would take place here. The important thing is that registration takes place so that members can be sorted by age and this allows the establishment of mailing lists that can be used to distribute information. It is also important that the lists can be updated continuously so that new members are included efficiently and receive important information. It can be difficult to get the part in information sessions during training, given that many of the guardians are spectating their kids on the ice. In this case, a lot of information can be distributed on e-mail or via the club's website. Therefore, updated mailing lists are important to get the right information at the right time. This register will also relate to recording payments of training fee. This link is crucial to ensure that the revenues are in

accordance with the number of participants. It is possible that associations have arrangements on their websites where individuals can register themselves. Each participant can enter their data themselves and sign up in advance and payment is made via internet banking (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

Tracksuits for participants are also an option mentioned by GSH. The described effect would be to give a feeling of identity, being part of a team. There is no specific design required, yet some form of representation of the association or GSH would suffice. This could be an important factor for some individuals, sparking interest to be part of a GSH program. The suit can also be used as a form of revenue for the association, with sponsors paying to be visible on the suit (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

Information material to be provided to participants and guardians should be available online. These would describe things such as information about the sport (for example, developmental attributes of starting ice hockey), including where to get equipment and specifications on sizing, cost, etc., background information on the association, the program. These would also be posters/flyers to distribute to schools. Reference to the associations website and contact information should also be on this material. Material should be available online (and printable), yet also available and/or distributed as registration and near guardians while they watch their child on the ice. This literature can also present a location for sponsors (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

Parent introduction meetings should be held regularly to inform new parents of the importance of their role regarding their child and the association. This will also open the opportunity to ask and questions they have in their mind. For this to be a success, each association should designate one person who is responsible for getting the parent meetings project flowing. It is advisable to have a meeting each semester (September-December; January-March) (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

To get as many into teams as possible, the transition from hockey school should be smooth and natural. Coaches from the youngest teams should visit the hockey school regularly to inspect players reaching the position of joining the coach's team. This should motivate players who are ready and of the correct age. The person responsible for the hockey school along with the coach of the team the participant is moving into, so that the people with the deepest insight make decisions, should do this process (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

Lastly, to have material to be used in marketing, the program should designate someone who is there to film and take pictures. Make sure to get the correct permission from guardians beforehand (NIHF 2009. Module 3.)

4.4 Marketing and finance

Due to the nature of youth sports, majority of the operation is maintained through volunteers, and funding is also very scarce. It is still important to invest some funding into marketing, for if done effectively, can in turn positively effect revenue through the growth of members and sponsors. When marketing GSH, some important concepts to be concerned with will be covered here (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

The target group for a youth association's marketing should bring in majority of the members at the bottom. For GSH, that would be 4-8 years old children. Therefore, targeting this age group, kindergartens, SFO (before and after school care), and schools are the areas to approach the kids. Approach these establishments to distribute flyers to each child to be taken home with them. The mind-set of the global effort to get children more physically active should assist in reasoning with people who are not willing to assist. The flyer should contain a brief text with areas to find more information, and pictures focused on fun, lots of activity, and friendship. Distribution should be in a large area surrounding the ice rink. This is relatively inexpensive, as the average kindergarten has two classes with 20 in each class. That's forty per kindergarten, and even small towns have multiple establishments. To acquire assistance from the municipality to distribute literature to kindergartens, offering instructional lessons for the teachers is a viable means of incentive. This would also potentially produce the situation of kindergartens running their own skating classes during their hours, increasing the popularity of ice hockey (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

The Internet is a valuable method of marketing and informing to use. In this day and age, many adults locate retrieve information online. All relevant information regarding hockey school should stand on the associations website. Information such as training times, program costs, potential benefits for physical activity, developmental benefits of ice hockey, statistics on hockey school (if positive), personnel, and more. Running and managing a facebook page for the hockeyschool is also a positive way of informing current members, and requests to share promotional posts can spread the amount of people reached, as well as paid posts which target which ever specifications you select for a period of time. Email is the method of relaying information these days. This is also a means for informing current members of the hockeyschool regarding upcoming events, training chang-

es/adjustments, and other news. Requesting them to forward emails to their peers and known interested parties can bring a few more children in, yet can vary in effectiveness. The traditional method of marketing through a newspaper is still effective dependent on national culture. Bare in mind, many newspapers have physical and online distribution methods, and gaining a business based on marketing as a sponsor would open up long-term marketing and exposure for the hockey school and the association (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

A-frame A3 posters stands, A3/A4/A5 posters, placed near schools, centres, inside windows of local shops and sponsors all accumulate exposure, leading to growing interest. Creation of a Hockey Calendar is also a means of promoting hockey school, and can be sold, or given away as a prize. It is important to assign a person responsible for consistently collecting material to use on creating posters/flyers/etc (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

Cooperation with SFO/kindergartens/schools to offer a one-time, association run session on ice is another means to bring in children. This does require personnel at early times at the rink (mainly possible if professionals are available in the association, or volunteers have flexible working hours), and the supporting resources (equipment, ice time, etc). Finances regarding GSH programs should be a positive outcome regarding association funds. Minimal or effective spending, with a return in the means of member fees, training fees, subsidies from municipality, sponsorship through suits and marketing material, sales on calendar, support and grants from various organisations (NIHF, NIF), funding from savings bank and insurance companies, and regional youth activity funding. Most common out of these is the membership fee. Grants from the municipality are usually based on registered members. It has shown that approaching sponsors with the values and qualities, as well as target markets of hockey school can be more effective than other areas of the association (other than broadcasted matches) (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

Majority of expenditure is accounted to tracksuits, advertising, printing, on ice equipment, player equipment, and coaching suits. As it can be seen, developing a positive financial outcome is more than achievable (NIHF 2009. Module 4.)

4.5 Connection into association

Here, it is specified that skating and hockey school starts at GSH, and continues through u8, u9, and u10, preparing the children to be part of a hockey team at the age of 10 (u11). The age groups of u8, u9, and u10 are still teams (organise tournaments and exhibition games with close by associations), yet games function under limited specifications (rules

and rink size). Recruitment should maintain the goal of producing a new u8 team every season. The autumn period of hockey school should include the recruitment of an additional 10 players to be moved into u8 to fill the team if cultural and environmental factors restrict general recruitment. All age groups up to u10 should contain 25-30 players. This should provide sustainable numbers to have u14-u20 teams (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

A focus within these levels should be team building and a sense of belonging. In Norway, many of the children come from different areas, and therefore should be provided the opportunity to socialise and build relationships. Social development on ice is limited as they are constantly active and pay little attention to each other. Educational gatherings off the ice regarding equipment, or social events such as watch hockey games, playing kids games, sleep overs, etc. give the time and environment for children to socialise and make friends. This can also be a means of locating parent coaches to take responsibility of the group, and team leader(s) to assist in logistics regarding events, trainings, etc (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

When a player is prepared to join a team (right age, acquisition of full equipment, motivated to join a team), it should be possible to create a training group where these players can join. This can ensure they do not quit because they are not moving forward. If on the other hand, there is not enough to make a new age group (u8 for example), flexible options can be pursued. They could train once with the older team, and once with hockey school. This can assist in their motivation as well as fitting into parents schedules with multiple training times (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

Informing players and parents of what is offered in terms of education and experiences when joining a team. Inform concerned parties at the end of the season regarding movement into teams can afford them the reassurance that they are still cared about, and negate the potential threat of them moving to another sport over the summer. Coaches from u8,u9,u10 should visit hockey school regularly to identify and monitor their age players, as well as motivate them to come join the team when ready. Information to parents in the hockeyschool regarding equipment requirements, and potential services in teams that require additional explanations should be provided to assist a seamless transition (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

U8, u9, and u10 teams should participate in tournaments/exhibitions regularly, as playing games should condition the players as to the environment of being in a team. Small numbers on each team can provide multiple teams from each club involved and provide more

ice time for each player (activity is key). All participating teams should be geographically close, as due to the age of players, long travel is inappropriate (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

Once players move into u8, recruitment is not done, even up to u12. Additional means to increase number within levels include events/promotions such as bring a friend, where players are allowed to bring a number of friends to try hockey. Equipment requirements must adapt, and structure on ice must also consider new level players. Another means to increase numbers within teams is called Buddy Hockey. Here the ice is separated into multiple lanes, and games are played, where even teams are set. Equipment and rule specifications should be adapted (NIHF 2009. Module 5.)

4.6 Interview with Ernst Falch

Briefly, Ernst Falch has been in charge of the hockeyschool at in the city of Stavanger since the late 70's. He started his work on the hockeyschool at 14 or 15 years old. Currently, he has approximately 40 years experience, and has great passion for providing the game of ice hockey to the youth within Stavanger, as well as nationally. He acquired his university education on the field of marketing, which has assisted his ability to develop the hockeyschool he loves.

While developing the manner in which youth were attracted, Ernst experimented with many approaches. Now, after 40 years, the hockeyschool at Stavanger boasts over 500 signups this season. In 2009, the format was made available nationwide, and Ernst (along with the national federation) have been advising ice hockey associations to implement it. As is characteristic of the response to change, many associations prefer to do things the way they have always done it. Development requires a degree of experimentation, and to this day, Ernst is always looking for new segments of the market to approach .

The format is directly from the way Stavanger does it. Stavanger is a city with a population of approximately 128000. Five questions were put forward to Ernst. Consider appendix 2 for details on the questions and answers.

5 9'ern's Hockeyskole

The town of Halden, Norway is the location of the association where this study is being conducted. Halden has a population of approximately 30,500. According to the national register, 250 births occur in Halden annually. IHK Comet was established in 1961 by Tor-Erik Gustavsen, Odd borge, Jon-inge Pettersen, Knut Berg, John Gummesen and J. Sverre Wold Heim. Halden ishalla was completed in 1988, and until then, Comet played their games in Sparta Amfi (Sarpsborg). The elite mens team participated in the top mens division (Get league) from 2004-2008. After suffering bankruptcy and safety problems within the facility in 2009, the association separated into IHK Comet – elite and IHK Comet – bredde. IHK Comet – elite restarted in 2010 in division one (IHK Comet bredde 2016.)

IHK Comet – bredde's GSH program is named after a player from IHK Comet – elite (men's team) who is popular around Halden. IHK Comet – bredde has approximately 350 members, with no u14, u16, and u18 teams. According to the association, the bankruptcy caused approximately six months of restructuring, and in this time, a large number of members moved to local associations. Sarpsborg Sparta is a strong association located 30min away. Strömstad Lions is also 30min away (in Sweden), and is also a very strong association. This means that since the restart in 2010, rebuilding is difficult because many unhappy members continue to relocate to these rival associations (IHK Comet bredde 2016.)

Originally Comet Skøyte og Hockey Skole, now 9'erns Hockeyskole is IHK Comet's first level recruitment. I took over management of the hockeyschool at the start of this season, and forced as much of the GSH format into place. Due to the state of the association, hindrances came to light. Examples of these range from lack of volunteers, outdated/old equipment, and little to no marketing plan to list a few. The average sign ins per season varies from 100-175 over the past 4 years according to the signup lists archived by the association.

6 The aims and research questions

Based on the evidence shown so far, and the rarity of recruitment research in ice hockey, the manner in which this format was sent out nationally, and the effectiveness of how it is implemented in Comet, the need for this topic is large for Norway. Much of the hockey associations in Norway refuse to implement this format, regardless of the results Stavanger has shown. In my opinion, this is due to the format requesting a greater workload, and the results not as clear in the big picture.

6.1 Aim

The purpose of this study two fold. The first purpose of this document will be to serve to analyse the efficiency of the Get Skoyte og Hockeyskole (GSH) format, when being implemented in IHK Comet's hockeyschool, and therefore produce possibilities to develop the format provided by the national association. The format provided from the national association is a great start, yet potential changes to how appropriate it is for associations in different circumstances are available. Expansion on topics such as personnel should be included, so as to highlight the importance of locating specific personalities to certain positions. The level of importance should be listed for each position to accommodate limited volunteers. Some different on ice structures may also be provided to accommodate limited coaches. Tools to analyse the effectiveness of each marketing channel advised, so as to understand what works in the environment surrounding the association implementing the format. Currently, the format gives one way of operating a recruitment program, with no variation to adapt. This should be changed. Some aspects that came up in the interview with Ernst Falch were very clear from him of their importance, yet not as much in the literature provided.

Secondly, to give an insight into what has been done well inside IHK Comet hockeyschool this season, and what should be changed/worked on to be better next season. The association is targeting developing their recruitment program for the next few years, and this is the starting point. Analysis comes before planning, and then execution. Repeat. To build from the bottom takes time, but if stuck to, can develop great results in the future.

6.2 Is the usage of sign in numbers relevant?

Many of the associations (including IHK Comet) boast big numbers in terms of sign ins, yet the amount of teams per association does not mimic these number. Majority of hockeyschools provide the first few sessions for free to allow the child to see if they enjoy it.

Using sign in numbers includes these children who decide they do not wish to continue (both during free sessions, and even after paying). To answer this question, data surrounding the number of players not moving into teams was collected.

6.3 What important factors are missing?

When considering the ability IHK Comet has to implement a hockeyschool format that is developed in a much bigger association, there is most likely some factors we have not addressed, or are unable to address. There is also the possibility that we have addressed the format correctly, and are reaching the scaled potential of a city a quarter of the size. An open comment section was used to collect opinions. This question gives insight into what areas of the program are lacking.

6.4 How can this format be improved?

Outcomes of the document can potentially assist the national association in developing this product for much of the smaller associations within the country of Norway. There are associations who are smaller, younger, less developed. Creating a format that can be implemented anywhere based on a checklist, or plan of analysis to understand where the association can or cannot achieve what is prescribed from the national association could be a valuable step nationally for ice hockey in Norway.

7 Research methods

A quantitative survey research approach (Creswell 2013. 42) was adopted to gather information regarding the customer's view on the areas of marketing channels, off ice organisational quality, on ice coaching and structural quality, and quality of service from personnel and equipment. Singular subject approach was chosen due to the acquisition of data from Stavanger regarding areas of analysis not being available.

7.1 Target Market

The previous managers advised marketing the hockeyschool through nine channels. These were posters in shops and on a-frame stands around the city, flyers to the school distributed by teachers whose children were already playing hockey, facebook and the website, local newspaper, and emails to previous and present members. The target market prescribed by the GSH format was 4-8 years old children. Much discussion around our target market was undertaken, as gaps with age groups which sit outside our target market are key areas recruitment should be attempting to effect. In conversation with Ernst Falch, the target age group was decided by him to try to acquire youth before they started other sports. Also, he wished to start them young, in the logical assumption of developing them for longer, into better hockey players.

7.2 Survey Format

Question selection was based on analysing marketing channels, analysing the effectiveness of personnel, analysis of the service (on ice satisfaction, quality of equipment), analysis of retention, analysis of environment created, and open feedback. The questionnaire was made as short as possible, in the hope that more would complete it. It was an idea to have it all in Norwegian, yet this did not happen, as I would require an assistant when analysing the results. A multiple-choice questionnaire was the simplest, with a little allowance for personal opinion. There is the open feedback at the end, but too much of this may have caused the results to be difficult to interpret.

7.3 Project plan

When starting work at IHK Comet in April 2016, it was made clear that the association wanted much work done on the hockeyschool. I had heard the season before (in Denmark) that Stavanger's hockeyschool had over 400 kids on the ice. Once informed that the format in Stavanger was the format used nationally, it became very interesting that not

every club in Norway has 400 kids in their hockeyschool. To have the opportunity to learn from the man who designed and implemented the format in Stavanger would also be beneficial personally.

From April to June, learning the format and planning for the season took place, as well as deciding from what point of view to approach this study.

8 Results

Next, analysis of the answers acquired from the survey will be broken down into the aspects expressed by the GSH format. The questions and answers can be reviewed in appendix 3. Over 400 emails were sent to participants from the past 4 seasons of hockeyschool in Comet. 27 individuals responded.

8.1 Marketing channels

Questions 1, 2, and 18 refer to the marketing channels used, and how effective they were. Figure 3 shows the percentage of individuals attracted by each external channel in relation to initial contact.

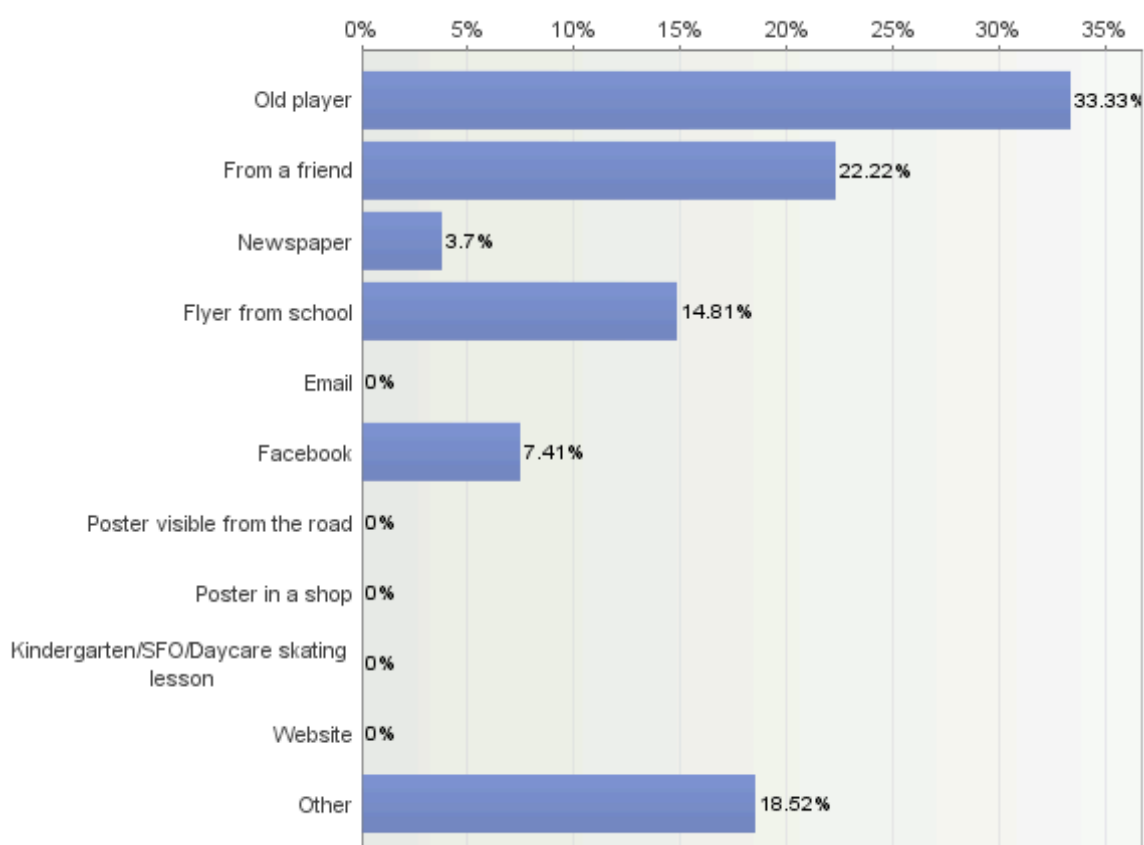


Figure 3. Representation of effectiveness of each marketing channel (Appendix 3. Questionnaire)

It is clearly demonstrated that the manners adopted to be used by IHK Comet (website, skating lessons, posters in shops and on the road, facebook page, emails, flyers, newspaper articles) have very different results. When referring to the appendix 3, the answers to the “other” option lined up with a similar marketing channel to “old player”, as these

individuals are already inside the association. That leaves Comet with a total of 25.92% of hockeyschool attendance coming from the marketing the association does. Marketing channels such as the posters or the website showed no effect in bring in more children. Answers to question 2 showed a positive branding of the sport, where majority of answers mentioned a social, fun, physically developing view on ice hockey.

Question 18 show a unanimous vote for continued marketing through word of mouth. The positive branding on a sport that is still viewed in some areas as dangerous or barbaric. It can be deduced that workload will be redistributed to target the effective means of marketing, and discard the ineffective channels. More importantly though, Internal marketing by creating a quality service is vital, if Comet is to keep the customers spreading the positive news of it's hockeyschool. Personnel surrounding the hockeyschool is shown to be a major factor, as the customer must know who the representatives are, where to find help, and a consistent face for them to feel comfortable with.

8.2 Personnel

Questions 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 16 all gathered information on the effectiveness of IHK Comet's personnel in the hockeyschool. Questions 7 and 12 showed 18.52% feeling that the ice time was unstructured and the coaches that appeared at times, disinterested or uneducated. Questions 10, 11, and 13 targeted the personnel off the ice, and the results showed a 4.56 out of 5 rating on positive and friendly mannerisms, only 14.81% unsure of who the personnel were, and a 74.07% of availability to assist while the customer was at the rink. This shows that the on ice coaching rotation has potential negative implication due to the fact that all coaches are forced to participate. As the uniforms for personnel off the ice came late, this can account for some not knowing who the personnel were in the beginning. It was made as clear as possible the mannerisms required to bring parents and children into IHK Comet, and the volunteers around the hockeyschool achieved the desired positive well mannered approach.

8.3 Service

Questions 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14, 15, all give insight into the quality of the service provided. The results show an inclination towards a fun atmosphere (2.59 rating out of 5), unanimous feeling of smooth transition into teams, and a majority vote on satisfaction of equipment. Information flyers were also handed out, though inconsistently available, which can account for the results to question 15. While the satisfaction on equipment was there, the quality of the service when the equipment used is secondhand, old, and out of date, is not

of a high quality. A new sponsor was applied for and new equipment purchased for next season.

8.4 Retention

Questions 3, 4, 5, collect information on when and how long the children were/ have been in the hockeyschool. Of the 26 respondents attending hockschool from 2013-2017, 37.04% are in teams, 55.56% are still in the hockeyschool, 7.41% have quit while in the hockeyschool, 58.52% have been in the hockeyschool under 1 season, and 40.74% were/are in the hockeyschool for 2 seasons or more. This shows a high retention level in Comet.

8.5 Feedback

Question 17 was for open feedback. Figure 4 shows the answers given.

Ideas for development included learn to skate or figure skating, a better socialising area for the parents, better consideration on how a child moves through levels on the ice, and many comments on the effectiveness of the coaches. It is clear from this feedback that the coaching rotation was a big negative point for the customer, where the coach is unable to grab the attention of the children, unsure of what he/she is doing on the ice, more individual attention to the children, and amount of trainers per level.

Figure 4. Customer feedback on ideas/opinions for developing the hockeyschool

Number of respondents: 17

Hide

- Little more educated coaches. Some are not that interested, IT seems..
- N/A
- I'm not sure that it's in the interest of Comet but I believe there are more children like mine who like to skate but are not particularly interested in hockey. Perhaps you could include a program also toward skating techniques, e.g. figure skating. That may be fun for many kids.
- When my child started hockey school, Nicklas Jigarp was organizing the hockey school and we were very much satisfied.
- It varies alot from session to session, and it seems that the lower levels are better organised than the level for the hockeyschool.
- Important to keep up to have fun by learning
- maybe more socialisation for the parents...
- consider more carefully when they are ready for the next step at hockey school. Sometimes I thought it was a bit tedious
- Make sure to have enough trainers on ice! Should be at least two trainers pr group! I know this might be difficult, but the more the merrier.
- No
- Not really.
- A comment to #7: It seems like some of the coaches need to be a bit more organized. As a parent I know it is not easy to gather and engage small children, but they need the attantion from a coach and a little discipline such as to be told that they need to listen and follow the training ;)
- Some of the coaches have great interaction with the kids and are able to engage and inspire them. But some seem to not have the needed authority to get the kids' attention.
- more teachers/ trainers and extra time to the children that cannot play hockey or first time on hockey school/ ice ring.
- Sometimes there are too many young unexperienced trainers.
- not sure
- New trainers

9 Discussion

Compiling a format of a successful program to make it available to other is an act of a caring individual/association. This should not be painted with failure or heavy negative criticism. Analysis of it should be done with the objective of making the format better at its purpose. The life's work of another should help to push the envelope on an aspect that by many is not given the value it holds. The study has shown that many points of the format deliver results. It has also shown that the environment surrounding the association, the history of the association, and the culture within the association affect in many ways the resources available. Does the format cause a big drop out? Not really. Does the use of the amount of signups matter? Maybe it matters on a marketing perspective. Not within the goals of the association. Recruitment goals within the association should target an age bracket that exploits the burnout of other sports, gives enough time for national level players to develop, and considers the age a child learns to love a sport. I am not saying that there should be no hockey for 4 years old children. I am saying the children who start very young are welcome to join, but the association should target a bracket of a few years older. Hockey in Norway moves to full ice with the u11 teams. This should also be an age where recruitment of kids is considered. I feel that the competitive nature in Norway comes in too early. From the data, IHK Comet cannot implement the full format yet. Parts of the format can be used, but the personnel available restrict the extent the format desires. Less available coaches and volunteers, means a smaller program. When considering the population within Halden, a smaller program would still produce results. Can the format be developed? Yes. Creation of a checklist to identify the resources available within the association could be an addition. Also, if the children do not stay in the hockeyschool for many seasons, is such a big on ice structure required? Could there be a smaller format for the associations in smaller cities? Or associations still trying to grow from 100 members? The marketing advised from the format is great, yet ideas that Ernst has spoken to myself, or people from Comet are not included in the format. The format should be developed consistently, as is the format used in Stavanger. If all of Norway is to use the same, then the literature prescribed should be kept up to date.

While working on this paper, I obviously ran into some obstacles. While I had hoped for a greater response to the survey, 27 responses is a minor number. Also, the survey went out around September, and as manager, I monitored the results and was compelled to develop the product from what I perceived as the problems. That is why uniforms for the

staff were designed and purchased. This is also why certain areas of marketing were cut mid-season (posters on a-frames).

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11 Appendix

11.1 Appendix 1 On-ice group requirements (NIHF 2009. Module 2)

| Group | Player equipment requirement | Minimum player ability | Trainer expertise |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Group 1 (min 2 trainers) | Helmet, skates, gloves | No requirement | Can skate. Interested to start coaching. Interested in working with children |
| Group 2 | Helmet, skates, gloves | Unable to stand/walk on skates; can go forward and manoeuvre, but unstable | Can skate; interested to start coaching; interested in working with children |
| Group 3 | Helmet + cage, skates, gloves | Basic balance, agility and turn smoothly | Can skate; interested to start coaching; interested in working with children |
| Group 4 | Helmet + cage, skates, gloves, shinguards, elbow guards | Competent balance, agile, stopping (plow) Can lead ring with stick through obstacle course | Can skate; Interested to start coaching; possesses basic puck control |
| Group 5 | Helmet + cage, skates, gloves, shin guards, elbow | Competent forwards, backwards, turns, stops, stick | Possesses basic skating and puck technical ability |

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|---|---|
| | guards, pants, neck guard | and puck | |
| Group 6 | Full equipment | Competent forwards, backwards, turns, stops, stick and puck, interest in joining a team | Possesses good skating and puck technical ability |

11.2 Appendix 2 Interview with Ernst Falch

1. What type of research (marketing and youth development based) went into adapting the GSH format?

The format has been my hobby for a long time now. In the beginning, I tried many things to get kids into hockey. I learned all the time about what works and what doesn't, not only with getting them to come to try, but also with what they want to do on the ice. My education in marketing helped a lot to give more ideas, as well as reinforce the things I had successfully implemented already.

2. In what ways was the format that was originally used in your association, modified to accommodate associations around the country?

The national association noticed the success I was having in terms of the growth of the club through high levels of recruitment at the bottom. Together, it was decided that this should be made available to all clubs in Norway to increase the overall effectiveness of recruitment. Stavanger has shown that this works, but many clubs prefer to do things their way.

3. What would you say is the objective of the program?

Create players. More numbers under means strength at the top.

4. Annually, is there any analysis done on how effective the program is in terms of what you perceive the objective to be?

Our smallest age group is 50 kids. We do not take numbers on how many kids enter teams, other than the amount of u6 (5 years old) kids we have ready for the following season's u7 team.

5. The hockeyschool in Stavanger targets which ages, and what happens to those who are too young to move into teams?

We target four to eight year old kids, but we can take a nine year old or a three year old under some circumstances (social, athletic, sibling, etc.). Six years old kids move into the u7 team, and the same with the ages above, but the younger ones stay in hockeyschool. This can lead to the three year old staying in hockeyschool till he/she is six. I know that sounds long, but it will take the three year old much more time to move through the levels.

6. What would you say were the key factors (in a managerial mind-set) considered and developed that initially lead to Stavanger's success at the hockeyschool level? Personnel. It is very important to find the people who are passionate about the game, and have the right attitude with the kids. Working with the small ones requires a special type of person. Not everyone has this quality. Push away the ghosts, those who cannot hold responsibility, or tend to have a negative mind-set. It is also important that the hockeyschool has an active marketing person. This person has a lot of legwork to do in terms of bringing the kids in. Going to schools, kindergartens, starting cooperation's with other areas of the community; this person is the key to the hockeyschool (and the club) being a success.

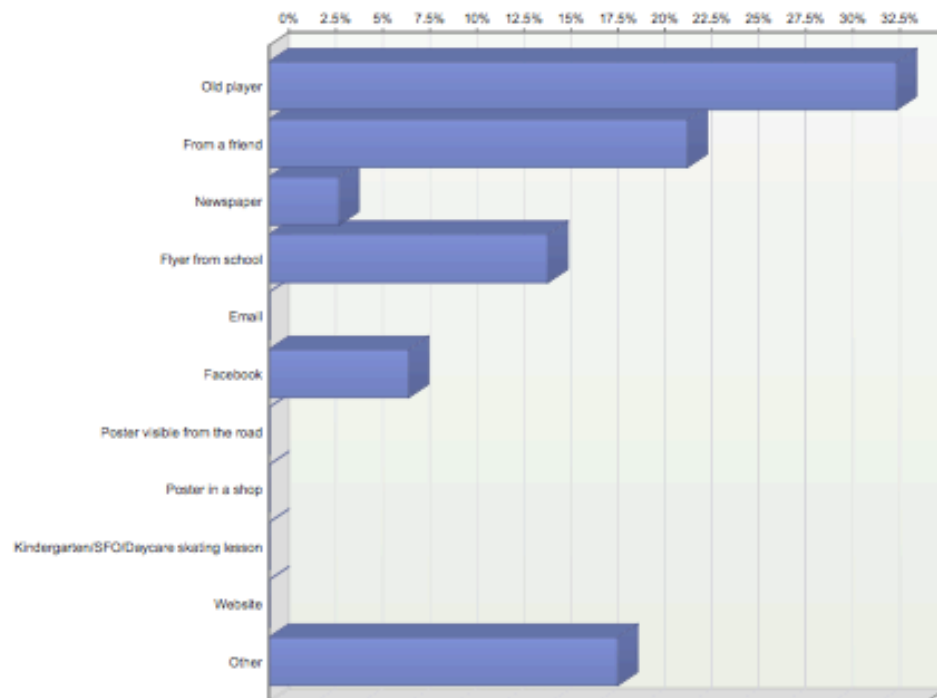
11.3 Appendix 3 Questionnaire to Comet hockeyschool attendants (27 responses)



IHK Comet hockey school - Basic report (edited)

1. How did you come to hear about IHK Comet?

Number of respondents: 27



Open text answers: Other

- I played 6 seasons for comet a team
- Hve been following Comet for many years
- Working for Comet
- Friends playing and old player
- Grew up with friends playing for Comet



2. What gripped your interest when first hearing about Comet?

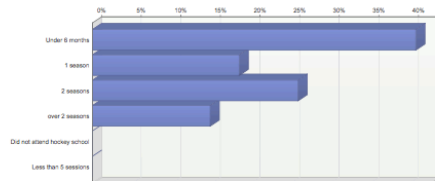
Number of respondents: 27

- Friendly people.
- Knew about comet all mye life
- Hockey -)
- I love hockey
- Icehockey seemed to be a fun sport for our sons.
- Friends playing back in the days
- I played and worked in Comet from the early 80's to 2009. For my son it's a fun and safe environment to be introduced to sports (he's 3 yo).
- Nothing really. My children attended the hockey school to learn skating, not actually to play hockey.
- I have played ice hockey on elite level and wanted to give my son a chance to try out ice hockey
- good sosial place to be for the children
- That it would be possible for everyone to join , also girls.
- Openminded.
- En fin måte å lære å stå på skøyter.
- sound fun, and skating is a good skill to have. Balance improves, and coordination gets better...
- the hockey school attended when he was 5, season was 2011 I think
- Own interest of hockey. Also I reckon skating is a great form of training.
- We wished that our sons should learn how to iceskate and more about hockey.
- Spille hockey
- My kid wanted to play hockey for many years. But he was also doing sports like gymnastics and cykling. He left gymnastics for hockey. He was then 11 years old, and had to trye this before he got to old for hockeyschool. Fredrik Olsson was backing him up (F O was his ass.at school). He started in hockeyschool Feb 2014 and moved to Comet's U12 in the end of Mars 2014
- Hockey interesse
- Great way for my kids to learn to play.
- Opportunity for my kids to learn how to skate.
- A natural interest following friends playing for the team back in the 90s and then again following someone we knew when Comet played to qualify to the highest liga/played in the highest liga.
- The emphasis on play, friendship and fun.
- fun and excitement
-
- just wanted my child to learn to at ishocky
- Because of the environment. Fun sport.



5. How long is/was your child in hockey school?

Number of respondents: 27



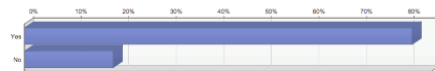
6. Did/does your child have fun at hockeyschool?

Number of respondents: 27



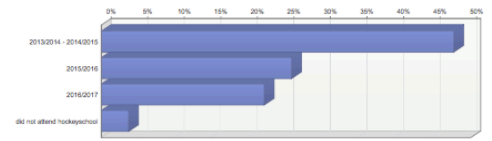
7. Did/does the structure of the ice time seem well organised?

Number of respondents: 27



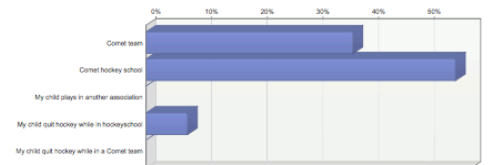
3. If your child is/was in hockeyschool, which hockey season did they start in?

Number of respondents: 27



4. Where does your child play now?

Number of respondents: 27



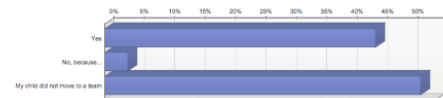
8. Would you say the coaches created an environment that is/was fun or serious?

Number of respondents: 27

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | Total | Average | |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|----|---------|---------|------|
| Fun | 14.81 | 22.22 | 51.85 | 11.11 | 0% | Serious | 27 | 2.59 |
| | % | % | % | % | | | | |

9. Would you consider your child's movement from hockeyschool to a team smooth and natural?

Number of respondents: 27

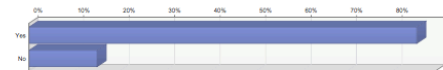


Open text answers: No, because...

- he just starting

10. Did/do you know who the Comet representatives were/are?

Number of respondents: 27





11. How welcoming was the Comet representatives?

Number of respondents: 27

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | Total | Average |
|-----------|----|----|--------|--------|--------|---------------------|-------|---------|
| Insulting | 0% | 0% | 11.11% | 22.22% | 66.67% | Positively friendly | 27 | 4.56 |

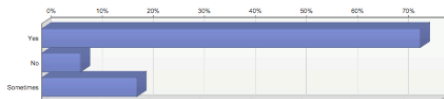
12. How knowledgeable did you see the Comet representatives?

Number of respondents: 27

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | Total | Average |
|-----------------------------|----|------|--------|--------|--------|-------------------------|-------|---------|
| uneducated or inexperienced | 0% | 3.7% | 44.44% | 22.22% | 29.63% | educated or experienced | 27 | 3.76 |

13. When/if you required assistance, was there a Comet representative available to help you?

Number of respondents: 27



17. Do you have concerns/opinions that you feel we should consider when planning development of our recruitment program?

Number of respondents: 17

- Little more educated coaches. Some are not that interested, IT seems..
- N/A
- I'm not sure that it's in the interest of Comet but I believe there are more children like mine who like to skate but are not particularly interested in hockey. Perhaps you could include a program also toward skating techniques, e.g. figure skating. That may be fun for many kids.
- When my child started hockey school, Nicklas Jigarp was organizing the hockey school and we were very much satisfied.
- It varies alot from session to session, and it seems that the lower levels are better organised than the level for the hockeyschool.
- Important to keep up to have fun by learning
- maybe more socialisation for the parents..
- consider more carefully when they are ready for the next step at hockey school. Sometimes I thought it was a bit tedious
- Make sure to have enough trainers on ice! Should be at least two trainers pr group! I know this might be difficult, but the more the merrier.
- No
- Not really.
- A comment to #7: It seems like some of the coaches need to be a bit more organized. As a parent I know it is not easy to gather and engage small children, but they need the attention from a coach and a little discipline such as to be told that they need to listen and follow the training :)
- Some of the coaches have great interaction with the kids and are able to engage and inspire them. But some seem to not have the needed authority to get the kids' attention.
- more teachers/ trainers and extra time to the children that cannot play hockey or first time on hockey school/ ice ring.
- Sometimes there are too many young unexperienced trainers.
- not sure
- New trainers

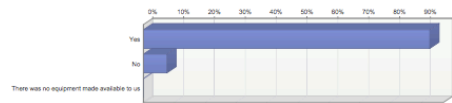
18. Would you recommend our hockey school program to your friends, and why?

Number of respondents: 27



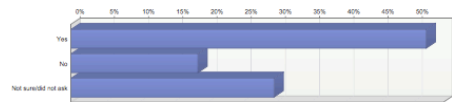
14. Where you satisfied with the equipment made available to you when first starting at our hockeyschool?

Number of respondents: 27



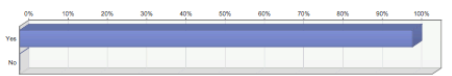
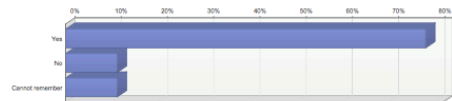
15. Was there any information available to you regarding your child starting sports?

Number of respondents: 27



16. Was there any socialising with Comet representatives/other parents during your time at the rink?

Number of respondents: 27



Open text answers: Yes

- Friendship for kids. Good body workout and fun at the same time.
- Hockey andre comet gave me so much so i want others to experiene the same as i did
- Best team sport
- Its hockey
- We are satisfied with hockey as a sport for our Kids.
- we need more players in Comet
- Fun in a structured and safe environment
- Skating is one of the things you should master living in a winter land.
- good chance to try hockey and learn skating
- safe and good environment for the children to learn about hockey
- Fun and good training
- Fin måte å lære å stå på skøyter.
- comet is nice
- because it is fun and welcoming
- Great training, good trainers
- Godt læringsmiljø. (vet ikke hva det heter på engelsk). Barna får helt grunnleggende kunnskaper om det å stå på skøyter
- Because hockey is a great sport especially for kids
- It is a great sport for kids. They learn how to skate and balance their body. And it is fun.
- It's a good sport for children
- Because hockey is fun!
- I've actually recommended it to several others who now have their kids participating at the hockeyschool. Recommended because the kids love it, and it really boosts their sense of achievement.
- Good training for the children and mostly well organized with great coaches.
- The kids learn to ice skate, and it's a low maintenance activity
- maybe
- Great Club.
- it is good
- To support the club

11.4 Appendix 4 Deltakere skøyte og hockeyskoler sesongen 2015/2016

| Deltakere skøyte og hockeyskoler sesongen 2015/2016 | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Klubb | Jenter | Gutter | Tot. | ant isflater | Delt. Pr flate | Klubb str. (rekr.) | innb. | delt./inn b |
| Drammen Ishockeyklubb | 2 | 18 | 20 | 1 | 20 | 1 | 67000 | 0,03 % |
| Kirkenes Puckers | 3 | 17 | 20 | 1 | 20 | | 10000 | 0,20 % |
| ringerike | 5 | 25 | 30 | 1 | 30 | 1 | 30000 | 0,10 % |
| Tønsberg | 10 | 30 | 40 | 1 | 40 | 1 | 42000 | 0,10 % |
| Kongsberg Ishockeyklubb | 8 | 36 | 44 | 1 | 44 | 1 | 27000 | 0,16 % |
| Lalm | 10 | 35 | 45 | 1 | 45 | 1 | 350 | 12,86 % |
| Grüner Ishockeyklubb. | 10 | 40 | 50 | 1 | 50 | 1 | 100000 | 0,05 % |
| Klepp Ishockeyklubb | 17 | 34 | 51 | 1 | 51 | 1 | 19000 | 0,27 % |
| Leik Hockey | 9 | 50 | 59 | 1 | 59 | 1 | 16000 | 0,37 % |
| Bodø Hockey | 15 | 45 | 60 | 1 | 60 | 1 | 50000 | 0,12 % |
| Jordal IHK | 60 | 0 | 60 | 1 | 60 | 1 | 100000 | 0,06 % |
| Tromsø Ishockeyklubb | 27 | 42 | 69 | 1 | 69 | 1 | 73000 | 0,09 % |
| Jutul | 10 | 60 | 70 | 1 | 70 | 1 | 120000 | 0,06 % |
| Lyderhorn | 19 | 51 | 70 | 1 | 70 | 1 | 137000 | 0,05 % |
| Narvik Hockey | 21 | 52 | 73 | 1 | 73 | 1 | 19000 | 0,38 % |
| Comet | 33 | 43 | 76 | 1 | 76 | 1 | 30000 | 0,25 % |
| Nærbe Farmers | 26 | 54 | 80 | 1 | 80 | 1 | 18500 | 0,43 % |
| Nes IK AIL | 25 | 59 | 84 | 1 | 84 | 1 | 20000 | 0,42 % |
| Lillehammer | 4 | 81 | 85 | 2 | 43 | 1 | 27000 | 0,31 % |
| Skien | 16 | 69 | 85 | 1 | 85 | 1 | 54000 | 0,16 % |
| Isfjorden IL | 21 | 66 | 87 | 1 | 87 | 1 | 7500 | 1,16 % |
| Kongsvinger IL Ishockey | 15 | 73 | 88 | 1 | 88 | 1 | 18000 | 0,49 % |
| Kristiansand | 22 | 66 | 88 | 1 | 88 | 1 | 87000 | 0,10 % |
| Haugesund ishockey | 41 | 51 | 92 | 1 | 92 | 1 | 36500 | 0,25 % |
| I.L. Kråkene Moss Hockey | 26 | 71 | 97 | 1 | 97 | 1 | 32000 | 0,30 % |
| Frisk Asker | 20 | 80 | 100 | 1 | 100 | 1 | 60000 | 0,17 % |
| Holmen hockey | 18 | 82 | 100 | 1 | 100 | 2 | 60000 | 0,17 % |
| Bergen ishockeyklubb | 20 | 81 | 101 | 1 | 101 | 2 | 137000 | 0,07 % |
| Manglerud Star Brekke | 7 | 94 | 101 | 1 | 101 | 2 | 100000 | 0,10 % |
| Vålerenga Ishockey | 14 | 91 | 105 | 1 | 105 | 2 | 100000 | 0,11 % |
| Rosenborg | 14 | 92 | 106 | 1 | 106 | 2 | 60000 | 0,18 % |
| Jar il | 22 | 88 | 110 | 1 | 110 | 2 | 120000 | 0,09 % |
| Gjøvik hockey | 21 | 97 | 118 | 1 | 118 | 2 | 30000 | 0,39 % |
| Leangen Ishockeyklubb | 18 | 101 | 119 | 1 | 119 | 2 | 60000 | 0,20 % |
| Skedsmo | 28 | 92 | 120 | 1 | 120 | 3 | 52000 | 0,23 % |
| Stjernen | 5 | 119 | 124 | 1 | 124 | 3 | 78000 | 0,16 % |
| Lørenskog | 25 | 100 | 125 | 1 | 125 | 3 | 35000 | 0,36 % |
| IHK Sparta Sarpsborg | 38 | 96 | 134 | 2 | 67 | 3 | 54000 | 0,25 % |
| Hasle-Løren | 40 | 99 | 139 | 1 | 139 | 3 | 100000 | 0,14 % |
| Astor ishockeyklubb | 30 | 116 | 146 | 1 | 146 | 3 | 60000 | 0,24 % |
| Furuset hockey IF | 71 | 120 | 191 | 1 | 191 | 3 | 100000 | 0,19 % |
| Ski IL Ishockey | 52 | 178 | 230 | 1 | 230 | 3 | 29500 | 0,78 % |
| Ullensaker Issportklubb | 170 | 249 | 419 | 1 | 419 | 3 | 33000 | 1,27 % |
| Storhamar Yngres | 47 | 373 | 420 | 2 | 210 | 3 | 30000 | 1,40 % |
| Stavanger hockey | 117 | 388 | 505 | 4 | 126 | 3 | 230000 | 0,22 % |
| Totalt | 1232 | 3904 | 5136 | 51 | | | 2669350 | 0,19 % |