

Classifying National Hockey League Players Drafted From 2000-2011 Based on Key Performance Metrics



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INTRODUCTION

Hockey players who are drafted by a National Hockey League team (NHL) are not guaranteed playing time or long-term success. However, before physical characteristics and player development patterns can be identified that may suggest or predict future success, a quantitative model of classifying career success must be established.

PURPOSE: To categorize NHL players drafted between 2000-2011 based on NHL performance metrics and career longevity between 2000-2022.

METHODS

Publicly available databases identified players drafted by NHL teams between 2000-2011, as well as individual career statistics from the 2000-2001 to the 2021-2022 NHL seasons (inclusive). Goalies were excluded from analysis.

All draftees (2000-2011) had a minimum of 10 years they could have played in the NHL. Players were classified into 4 success groups (Table 1).

Forwards (Left and Right Wing, Center) were classified by:

- Points per game
- Includes both assists and goals
- Years in NHL
- Games per Year

Defensemen (Left and Right Defense) were classified by:

- Assists per game
- Includes only assists
- Years in NHL
- Games per Year

Each player's final classification was based on their lowest category rating.

RESULTS

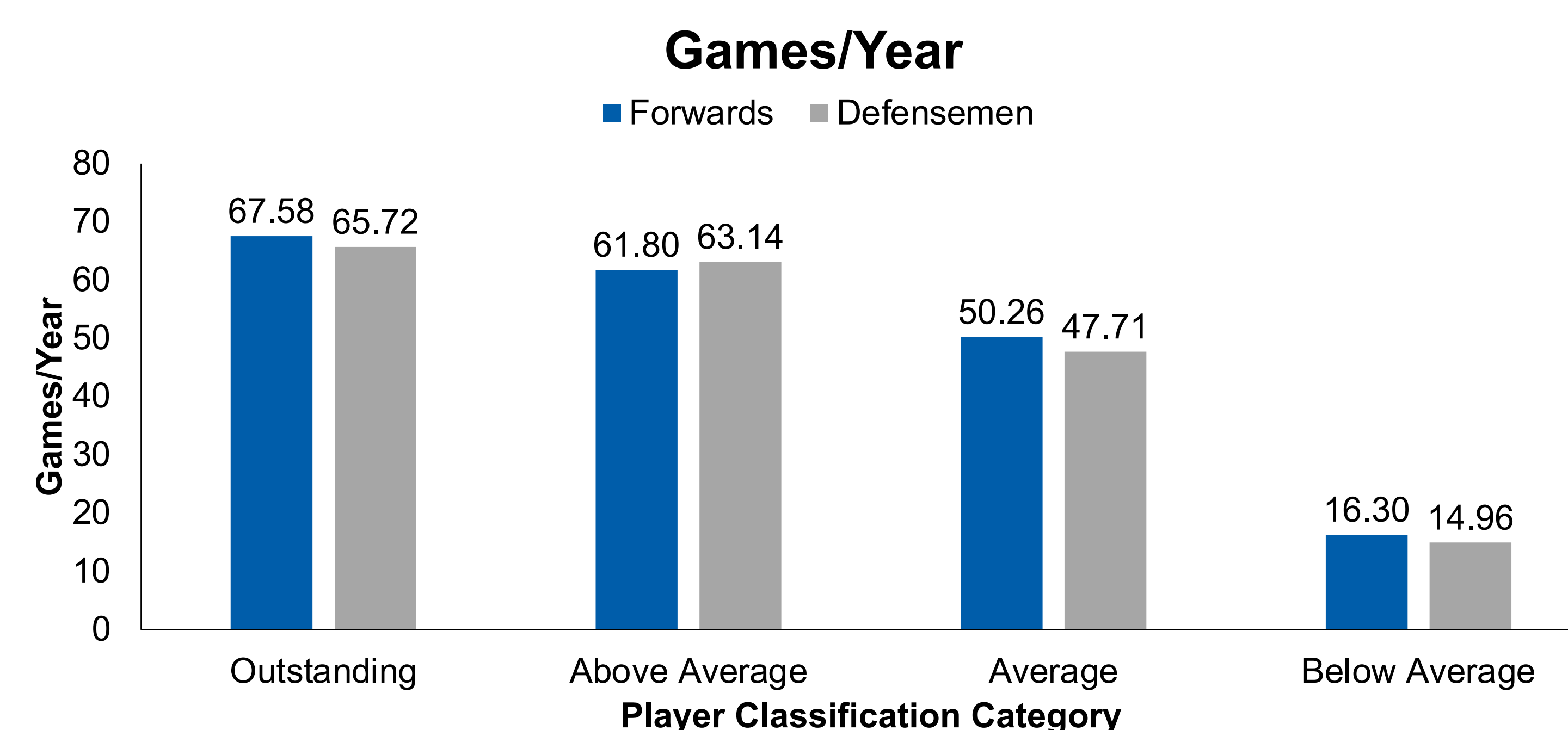
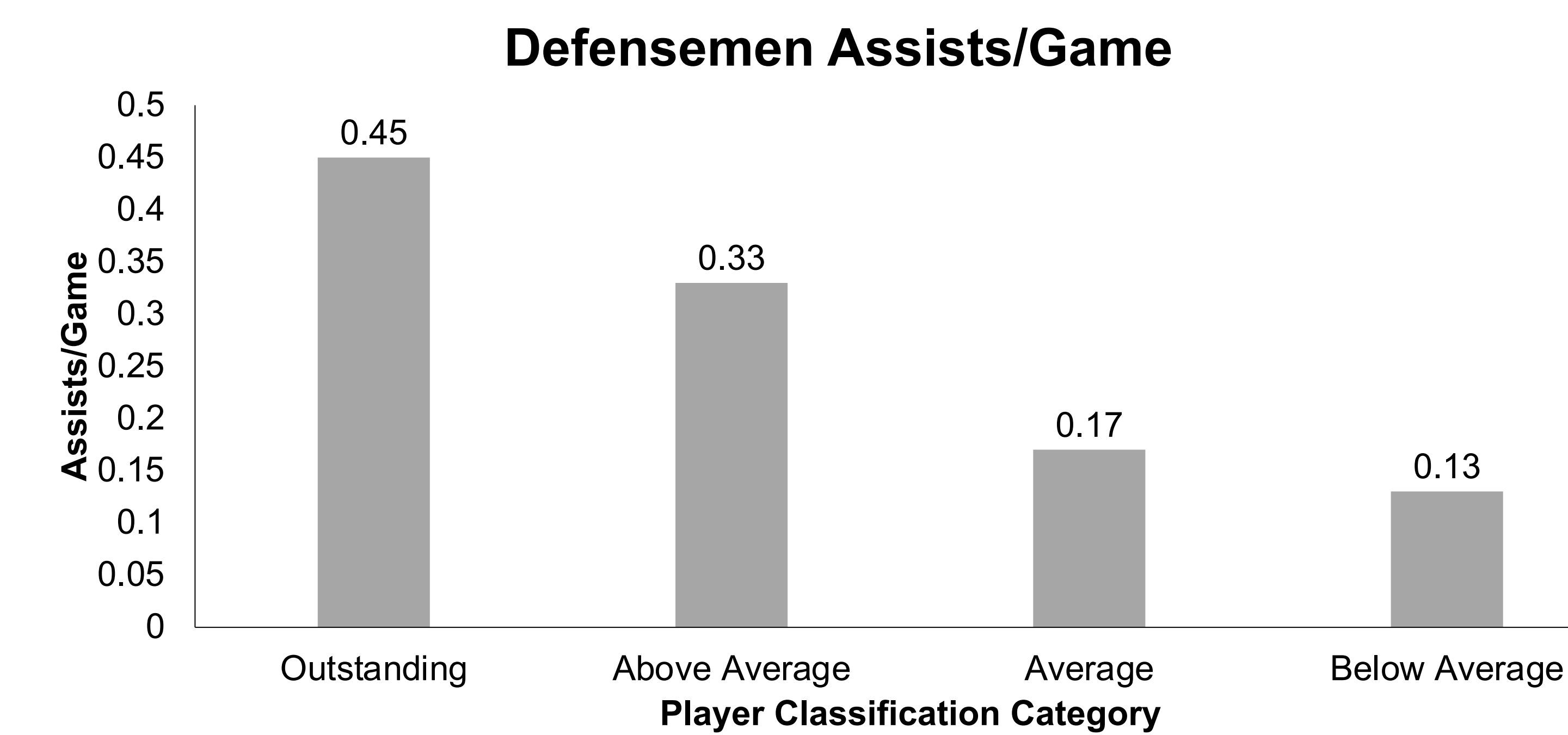
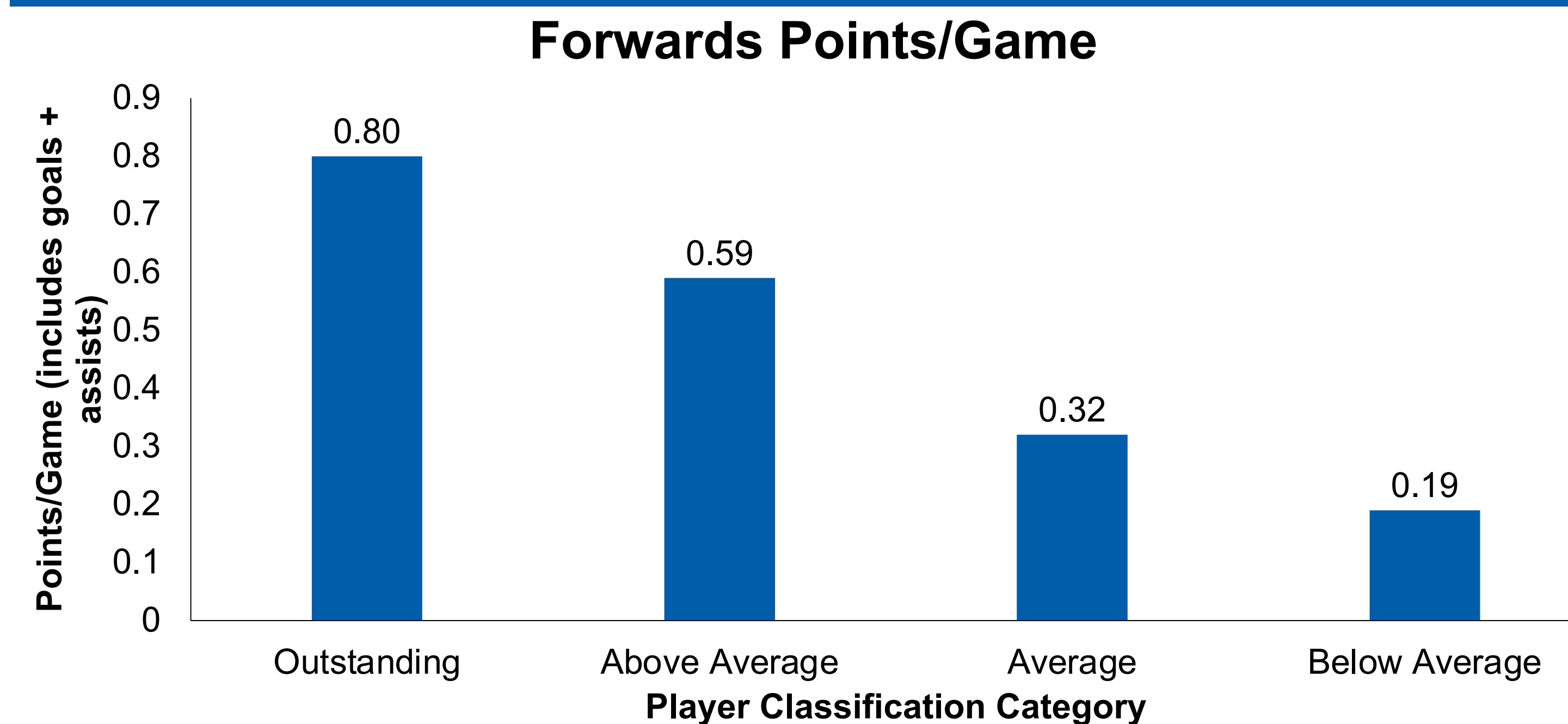
- 1221 Players were included in the study:
- Forwards = 798
- Defensemen = 423

Table 1. Criterion Used to Classify NHL Players Based on Key Performance Metrics

Classification Category	Performance Metric	Years in NHL	Games/Year
Outstanding	>1 SD	≥8 years	>1 SD
Above Average	+0.5 to +1.0 SD	≥8 years	+0.5 to +1.0 SD
Average	-0.5 to +0.5 SD	5 to 8 years	-0.5 to +0.5 SD
Below Average	<-0.5 SD	≤5 years	<-0.5 SD

SD = Standard Deviation

RESULTS



Final #Players/Classification

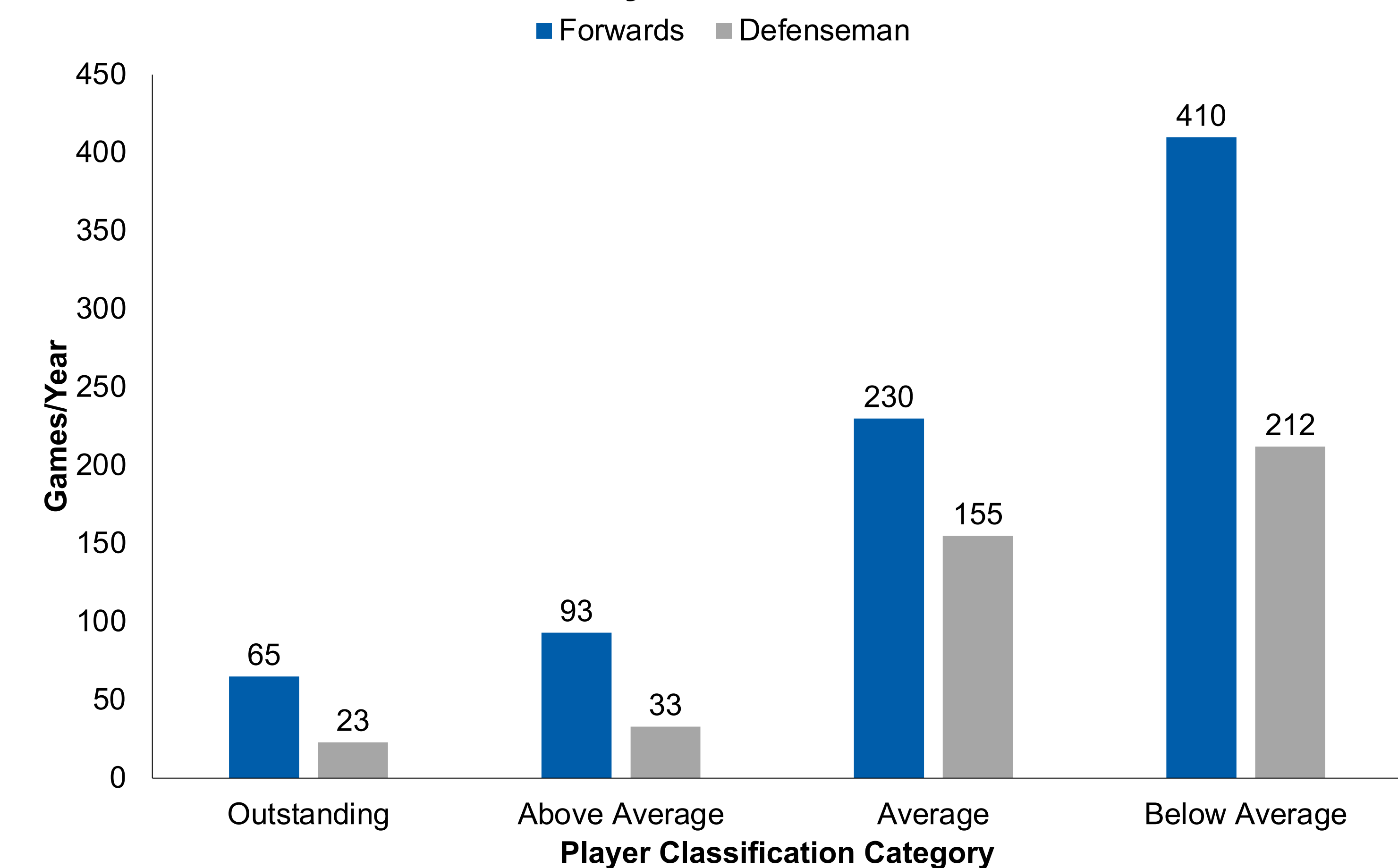


Table 2. Overall Averages for All NHL Players Drafted 2000-2011

Position	Performance Metric	Years in NHL	Games/Year
Forwards	0.32 ± 0.31 Points/Game	6.26 ± 4.70	35.71 ± 23.91
Defensemen	0.18 ± 0.19 Assists/Game	6.29 ± 4.70	33.52 ± 23.33

Mean ± Standard Deviation

KEY OUTCOMES:

- Only **88** of 1221 total players (7.2%) were classified as Outstanding

CONCLUSION

- The quantitative methodology used successfully classified NHL players into four categories of overall career success
- Player classification included in-game performance, and career longevity
- Defensemen are only rated on offensive stats, as no suitable defense-based statistics currently exist

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

- Results of this classification can be used to compare physical characteristics that could predict, or are required for future NHL success
- See *Characteristics of Player Development That are Associated with Future Success in the NHL* Poster Presentation, NSCA Conference (Location: Milano III-IV. Date & Time: Thursday, July 13, 2:00 – 3:30pm)

For more information about this study or the research group, please use the QR code

