

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Student:	Jan Liehman
Advisor:	PhDr. Radek Janhuba, M.A., Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Do National Hockey League Players Perform Better During Their Contract Years?

OVERALL ASSESSMENT (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):

The thesis investigates the contract year phenomenon in the National Hockey League (NHL). A contract year phenomenon arises when players perform better when their contract is about to expire relatively to other years. The study further extends the analysis to investigate quasi-contract years, meaning a period when players have the potential to extend their contract one year before it expires.

Contribution

The thesis builds on a body of previous literature investigating the contract year phenomenon in the MLB and NBA. It also extends the analysis to include the quasi-contract years. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis is the first one to combine these two approaches. The results of the study are novel and have previously not been found in academic literature.

Methods

The author demonstrates the ability to use panel data methods and use formal testing procedures to select the appropriate econometric specification. The thesis is written in a way that clearly demonstrates the author's grasp of methodology already in the sections on literature review and data. Moreover, the section on data demonstrates developed data management skills.

Literature

The literature review is carefully executed and reviews previous academic literature which is relevant in the context of the research question.

Manuscript form

The English of the thesis is of a very high level, both grammatically as well as stylistically. The writing style resembles the styles found in scientific articles published in some academic journals. The thesis also utilizes a LaTeX template, which ensures a professional appearance.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

This is a very well written thesis that, in my opinion, would also be acceptable as a master thesis. I would also recommend the author to try to publish the thesis in an appropriate scientific journal. I recommend the thesis for a defense with a perfect score of 100. I also recommend the thesis to be awarded the distinction for an extraordinarily good thesis.

I would suggest the following questions for the defense:

- Is there a reason to suspect that standard errors should be adjusted for heteroskedasticity or clustered at a certain level? How would you expect the results to change in case you reestimated the models with e.g. clustering at a team level?
- Given that the analysis was relatively complicated, the thesis required setting some parameters which were selected carefully, but inevitably remain arbitrary. Could you comment on setting the levels of these parameters and testing for the robustness of these selections?

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SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	20
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	20
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	100
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A

NAME OF THE REFEREE: *PhDr. Radek Janhuba, M.A., Ph.D.*

DATE OF EVALUATION: *Aug 29, 2019*



Referee Signature