

# Growth of Curling Survey Results

Robert Torres

Research Help By

Sam Langman

Connor Sparkman

# Survey Background

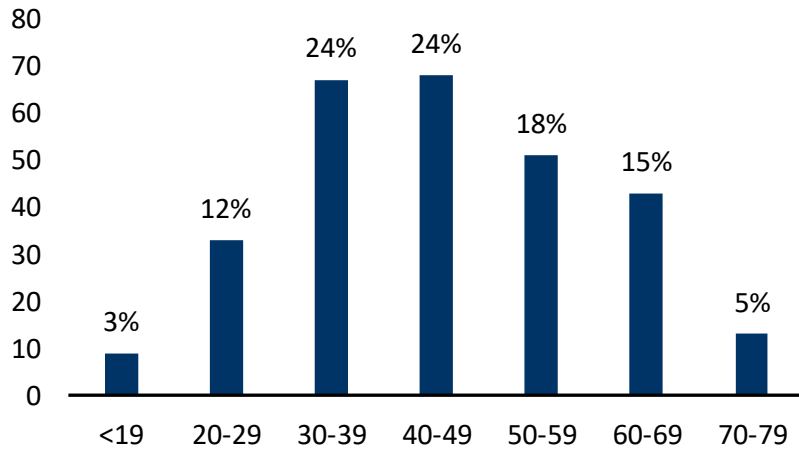
- This survey was conducted for a Penn State business class in Spring 2019 that was focused on data gathering and presentation
- The curling community provided overwhelming support when the request for data went out. Due to the support, I have reformatted the data and repackaged it for the curling community. The following slides contain quantitative and qualitative findings from the survey
- Please let me know if you have any questions about the findings or would like to see a different data breakdown for any reason. I can be reached at [rtores5147@gmail.com](mailto:rtores5147@gmail.com) and will try my best to answer any questions

# Notes on Quantitative Data Presentation

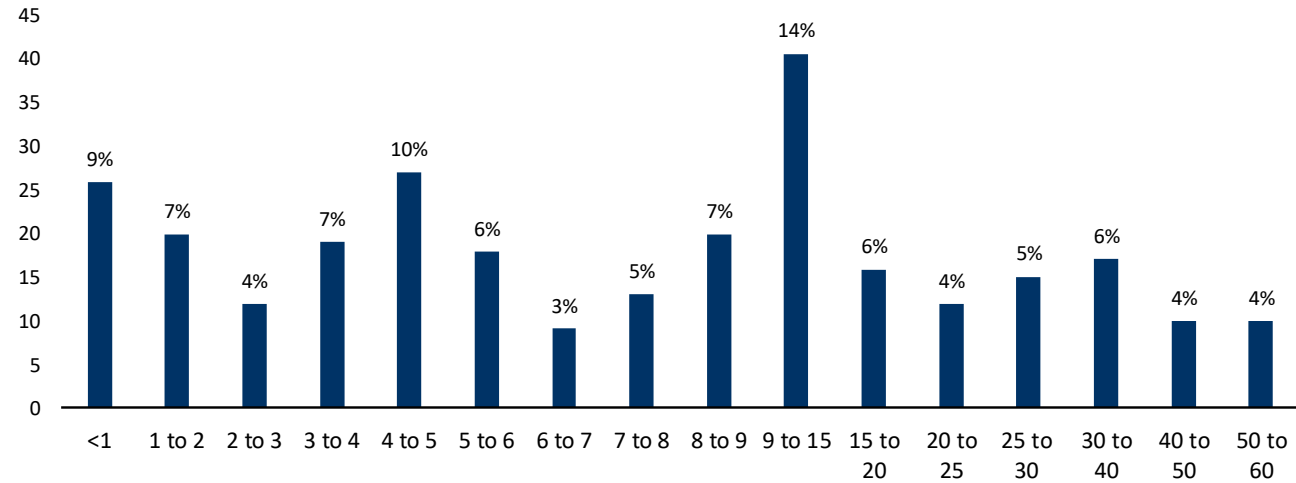
- Throughout the data presentation, the data is often broken down by respondent category, these are organized as follows:
  - USA: Respondents from the United States
  - Canada: Respondents from Canada
  - <5 Years: Respondents that indicated they have less than 5 years of curling experience
  - >5 Years: Respondents that indicated they have 5 years of curling experience or more
- Charts that do not indicate one of these subgroups in parentheses are comprised of data from the entire dataset

# Respondent Demographics (N=284)

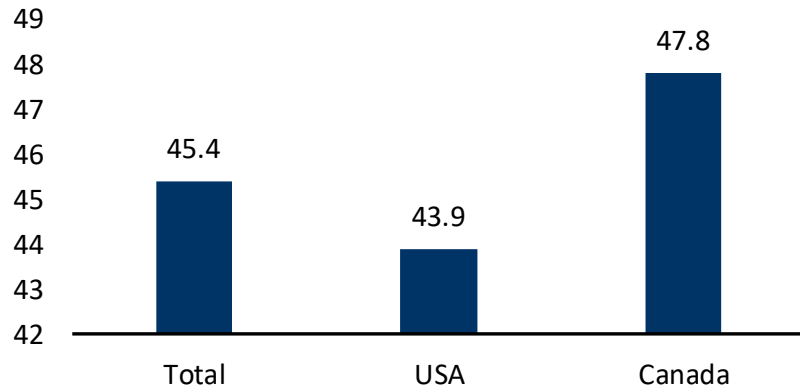
Age of Respondants



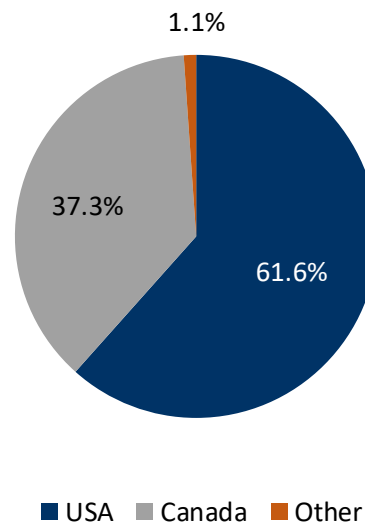
Respondant's Number of Years Curled



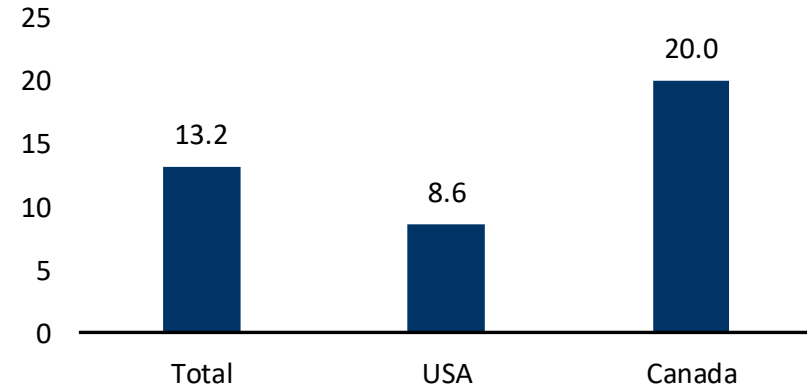
Average Age of Respondant Per Country



Country of Residence

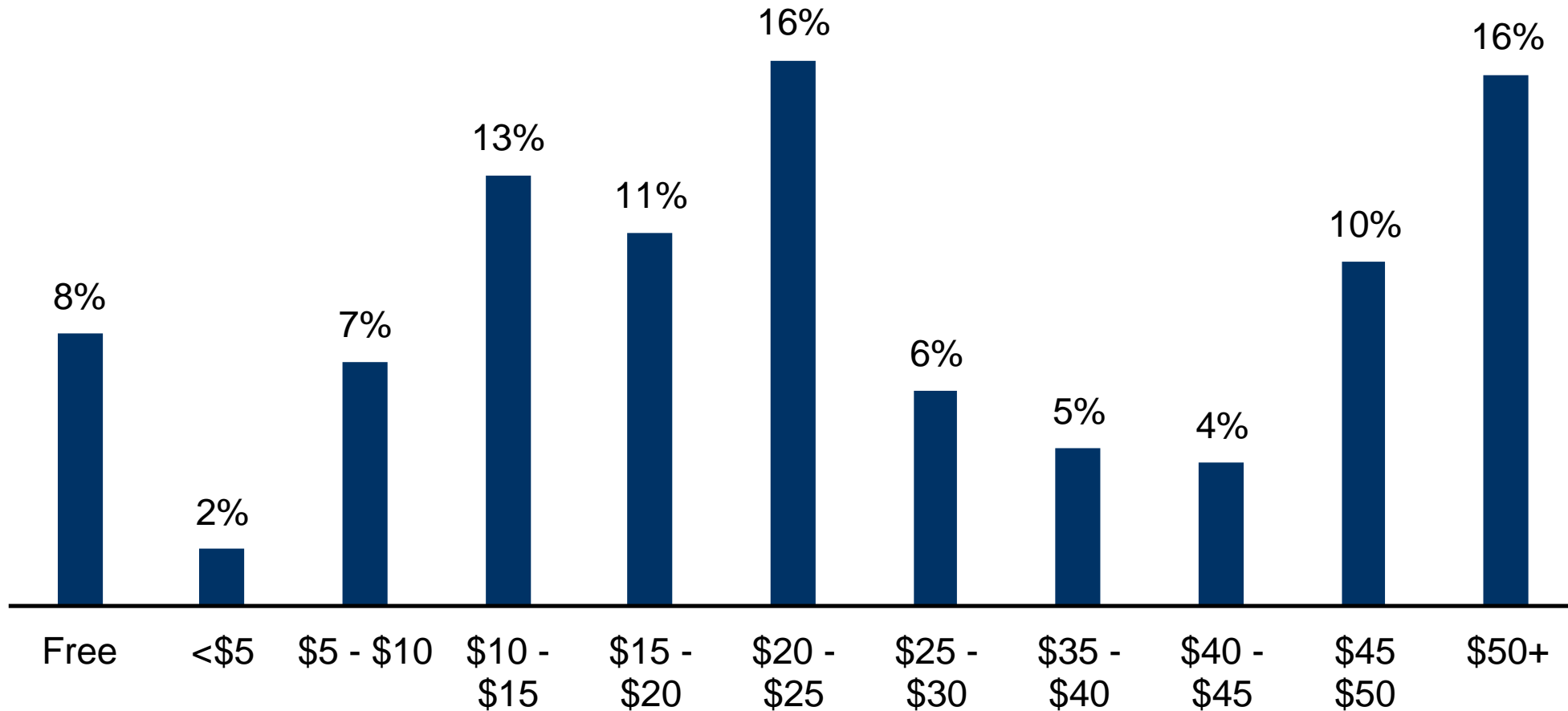


Average Years of Curling Experience Per Country



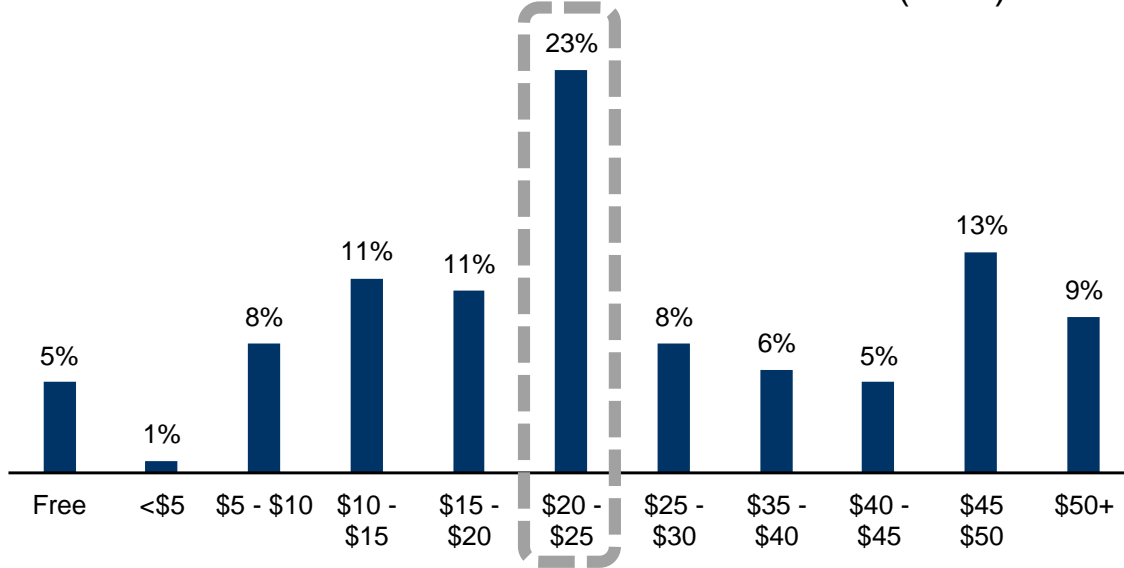
# Learn to Curl Cost

How Much Should a Standard LTC Cost?

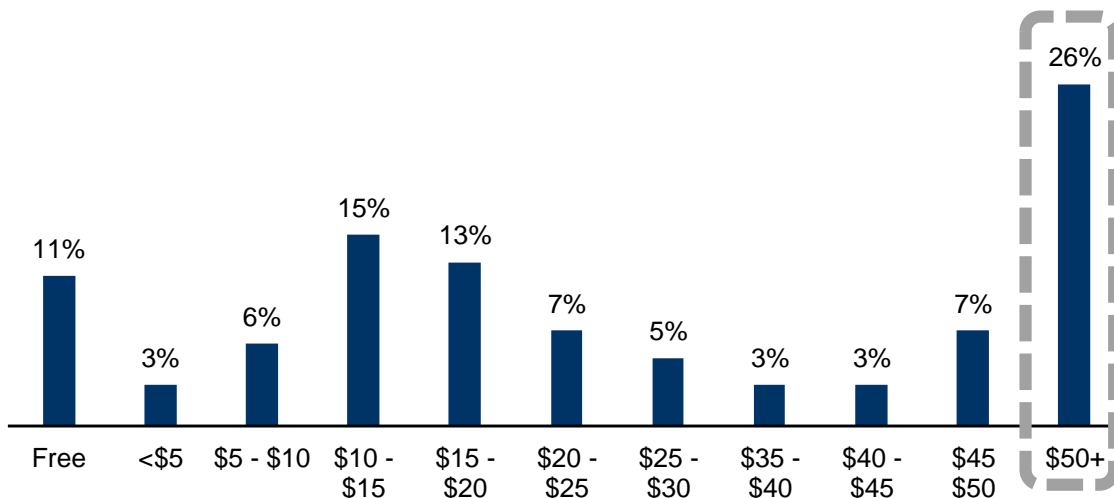


# Learn to Curl Cost by Country

## How Much Should a Standard LTC Cost? (USA)



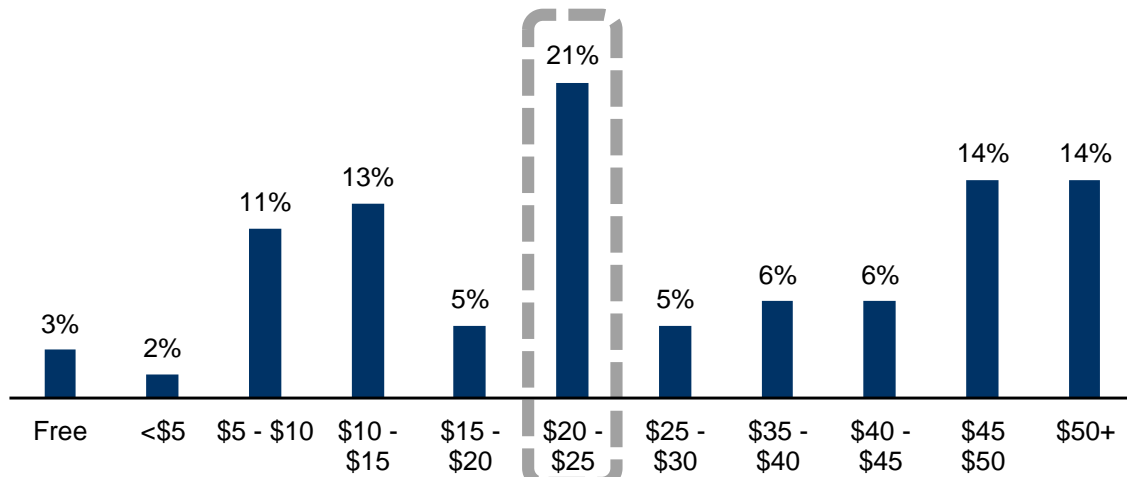
## How Much Should a Standard LTC Cost? (Canada)



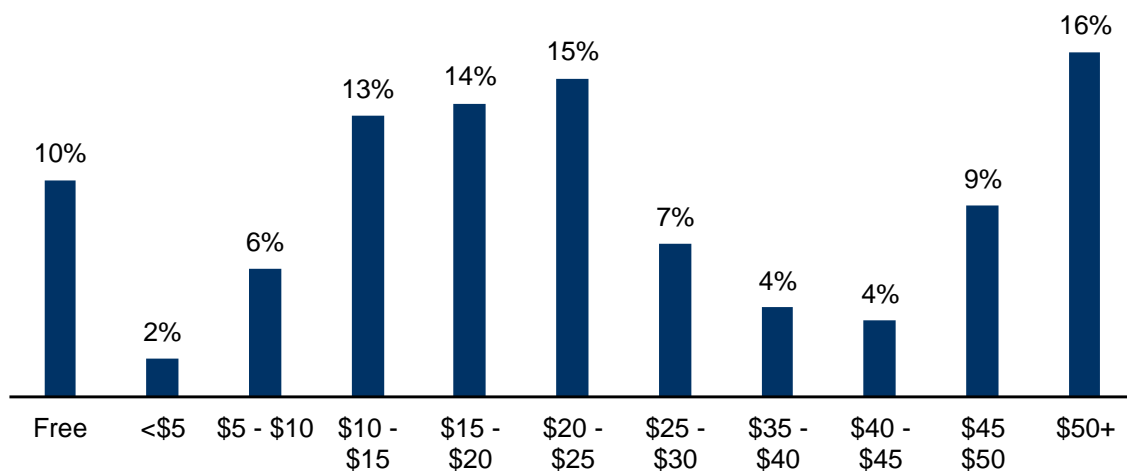
- It is worthwhile to point out the significant difference in what current curlers in each country view as the proper cost for a LTC
- An error of this study was specifying that this was a question in USD, so some of the higher responses by Canadians might be skewed
- Even with a currency adjustment, Canadian curlers still favor a higher cost

# Learn to Curl Cost by Experience

How Much Should a Standard LTC Cost? (<5 Years)



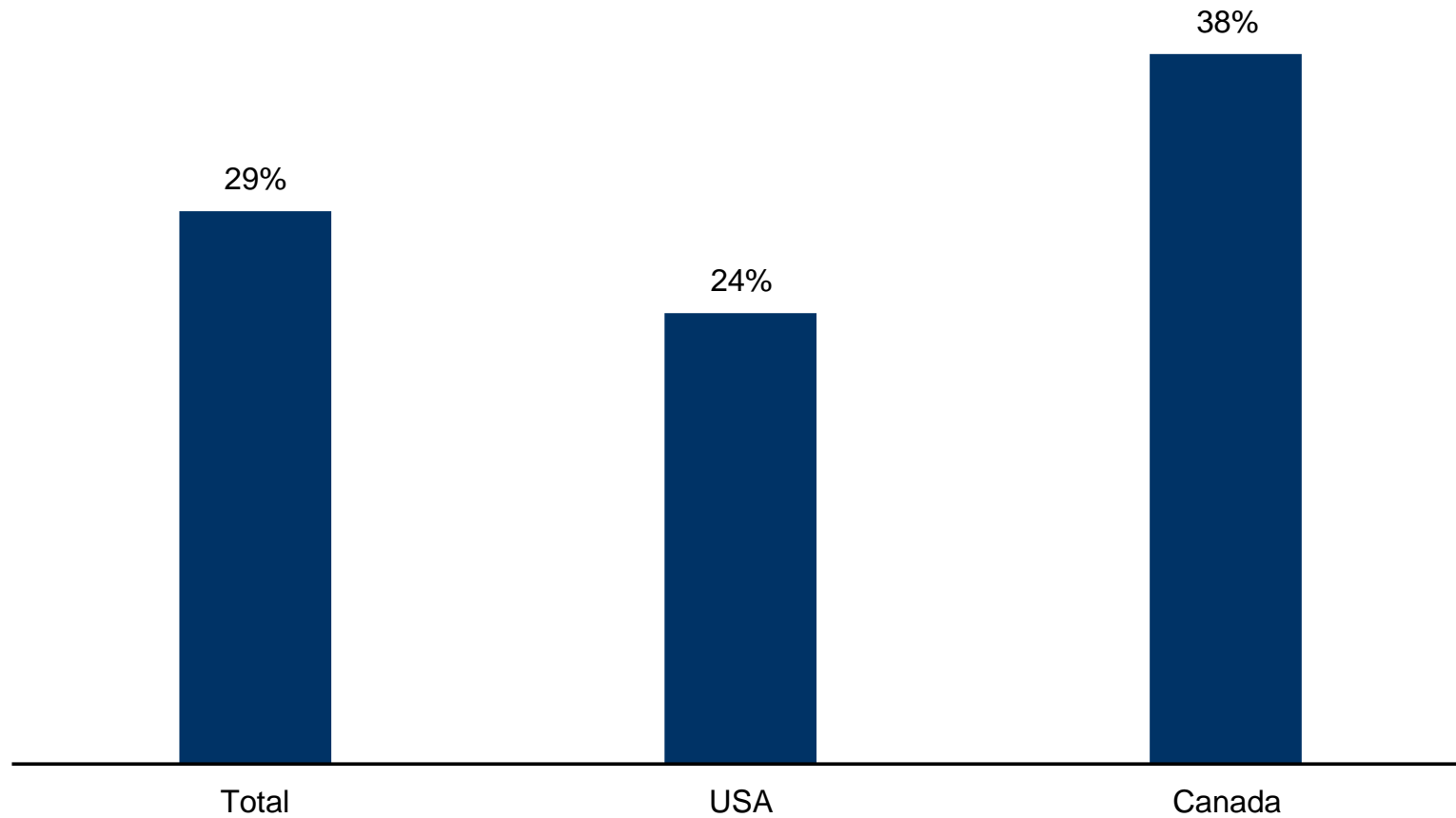
How Much Should a Standard LTC Cost? (>5 Years)



- Newer curlers had a spike of responses in the \$20 - \$25 range
- There was no significant bunching of data among more experienced curlers
- It is interesting to note that more experienced curlers were significantly more likely to suggest free LTC days than newer curlers

# Estimated Learn to Curl Participant Return Rate

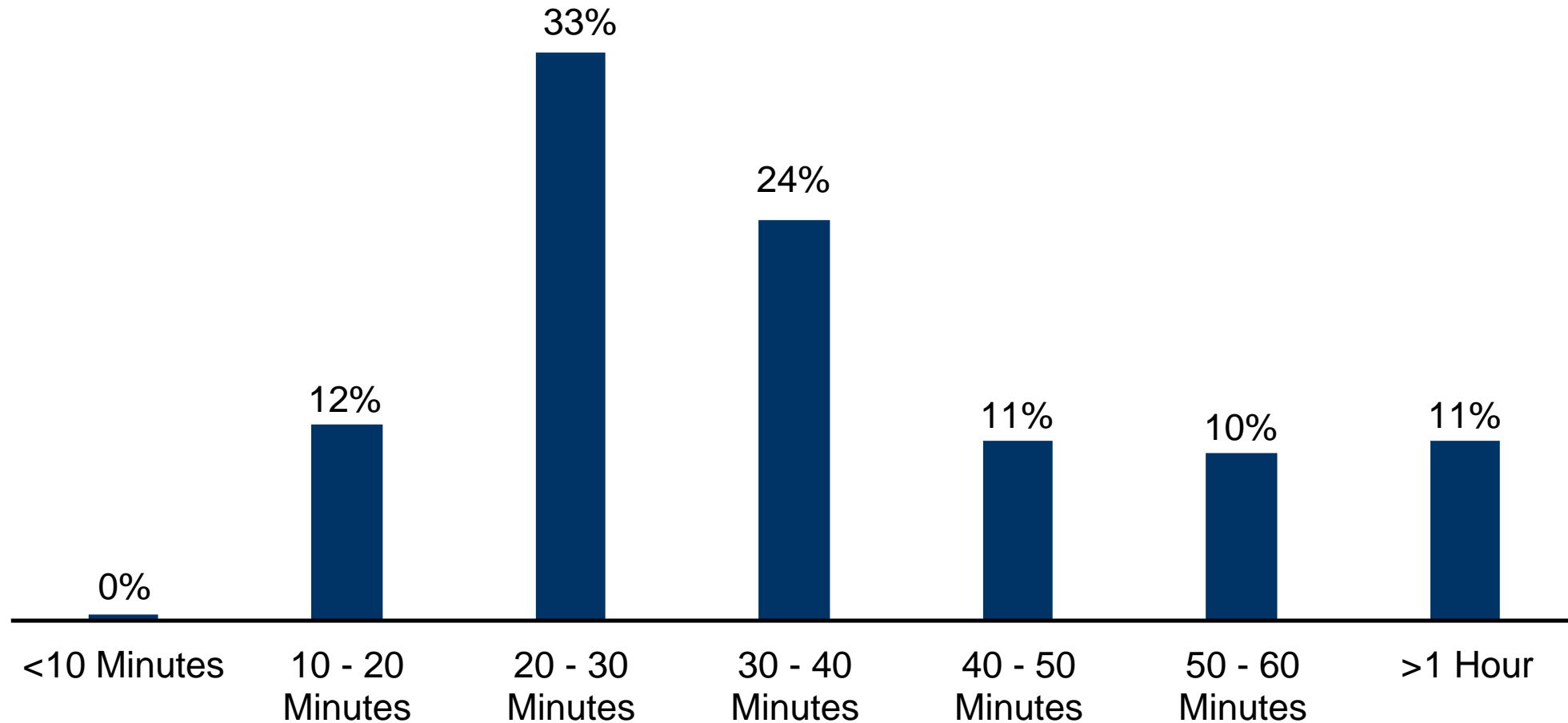
Estimated Percentage of LTC Participants who Return





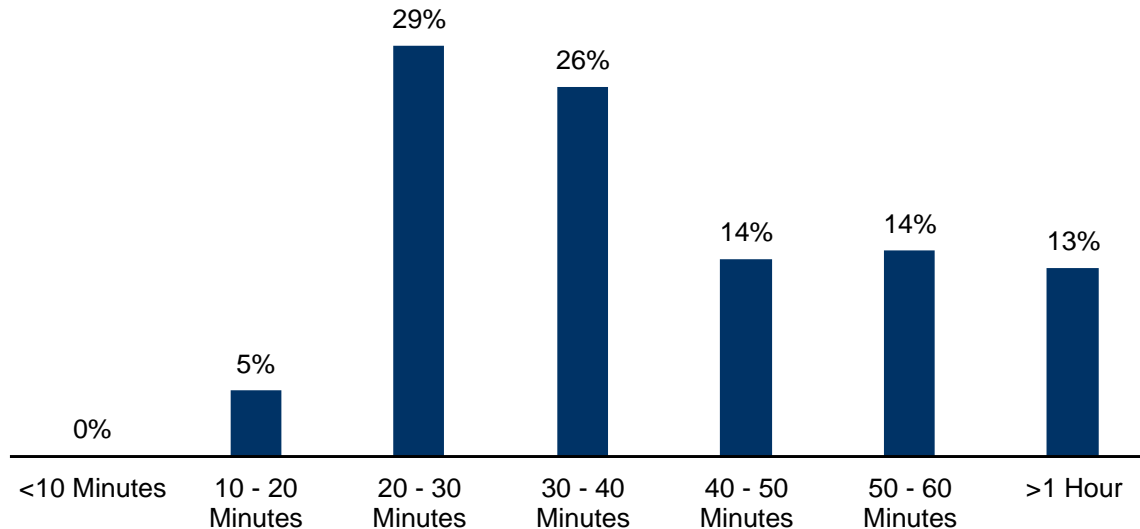
# Willingness to Travel to Home Club

## Distance Willing to Travel to a Home Club

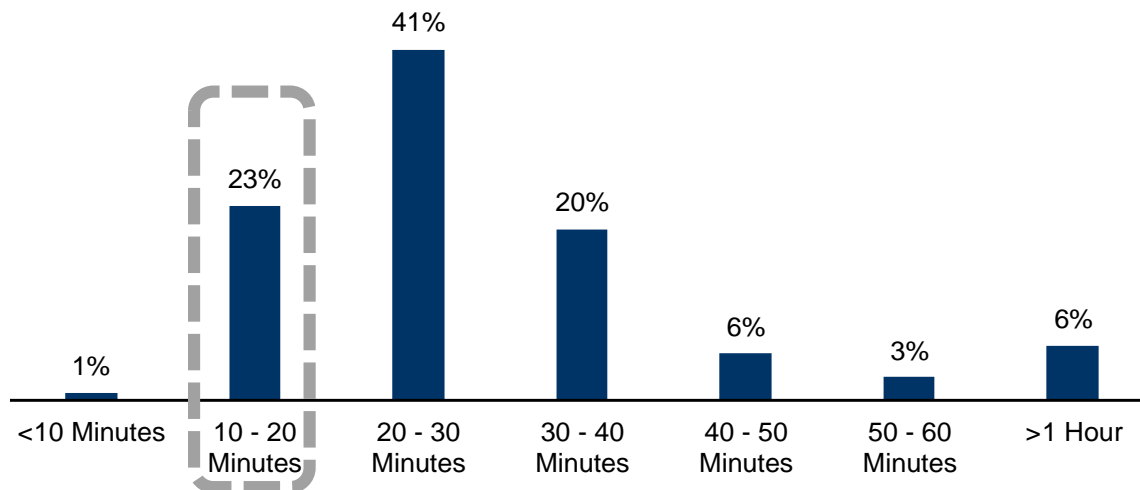


# Willingness to Travel to Home Club by Country

Distance Willing to Travel to a Home Club (USA)



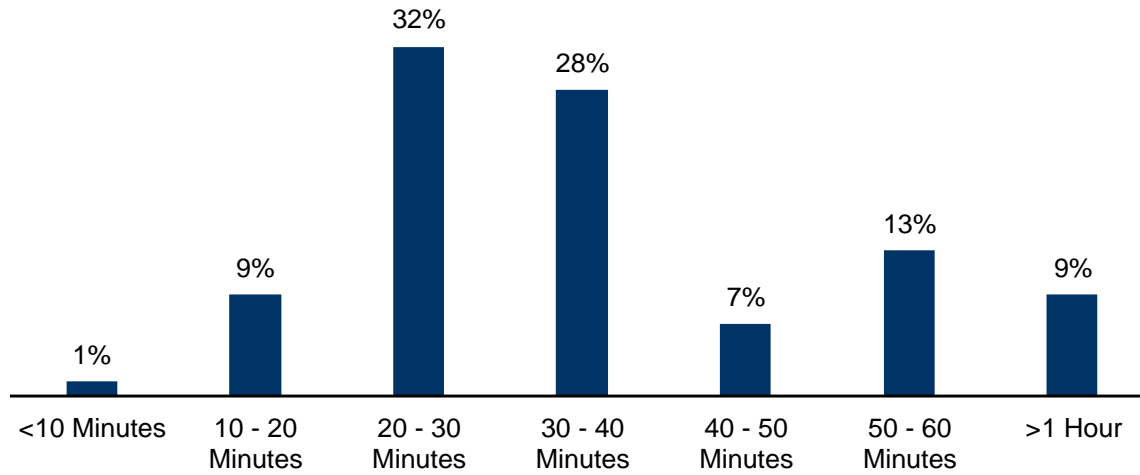
Distance Willing to Travel to a Home Club (Canada)



- There is a skew towards longer commutes for American curlers than their Canadian peers. This is likely explained by the relative scarcity of clubs in the United States
- These findings show Canadian curlers value convenience of clubs, while American curlers are more willing to travel out of their way to find curling facilities

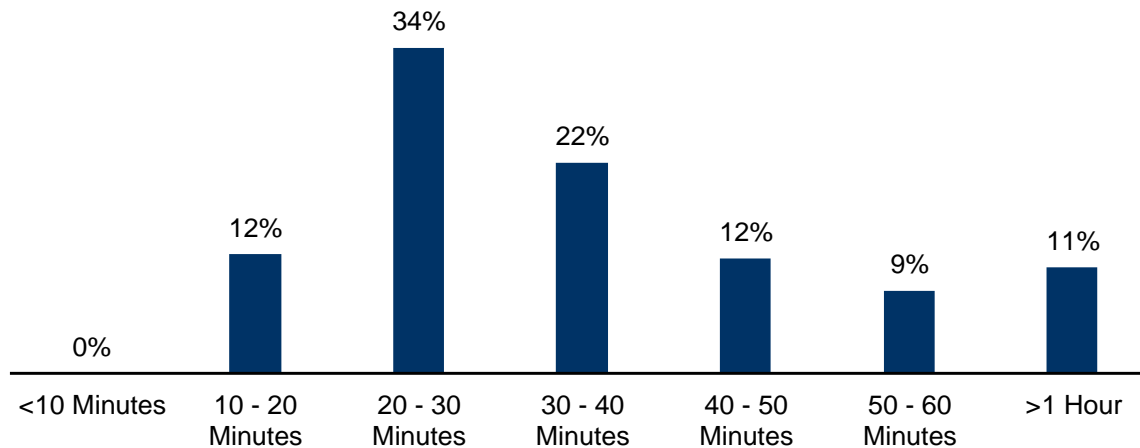
# Willingness to Travel to Home Club by Experience

Distance Willing to Travel to a Home Club (<5 Years)



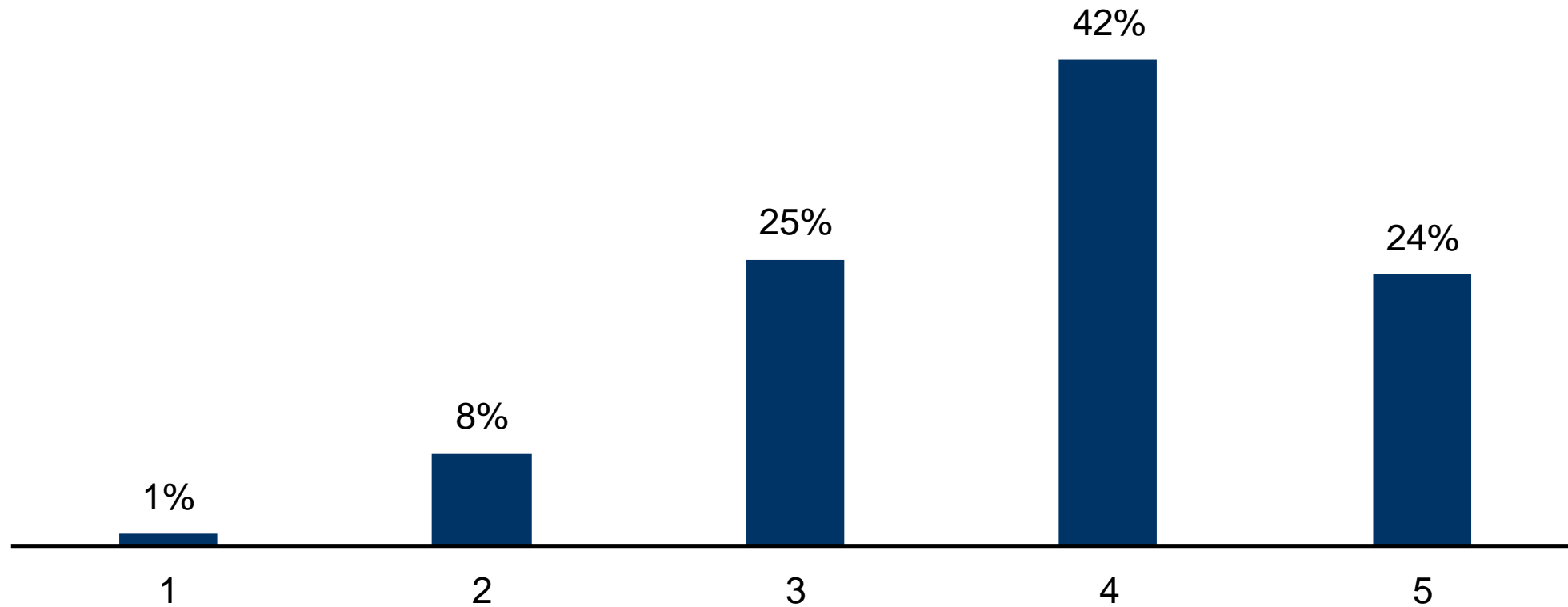
- There are no major differences between experience levels for this metric

Distance Willing to Travel to a Home Club (>5 Years)



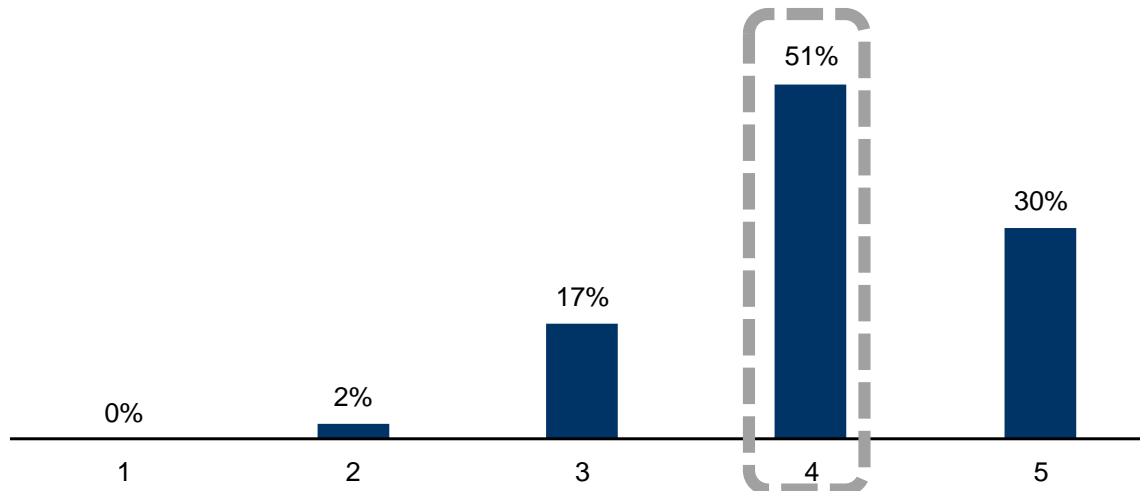
# Satisfaction with Growth of the Game

How Satisfied are you with the Growth of the Game?

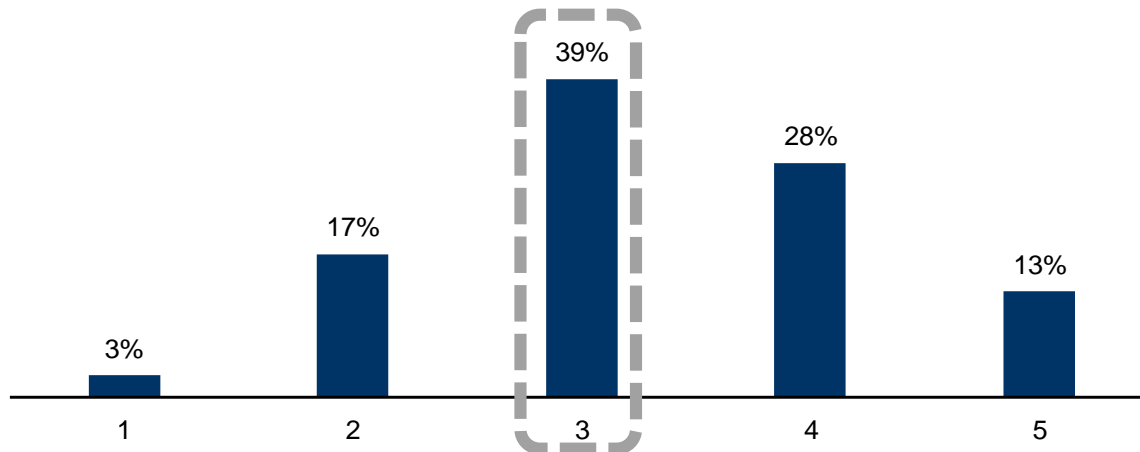


# Satisfaction with Growth of the Game by Country

How Satisfied are you with the Growth of the Game? (USA)



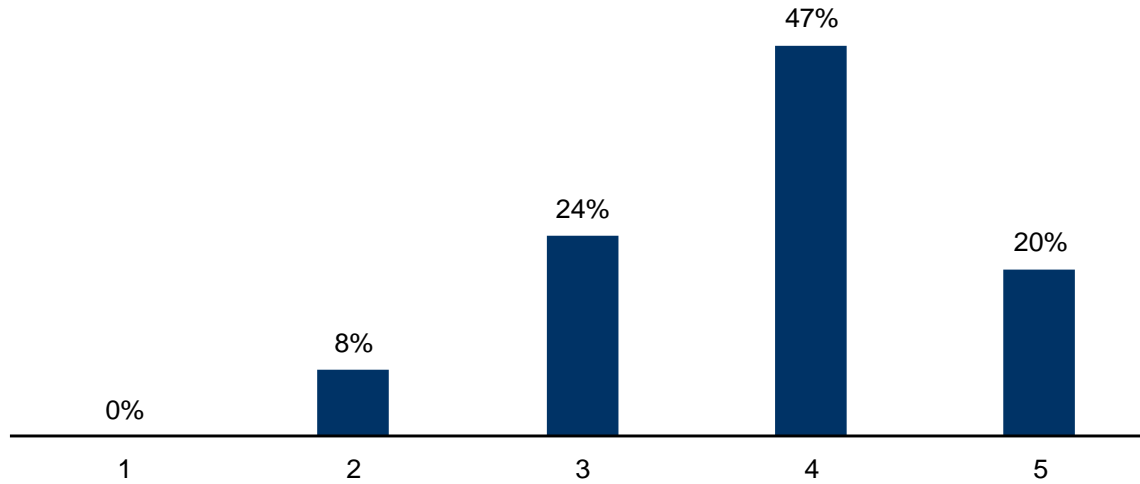
How Satisfied are you with the Growth of the Game? (Canada)



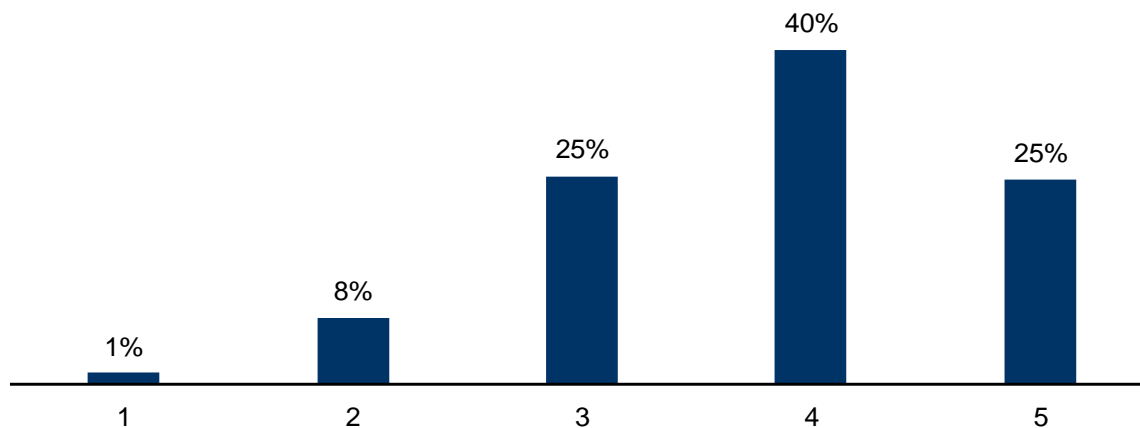
- American curlers indicated they were more satisfied with the growth of the game, with a strong skew towards high satisfaction
- Canadian curlers responses were much more evenly distributed, with some skew towards satisfaction

# Satisfaction with Growth of the Game by Experience

How Satisfied are you with the Growth of the Game? (<5 Year)



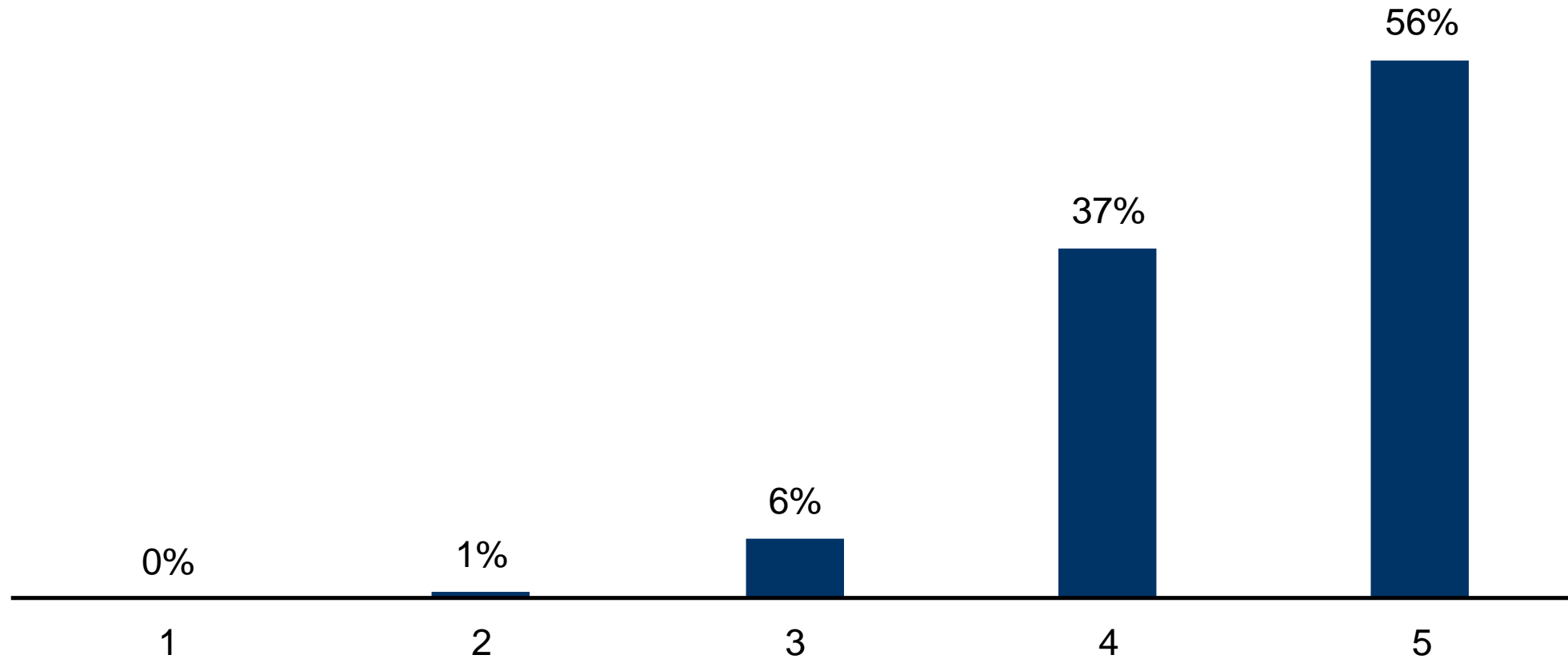
How Satisfied are you with the Growth of the Game? (>5 Year)



- There are no major differences between experience levels for this metric

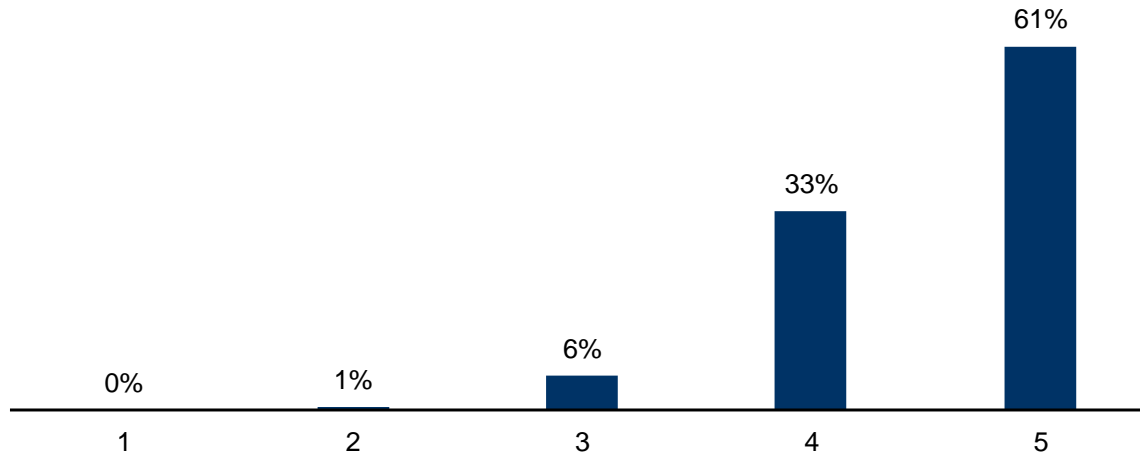
# Room to Grow in the United States

How Much Room is Left to Grow in the United States?

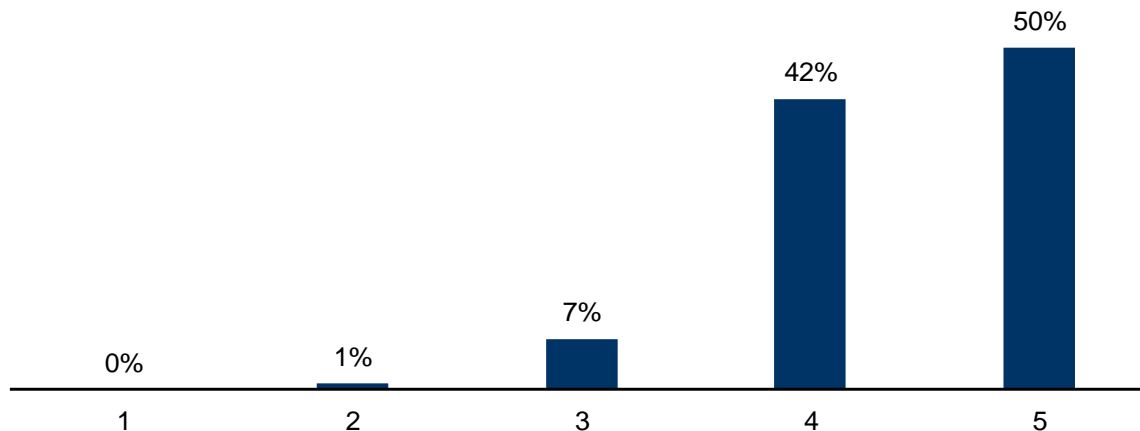


# Room to Grow in the United States by Country

How Much Room is Left to Grow in the United States? (USA)



How Much Room is Left to Grow in the United States? (Canada)

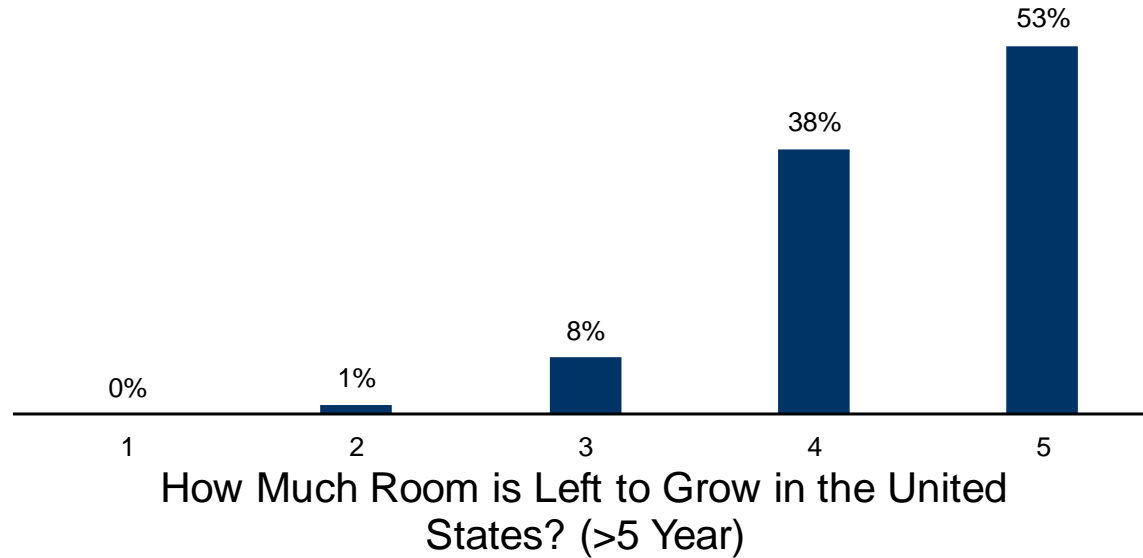


- Although the responses were similarly distributed for this question, it does seem American curlers are slightly more optimistic for growth in the United States

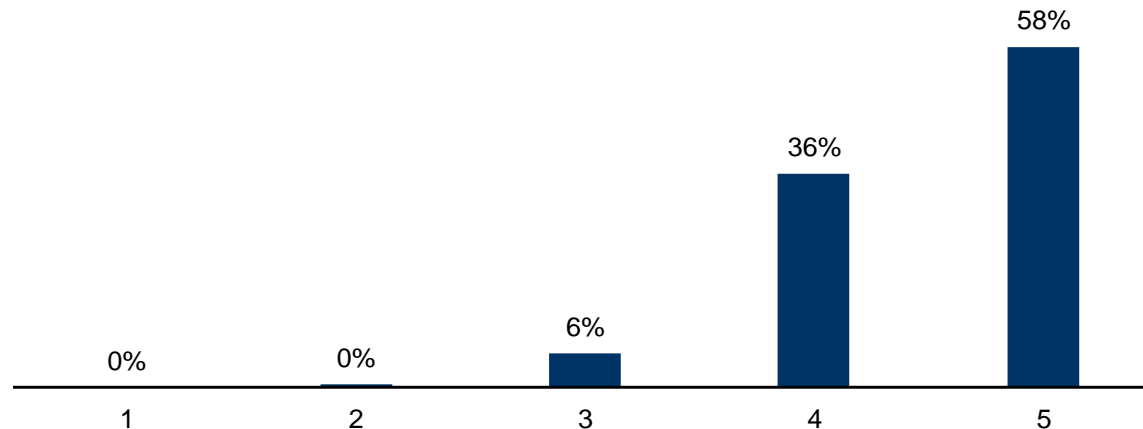


# Room to Grow in the United States by Experience

How Much Room is Left to Grow in the United States? (<5 Year)



- Responses were distributed fairly evenly between experience levels for this question



# Notes on Qualitative Data Presentation

- Our team received significantly more qualitative data than we ever expected
- Responses ranged from single answers to paragraphs of feedback
- In the following slides, I have tried to summarize some of the most common themes of these responses and break them down into helpful categories
- Due to the sheer number of responses, not all feedback could be included, so these results may not be entirely representative of every response

# How did you get Involved with Curling?

- Some of the most common answers:
  - Family
  - Olympics
  - Other curling on TV
  - Exercise
  - Social life/crossover with golf clubs (mostly from Canadian respondents)
  - Bucket list item

# Successful Club Growth Attempts

- Beginner opportunities
  - Many respondents spoke highly of novice, or learn-to-curl leagues for beginners to feel comfortable
  - Flexibility with these programs to be open to all was also highly regarded
  - Discounts for larger groups at beginner events
- More grassroots advertising (Example: Facebook)
  - Many respondents spoke highly of novice, or learn-to-curl leagues for beginners to feel comfortable
- Gradually increasing membership dues with experience
- Flexible league types/lengths
  - For example, allowing members to join for half seasons with less commitment
  - Another example was offering leagues to parents where childcare was taken care of within the club during league events

# Positive Club Attributes

- Inclusiveness and openness to younger members outside of the club
  - This was a key point many brought up
- Focus on grassroots marketing, and increasing utilization of social media and web based membership interfaces and marketing platforms
- Social events outside of curling year-round

# Unsuccessful Club Growth Attempts

- Cold mailings/marketing
- Frequent open houses
  - Respondents who inferred these type of events were rare occasions viewed them more positively. This might infer that when open houses are rare, their novelty increases likelihood of participation
- Offering beginners poor ice time (Example: Late hours for beginner leagues with advanced leagues in prime time)
- Marketing for new membership without specific events/programs for beginners to grow into the club

# Negative Club Attributes

- A main theme of negative attributes focused on adherence to older traditions and attributes of clubs
  - Some respondents cited older members not being welcoming to new members, or social circles not willing to accept new people
  - Strict adherence to traditions and lack of adaptation to modern trends was also viewed very negatively
- Focusing on high performing leagues and teams, rather than encouraging younger more inexperienced teams to play/get better
- Lack of social media/online presence
- Lack of focus on youth developmental programming

# Other Improvable Areas

- Similar to with club specific changes, many curlers indicated that adherence to strict tradition could slow growth
  - With national organizations focusing on single teams through major events, more inexperienced teams lack media coverage, and give fans less options to root for. This also seemed to indicate a “Tiger Effect” (when a leading athlete or team is not playing, people will simply not watch)
  - Some curlers felt that the sport could grow by being more spectator friendly and interactive for high level events. There seemed to be significant push/pull between traditional curling etiquette and more exciting modern sport event spectator activities (Examples: noise levels, pushing a home team ect.)



# Conclusions

- Most curlers are satisfied with the growth of the game, but admit there is significant progress that can be made
  - Overall there seems to be strong sentiment to fight some of the more traditional aspects of the sports in order to adapt it to grow in today's sports world
  - Most negative sentiment from respondents was regarding the lack of adaptation of clubs whether it be in tradition or in organizational development (Examples: online presence, payment systems, social structures)
- Please feel free to reach out with any questions or comments