

The Experiences of Two Learn-to-Curl Leagues: Ideas for Future Sport and Physical Activity Practice

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AGENDA

1. Learn-to-Curl League research project
2. Wider adult introductory sport program workshop

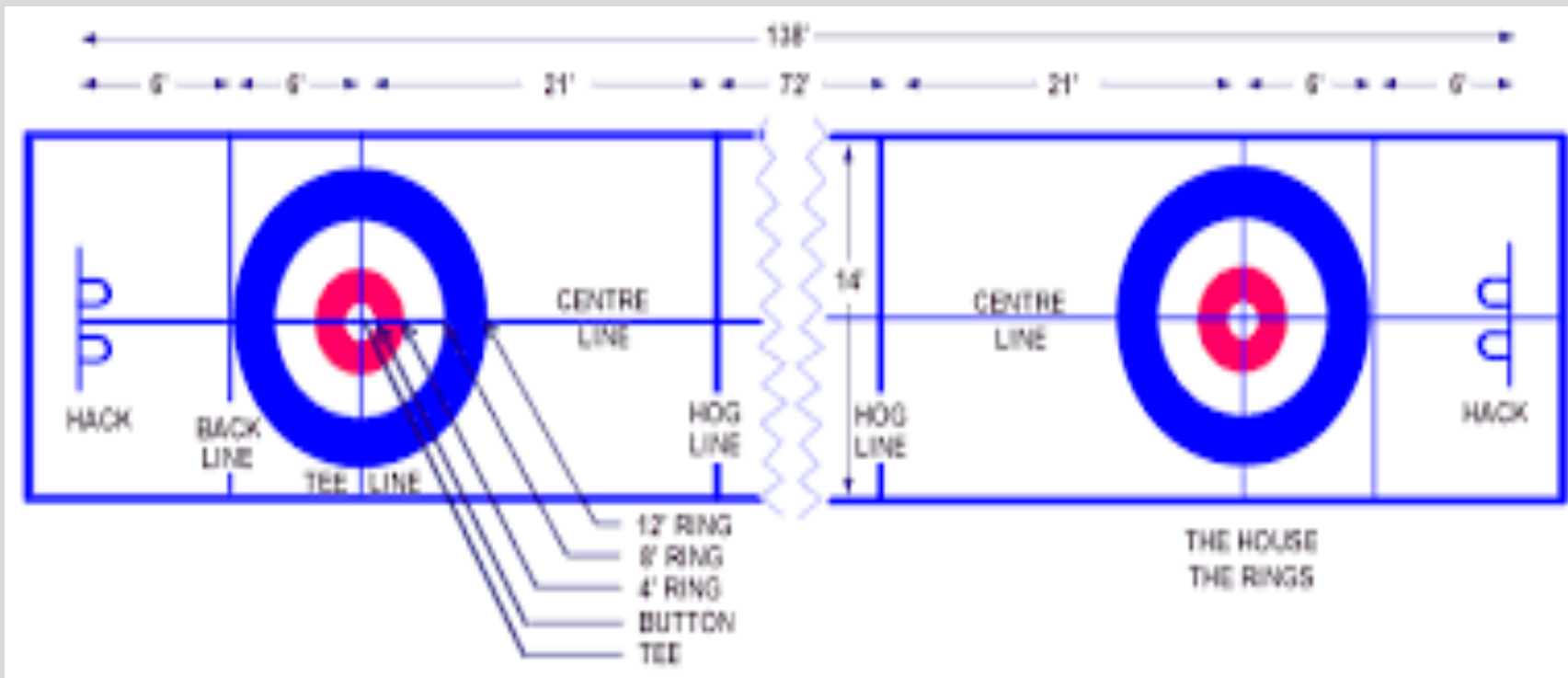


RESEARCH PROJECT

- What is curling?
- What are Learn-to-Curl leagues?
- Why study Learn-to-Curl leagues?
- How do adults experience these programs?
- How do Learn-to-Curl leagues and mega-sport events (ex. The Olympics) intersect?
- What lessons emerge for other sports?



WHAT IS CURLING?



From: www.capitalwheelchaircurling.ca





From: slam.canoe.ca



From: <http://www.teambradjacobs.com/>



From: panthersiceden.com



WHAT ARE LEARN-TO-CURL LEAGUES?

- Step-by-step adult introductory programs
- Novice curlers
- Taught by experienced, certified coaches
- 8-week, 12-week, or full-year (20+ weeks)
- Progress from basic instruction, to drills, to games
- ‘Graduate’ into other club leagues
- Need for such leagues...



LEARN-TO-CURL LEAGUE HISTORY

- Brief history
- First learn-to-curl leagues introduced in early/mid 2000s (Ontario)
- ‘Getting-Started-For-Adults’ manual
- Today: focused mainly in urban city centres
- Ontario Curling Association (OCA) provincial program roll-out



WHY STUDY LEARN-TO-CURL LEAGUES?

- Purpose is to explore:
 1. The Learn-to-Curl league experience
 2. The experiences of new sport participants
 3. The connections between Learn-to-curl leagues and mega-sport events



RESEARCH METHODS

- Qualitative case study methodology:
 - In-depth interviews
 - Participant observation
 - Document analysis
 - Photo elicitation interviews (PEI)



STUDY SITES

- Two urban, central Canadian curling clubs
- Both hosting full-year (26-week) learn-to-curl programs
- Each club has long established history in their community



STUDY PARTICIPANTS

- Curling Administrators: n=7
- League Organizers: n=5
- League Instructors: n=3
- League Participants: n=8



NOVICE CURLERS' EXPERIENCES

- Motivations for enrolling
- Overwhelmingly positive
- Valued:
 - Step-by-step instruction
 - Qualified instructors
 - Friendships with peers
 - Social experiences (post game)
 - Sense of belonging
- Some critical of newer instructors



PHOTO ELICITATION INTERVIEWS



LEARN-TO-CURL LEAGUE/MEGA-SPORT EVENT INTERSECTIONS

- Leveraging:
 - Creation of legacies involving ‘all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself’ (Preuss, 2007, p. 211).
 - Sport participation legacies/leveraging: Translating the media/spectator interest surrounding mega-sport events (ex: the Olympics) into sustained sport participation increases through targeted program development and investment



LEVERAGING OUTCOMES

Participants

- Reported weak relationship
- Recalled minimal (if any) connection to mega-sport events or elite curling

Administrators/ Organizers/Instructors

- Reported potential of leagues to be leveraging initiatives
- Argued that the connection needs to be strengthened
- Annual nature of leagues



UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF LEARN-TO-CURL LEAGUES

- Beyond simply new members:
 - New volunteers/board members
 - Specifically, giving back as learn-to-curl league instructors
 - Infusion of new ideas/energy
 - Competitive curlers (bonspiels, Colts league)



LESSONS FOR OTHER SPORTS – PARTICIPANT-SPECIFIC

- Adults enroll for diverse reasons
- Positive experiences built around social interactions
- Value of skill development/improvement
- Certified instructors/effective communicators
- Sense of belonging to a club
- Eager to take on new opportunities (bonspiels, other leagues)



LESSONS FOR OTHER SPORTS – PROGRAM-SPECIFIC

- Tension with program template
- Requires flexibility
 - Paid vs. volunteer instructors
 - Curriculum-driven vs. curriculum-informed
 - Tailor program to your participants needs (year 1 vs. year 2)
- Participant feedback is essential



QUESTIONS??



ADULT INTRODUCTORY SPORT PROGRAM WORKSHOP



**WHAT ADULT INTRODUCTORY
SPORT PROGRAMS EXIST IN
YOUR ORGANIZATION(S)?**



**HOW DO THESE ADULT
INTRODUCTORY SPORT
PROGRAMS DIFFER FROM
THEIR YOUTH SPORT
COUNTERPARTS?**



**HOW DO YOUR PARTICIPANTS
REPORT THEIR EXPERIENCES
IN THESE INTRODUCTORY
SPORT PROGRAMS?**



**DO PARALLELS EXIST
BETWEEN YOUR PROGRAM(S)
AND LEARN-TO-CURL
LEAGUES?**



**WHAT GAPS PRESENTLY EXIST
WITHIN YOUR
ORGANIZATION'S ADULT
INTRODUCTORY SPORT
PROGRAMS?**



WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF ADULT INTRODUCTORY SPORT PROGRAMS?



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THANK YOU!

