**Curl Troy Business Plan**

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**Write Last**

**Executive Summary**

**Overview**

*Objectives*

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**Company Overview**

**Business Description**

Curl Troy is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization created to support and grow the Olympic sport of curling in the Miami Valley.  Started 7 years ago in Troy, Curl Troy has introduced curling to nearly a thousand people during Learn to Curl Clinics, and other introductory programs.  Curl Troy also fields competitive teams to USA Curling’s Arena National Championships, and several other curling tournaments across the country and abroad.

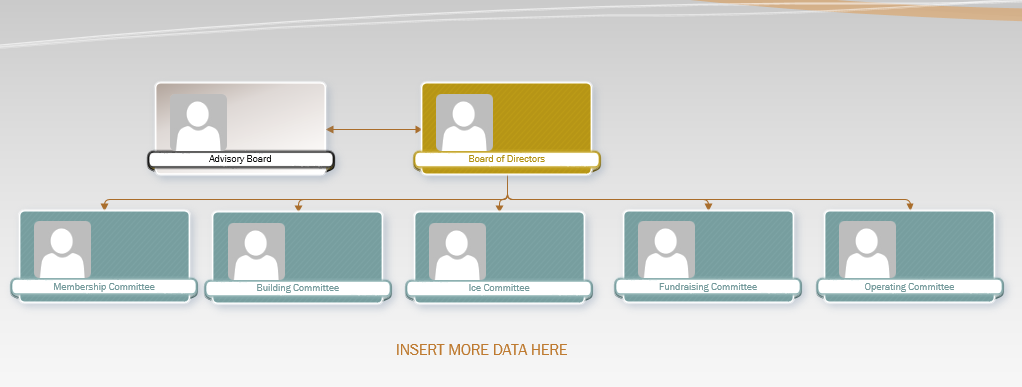
Currently conducting programs at RiverScape MetroPark in downtown Dayton, and the NTPRD Chiller in Springfield. Curl Troy is limited in ice availability, and ice quality, which limits the organization's ability to expand, grow, and provide expanded community and youth curling activities.  The club can only begin offering additional programs, leagues, and introduce the sport of curling to a larger audience by moving into a dedicated facility designed for curling.

(need a little more here maybe)

**Structure and Management**

Curl Troy consists of a six-member board of directors that is the primary operating and decision-making body for the club. Currently the members are nominated by existing club members and voted on by the remaining board members. There are currently no term lengths or limits, however as the club has continues to grow, open elections by the membership will be exercised. The club currently has several committees that report directly to the board. These committees have been formed both to help delegate some of the current operating responsibilities from the board of directors, as well as to help facilitate the development and implementation of a dedicating curling facility. These committees will play a role and continue to expand after successfully moving into a dedicated building; the club consists entirely of volunteers with no paid staff, so it is important that participation off the ice is encouraged as much as on the ice.

(need to now lay out the roles and responsibilities of each in brief - a list should be ok, or diagram would be better, or both. Regular operations of the club need to be included in more detail here however, at least to the point of describing how a club “operates” not necessarily who is in charge of doing it)



**History and Growth of Curl Troy**

(Can probably C&P from a grant or some such thing)

**Vision**

We see a world class dedicated curling facility nested right in the growing areas of Downtown Dayton to provide recreation and social activities for the growing urban residential population, to provide a unique attraction to Downtown Dayton during the off seasons for other more outdoor rooted activities, and to provide additional extracurricular and competitive athletics opportunities for both the K-12 and Colleges located in the Dayton Region.

This facility would provide a full service bar for members and guests participating in our activities, and a safe social environment that is family friendly, along with ice facilities to handle multiple curling games simultaneously ranging from competitive to recreational to educational.  Activities at the curling facility will range from introductory lessons all the way to competitions between competitive international curling teams.  The facility would also meet specifications to host televised, and non-televised national or international curling competitions, complete with viewing areas both on and off the ice surface.  A curling pro shop, and offices and conference space would exist overlooking the curling surface.  Conference space would be available free of charge to nonprofits and community groups in the Dayton area to use when available.

During the non-curling season (May-Sept) the facility could be multi use providing a space for reception, banquet and meeting services, or additional recreation services such as basketball, floor hockey, volleyball, and other indoor activities.  The facility could be used for daytime programming for school age children during the summer time as an open gym facility partnering with social service agencies.

**Mission**

Curl Troy seeks to be a contributing member of the Dayton Community by providing safe recreational and social programming for members of the Dayton Community as a whole, as well as unique recreational and spectator opportunities for tourists visiting during the curling season.  The curling facility will drive business at local retailers and restaurants as well as provide exposure to Levitt Pavilion and its activities to community members and visitors from across the country and abroad.

Values – (Some of this is mentioned at other times and fleshed out later, can probably condense)

* Recreational activities for members of the Dayton and surrounding communities.
  + All ages can participate in this sport.
  + It requires no pre-disposed athletic ability.
  + Easily adaptable for those with disabilities.
* Olympic sport exposure to the community.
  + Curling is the largest growing Olympic sport in the United States.
  + Hosting Olympic and other International Level Competitions brings exposure to the city.
  + Curling Night in America is a growing television broadcast funded by the USOC and USA Curling that could be hosted in this facility.  Brings national TV exposure to the Greater Dayton Region
  + Physical Education
    - Curling fits well into the physical education program with classroom discussion about scoring, history, and technique, as well as on ice activities.
    - It provides a physical education activity that can be carried outside the classroom by all students.  It is accessible to everyone.
* Tourism
  + Curl Troy plans to host on average 2 regional and 1 national curling competitions each year in addition to its regular programming.
    - Each regional competition will bring roughly 100 curlers, and another 30 coaches, family members, alternates, and other guests to the facility for a Friday-Sunday event.
      * Each team would be expected to have ample down time to visit local attractions like museums, restaurants, breweries, and other entertainment venues.
    - Each National competition will bring roughly 75 curlers, and another 50-60 spectators, support personnel, and family members from outside the region for a Tuesday through Sunday event.
      * Each team would be expected to have ample downtime to visit local attractions during the event.
  + Curl Troy would seek to host USA Curling Members Assembly which brings over a thousand curlers and sponsor representatives to the region.
    - * This is usually offered to newly opened facilities first.
  + Curl Troy plans to host a juniors curling camp during each season which would last Thursday-Sunday and bring hundreds of junior curlers and their families to the region during the event.

**Start-Up Summary**

Curl Troy is endeavoring to find a permanent home that will be used exclusively for curling. Before being able to successfully follow through with any aspect of this plan, the central pillar that supports it is the purchase of a building that will house the club for years to come. Without it, and as evidenced throughout, the club faces limited growth and community impact.

Through the division of multiple committees as described above, the club has devised a strategy for discovery, procurement, and renovation of an existing building and the means to finance it. Current architects, engineers, and builders who are either club members or friends of the club have all offered their services in providing plans, cost estimates, and other in-kind services to help reduce the burden of upfront costs and help lessen the need for financing other than as described below. Other clubs have also been generous in sharing their resources, action plans, and financials to help guide Curl Troy to a successful acquirement and eventual execution.

*The Building*

Curling facilities can come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but generally will consist of a number of basic amenities to make it successful. The building needs to have a minimum of 3 sheets of ice to play on, with the ideal number being 4. According to the United States Curling Association (USCA) the average number of sheets for both arena clubs and dedicated facility clubs is 4, with the next highest number being 3. Each curling sheet is approximately 146ft long and 15ft wide. Including the ice sheets, storage for ice equipment, and other potential needs, the “cold room” is generally anywhere between 10,000-13,000 sqft, and takes up the majority of any room that is necessary for a curling club.

In addition to this however, other amenities that are typically considered important to have for any dedicated club are:

* Separate men’s and women’s locker rooms
* Men’s and women’s bathrooms
* An office, a pantry, a kitchen or warming station
* Equipment storage area
* A warm room with bar for observers and players not on the ice, and additional viewing areas.

The ancillary areas outside of the curling sheets are far more flexible in terms of how much space they need to take up, and depending on the ideal building, the club is currenting making projections ranging in size from 12,000 to 21,000 sqft, with additional footage needed for parking. A diagram made for Curl Troy depicting a 4-sheet curling club in a potential location is in Appendix A.

The building committee is tasked with targeting possible sites for a curling club and both evaluating the merits it has as well as the potential costs associated with converting it for proper usage, including all necessary code and zoning requirements. The ideal building will likely be an industrial or warehouse space that can be repurposed, which is the most common approach. As the committee narrows down sites, it will examine more closely the costs required to purchase and redevelopment.

*The Ice House*

The largest single piece of equipment that will need to be purchased for any curling club is (Don’t really have much info on this, but doesn’t have to be long, just felt like it warranted a description on it’s own as to what it is etc)

*Fundraising*

The Club has a dedicated committee for the purpose of driving a strategy to help raise funds for the initial and ongoing costs of transitioning into a dedicated building. While clubs will approach this in different ways, there are several approaches that the committee will be embarking on, including:

* Direct member solicitation
* Donation/lending campaign
* General Fundraising
* WCF Lending/Grant program
* Other Resources

The club has already begun to engage and connect with current, previous, and future members and discuss their willingness to help contribute money for the purpose of acquiring a curling facility. Early indications of interest from this group amount to around $46,000 and additional conversations are being had to help accommodate and encourage giving.

Curl Troy will also be engaging with friends, families, business partners, community partners, and other interested parties to provide donations. This will be done through the use of collateral materials developed for both one on one engagements as well as anticipated larger presentations. The club will focus on a developed list of potential donors and referrals in its initial fundraising efforts. (perhaps a little bit about what we’ll be offering for a donation if anything; eg, names on curling stones or something. The “Campaign” that will be used to approach and solicit still needs a little fleshed out, and I think it would be valuable to put that here so we’ll need to come back to it once we have a better idea of what we’re asking for) Ideally, the club would like to raise no less than 50% of the anticipated costs of purchasing and renovating a facility through these means. (I made this number up but it seems reasonable. I couldn’t find any real info as to what a good number here would be, but might be worth looking into)

Other fundraising ideas such as volunteering at a baseball game or attending a fundraiser at a local restaurant have been discussed, but will most likely not be utilized unless to help fill a small gap of funding, and can be useful in providing name recognition and community awareness of the club.

The World Curling Federation will also be approached to assist in paying for the upfront cost of a building. The WCF has a loan program specifically for the purpose of purchasing and developing a building. The program can provide an up to $50,000 per sheet (or $150,000-$200,000) zero interest 10 year loan with 3 year deferrable payments. The loan does require collateral or guarantees as well as other requirements in order to apply for them, however it is well worth approaching for the value of the money being lent. Many clubs have been able to successfully capitalize on the very favorable terms the WCF offers, and is typically the best financing available.

Lastly, Curl Troy has had a successful track record with identifying and being awarded grants for various operations purposes in the past. The club will be looking for additional grant opportunities to help fund this project.

*Go To Market*

(When the time comes, this section can primarily consist of a projected “P&L” that uses a lot of the data just spoken about and depicts how it’s all going to work. It is essentially a summary spreadsheet of what everything costs, and where all of our money is going to come from. It can also include what we still have to raise, or our “shortfall” at the moment, that’s ok. I am not sure there needs to be much of a narrative, but could have a brief explanation)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Item | Amount |
| Building Purchase | -100,000 |
| Renovation | -$200,000-$300,000 |
| Equipment Installation | -$150,000 |
| Total Costs | -$550,000 |
| Member Donations | $50,000 |
| WCF Loan | $200,000 |
| Other donations | $150,000 |
| Grants | $10,000 |

(Alter and edit once more info is known, this is bad formatting, just an example, mostly guesses. Also doesn’t have to be a full breakdown, financials with all the details obviously come way later, but this can essentially be the bird’s eye view of that initial cost, and that initial fundraise.)

**Market Analysis**

**Target Market**

Curling is a flexible and easily accessible sport for all age groups and levels of experience. There are little-to-no barriers for anyone interested in trying curling; whether they are young, old, or disabled, the game can be easily adapted to meet the needs of its players. Playing the game requires no single particular physical or mental attribute to be successful. Curling is challenging for those who are driven by competition and a desire for strategy and teamwork, but also serves as a recreational game that emphasizes social interaction, and sportsmanship. The club therefore has few restrictions in targeting a specific market, and can be broadly defined as the entire Dayton Metro area. The Dayton area combined statistical area has roughly one million residents with about 500,000 within the city of Dayton and it's immediate surrounding suburbs according to most recent census data.

Curl Troy would ideally like to establish a permanent location in, or around, the downtown Dayton area or within the immediate surrounding suburbs. This area offers the greatest ease of access for interested individuals across the region, and has by and large been the location that has offered the most significant growth to the club over the last (howmany) years. On average, the club has seen (howmanypercentage) of new curlers originate from its downtown Dayton leagues. This demographic has been largely (insert any specifics we know – age, etc) and the club would like to continue to serve this group which has historically shown the largest growth potential of all its previous league locations.

Follow up with some information from Montgomery County, there is a lot out there, but not too in the weeds.

The overall adaptability of the sport of curling offers the club a variety of approaches for attracting new members. In addition to the general population, Curl Troy will specifically target some specific demographics:

*Juniors Curling*

For long-term sustainability, the club *needs* to grow and maintain a juniors curling league for school age children and young adults. The objective of a Juniors Curling program would be to create a long term love and passion for the game and to provide an alternative to more typical organized sports activities. Nearly 6 out of 10 children between the ages of 6 and 17 participate in some form of after school extracurricular activity and 35% of them participate in after school sports\* (US Census Bureau). In particular, curling can be less physically demanding and more mentally stimulating than many typical junior sports. Establishing juniors programming is often considered vital for the long term success of curling clubs. However, the largest impediment for introducing a junior’s league at this time is the lack of a dedicated facility. It is estimated that less than 10% of arena clubs across the country currently are able to offer youth curling activities due to difficulty in securing appropriate ice time\* (USCA).

*Collegiate Curling*

In addition to school age curling, Curl Troy would like to partner with local colleges and universities to offer an introduction to curling to a college audience. There are over 45,000 students enrolled across Dayton's three largest higher education institutions; Wright State University, Sinclair Community College and the University of Dayton. Cost is often a barrier preventing college students from engaging in club activities such as regular curling league play. With a dedicated facility, college intermural leagues can be organized at discounted rates. A long-term goal for the collegiate program would be establishing a USCA Competitive Collegiate curling team with Curl Troy as their home club.

*Wright-Patt*

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base is an existing market that supports many local businesses, clubs, and other organizations. Sub-demographics within WPAFB include government civilians, military members, retired military, contractors, recent college graduates, and interns. Many units on base organize teams in local sporting clubs; and the AFB recreational sports office organizes both competitive and recreational sporting opportunities for base personnel. Partnership opportunities have great potential for both organizations. In particular, young military personnel and recent college graduates new to the Dayton area are often looking for ways to meet new people and get involved in the local region; a curling club is a perfect opportunity.

The base has a workforce numbering approximately 27,000 people; 7000 active duty and nearly 13,000 civilians. 90,000 retirees within a 100 mile radius also use the services offered by WPAFB.

*Other Specific groups?*

In addition to these markets, curling is a suitable past time for many other groups including:

* Families
* Seniors
* Young Professionals
* Americans with disabilities
* Other Military Groups
* Partnerships with Traditional Country Clubs

**Market Trends and Growth**

Currently there are no other curling clubs that operate within the Dayton region. There are however, several clubs that operate in the surrounding metro areas and across the state. Most notably would be the Cincinnati Curling Club and the Columbus Curling Club; both of which reside within an hour's drive of Dayton. Both of these clubs could be considered direct competition as there are several instances of Dayton area residents commuting to either of these clubs to curl. Curl Troy will aim to attract and retain all residents within the Dayton area to the club.

The most recent available information from the United States Curling Association (USCA) indicates that the average adult member age ranges between 36 and 49 years old (62%) with the next most common age range between 50 and 64. There have been some notable statistics regarding the introduction of curling to younger audiences however. Immediately following the winter Olympic cycle, many clubs report a significant uptick in the number of younger participants interested in learning to curl. Out of the clubs surveyed, as many as 80% of all new touches after the Olympics were reported to be below the club's average age. - Not sure I like this, or is relevant. Need to relate back to Dayton stats somehow.

Curling within the United States has seen consistent growth and expansion. In the Great Lakes Curling Association region, there are currently 16 clubs across four states (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana and Tennessee.) Out of these 16 clubs, 7 of them were established within the last 10 years, including Curl Troy. The clubs in Cincinnati, Columbus and Dayton were all established since 2004. In addition to local expansion, the United States has seen growth of new clubs across the country, including some less likely regions such as Florida, Texas, Arizona, and Mississippi. In total there are currently 165 clubs across 40 states registered with the USCA and consists of 16,000 members.

Would like to insert some more numbers regarding the current membership statistics of the USCA – Need to find.

**SWOT**

The Club has identified the following as part of a SWOT analysis to help better prepare and plan for the future growth of Curl Troy.

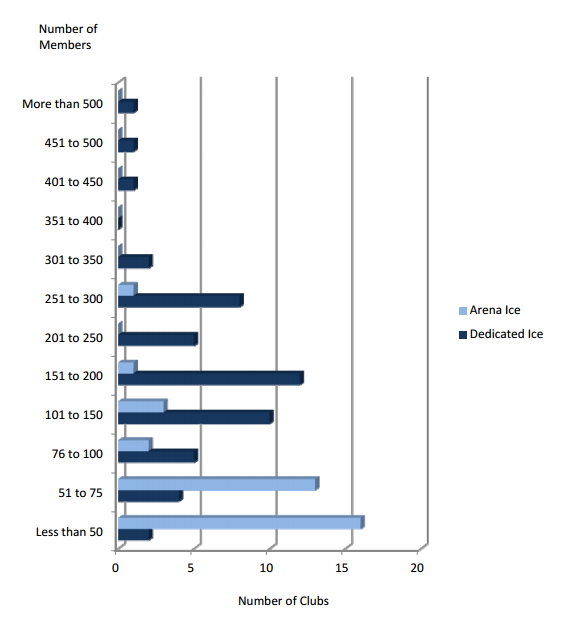
|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strengths and Competitive Edge** | **Weaknesses and Barriers** |
| * No other competitors in Dayton Area * Significant Assets already purchased * Strong Membership Retention * Consistent membership growth * Dedicated and experienced Board * Registered 501(c)3 non-profit * Low cost real estate market * Experienced, trained instructors * Large market size * Local interest is strong * Experience organizing and hosting Bonspiels and friendlies * Good relationships with nearby clubs * Established communication channels for members and new curlers * Multi-revenue sources | * **Full time membership low** * **Low volunteer participation** * **Current expensive ice time** * **Limited ice time** * **No consistent home** * **Large upfront capital costs for building** * **Sport awareness** |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| * Capitalize on upcoming Olympic cycle * UCF Grant/Loan programs * Community Partnerships * Resources and Knowledge from Existing Clubs) * Expand offerings such as for Junior leagues and Collegiate leagues. * Better incentives for members such as expanded ice time and leagues. * More frequent event hosting * Ideally central location | * **TBD** |

**Products and Services**

**Dedicated Facility**

It is important to emphasize that without a dedicated facility, all of the following topics are either largely impractical or impossible. Obtaining a space specifically for the purpose of curling will allow for significant growth and expansion of the club. A dedicated curling space will allow the club to provide additional services to members, newcomers, other curling clubs, and outside community partners in a way that Curl Troy physically cannot accommodate while operating out of the local arenas.

The lack of a dedicated facility hampers the club’s ability to attract and retain members due to both minimal ice availability needed to support a growth in membership, as well as fewer significant membership incentives other than play time. Though no guarantee, the USCA Growth and Development survey cites that 80% of arena club respondents have less than 75 members, while less than 12% of dedicated clubs have fewer than 75 members. The chart below shows a sampling of data from the survey.



*Quality* of curling ice is also a major factor in attracting and retaining members. Research from the Scottish-Ice Curling Group shows that all level of curlers benefit from having a dedicated facility that is not shared with other sports such as ice hockey or figure skating, and is specifically laid out and cultivated for curling. Not all ice curls the same, and in some instances, it may barely curl at all, or cause the stone to fall in the opposite direction than intended.

Beginners who are instructed how to play properly only to have something different happen will become frustrated or confused and be less likely to return. Likewise, experienced curlers want to play on good ice that helps them sharpen their skills and strategy. They will expect that the surface they are playing on is of the best quality, just like a basketball player, football player, or golfer. It is an integral part of growing participation, and it is not achievable in an ice arena. —maybe an analogy to golfers practicing putting in their weed-infested back yard is in order…

In addition, Curl Troy will be focusing on providing *Club Memberships, Curling Events, Bar and Concessions, and Off-Season events. (Work through this segway)*

**Membership**

Curl Troy will provide a flexible tiered structure of membership options to provide the best fit for individuals. It is understandable that potential members will have different levels of commitment, ability, and availability, so the club plans to provide opportunities for everyone who is interested to participate, and encourage them to join at the level that best meets their current needs. As membership grows, these dues will represent the largest portion of revenue that the club will generate for ongoing operations.

*Annual/Full Time Membership*

As it currently stands, this is the primary type of membership that the club offers. At $500 a year, it guarantees members access to all current league offerings. In the future this tier will be priced at (insert here.) Annual Members will continue to have access to all currently planned league offerings, and will also have full access to the facility during any unscheduled events or leagues for practice and socializing. Annual members will also have first access to any bonspiels being held at the club, discounted pricing on holding private events at the club, and any training or practice opportunities with limited availability. (Add or subtract more things here)

*League Membership*

For those who are very interested in curling but may have limited availability due to other commitments, or may not be ready to commit to a full time membership, the club will offer single league memberships. Currently, participants in single leagues make up a large portion of players with Curl Troy. It's important that this level of access be maintained to encourage new players to remain involved, and to grow their love of the game. These players are often new to curling and represent the primary pipeline of individuals who will most likely become full time members. The current price for single leagues vary over the course of the year but a set price of ($180.00) will be established with a dedicated facility.

Perhaps add in that these levels/benefits are likely to change as the club evolves into a dedicated club and additional league options become available. Social Membership?

Members who sign up for single leagues will be able to select the option that best suits their current situation, and to sign up for multiple leagues a year if they desire to do so. This level of membership will allow access to the club only during daytime hours or during club-wide events, and access to the ice only during their scheduled league time. They will have limited access for practice and bonspiels held at the club. Members of this group also represent individual league offerings the club would like to host such as:

* Juniors Leagues
* Collegiate Leagues
* Rookie Leagues
* (Any Others here)

Statistically, retention rates for first year curlers are the lowest, and increases between years two and three. Curlers between 1 and 5 years of experience, regardless of membership type will have opportunities to participate in more formal training programs to encourage continued interest in the sport and inhibit attrition. Some of these opportunities may include:

* Skill Development Clinics taught by senior club members
* Curling Camps
* One on One Coaching
* Juniors skip mentoring programs

Though ideally the club would like to have 100% full time members to secure revenue and plan for league offerings and operational needs, *League Membership* may well make up the bulk of new members early on, and it is important to provide them affordable and convenient access to the club and encourage greater participation with the club, both on and off the ice. As membership grows, additional leagues and offerings will be assessed and provided.

**Curling Events**

Hosting a variety of events outside of typical league play is vitally important for building community awareness of the club and building stronger partnerships with other clubs. Curl Troy will focus primarily on hosting *Bonspiels (and Friendlies),* *Learn-to-Curls,* and *Corporate Events.* Each type of event will aim to attract a different crowd from the other, and will also provide a supplemental revenue source for the club.

Bonspiels and friendlies focus on building connections between clubs and can be high-profile community events. Learn-to-curls and corporate events help encourage others to come to the club and participate. In general, bonspiels are often the second largest and most reliable source of income for a curling club.

*Bonspiels*

A bonspiel is a weekend long curling tournament that the club hosts for other curling teams across the region and country. These tournaments have entry fees per each participating team often in the range of $300-$400, and capacity for participation is dependent on how many sheets of ice the club manages. A club with 3 sheets can typically support (xyz) teams, and a club with 4 sheets can support about (abc) teams.

Different clubs provide different offerings to encourage teams to enroll in the tournament, including live entertainment, raffle prizes, beer festivals, and games. Teams are encouraged to socialize at the club in between games, share a few beers, and get to know the other teams they have played. Bar sales can make up a large part of the revenue over this one weekend, and having a full service bar is important. (Insert Gross alcohol sales from CCB) (Some clubs do not get bar revenues / hurts the bottom line –Kalamazoo / Pittsburgh – impacts onsight broomstacking.).

Curl Troy has experience at organizing and operating a successful Bonspiel. In 2016, the club hosted the inaugural Champion City Bonspiel in Springfield, OH. Twenty-four teams attended this event from across the country and Canada with overwhelmingly positive feedback. This event was held in an ice arena which caused significant logistical problems and higher expense-to-income than it would have had it been in a dedicated building. (Stronger wording: Something like 80% expense instead of 80% income) The club has opted to postpone hosting a second tournament to focus efforts on a curling facility that will reduce planning time, overhead, and provide a better ice experience for visiting teams.

Bonspiels are a great way to compete with other teams, get to know other clubs, and build friendships around an amazing sport. Curl Troy will be hosting a minimum of one bonspiel in it's first year in a dedicated building, but will expand as needed in years 2 through 5. The club will likely grow to at least 2 bonspiels a year, as well apply to host regional and national tournaments such as the five (year) and under bonspiels.

Friendlies are similar to Bonspiels, but on a smaller scale. In particular, they build stronger ties to neighboring curling clubs. Friendlies require much lower investment in time and money but with correspondingly less income. The main strength is that they can be organized more frequently than the larger bonspiels.

*Learn-To-Curl*

A Learn-To-Curl is essentially an open invitation to the public to come try curling for a single session that usually lasts about 2 hours. During this session, instructors teach individuals all of the basic fundamentals of curling by taking them out on the ice and providing hands on experience right away. The participants start with a crash course, and finish with a short curling match. This is followed up by socializing and broomstacking in the warm room/club room after the game.

These events are typically not large money makers, but they do serve an important purpose in helping to expose the sport of curling to people who have never played it and help spread awareness of the club around the Dayton area. The bottom line goal of a learn-to-curl is to identify the first-time curlers who will be eager to continue playing an sign up for leagues and membership.

*Corporate Events*

In addition to learn-to-curls, the club will try to capitalize on opportunities to host corporate events for groups who are interested in curling as either a team building exercise or company outing among others. These events would essentially be private learn-to-curl sessions scheduled with the club and offering all of the same benefits. These events focus less on learning and more on having fun, and are great for building awareness of the club.

*Bar and Concessions*

One of the most celebrated traditions in the game of curling is the promotion of camaraderie and sportsmanship through the post-game ritual called *broomstacking.* Broomstacking is time after each match to sit down with the opposing team to get to know each other, talk about the game, and more frequently than not, have a beer together. It is no wonder that most if not all dedicated curling facilities have their own full service bar and kitchen. The tables in the warm room around which all teams share and socialize, create bonds off of the ice that can't be formed elsewhere; commiserating about a loss or boasting about a victory with your team happens over a pint glass. Providing a place for teams to do this is essential to socialize and grow bonds with their club-mates.

Currently, Curl Troy departs the arena after its game each week and heads off to a local bar or brewery to broomstack. Not only are dollars leaving the club to buy a beer elsewhere, but often players may not want to travel to a second location for the night before heading home, and lose out on the opportunity to connect with others.

At events such as bonspiels, it is expected to have beer available for thirsty players, and often provides a significant boost to revenue for the weekend. In addition, several meals are often provided to teams who participate. A kitchen isn't as vital to the club's success as a bar, it is important to have to decrease the burden of providing meals at bonspiels as well as create a more flexible and appealing location for other events being held at the club.

Expected bar revenues estimated up to 15% of yearly membership income, and at least 15% of estimated Bonspiel income at a dedicated club.

**Off-Season Events**

(Need to do more brainstorming on this with others)

A few options that have been discussed:

* Rent out the space as a banquet hall / multi-purpose space.
* Share the space/expenses with a summer-time sports club or other social group
* Make space available as a free community resource (i.e. arts /music venue) with shared portion of bar / door cover income.
* Existing model of Detroit CC leasing the space to the city as a community center.

**Strategy and Implementation**

**Marketing Strategy**

Curl Troy already employs a relatively robust outreach system in order to attract new and maintain current members. These methods, while suitable at present, will need to expand and evolve as the dedicated facility comes to realization. Currently the club utilizes a strong social media presence as well as provides both electronic and printable information, direct communication with members and other clubs, and most importantly, partnerships with other organizations such as Five Rivers Metro Parks. The club uses these avenues to provide information ranging from upcoming leagues, bonspiels and social activities, to national curling events, tips and techniques, and to raise general awareness of the sport of curling.

*Social Media*

Curl Troy posts regularly on Facebook, (Instagram, and Twitter?) The club has almost 300 followers on Facebook, which is significant given the limited number of full time members the club has at present. Primarily this is a space used to inform those who are already aware of Curl Troy and its activities about upcoming events. Given the ratio of active players to followers, it is a great way to serve as an easy reminder, or communicate with interested curlers who may be looking for an extra league or bonspiel to sign up for. It is not an excellent resource for outreach to those who may not know much, if anything about curling in the Miami Valley. Curl Troy will continue to grow its presence online and keep itself front and center in the minds of people who want to know about opportunities to curl.

*Other Electronic and Print Media*

The club maintains a website complete with an active blog and information about upcoming events. This is often used in conjunction with social media, but provides a more official resource, with information about the club and how to become a member. The club also provides a regular e-newsletter to members to help both recap any public news that may have been missed, as well as provide “members only” information regarding the club.

In addition to the user generated information, Curl Troy has found success in utilizing other media sources such as local newspapers and magazines to help spread information about curling. Such publications include the Dayton Daily News, Springfield Sun Times, Dayton Magazine, and Five Rivers Metro Parks publications. These have proven to be valuable outlets for helping disseminate information, and either drive individuals to the website, or directly to the curling sheet. Notably, large events such as bonspiels help attract additional media attention, and help fuel a cycle of continued publicity and growth.

*Partnerships and Word of Mouth*

As mentioned previously, Curl Troy has found a lot of success partnering with organizations such as Five Rivers Metro Parks to help create awareness and attract new participants. This is primarily because the size of their audience is significantly larger than the club’s, and it can reach more people through their publications and advertisements. Beyond that however, the club has also engaged in a number of other activities such as participating in local community events, fundraisers at local breweries, and (something.)

Any new strategies developed will be as a result of new opportunities to reach out to the community and attract different players. As an example, the club does not currently make any significant efforts to reach out or develop relationships with groups that interest the club such as junior curlers. The reason for this is simply because as an arena club, we do not have the resources to offer leagues or classes to individuals in those groups. However, as the dedicated facility is established and new offerings are made available, growing partnerships with institutions such as local colleges, high schools, and Wright-Patt will become imperative pipelines for the club. (Also probably important to mention partnerships such as USCA and other curling associations that we have a beneficial relationship with)

Lastly, the importance of word of mouth cannot be understated. If every current member could bring in one new person a year, we wouldn’t have room for them. Building relationships, particularly with the partners mentioned, requires goodwill and the time needed to develop it. Personal one on one interactions are vital for any club’s growth, including this one.

**Sales Strategy**

Once individuals have discovered that the wildly fun and entertaining sport of curling is located right in their own back yard, it will then be the club’s mission to turn that discovery into a long-term love and commitment. The club intends to focus on converting first time curlers into life-time members, and to do that, it will be focusing on a number of different factors such as early pipeline development, incentivizing continued participation and extending the best hospitality possible to existing and future members.

*Pipeline Development*

Through all the means described before, the club will find ways to solicit interest from different populations and organizations to help initially welcome people to curl. That initial introduction to curling can include activities such as Learn-To-Curls and Corporate Events. The club will price these modestly at around $25.00 a person and provide 2 hours of instruction and play time, as well as host the new curlers to a broomstacking event at the club afterwards. Broomstacking is an important social opportunity for people to discuss their experience on the ice, and for existing members and instructors to build relationships and gather interest for potentially joining an upcoming league.

At present the club holds roughly (4) Learn-To-Curl sessions per year. Assuming that 3 sheets will be available and interest will grow annually along with corporate events, the club assumes growth in that first contact to reach around 300 people a year by within 5 years.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Learn-to-Curl** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| Number of LTC's | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Participants | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Total Participants | 96 | 144 | 192 | 240 | 288 |

After first contact, the club will encourage first time curlers to stay in touch with the club via social media, email, or other means, as well as to join an upcoming league. Learn-To-Curls and other events will be, whenever possible, strategically placed close to league start times so as to not lose interest. Currently, the club maintains 3 separate leagues that correspond with the different venues it hosts them at. However, in a dedicated facility it is assumed that there may likely be two 12 week leagues for members, to correspond with the standard curling season between October and March.

This may grow and change as both the size and consistency of the membership evolves. For example, should there be a large population of junior curlers, it may warrant their own league, and the same can be said for participants in a collegiate league or a Wright-Patt night. As these considerations develop, they will be addressed. In addition, there is something to be said about hosting rookie leagues instead of dropping a new curler into a wolf’s den of experienced players. As the club ages and its players skill develops, leagues for curlers with less experience become more important so that they do not become frustrated or discouraged, and can learn to play in a more inviting environment.

The club projects that over the next 5 years there will be a gradual growth resulting from the successful conversion of Learn-To-Curlers to first time league players at around 25%. This is intended to represent roughly half the projected Annual Single League members, with the rest coming from direct sign-ups as well as past players interested in only playing in a single league for the year. From there, the club hopes to retain 20% of those members for the second league and then convert 50% of Second League members into full annual members.

At the end of 5 years, the club hopes to have a total of 131 full or part time members in the club. This number is based in part on trends from other local dedicated club membership numbers as well as previous experience.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **1 L Member** | **2 L Member** | **Ann Member** |
| 1 | 50 | 10 | 25 |
| 2 | 60 | 12 | 30 |
| 3 | 72 | 14 | 36 |
| 4 | 76 | 15 | 43 |
| 5 | 80 | 16 | 51 |
| 2 L Members as detailed are non-unique of 1 L Members and are not counted twice for the purposes of membership, only revenue | | | |

The initial Single League number is based in past performance, in which Curl Troy has been successful in attracting around 75 unique participants (including annual members) in its winter league in Downtown Dayton. The initial Annual Membership number begins Year 1 at the current full-time membership level and grows as described above, with retention of Second League members also reflecting historical ratios. It is assumed these numbers are net any attrition or absence year to year.

1 L Membership is represented as less number of 2 L Membership

In general, it is difficult to predict membership growth of the future based on past experience since as mentioned previously, an arena club does not have the ability to retain members in the same way that a dedicated facility does. However, since the average dedicated club maintains a membership level of around 150-200 individuals (USCA G&D) it will be the goal of the club to reach and maintain that number as well.

(As membership and league due strategies are not finalized, we will proceed with an assumption based on the current model)

*Membership Pricing*

Currently, the membership dues are broken down as follows and come with all benefits and restrictions as detailed previously. Members pay a one-time sum for either the league they are participating in, or for the full year with further incentive offerings explained below. It should be noted that there are many other revenue sources available to the club that it will capitalize on including Learn-To-Curls, Friendlies, Bonspiels and food and alcohol sales. A larger breakdown of revenue generation may be found in the Financials section.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Basics Year :** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| Annual Members | 25 | 30 | 36 | 43 | 51 |
| League Members | 50 | 60 | 72 | 76 | 80 |
| League Members 2 | 10 | 12 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| Number of Sheets | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Weeks of Curling | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Ann. Membership Cost | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 | $500.00 |
| New Ann. Membership Cost | $400.00 | $400.00 | $400.00 | $400.00 | $400.00 |
| League Membership Cost | $180.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 | $180.00 |
| League Membership Cost 2 | $150.00 | $150.00 | $150.00 | $150.00 | $150.00 |
| Ann. Membership Revenue | $12,500.00 | $12,500.00 | $15,000.00 | $18,000.00 | $21,600.00 |
| New Ann. Membership Revenue | $0.00 | $2,000.00 | $2,400.00 | $2,880.00 | $3,052.80 |
| League Membership Revenue | $9,000.00 | $10,800.00 | $12,960.00 | $13,737.60 | $14,424.48 |
| League Membership Revenue 2 | $1,500.00 | $1,800.00 | $2,160.00 | $2,289.60 | $2,404.08 |
| Total Membership Revenue | **$23,000.00** | **$27,100.00** | **$32,520.00** | **$36,907.20** | **$41,481.36** |

These prices are both comparable to what the club is currently offering at an arena facility, but also within the typical market rate pricing of other nearby clubs. Some examples include:

* Cincinnati Curling Club: $160.00 per 8 week League
* Columbus Curling Club:
* Ft Wayne Curling Club: $1000.00 Full Annual Membership
* Bowling Green Curling Club:
* Kalamazoo Curling Club: $150.00 for Rookie League, $550.00 for 18 weeks and other tiers.

(There is likely a little more to say with regards to the “Pricing Comparison” and how we are competitive in this sense)

*Discounts and Incentives*

As stated before, first year retention rates are the lowest, and after succeeding in getting someone to sign up for their first league, the next challenge becomes getting them to come back. Strategically, there is little good in offering a first-time league player a discount to play, as they will forever after be paying an increased price to participate, and upon reaching a point to play again, may choose not to. Instead, the club will offer a ($150.00) discounted second league to players who complete their first one, no matter when in the year that may fall. This special price will be the first step in incentivizing young players to come back and play again (club burden)

If any player chooses to become an annual member for the first time, then they will pay a discounted rate of (I Have no idea.) This will be done for their first annual membership because it is a larger commitment in both time and money, and anyone eager and willing to make that commitment for the first time will be duly incentivized.

Beyond this, it is still yet to be determined as to whether or not there will be discounts for the previously mentioned partners such as universities and college leagues. Depending on the model, it may be that the college itself pays for students to attend, or some other agreement to offer a subsidized price. Similar discussions have been had regarding the employees at Wright-Patt which represent a vastly large population in the region. However, for the purposes outlined here, the club assumes that all membership pricing will maintain this model until such time as those partnership discussions are more fully realized.

*Hospitality*

As has been mentioned previously, Broomstacking is the social activity that occurs, typically after each curling matching where players from each team sit down to commiserate. Other than simply offering a space for players to do this (which is also important,) it is intended that this is a warm inviting space where even players who have curling a single night of their life feel like they are in the most welcoming place of their life.

* What to do to help keep newbies coming back and seasoned players from bailing? Need to think on this and get some ideas. – Need others input.

*Events Sales Strategy*

Curl Troy will be intending on starting with a single bonspiel in the first year of the dedicated facility unless strong demand and steadfast volunteers warrant a second. This isn’t uncommon in a first year of operations when excitement is high, but for these purposes, the club will grow steadily to include 4 different “bonspiel” events by Year 5. These could include regionally or nationally sponsored events, but will also be dependent on demand.

As there are other curling clubs within a few hours drive of Dayton, there are also many other bonspiels going on during the year that compete for local players. In general, March is a busy time for local bonspiels. Soliciting directly to other clubs for teams to participate is often the easiest, but strong relationships and having a spotless reputation for hosting a good event that is built upon year after year is the best way to keep players coming back from other clubs. If you can’t host a good bonspiel, people won’t want to attend. As mentioned before, the club has had experience with hosting such events with great success in the past; it is the second largest revenue generator for the club.

Teams attending will be charged around$100 a player or $400 a team. With three sheets, the club could support a total of 24 teams per spiel. The club estimates that each participant would, on average, purchase 2 beers a day over the course of a 3 day event, at a currently projected price of $3.00 per beer. Other drinks and meals are typically provided as a part of the entry fee to participate. Keeping teams busy with many of the events and games mentioned above as well as raffles, contests, and solid beer selection are all integral. Further breakdowns can be seen in the Financials, but in general, the club anticipates revenue to grow as seen below:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bonspiel** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| Number of Bonspiels | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| Number of Teams | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Participants | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 | 96 |
| Price | $100.00 | $100.00 | $100.00 | $100.00 | $100.00 |
| Registration Total | $9,600.00 | $19,200.00 | $28,800.00 | $28,800.00 | $38,400.00 |
| Bar Estimate: | $1,728.00 | $3,456.00 | $5,184.00 | $5,184.00 | $6,912.00 |
| Raffle Estimate | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 | $1,000.00 |
| Total: | $12,328.00 | $23,656.00 | $34,984.00 | $34,984.00 | $46,312.00 |

In a similar vein, the club will likely host a number of “Friendlies” throughout the year. These tend to be low key invitationals for a single other club to come play for a day. They can be thought of as a “Bonspiel Lite” events with lower registration fees and fewer teams, but in most other ways function in the same way as a full bonspiel. The club anticipates it could host up to 3 per year given the proximity of other clubs, though friendlies tend to work as a “home and home” series with the other club and so may not always be hosted in Dayton. Here it is assumed there would be only 24 total players, or 6 teams, with each individual consuming 3 drinks throughout the day.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Friendlies** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Year 3** | **Year 4** | **Year 5** |
| Number of Friendlies | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Participants | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Price | $50 | $50 | $50 | $50 | $50 |
| Bar Estimate: | $648.00 | $648.00 | $648.00 | $648.00 | $648.00 |
| Total: | $4,248 | $4,248 | $4,248 | $4,248 | $4,248 |

With regards to corporate events, the club anticipates that these will slowly grow as local recognition of the club becomes more broadly realized. The Curl Troy website will provide detailed information regarding corporate events as well as disseminate information on Facebook and other social media sources. There is currently no strategy in place to directly solicit companies to host events at the curling club, however that is likely going to be developed and implemented once a dedicated facility is up and running. Different clubs interpret the value of these events differently, and it all depends on how to generate interest and demand for curling as a social out-of-office corporate activity. USCA states that the most advantages corporate programs are realized in large metro areas, which Dayton arguably is or is not.

Depending on the schedule and how integral this aspect of programming is for the club going forward, it could either be something scheduled just about once a week; where the facility is rented out at a base price to be made use of by the company interest in it, or it could be set as a per person enhanced ‘Learn-To-Curl” session price as it is currently detailed below. The club projects that by year 5, it will be hosted a total of 12 Learn-To-Curl or Corporate events during the season, or 2 per month. This also assumes that each participant has 2 beers during their stay.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **LTC/Corporate** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Number of LTC's | 4 | 6 | 8 | 10 | 12 |
| Participants | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 24 |
| Price | $25 | $25 | $25 | $25 | $25 |
| Bar Estimate: | $576.00 | $864.00 | $1,152.00 | $1,440.00 | $1,728.00 |
| Total: | $2,976.00 | $4,464.00 | $5,952.00 | $7,440.00 | $8,928.00 |

**Financial Information**

**TBD**