

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - The 2017 Bill Bolton Survey

The Bill Bolton survey on program participation and user satisfaction was launched in October, 2017, and terminated in early December. We, the arena’s Board of Directors, together with its staff, are grateful to the 115 individuals who voluntarily filled out questionnaires, and we now wish to report back to the community on the survey’s most significant findings. The survey results will be used to inform future program and resource planning. (Note: the full report on those findings can be accessed by contacting Chris Quinn of the Bill Bolton staff at cquinn.billboltonarena@gmail.com.)

By *programs*, we have in mind such operations as Bill Bolton’s Co-Ed House League or its Learn-to-Skate classes. On average, those filling out questionnaires were involved in approximately three programs each, whether as participants (44%), as the caregivers of participants (27%), or as both (29%). A five-point scale—ranging from *very unsatisfied* to *very satisfied*—was used to measure respondents’ evaluations of their experiences. Most questions also invited respondents to use their own words to describe specifically what they like and dislike about our operations.

Demographics. Regarding age, a solid majority of our sample (80%) is 35 or older. How does our clientele receive information about arena events? The Bill Bolton website (74%) and the brochures available near the Pro Shop (56%), are the most accessible sources of information, but on-site postings (27%), Facebook and other social media (27%), and even the arena newsletter (9%) reached significant numbers. Regarding transportation, 25% indicated they lived within one km. of the arena and 56% placed themselves within three, yet relatively few (19%) arrive on foot, by bike, or by public transportation. Little wonder, then, that parking and drop-off difficulties figure prominently in our participants’ arena concerns.

Hockey Leagues, Learn to Skate, etc. How do our respondents rate the various activities they are directly or indirectly involved in? We can report that their levels of satisfaction are very high indeed. Here are the percentages for all ten of the programs we surveyed:

Program Name	Percentage “Very unsatisfied” or “Unsatisfied”	Percentage “Satisfied” or “Very satisfied”
Co-Ed House League (N:49)	8%	90%
Girls House League (N:24)	0%	80%
Learn to Skate (N:38)	8%	90%
Men’s Adult League (N:31)	3%	90%
Women’s Adult League (N:47)	11%	79%
Girl’s Hockey Skills (N:16)	6%	69%
Youth Hockey Camps (N:31)	3%	90%
Adult Hockey Skills (N:28)	8%	79%
Public Skating (N:56)	1%	95%
Private Rentals (N:30)	7%	83%
Total responses (N:330)	6%	90%

These positive results notwithstanding, our respondents had various complaints and improvements to suggest, especially in connection with the hockey programs listed above. Inconsistent refereeing is one flashpoint (though we have just as many comments praising our referees). Somewhat more prominent is a concern for team “balance,” especially in the case of the Women’s Adult League. (Note: it is the only program where disapproval levels rise, however slightly, above 10%.)

Dressing Rooms, etc. That Bill Bolton’s dressing rooms are too small, that they are often too hot, that the showers are a hit-and-miss affair (mostly miss), and that there is a lack of privacy in the dressing rooms during women’s games—none of this is lost on our respondents. Yet despite this litany of complaints, assessments are high, with over 90% of respondents in the *satisfied* or *very satisfied* columns. In particular, the cleanliness of our dressing rooms and public areas was much appreciated, to judge by the written comments we received. Regarding the Pro Shop and the Snack Bar, once again the overall scores are highly positive, though here we do well to note an undercurrent of demand for healthier offerings in the Snack Bar. (In fact, in the past few months, we have initiated a number of “healthy-choice” improvements.)

Staff: Accessibility & Helpfulness. “The staff makes BB the great community facility that it is,” one enthusiastic respondent writes. “They are always on hand. Great with kids, with youth, with the grandparents.” This comment supports the high ratings received by the Bill Bolton staff on both *accessibility* and *overall helpfulness*. Thus—to focus solely on the latter findings—some 106 (of 115) or 92% of our respondents declared themselves *satisfied* or *very satisfied* and only three registered outright negative judgments.

“Final Thoughts.” The last question of our survey simply asked respondents to comment on what impressed them about our operations and where there was a need for change or improvement. Here, we do well to caution our readers that this research does not represent a systematic survey of our community. Nevertheless, we do have one tentative conclusion to offer: for a significant number of our users, Bill Bolton is not only a programmatically versatile facility with a friendly and effective staff. It is also—to judge especially by the written comments this exercise elicited—a significant presence in their lives and in the lives of their families. That is a sobering thought for both board members and staff as we make decisions on programs, budgets, capital investments, and the like.

February, 2018

--Chris Quinn, Facility Operator

--Stephen Longstaff, Board Member