



THE  
ULTIMATE  
BOWLING  
EXPERIENCE



# 2021 USBC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS **SURVEY RESULTS**

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## SURVEY RESULTS

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## **Overview**

In 2017, USBC introduced significant changes to the USBC Open Championships designed to improve the experience and competitive environment of the event. The changes included a new three-division structure designed for better peer-to-peer competition, average requirement and team roster qualifications, along with withholding publication of lane patterns until after the event to improve fairness.

Now that bowlers have experienced the changes at the 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2021 Open Championships, a survey was conducted to determine participants' ongoing acceptance and approval of the changes.

USBC gathered 5,051 survey responses from participants in the 2021 Open Championships in Las Vegas. Based on 38,045 total bowlers in the 2021 Open Championships, 5,051 survey respondents and a confidence interval of 95%, this survey has a margin of error of +/- 1%.



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## **Survey Participants**

- 77% of those who responded to the survey were competitors and 21% were competitors who captained the team. 2% were coordinators (five or more teams).
- 13% of survey participants came with one team to the Open Championships, 69% traveled with less than five teams, 16% brought 5-9 teams and 15% came in with 10 or more teams.
- 8% of respondents said they bowled in their first Open Championships, 47% have bowled the tournament nine or less times, 25% bowled more than nine but less than 20 years, and 28% have been in bowling in the event for 20 or more years.
- The majority, 54% of those who took the survey, traveled from the following top 10 states in order from highest to lowest: Texas, California, Illinois, Florida, Ohio, Wisconsin, Arizona, Michigan, Minnesota, New York.
- Household income of the surveyed bowlers: 20% make \$50k or less, 42% make \$50k-\$100k and 38% make more than \$100k.
- Most survey respondents are male (86%), while 13% are female and 1% preferred not to say.
- A majority, 75% of Open Championships survey responses, came from bowlers who are 50 years or older, 23% were 30-49 years of age and 2% were age 29 or younger.
- 9% of survey participants had a league bowling average of 160 or less, 18% have an average between 161-180, 43% have an average between 181-209 and 30% have a league bowling average of 210 or more.



# **SURVEY RESULTS**

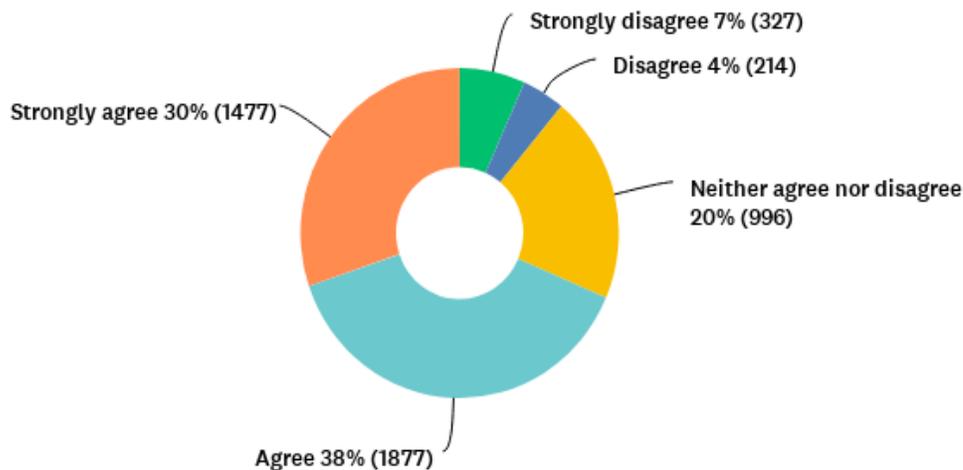
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## **Average Structure**

Bowlers were asked about the change in 2019 to using Championships Averages, based on a minimum of 27 games at the event, as a bowler's entering average, and whether it was a positive change for the future of the tournament.

Respondents were asked to indicate if they strongly agreed, agreed, strongly disagreed or disagreed with that statement, or if they neither agree nor disagree.

*Answered: 4,891    Skipped: 160*

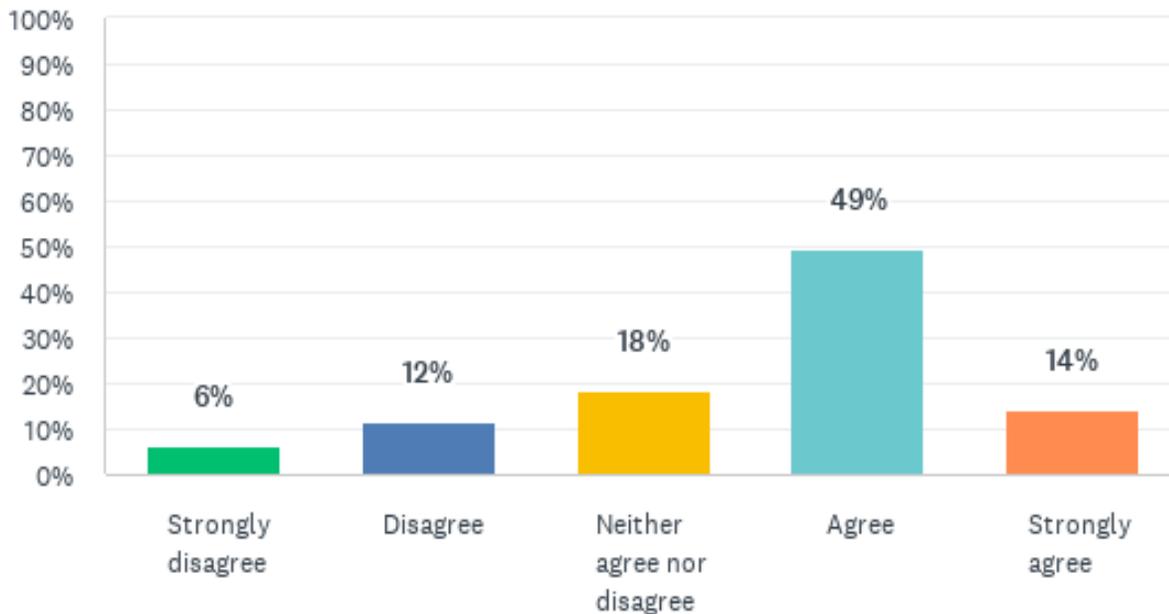


The majority of bowlers (68%) either agreed or strongly agreed that this was positive.

## **Lane Pattern Difficulty**

The survey asked bowlers whether they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or neither agree nor disagree that the lane conditions at the Open Championships were appropriate for a national championship tournament.

*Answered: 4,891    Skipped: 160*

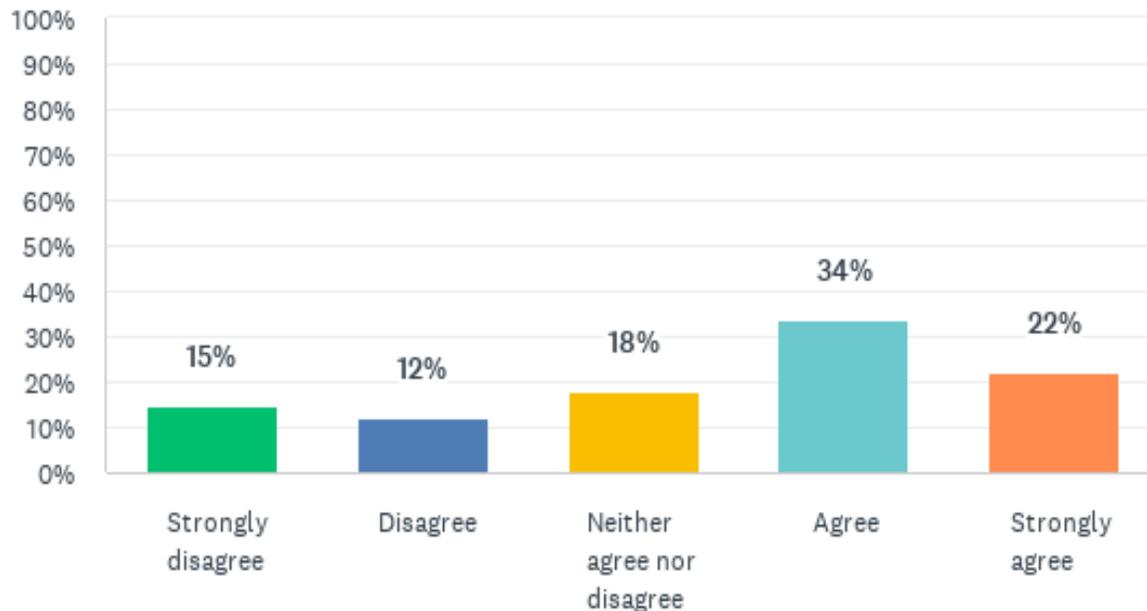


The majority of bowlers (63%) either agreed or strongly agreed that the lane conditions at the Open Championships were appropriate.

## **Lane Pattern Publication**

Bowlers were asked whether they agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed that the lane patterns being kept secret, and not revealed until after the tournament, helps create a more level playing field for all competitors.

*Answered: 4,891    Skipped: 160*

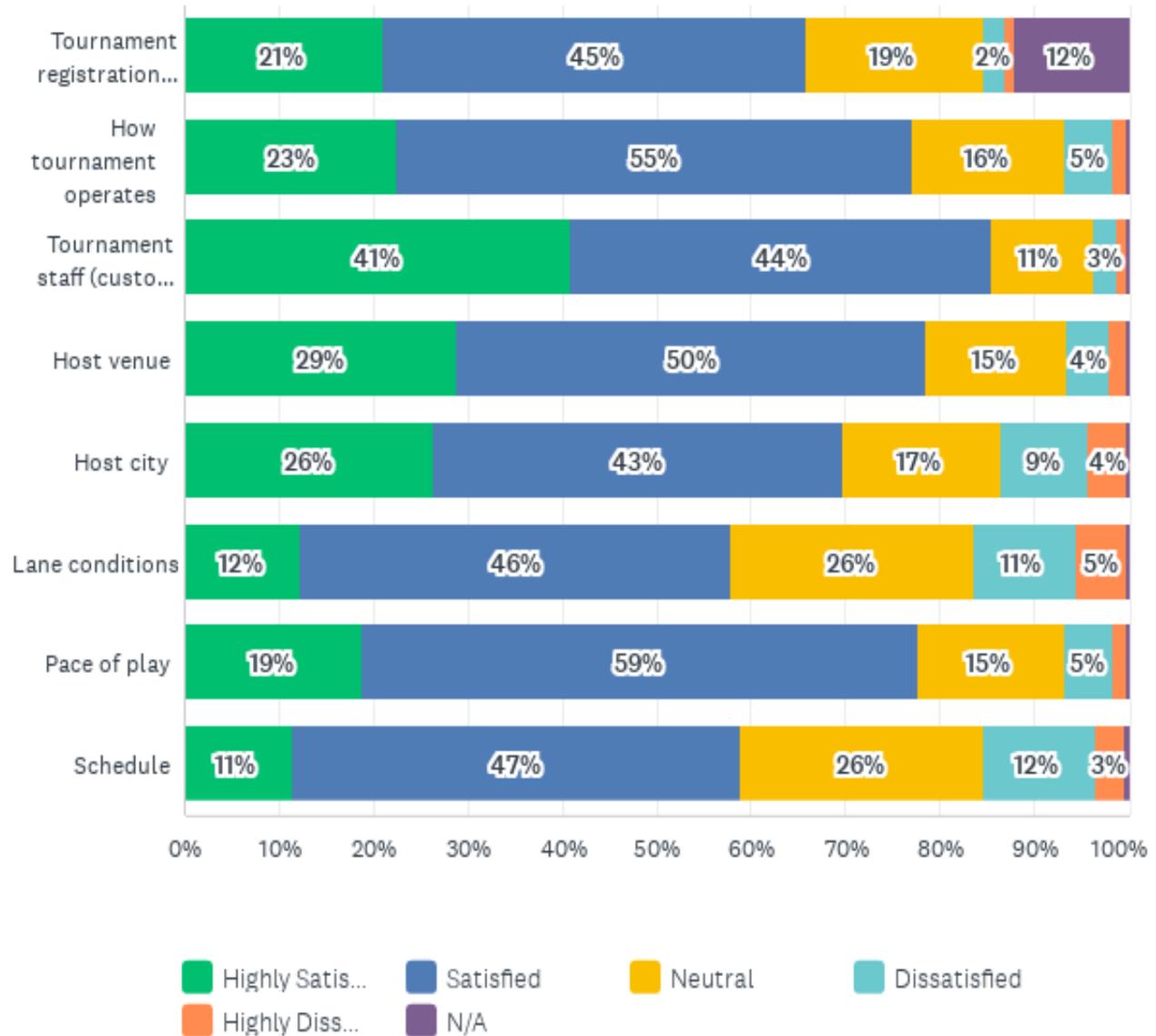


Overall, the majority (56%) of bowlers agreed the lane patterns should remain secret and not revealed until after the event. The results show bowlers have a wider acceptance in 2021, up 12% over 2018 when only 44% agreed with not disclosing the lane patterns until after the event.

## Event Satisfaction

Bowlers were asked to identify their levels of satisfaction relating to eight aspects of the 2021 tournament. Results were evaluated by combining satisfied with very satisfied, neutral by itself, dissatisfied with very dissatisfied<sup>7</sup> and N/A.

Answered: 4,596 Skipped: 456



On-site tournament staff customer service, the host venue and pace of play received the highest percentage of satisfaction. Other top-performing categories were event operations, the tournament registration process and host city.

It is worth noting that overall satisfaction with tournament operations is likely to have been impacted negatively if the majority of Open Championships bowlers were dissatisfied with the operational changes made in 2017.

It is also likely that the tournament being canceled in 2020 resulted in some negative feelings toward the operational aspect of the event.

However, this clearly was not the case, as overall satisfaction with tournament operations were one of the highest-scoring categories in the satisfaction rankings.

The worst-performing categories were the tournament schedule and lane conditions; however, most bowlers still were satisfied overall by more than 50%.

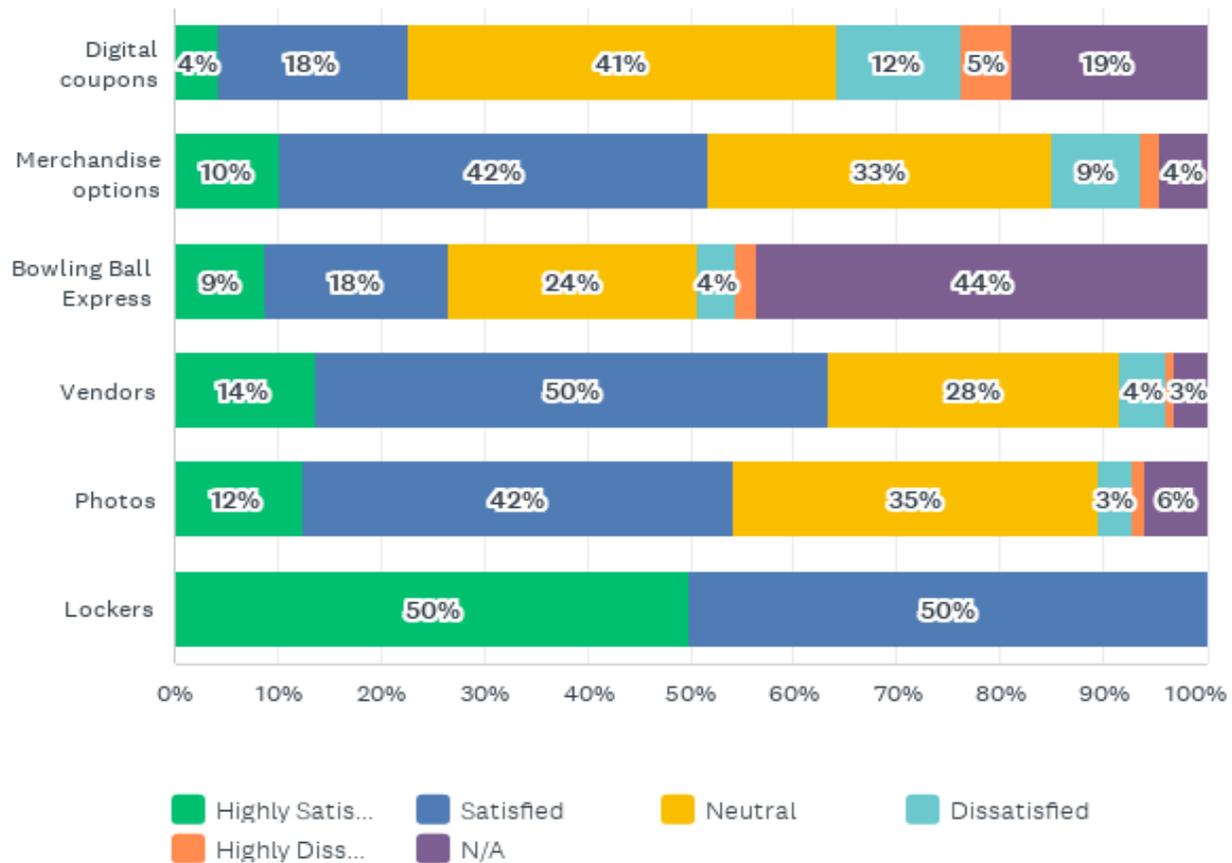


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## Event Services Satisfaction

Bowlers were asked to identify their levels of satisfaction relating to six service-orientated aspects of the 2021 tournament. Results were evaluated by combining satisfied with very satisfied, neutral by itself, dissatisfied with very dissatisfied and N/A.



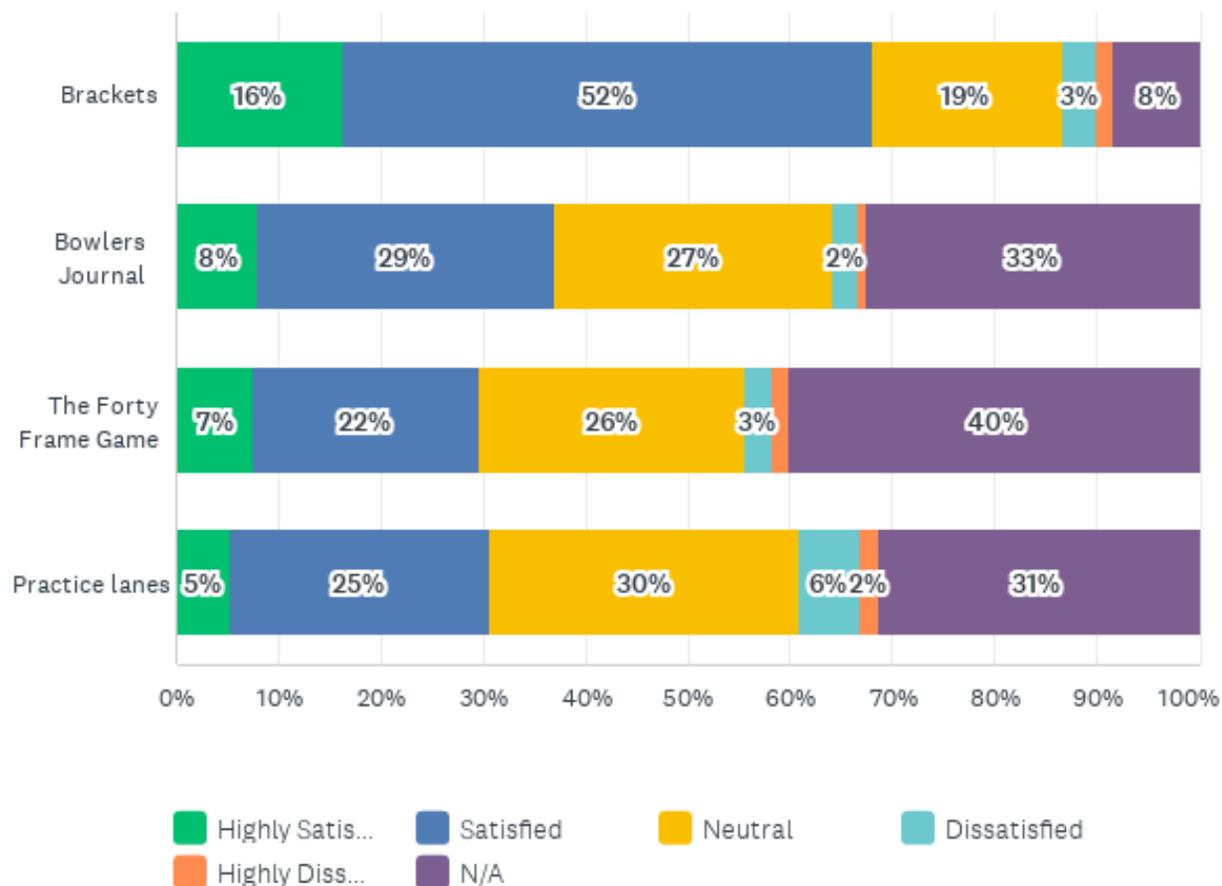
On-site lockers, vendors, photos, merchandise and Bowling Ball Express received the highest percentage of satisfaction, especially when considering those customers who answered neutral.

The worst-performing category was digital coupons, which was a new activation for 2019 over the previous events, where coupon books were provided to captains at check-in.

## Side Event Satisfaction

Bowlers were asked to identify their levels of satisfaction related to side events. Results were evaluated by combining satisfied with very satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied with very dissatisfied and N/A.

Answered: 4,596 Skipped: 456



Brackets received the highest percentage of satisfaction (68%), with the Bowlers Journal Championships coming in second at 37%.

The lowest-performing categories were the practice lanes and The Forty Frame Game; however, only 13% of customers were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with both events.

## **Other Satisfaction Considerations**

Several other key findings related to bowler satisfaction at the 2021 USBC Open Championships included:

- When asked if they were going to return in 2022 to bowl the USBC Open Championships in Las Vegas in 2022, 87% said they plan to bowl.
- 50% of first-time bowlers said they competed in the 2021 Open Championships for the opportunity to compete, second only to friends 64% (respondents could select more than one response to the question).
- Of those approached by USBC Open Championships staff, 92% said any issues they had were resolved and to their satisfaction, or they did not have any issues.



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## **Key Takeaways**

After analyzing the 2021 Open Championships survey data, we have discerned the following takeaways:

- 89% of bowlers either agree or don't have an opinion regarding the use of Championships Averages, making that one of the most positive changes for the future of the tournament.
- 82% of bowlers agree or don't have an opinion regarding whether the lane conditions at the 2021 Open Championships were appropriate for a national championship tournament.
- 73% of bowlers agree or don't have an opinion regarding the lane patterns being kept secret and not revealed until after the tournament helps create a more level playing field for all competitors.
- Spending time with family/friends is the highest ranked reason as to why people decide to bowl in the Open Championships, with the host city and what it offers falling in second place and testing their skills against their peers in third place. The bottom two reasons why people compete are because it is a world-class stage/venue, with the prize fund/bracket money in last place.
- The overall satisfaction with the event operations is at an all-time high, with 94% of bowlers either satisfied or neutral as it relates to key areas such as customer service, host venue and city, pace of play, event operations, online registration, event schedule and lane conditions.



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