
GERALDTON CURLING CLUB NEWS



MARCH 12, 2014

According to the calendar Spring is supposed to start in nine days – but looking outside it appears Mother Nature is playing a cruel joke on us all this year!

Curling season is coming to an end – be sure to mark Saturday, May 3rd on your calendars as that is the date of our annual windup!



Have you ever witnessed or had an 8 ender in curling? Probably not because the odds are astronomical – even higher than scoring a hole in one in golf. If you ask most competitive curlers they will probably say they have never had nor ever witnessed one! But don't ask Brad Jacobs because he did have one last year in the Northern Ontario Provincial Men's Championship! If you happened to be at the Geraldton Curling Club on Wednesday, January 29th, you would have had the opportunity to see one occur here – as far as we are able to determine that is at least the fifth one that has happened in the current club building since it opened in 1978.

Congratulations to Julie Valley, Bev Sivic, Lisa Slomke and Brandi Fortier (sparing for Colleen Lemieux) who scored 8 in the first end against Julie Davis and her team in a regular women's league game! The team had the hammer and originally were going to draw for five, but then saw an opportunity to take out the opposition's rock to score the eight, made the shot and the rest is history!

BONSPIEL UPDATE:

The 70th Annual Ladies Bonspiel held February 28 – March 1, 2014 was a rocking success. Thanks to Darlene Leupen for chairing this event. This year's Bonspiel theme was "Country Western" and the 14 participating teams had a great time. Teams wore plaid and denim on Friday night during which time country music was featured. It was a great night for dancing, and snacking on the treats provided by the Ladies league. The Men's league headed by Claude Beaulieu prepared a country style dinner of ribs, chicken and pulled pork, which the Ladies enjoyed while listening to music by our resident "Piano Man" - Norm Kristjanson. After supper one more draw was held followed by more dancing to the music provided by Robert Gagnon. On Sunday the third event semi-finals and all event finals were held with prizes awarded as follows:

A Event

1st K. Saarimaki, H. Dyke, T. Evoy, S. Fortier

2nd P. Luomala, S. Lafrance, E. Cotton, A. Offinowska

3rd D. Smith, L. Brown, J. Flynn, K. Papineau

B Event

1st C. Lemieux, J. Valley, B. Sivic, L. Slomke

2nd H. Maenpaa, S. Rondeau, B. Anderson, L. Foulds

3rd B. Abraham, S. Duranceau, S. Penner, G. Letourneau

C Event

1st B. Fortier, S. Beaulieu, K. Davis, S. Davis

2nd D. Leupen, C. Kristjanson, P. Violette, S. Gross

3rd Curling Cuzzins – Y. Metansinine, J. Dutil, H. Baillie, D. Bottle

Costume Prizes were awarded to:

1st Place – Maenpaa Team

2nd Place – Leupen Team

First Team out – N. Moffat, T. Nadon, S. Nadon, F. Charles



The 73rd Annual Men's Bonspiel was held March 7 – 9 with 15 teams competing for prizes in four events. Snacks for Friday evening and a delicious prime rib dinner on Saturday were prepared by the Ladies League. A skills contest was held Saturday before dinner with Brandon Ruoho winning the top shooter prize, followed by Bruce Lamb. Congratulations to John Salo, Norm Kristjanson, Tony Petty and Terry Garbachewski who defended their 2013 Men's Bonspiel title with a win over Dave Barker and his team.



A Event

1st J. Salo, N. Kristjanson, T. Petty, T. Garbachewski 2nd D. Barker, A. Luomala, R. Melhuish, E. Hoffman

3rd E. Carreira, R. Maenpaa, J. Armstrong, L. Pascoe 4th M. Assad, A. Foulds, B. Ruoho, D. Sutherland

B Event

1st S. Desmoulin, J. Wenzoski, D. MacLeod, J. Nadon 2nd C. Brown, J. Smith, B. Lamb, J. Guillemette

3rd C. Nephin, C. Curtis, R. Harnett, K. Scott 4th C. Beaulieu, E. Michon, A. Poulin, D. Lafrance

C Event

1st B. Adams Jr., K. Pristanski, S. Leblanc, J. Nadon
3rd S. Smith, M. Davis, F. Dzijacky, D. Randa

2nd A. Hackner, M. Shallow, K. Levesque, A. Proteau
4th V. Tschajka, B. Assad, S. Assad, R. Kurish

D Event

1st K. Leupen, G. Taphorn, P. Levesque, C. O'Quinn
3rd T. Milne, C. Milne, K. Levesque, K. Gruchy

A big THANK YOU to Darlene Leupen and Kurt Pristanski for chairing the bonspiel and to all of the volunteers and sponsors who contributed to the success of the events!!

LEAGUE UPDATES:

Mixed League – Playoffs are underway for the second event. There still is mixed curling scheduled for Mar. 14th and 28th – please contact Beth or Steve Anderson if you can't make it.

The Second Annual Mixed Business Bonspiel will be held on Mar. 21-22 – twelve teams have signed up so far. 4 end games, cash prizes, beef on a bun Saturday night, teams may challenge other teams for their first game. Contact Kurt at 0018 or 4107 for more information.

Afternoon League – The last regular afternoon session will be on Tuesday, March 18, with the Windup Social on Tuesday, March 25th. Carol Poirier is the Social Convenor for this group and will be contacting people about attending and details.

Wednesday Juniors – Second session is well underway and will run until Wednesday, April 2nd. There are rumours of a possible Family Bonspiel being organized – will let everyone know when more information is available.

AREA BONSPIELS

There are still a number of clubs that have bonspiels scheduled well into April to if you are looking for a spiel to possibly attend check out the master list of dates and locations posted on the bulletin board downstairs in the hallway. Information is also available on Facebook and club websites.

NORTHERN ONTARIO CURLING ASSOCIATION:

Competition season is winding down. The Mixed Provincial is scheduled for Port Arthur Curling Club in Thunder Bay March 20-23, and on March 28-30 the Wheelchair Provincial will be held at Fort William Curling Club.

Congratulations to Dave Barker and his team of Brian Aaltonen, Ron Melhuish and Ray Blanchard who won the Region 3 Travelers Competition in two games straight over Marathon held here in Geraldton in late February. Good luck to the Barker and Saarimaki teams who will be heading to the Travelers Curling Club Provincial Championship to be held at the Copper Cliff Curling Club in Sudbury March 28 – 30.

OTHER CURLING EVENTS:

The Ladies World Championship starts this weekend in St. John's, New Brunswick with Rachel Homan and team representing Canada.

The Kevin Koe team will be hoping to bring back gold from the Men's Worlds to be held in Beijing, China March 29 – April 6. Check out TSN for coverage.

And in case you haven't watched enough curling on TV - Rogers Sportsnet will be covering a Grand Slam event (The Syncrude National) being held in Fort McMurray this week. Draws will be televised at 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 13th at 3:30 p.m., 7 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. on Friday, 5 p.m. and 8:30 on Saturday, 12 noon on Sunday. Jacobs, Koe, Howard, Stoughton, McEwen, Martin, Laycock and Gushue are some of the teams competing, and will be playing under a FIVE ROCK rule in this event – should make for some interesting ends!



SEE YOU ON THE ICE!

HOUSE CALLS

A new curler sits in the hack staring at her skip at the far end. Her worst nightmare of a shot is being called; a takeout.



Jill Officer (Photo Andrew Klaver)

As she stares down the broom she recalls past issues with attempted take-outs. Though she occasionally makes a hit successfully more often than not she finds she is either too heavy, too light, off the broom or some combination of the three.

Often even the most experienced curlers end up missing hits because they sacrifice accuracy for weight. Please don't get me wrong; the ability to throw very heavy hit weight with accuracy can be a wonderful secret weapon (Thank you, Jill Officer). However, curlers like Officer practice throwing the high hard ones more than I can even imagine. For those of us not practicing almost every day of the week, here are three things you can do to improve your hitting skills and become more consistent.

Board weight isn't boring

Board weight means the thrower must only throw the stone hard enough to just touch the back boards at the far end and perhaps bounce off slightly. Most curlers will be able to muster the leg drive needed to achieve this weight with accuracy. The sweepers can easily keep up with board weight. Also the skip gives the thrower a little more ice than for a harder hit so they have more time to call line accurately.

If you and your team start to use board weight more often, you will soon discover a lot can be accomplished with it. It works great for when the opposition's stone is partially buried, as it will curl more than a harder hit. Often throwing board weight can be enough for a double or partial double take-out. Just make sure you decide as a team what board weight means to you and try to practice what it feels like to throw a few times before using it in a game if possible.

Keep your eye on the broom

Many curlers tend to look down at the ice when they pull the rock back towards the hack and elevate their hips. It's a motion that reminds me of those toy birds rocking back and forth to dip their beaks in the water. This is a motion you should avoid because not only do you lose sight of your target, but it also creates instability that can cause you to lean heavily on the stone. This means you'll have to push the rock at the end of the slide and likely lose the line of the broom you're aiming at. You may also end up moving the broom you're holding into a less stable position which can again cause you to lean on the rock.



Glenn Howard (Photo CCA/Michael Burns)

To correct this make sure when you pull your rock back towards your hack foot you elevate your hips and only your hips. Keep your head as well as your shoulders level, keep your eyes on the broom and push straight out towards the target.

It can be hard to tell if you have the bad habit of looking down because the delivery happens quite quickly. Ask the players on your team to watch for it. If you do have this habit, try to schedule some practice ice to work on correcting it, or if there is an instructor at your curling club, ask for a lesson to work specifically on the backwards motion of the slide and take-outs.

Hack foot placement

Hack foot placement is extremely important. Not only do you want to make sure you point your toes towards the broom, you also need to make sure your foot isn't buried way down in the hack as this will greatly diminish your aim and ability to drive out of the hack hard enough with your leg to achieve hit weight or sometimes even draw weight.

We generally tell curlers to place the ball of their foot midway up the hack. This works well for most people but if you find yourself having difficulties throwing board weight or harder you may wish to try moving your foot up slightly higher in the hack. This will give you better leverage when you thrust forward out of the hack.

Hopefully these tips will improve your hit game. Remember not to be discouraged if you don't see a change in weight right away. When something in your delivery has been corrected or altered it takes time to gain confidence with the new skill. If you give it time and practice for a few minutes when you can squeeze it in, the changes will soon start to work for you and make you more comfortable and competent with take-outs.