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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 74

January 2017

Monday, January 2	League Play Resumes
Saturday, January 7	General Meeting and Social
January 13 and 14	Two on Two Spiel
Saturday, January 14	Dance with DJ Jimmy
January 20-22	Ship Hector - New Glasgow
Saturday, January 28	Fun Night
February 10-11	Sweetheart Spiel
Saturday, February 18	Fun Night
February 24-26	Schooner Cash Spiel
Saturday, February 25	Dance with DJ Jimmy
March 2-6	NS Traveler's Championships
March 7-11	Fun Spiel
Saturday, March 11	Dance with the band Full Circle
Saturday, March 18	Fun Night
March 24-26	Sydney Spring Fling Mixed Spiel
April 2-8	Sydney Closing Spiel
Saturday, April 15	Fun Night
April 18-22	Schooner Closing Spiel
Saturday, April 22	Dance with DJ Jimmy
Sunday, April 23	Skating Party

NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.

Welcome Back

On Behalf of the Schooner president Gordie Cormier and all of the executive committee we would like to welcome back all members after our Holiday break. We would also like to welcome any new members who are joining us for the remainder of the season. We are hoping for a good turnout at the general meeting being held January 7th so everyone can be brought up to speed on what's happening at the club and also ask questions and provide their input on the direction we are taking. There will be a wine and cheese social following the meeting to help welcome the new year. There's lot's to look forward to at the Schooner Club for the remainder of the season. Along with the return of league play, fun nights make a comeback in January and continue monthly for the remainder of the season. We have our Open Cash Spiel coming up, the Sweetheart lady's spiel, more fun spiels and a 2 on 2 event which are gaining in popularity. Watch the schedule for more Friday night 2 on 2 games and don't forget about Matinee curling each Friday from 1-3 which is open to all members. Also, when you are at the club during a regular curling event, don't forget to play the Snowball and have a chance at winning the jackpot. Chase the Ace is also scheduled to make a return to the club in January with a new format for buying tickets. We hope everyone will support this important fundraiser as well as they have in the past.

So here we go. Back at it after a wonderful Holiday break and looking forward to a busy second half of the curling season. Happy new year everyone and *Good Curling!*

League Play



League play for the first two months of the season has gone well and there have been minimal issues with postponements and cancellations. Play resumed on Monday, January 2nd following the traditional Holiday break when Mixed League took the ice to play the first games of 2017. The big news in the mixed league will be the creation of new teams and the start of a 'second season' of sorts after the completion of the first round of play in mid January. At that time, a first round champ will be crowned and the second round will get underway with all new teams. There will be no playoff rounds in the mixed this season. This new format is under a sort of trial run this season to see how it works out and to see how the members feel about it. It will be reviewed before next season. This format also allows for the easy inclusion of any new members who decide to join the club in January and it may contribute to an expansion of the mixed league for the remainder of the season. Given that there is a 'Learn to Curl' program being run at the club the first three weeks of January, it is hoped that the club will see some new members from people taking part in that. Heading into the final three weeks of round one in the mixed, the Sid Murray rink is in sole possession of first place but has three teams hot on his heels. Murray has a league best ten points (5-1) but the MacIntyre, Drover and Ferguson rinks all sit tied for second with eight points (4-2). Murray had started the season a perfect 5-0 but lost his for the first time in the campaign to the Greg Ferguson rink in the last week before the Holiday break, allowing Ferguson to move into a share of second and within range of Murray for first. The Drover rink started out slowly but has seemed to find their winning form and has scratched their way into contention while MacIntyre has been solid so far but has his two losses coming against the Drover rink who he is tied with and the Murray rink who he is chasing. While there are two other teams still with an outside chance, the Cal Thistle rink and the Rick Windsor rink (formerly skipped by Rob Agnew), both sitting with six points, it will be tough for them to climb back into contention and it looks like it will be a four horse race to the finish. If Murray can shake off that late December loss to Ferguson and get back to the winning form he had for most of the year, he will cruise to a championship. Ferguson and Drover will meet head to head in one of their final three games and that could play a big role in the success or failure of either of them. MacIntyre will have to play well and hope for Murray to collapse in January to have a shot at a first place finish. No matter what happens, it looks like the stretch run in round one of the mixed will be an exciting one to watch.

The Men's League, playing on its new night this season, has proven to be very competitive and there are six teams out of eight that are within three points of one another. The Omar Roach rink is currently in first with eight points, followed closely by the Brian Laughlin rink with seven. Both Laughlin and Roach have a makeup game that gives them a game in hand over some other teams and once they play that game against each other the standings at the top of the league will change. Three teams sit tied for third with six points, the Sid Murray, Wally MacDonald and Rob Agnew rinks, while the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell foursome sits just behind them with five points. Murray has one game in hand as well with a makeup game with the Gordie Cormier rink. Murray also has a head to head matchup with the MacDonald rink and Agnew faces one of the front runners, the Laughlin rink in his final match of round one. The Men's League will play a second round and then a playoff round to determine overall season and playoff winners. At this point it's too hard to predict who might come out on top.

The Sunday Team Entry league has seen three teams position themselves at the top of the standings, all tied with ten points each heading into the Christmas break. The

Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink, the Wally MacDonald rink and the Gordie Cormier rink sat tied but the MacDonald rink had played one more game than the other two. Bonnell and Cormier had a makeup game against each other that was played on Monday, January 2, and saw Cormier soundly defeat Bonnell and vault him into sole possession of first place. Bonnell started the season with a perfect 5-0 record but suffered a surprising loss to the John Donovan rink in the final week of play before the break and now has his second loss to Cormier. Donovan handled the undefeated Bonnell rink with ease, scoring early and often, winning the shortened game in easy fashion while Cormier stole points in every end if a six end tilt that saw Bonnell pummeled for the second straight outing, not even able to muster a point against Cormier. It looks like the wheels may be starting to come off for Bonnell after his strong start and things don't get any easier for him in the next few weeks. If he is going to right the ship he will have to do it against two strong teams in the Chris "Slugger" MacLeod and Omar Roach rinks who he is scheduled to face moving forward. Cormier has only a single loss that came at the hands of the Martin Campbell rink. MacDonald has two losses and is now tied for second with the Bonnell rink following the make-up game between Cormier and Bonnell. The Keith MacEachern rink had started the season strong with three wins but has dropped three games in a row to fall into the middle of the pack at six points. MacEachern has still played well and has lost some close games so he still may be able to rebound in the remainder of the season. Joining MacEachern at six points are the Omar Roach Rink and the Martin Campbell rink. Both Roach and Campbell struggled a bit out of the gate but have the ability to make a good run at the league's top spot if they can figure things out and start winning. Two surprises in the Team Entry this year are the slow starts of the Brian Laughlin and Greg Ferguson rinks. Ferguson was in the final game for the playoff championship last season in this league and Laughlin has always been a contender for top spot in previous seasons. We'll be watching these teams to see if they can turn things around and make a run at first. That won't be easy this season as the three teams on top have the ability to win every week and have a small cushion of points that other teams will have to overcome if they want top spot. There is, however, lots of time left in the season for them to do so.

The Schooner Junior Program will continue after the break and takes the ice on Saturday afternoons.

Best of luck to all teams and all curlers for the remainder of the season and *Good Curling Everyone!*

Junior Curling Fundraiser



Junior Coordinator Nadine Neima-Drover would like to thank everyone who took part in the Junior program's Cineplex Fundraiser, both those who sold and those who were buyers. The junior curlers were offering various Cineplex movie packages and gift cards for sale leading up to the Christmas season. Overall, the fundraiser was a good success and raised a total of over \$240 for the Schooner Junior Program. This money will go towards competing in spiels and various social events like the program's Christmas and year-end parties.

The Junior Program is looking forward to 2017 with lots of plans in the works. Registration is down slightly over last season and everyone is reminded that kids can join the program at any time during the season and enjoy the same prorated membership fees that the full members enjoy. Pay only for what time is remaining in the year. Anyone who knows of any kids over the age of five years old that may be interested in curling is encouraged to bring them to a Junior practice on Saturday

Learn to Curl Program

afternoon and let them try it out. The junior curlers of today are the members we will need in the future.

There is a "Learn to Curl" program scheduled to get underway on Tuesday, January 3rd at the club and will run for three weeks, start time is 7pm each night. Cost is \$15 per night for a total of \$45 for all three lessons. Participants will be taught the basic rules and techniques of the game by our certified coaches. We hope that, after the program is complete, that some of the participants will take to the sport and become members or participants in some of our open events. After a similar program last year, Lisa and Blair Gentile became members and have returned to the club this season, taking part in both league play and spiels. New members can take advantage of our pro-rated membership fee for those joining part way through the season. The timing is perfect to introduce new members as the program completes right around the time the mixed league will be finishing its first half schedule and all teams will be getting reformed for the second half. The learn to Curl program is being run through the Cape Breton Curling Association.

Fun Nights



Schooner Fun Nights will make their comeback to the schedule starting this month with the first one taking place on Saturday, January 28. The fun gets started at 7pm. These events are a great way for people to try the great sport of curling in a fun, no-pressure environment. For just a few bucks you get to try curling, eat delicious pizza and maybe even get a chance at winning a prize at the end of the night. Instruction is provided for those who need it and all the equipment is there as well, you just need clean, dry running shoes for the ice area. All members are encouraged to get groups together and attend the fun nights. These nights not only bring new faces into the club but have been a great source of new members for the last number of years. The Fun Night coordinators for this season are Janet Gallivan and Kathy Gale but if anyone has time to drop by and help out they would very much appreciate it. If you can't make the Fun Night on January 28, don't worry, there's a Fun Night scheduled for February, March and April as well. Visit the Schooner website for full details and a printable poster that you can put up on your fridge, at work, school, your local grocery store, wherever, and help us promote these very important events.

Turkey Spiel Results



The Schooner Turkey Spiel was held at the club from December 13-17. A total of ten teams competed in two divisions, six in the Tuesday/Thursday and four in the Wednesday/Friday, with all teams from both divisions playing on Saturday to determine the overall winners. Bad weather played a part in the Turkey Spiel again this year when snow forced the cancellation of two out of three games on Thursday and all games on Friday. Given the number of games that had to be made up, it was decided that the Thursday and Friday portions of the schedule would be eliminated all together and results from the Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday games would be used to determine winners. With points from only two games counting it was very important to win and also to maximize your ends to try and come out on top to win that Christmas turkey. With a convincing win in his first game, taking five ends and thirteen of a possible fifteen points, and a second win on Saturday, it was skip Wally MacDonald who took top honors in this abbreviated spiel. This is MacDonald's second spiel top finish in as many tries this season as he was also tops in the Opening

Spiel. Skip MacDonald was joined by Walter Nichols as mate, Mathew Tubrett at second and Julia Cormier as lead. Second place was won by the Gordie Cormier rink who had two come from behind ties in their two games. In his first game against Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell, Cormier made a fantastic shot to come around a guard and tap a Bonnell stone off the button to score one and tie the game. Cormier was able to get four ends in that game as well for 9.5 point total. Saturday's game for the Cormier rink against the Peter MacIntyre rink was skipped by Brian Laughlin. Laughlin was down by three heading into the final end but, with MacIntyre ignoring some stones to try and win the end, Laughlin was able to score three with hammer, the third point having to be confirmed by a measurement, and roared back tie, getting 7.5 points and solidifying second spot. Joining Cormier, along with spare Brian Laughlin, was mate Rick Billard, second Bernadette Cormier and lead Bill Moss. The Greg Ferguson rink finished just behind Cormier in third spot with an equal number of points but a -2 ranking against Cormier's even plus/minus. Ferguson lost his first game but had a convincing win on Saturday to vault him in the standings. Joining skip Greg was Richard Lorway at mate, Blair Gentile as second and Jillian Gentile as lead. Lisa Gentile filled in for Jillian on Saturday. Fourth place was a tie when Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell and Peter MacIntyre both wound up with 16.5 points and a +3 rating. Both teams also had identical records of one win and one tie. Joining Bonnell was mate Bill Farr while Allen and Bev Young handled the front end duties and skip MacIntyre was helped out by Mate Bryant Cormier, second Greg Wall and lead Val MacIntyre. The top four teams were winners of Christmas Turkeys and since there was a tie for fourth place, accommodations were made to make sure all teams were looked after. The remaining teams won hams or chocolates.

Even though some games were lost to weather, it was another great spiel at the club and everyone had a good week. On Saturday, all curlers were kept fed with sandwiches and wraps from Sobeys along with sweets and other snacks. We want to thank everyone who took part in the spiel, especially those non-members who joined us, and to everyone who helped out in any way. Bonspiel coordinator Stephen Leslie did another great job of organizing teams and schedules which was evident in the fact that the second place team to the fifth place team were all separated by just half a point. Thanks to the ice crew and bartenders, to Lynn Kelly for coordinating the food for Saturday and to everyone else who helped out in any way. Congratulations to our winners.

Mid-Season General Meeting

Everyone is reminded that there will be a mid-season general meeting held at the club on Saturday, January 7th starting at 7pm. Immediately following the meeting there will be a wine and cheese social for all members and guests to help welcome in the new year with your Schooner friends. This meeting is a great way to get caught up on what's been happening at the club so far this year and to find out what is in store as the rest of the season moves forward. Some topics of discussion will include an update on the 649 fundraiser that was held in December, a financial summary to let everyone know how the club is doing, a discussion on the upcoming return of the Chase the Ace fundraiser and changes to how that will be run as well as a discussion on other potential fundraisers such as the return of our always successful spaghetti dinner sales. This meeting is not just for members, everyone is welcome to attend. Once the meeting is complete you can all plan to stay around and enjoy wine, cheese and other snacks and socialize with everyone and discuss how your Holiday season was. So please plan to attend and help us make decisions that will benefit the club and all of its members.

2 on 2 Spiel

There will be a two on two spiel held at the club on Friday, January 13 and Saturday, January 14. Entry fee is \$20 per player and you must sign up as a team of two people. Entry fees will be returned as prizes. If you do not have a partner you can leave your name and other people looking for partners may team up with you. This spiel is open to everyone, membership at the Schooner Club is not required. A sign-up sheet is available at the club or you can call us or email us to get your name on the list. The two on two game has grown in popularity at the club since we started playing it a couple of seasons ago and everyone who tries it enjoys the format. We use a slightly different set of rules than what is known as mixed doubles in the curling world and have adopted our version from the Sturling website but, with the exception of a couple of changes on how the ends are started out, it's basically the same game. While this spiel was run in a bracket format last year, the number of teams entered will determine the format and the number of guaranteed games each team will get. Everyone is reminded that there will be a dance held following the spiel on Saturday, January 14th with music by DJ Jimmy. It runs from 9-1 and is open to everyone.

Sweetheart Women's Spiel



The annual Schooner Sweetheart spiel will be held this year on February 10-11 and is open to all women curlers. This is a single entry spiel but teams of four may be accepted. This Valentines tradition at the club has become one of the busiest and most enjoyable spiels of the season. All curlers are guaranteed three, six-end games and there will be a wine and cheese reception on Friday night and dinner for all curlers on Saturday. This spiel is once again sponsored by CC Computer Solutions of Sydney and we wish to thank them for their continued support. Keep an eye open for more information posted at the club and on the Schooner website as the spiel dates get closer.

Schooner Cash Spiel



The annual Schooner Cash Spiel is being held on February 24-26 this year. Entry for a maximum of sixteen teams is now open and there are a number of teams already signed up. The fee for a team of four is \$180 and the makeup of the teams can be any combination of male and/or female curlers. All entry fees will be returned as prizes and the amount will be determined by how many teams compete. All teams will be guaranteed three games and there will be a meal served on Saturday along with snacks all weekend long. There will also be a free dance with entertainment by DJ Jimmy on Saturday night, February 25. This is traditionally a great weekend of curling at the club and if you want to be part of it we recommend that you get your team organized and get registered as quickly as possible. A sign-up sheet is now posted at the club. You can also call the club or send us an email and we'll get you registered. Teams from outside the area can mail their team roster along with a cheque payable to the Schooner Curling Club to cover your registration fee. Please visit the Schooner Club's website for more information.



Chase the Ace will be returning to the Schooner Curling Club in 2017. The first draw will be held on Tuesday, January 31 and will continue every Tuesday night until the Ace is drawn and the jackpot won. This time around the format for ticket sales will be a little bit different. Instead of just selling tickets for a short period on the day of the draw, tickets will be sold all week leading up to the draw. This will allow members to sell tickets to friends, relatives, co-workers, whoever and submit the tickets back for the draw. Tickets will also be sold at the club's bar all week and from 7-8pm on the evening of the draw at the club. Tickets will be \$5 for a book of three and will be filled out with the purchaser's name and contact information. The weekly winner is

not required to be present at the club when the draw is made. If the winner is not present, they will be contacted and informed that they have won and given 30 minutes to arrive at the club to draw from the deck. If they cannot make it or choose not to come to the club in the allotted time they can, instead, choose to have a representative at the club pick a card on their behalf. The prize breakdown will be the same as it was for previous Chase the Ace fundraisers with 20% of total sales going to the weekly winner, 30% getting added to the jackpot and the remainder will go to the club, cover expenses and government fees and taxes. The jackpot for the first draw will be at a starting point of \$500 with the 30% of sales being added to that amount. Ticket sales will begin on Wednesday, January 25th, one week prior to the first draw which, again, will be Tuesday, January 31st. Draw time will be 8:15 each Tuesday which allows fifteen minutes between final ticket sales and the actual draw. Ticket sales close at 8pm on Tuesday for that week's draw.

We hope that all members will take part in this very important fundraiser and, given the new format, try and sell tickets to help raise the prizes and the funds that we take in for the club. Previous Chase the Ace fundraisers have been very successful and raised funds that have allowed us to make much needed improvements to the electrical system in the compressor room, make improvements and additions to the club house and to provide operating money that helped keep costs down for Schooner members on things like yearly dues, spiel entry fees and bar prices. And who knows, you may be the one to catch that Ace of Spades and take home a big pile of money for yourself as well.

649 Fundraiser

The club ran a 649 fundraiser in December that began with the December 14 drawing of the 649 lottery. Participation was good with almost \$1200 in total sales and a prize of \$587.50 up for grabs. It took five draws for us to get a winner but Julia Cormier was the first and only one to tick off all six of her numbers and took home one hundred percent of the total prize. Congratulations to Julia and a big thank you to everyone who took part in the fundraiser, both buyers and sellers. These types of events are very important to the club and helps provide us a way to cover expenses while still keeping costs to members at a minimum. We hope to run more of these fundraisers in the future and look forward to the same or better support from members and the public. Thanks again.

Casual 2 on 2 Evenings and Matinee Curling

Members are reminded that the Friday afternoon Matinee Curling will start up again on Friday, January 6th after taking a break for the Holidays. Matinee curling runs from 1-3 pm and is open to all members. Teams are made from whoever shows up on a given day.

Casual 2 on 2 curling will continue in the new year and all members are asked to keep an eye on the club bulletin board, the club's Facebook page and the website for when these events will take place. There is no set schedule and they will be held when time allows. Like Matinee curling, these events are open to all members and teams and format will be determined by how many players take part on any given night.

Both Matinee Curling and Two on Two are great ways to maximize your curling time and get the most out of your membership.

The Ship Hector Spiel

The Ship Hector Spiel, held in four curling clubs in the New Glasgow area, is set to go from January 20-22. Schooner will be well represented there this year with five rinks from our club making the trip to take part. Teams making the trip to the Hector include the Brian Laughlin rink, the Wally MacDonald rink, the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink, the Gordie Cormier rink and the Thomas Drover rink. All teams have competed at the event in the past and have enjoyed some success. The three day event is held in the Bluenose curling club in New Glasgow, the New Caledonian in Pictou, the Stellar club in Stellarton and the Westville Curling Club in downtown Westville. Each team is guaranteed four games with a grueling schedule on Saturday of three games for each team on that day. Some of the Schooner rinks are taking a fifth player to help ease the burden of such a hectic schedule. Twenty teams will share in the prize money which is estimated to total over \$7000 based on 48 teams entering. Many years that number is exceeded with over 50 teams taking part in the event. Best of luck to all Schooner rinks competing at the Hector and we know you will represent our club well.

Upcoming Dances

The club has once again booked the services of everyone's favorite DJ, DJ Jimmy, for a number of events throughout the season. The first will be held on Saturday, January 14 when there will be a dance at the club to finish off the two on two spiel that will be held that weekend. Dancing is from 9-1 and is open to all members and guests.

Other events include a dance during the cash spiel on Saturday, February 25 and a dance to finish off the closing spiel and the season on Saturday, April 22. Both dances are from 9-1 and again are open to everyone. The final event we have Jimmy booked for is the Closing Banquet.

There will also be live entertainment at the club on Saturday, March 11, when the band Full Circle will take the stage at the Schooner club. Full Circle is a very popular local band and play a wide range of music to suite all tastes. There is no cover for this event or any of the dances at the Schooner Club.

Schooner Online

For the last number of years the Schooner Curling Club has been maintaining an online presence with its own website and, more recently, has expanded that to include a Facebook page and a Twitter feed. Currently, our website is registering approximately 1000 page views per week and around 200 unique visitors. By growing our web presence we hope to provide members more information in a more timely fashion and we also hope to introduce the club and its offerings to the general public as well.

While the website has evolved over the years, the addition of Facebook and Twitter help us reach a much broader audience by integrating the three tools to work together. For example, all information and schedules for all Schooner events are posted on the website. We have started to use daily Facebook posts that include schedules of events happening that day and those posts are automatically tweeted to our followers and also show up on a twitter feed on the main page of the website, putting them front and center for everyone to see as soon as they reach our page. These posts include things like daily league schedules, spiel schedules, weather cancellations and updates to events such as Tuesday Night Tarbush or Fun Nights. The front page of the website has also recently seen the addition of a more compressed version of our Google calendar or what Google refers to as an 'Agenda' view. This view shows the current day as well as the next few days and allows users to quickly click on a date and see

what is happening that day. The link to the full calendar and monthly view is still available as well if you want to go further into the schedule.

While we do know that members rely on the website for schedules and that sort of thing, because we use all free services to get online we cannot obtain much in the way of statistics that tell us how visitors are using the site and what pages are being visited. Therefore, we are asking for feedback from users of the Schooner online tools, mainly the Schooner members. Let us know what you think of the information available to you and how obtainable it is. Those who use a mobile device should let us know if you are experiencing any issues in browsing the Schooner site on your device or in obtaining the information you are seeking. Let us know if you are getting the info we are posting on Facebook and Twitter and if you find it useful. This all requires time and effort and, if the information is not getting to the end users or if they are finding that it's not a useful way to get the information, then we want to know so we can concentrate our effort in another way. General feedback of the website and Facebook page are also welcome. Any suggestions for change will also be taken into consideration. Comments and suggestions can be emailed to the club or simply jotted down and left at the bar. You can also speak directly to members of the executive or to Bill Farr who looks after the website.

We also ask those who are on Facebook and do have access to our posts to like and share those posts so we can reach a wider audience. While many of our posts reach from 20-50 people, we have had posts that have reached well into the hundreds and a few that have reached into the thousands of users. The more people who get our info the more chance we have of drawing more attention to the club.

Another way the Schooner Club gets online is through GoCapeBreton.com. This local community website has all sorts of information about what is going on in the community and is a great way for the club to advertise open events such as spiels and dances to the general public. GoCapeBreton has also recently become a sponsor of the club. If you haven't checked it out it's certainly a site you should visit.

Lastly, the Schooner Curling Club also maintains a mailing list of email addresses to send out updates on club activities and things such as meeting minutes and agendas and this newsletter. If your email address is not currently on the mailing list but you would like it to be, please send us an email at schoonercurling@gmail.com or leave your name and email address at the bar and we will get you added. Don't miss out, get your address added today.

There's still time to enter the Tirecraft Hit the Button Sweepstakes for your chance to win an all expense paid trip for two to Toronto and an opportunity to throw a stone to the button to possibly win up to \$100,000. There will be four winners making the trip for the chance at the grand prize. Simply visit the website and fill in the entry form. When you do, choose the Schooner Curling Club from the list of Nova Scotia clubs and if you win, we win too. The clubs who are chosen by the four winners will all receive \$2500. So visit <http://hitthebuttonwithtirecraft.com/> today, fill in the entry form and take your chance on hitting the button in Toronto with Tirecraft.

