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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 78

October, 2017

Fall General Meeting	Wednesday, September 27
Opening Spiel	TBA
Start of League Play	TBA
NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.	

Another Season

Hello to everyone and welcome to another season of 'In the Hack'. This is an early release of the October Newsletter, the earliest we have ever released an edition, but so much happened at the end of last season and over the summer that it was felt an update was required. The first edition of 2017-18 is being released in conjunction with the Schooner Club's Fall General Meeting. A full summary of the meeting will be available for readers in the November edition. As always, the newsletter will be available in printed form at the club and electronically through email to those who have subscribed. This and all previous newsletters are also available at the Schooner Website under the 'About the Club' tab.

It was a great summer on Cape Breton Island and it was a busy summer for the Schooner Club and curling in Cape Breton in general. The club was active every Tuesday evening with our Chase the Ace draw, that had grown to a very nice size jackpot before finally being won by Donald Delaney on September 26, and our weekly Tarabish game. There were special events like Schooner Golf and Washer Toss and there were lots of changes and improvements planned and undertaken over the summer months like our new POS system and improvements to the parking lot, club lighting and other fix-ups. Read on for more information on all of this as well as a wrap-up of curling action and social events from the end of last season.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all returning club members and also welcome all the new members who will be joining us this season as both adult and junior members. It seems like such a short time ago we were saying good bye to curling for the summer but now, here we are, ready to go again. I want to wish everyone a great curling season and a great year overall. The Schooner Curling Club is a great place to have fun, relax and enjoy the company of good friends. Welcome back everyone and *Good Curling!*

League Roundup



As we entered April of last season most leagues were in the home stretch to finish and crown playoff champs or, in the case of the Pepsi Mixed League, a second round champ for leg two of the split season. As it was in the first leg of the season, there were three teams vying for the title coming down to the end. The first games in April saw two of these teams go head to head when Gordie Cormier took on Greg Ferguson. Both needed a victory to remain in contention. Ferguson took the win against Cormier and needed only one more win in his final game of the season against the Sid Murray Rink to solidify first overall while the loss for Cormier eliminated him from a chance at top spot. Even if Cormier were to win the two remaining games he had, that would only be good enough for a tie with Ferguson and since he lost to the Ferguson rink he would lose the tie break and the title. With the win over Cormier but a loss to Murray in his final game, the Ferguson rink sat in a tie with the Rick Windsor rink who had one game remaining in the season that was against the aforementioned Cormier rink. A win or a tie in that final game would vault Windsor to victory while a loss would give the crown to Ferguson as he also held the tie break advantage over Windsor since he had won their head to head matchup. Ferguson could only sit and watch as things unfolded. The game between Cormier and Windsor had originally been scheduled for March 29 but was cancelled due to bad weather. The game was finally played on Wednesday, April 12. While Windsor played a strong game it was Cormier who eventually took the victory and dashed the championship hopes of the Windsor rink. The Greg Ferguson rink took top spot in the second leg of the Mixed League Season. Joining skip Greg Ferguson was mate Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod, second Matt Tubrett and lead Julia Cormier. For MacLeod and Cormier, it was their second mixed league top finish as they were both part of the Sid Murray rink who won honors in the first leg of the season.

The Don Cherry's Team Entry playoffs wrapped up in mid-April with the Wally MacDonald rink and the Martin Campbell rink making it into the final game to play for the title on Monday, April 10. MacDonald and Campbell both went through the round robin portion of the playoffs without a loss and earned their chance to play for the playoff title. It was a close game for a while until MacDonald made a fantastic shot, an in-off double, to give himself a big end and take control of the game that he eventually won. Skip MacDonald was joined in the championship by mate Sid Murray, second Rick Billard and lead Anthony Boudreau. For the skip/mate duo of Wally MacDonald and Sid Murray, success in this league is well known as they have been champions of either regular season or playoffs in all of the last four years, one year even taking both titles. MacDonald joined with Murray after breaking away from skip Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell to take the reins of his own rink and, up until 2016-17, had Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod and Walter Nichols as front end. MacLeod and Nichols left to form their own team last season and that's when Billard and Boudreau came on.

Ironically, the playoff title was decided before the regular season winner as there was a make-up game between the Gordie Cormier rink and the Martin Campbell rink that was delaying the crowning of a schedule champ. Cormier was tied with the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink after the schedule finished but had this game against Campbell in hand that, if he could win, would make him the schedule winner. If Campbell was to win, it would be Bonnell who

held the tie break advantage and would be the champ. Campbell had no vested interest in the game other than to play spoiler for Cormier. The game was played on Tuesday, April 11 and saw Cormier come out on top. He jumped out to an early lead that he was able to hold onto through the game until he solidified the victory in the sixth end with a light weight tap and roll on his final shot, removing a Campbell stone from the button and then sliding over to move a second stone just far enough to get two and go ahead by four points, prompting Campbell to shake hands and concede the win.

For Cormier and MacDonald this is a flip flop to the finish they had in the 2015-16 season when Cormier won the playoff title and MacDonald won regular season. Congratulations to both winners, thank you to returning league sponsor Don Cherry's Sports Grill and thank you to everyone who took part in the Team Entry league in the 2016-17 season.

The Old Triangle Men's league was the last league to crown a playoff champ in 2016-17 when they played the final league games of the season on April 13. Three teams had a chance at the playoff crown heading into the final night. The Brian Laughlin rink, the league's regular schedule champs, the Omar Roach rink and the Gordie Cormier rink were all in contention and there was a possibility of a three way tie among them. On the final night, Roach was facing Laughlin while Cormier was taking on the currently winless Wally MacDonald rink. Roach needed to win and also a loss by Cormier to take the title while a Laughlin win or tie would wrap it up for him and give him the double championship, regular season and playoffs. Cormier needed a win and also to have Roach win to get into a tie break situation and take his chances there. The battle between Roach and Laughlin came down to the last stone of the game before a winner was decided. Roach led by one coming into the final end and held the all important hammer as well. Laughlin needed to steal at least one point to tie the game and win the playoff title. The final end saw a lot of stones left in play and, as Roach slid down to take his final shot, also saw Laughlin lying one, the single point he needed to take the title. That was not to be as Roach made his final shot perfectly to hit and roll in off an outlying stone and out count Laughlin, taking the game and forcing a three way tie between him, Laughlin and Cormier who had also won that night. Draw master Cal Thistle had pre-determined that, in the case of a three way tie, a draw to the button would be used to determine two teams who would play one more game for the title with the third team being eliminated. That draw saw Laughlin and Roach come out on top and, fittingly play for the playoff title since they were the top two teams in the league all season. With only limited time remaining and the Closing Spiel scheduled for the following week, it was decided that the game would be played on Easter Sunday at 7pm. It was expected that this would be another close game between the two teams and no one would have been surprised if it, once again, came down to the final stone to determine a winner. That was, however, not the case as the Omar Roach rink came to play and scored early and often while the Brian Laughlin rink, a team who dominated in the men's league all year, had a very uncharacteristically bad outing and lost to Roach in a shortened game. Skip Roach was joined in his playoff title by mate Bryant Cormier, second Anthony Boudreau and lead Jeff Steel.

Closing Spiel Wrap-up

Congratulations to all of our winners, both playoff and regular season, and thank you to everyone for a great year.

League play will remain unchanged for this season after the somewhat major shakeup last year. Team entry will play on Sunday afternoons starting at 1pm. Mixed league will run Monday to Wednesday starting at 7pm with a 9pm start time to be determined by the number of teams involved. Men's league will once again be played on Thursday nights with draws normally at 7 and 9 pm. There is also talk of a combined lady's league between the Schooner and Sydney Curling Clubs. It is thought that it could be run on Thursday evenings at Sydney. Additional cost may be charged in Sydney to the Schooner women. Details are still being worked out and nothing has yet been solidified. Matinee curling is planned to be on the schedule this season for Friday afternoons and there may be random 2 on 2 curling nights throughout the season as well.

The Schooner Junior program wrapped up in April after another good season. The numbers were down a bit in the program but everyone involved had lots of fun and learned a lot. The Juniors also competed in spiels in the Baddeck Curling Club and the Sydney Curling Club. The season for them wrapped up on April 15 with a final on ice session and their end of year party. Thanks to Junior Coordinator Nadine Neima-Drover for another great season and to everyone who took part or helped out with the Junior program in any way this year. We hope that the Junior Program will grow again next season and events like the learn to curl for kids that was held during March Break and was very well attended are encouraging for that to happen.

The Annual Schooner Closing Spiel was held from April 18-22 at the club and was sponsored by Disco Tirecraft. It was a great success with six teams competing in the Tuesday/Thursday division while the Wednesday/Friday division saw a full complement of eight teams take part. All fourteen teams came together to go head to head on Saturday before a winner was decided. In the end it was the Thomas Drover rink with Skip Thomas, mate Nadine Neima-Drover, second Eric Boutilier and lead Paul Brown taking top spot. Drover began the day Saturday in the middle of the pack and it didn't look like he had a chance at top spot but a huge victory that day where he took all fifteen possible points vaulted him up in the standings. The Richard Lorway rink and the Stephen Leslie rink started the day one/two in the standings but a loss by Lorway took him out of the running and he eventually finished third while Leslie, a winner in his final outing, wasn't able to get enough points to catch Drover and wound up in second place. Joining skip Leslie was Joe Erickson, Bernadette Cormier and Mel Windsor while skip Lorway was aided by Bryant Cormier and Todd MacAulay. Fourth place was taken by the Gordie Cormier rink that was made up of skip Cormier, mate Julia Cormier, second Donald Delaney and lead Justin Humphrey. The top five was rounded out by the Lonnie Howe rink with skip Howe, mate Greg Wall, second Georgette Sparkes and lead Jeff Steele. Thank you to all the curlers who took part, especially those who joined us from outside of the Schooner membership.

Curling wasn't the only thing going on during our final week of the season

and it almost took a back seat to the great entertainment that we had at the club that weekend. On Friday night there was an open mic night that was headlined by Brian Cathcart of the band Pretty Archie. Brian did a great job entertaining the crowd and he was joined by a number of other musicians and singers throughout the evening that kept the big crowd entertained until late into the night. A huge thank you to Brian and to all the other talented people who took the stage to entertain. Given the success of this inaugural Open Mic event, you may see it be added to the Schooner schedule again in the future. Saturday night saw another great party as we held the Closing Spiel Dance with music for this event by everyone's favorite DJ, DJ Jimmy MacKinnon. Jimmy had the dance floor full most of the night and everyone had a great time. The night was capped off by a barefoot draw to the button that saw a large number of participants. It was a great end to the Closing Spiel and a great end to the curling season overall.

Congratulations to our winners and thank you once again to everyone who joined us to curl. Thanks to Stephen Leslie for organizing and running the event and to anyone who helped Stephen out along the way, to the ice crew for maintaining wonderful ice conditions, not easy at that time of the season, to the bartenders for doing a great job as always, to everyone who was involved with organizing the food and entertainment that we all enjoyed so much and to everyone else who helped out in any way. Last but certainly not least, thank you to Cheryl Windsor and her staff at Disco Tirecraft for their sponsorship. They have become great supporters of the club and we should all try and use their services to say thanks.

It was a great season at the Schooner Club and it couldn't have come to a more fitting end.



Fundraiser

The third Schooner Chase the Ace fundraiser started on January 31, 2017. Things started out well with sales hitting the \$600-700 range for the first few draws and then leveled off a bit with the next few draws having sales in the \$450-500. This level of sales was still well in excess of what we were used to in the first two editions of our Chase the Ace. The draws continued into the summer with sales staying relatively strong, only dipping below \$400 in a week once or twice. Outlets for weekly ticket sales were set up with Disco Tirecraft and CC Computer Solutions and later in the summer at Cape Breton Glass, each selling tickets on behalf of the club. Sales at the outlets certainly played an important part in the overall success of the Chase the Ace fundraiser this time around.

With the jackpot growing and still 19 cards left it looked like our Chase the Ace event would stay alive until curling season began again. That was not to be when, on the September 26th draw, Donald Delany became our lucky jackpot winner when he had a proxy pull the ace of spades from the deck on his behalf. Donald won a total of \$6118 which included the current jackpot plus a weekly prize amount. Donald bought tickets for the draw weekly since it began.

Thank you to everyone who played Chase the Ace with us, to everyone who sold tickets including our local business outlets, to Frances Ford and Lynn Kelly for selling tickets at the club each week and to everyone else who helped out in any way.

Fun Nights

Fun Nights will make a return to the club this year again but won't get going until after the Holiday break. That has been the norm for the last couple of seasons since it was found that the fun nights scheduled in November and December were never that well attended. There is discussion under way that may bring a fun night early in the season to allow non-curlers an opportunity to come to the try the sport in hope they may join as members. Watch the Schooner bulletin board, the website and Facebook page for more information on Fun Nights and a full schedule once it's available.

Club Executive and Elections

At the Spring General Meeting held at the end of last season, those in attendance chose the Schooner executive and committee heads for this coming season. There weren't a lot of changes but two positions, bar and bonspiels, will now be run by committee. The bar has been run that way for a couple of seasons and has worked out well. This will be the first season for the bonspiels to be handled this way but everyone is optimistic that it will work out well. The committee is made up of a number of people, each of whom will take responsibility for one spiel a year. The remainder of the committee will be available to help out if required. We wish to thank everyone who has committed their time to the club and taken on an executive or committee position. Without the tireless work of volunteers our club could not survive. So, without further adieu, here are your 2017-18 Schooner executive and committee heads.

President - Gordie Cormier
Vice President - Lynn Kelly
Treasurer - Thomas Drover
Secretary - Frances Ford
Draw Master - Cal Thistle
Bar Steward - By Committee
Ice Director - Brian Laughlin
Bonspiels - By Committee
Juniors Coordinator - Nadine Neima-Drover
Housekeeping - Georgette Sparkes and Bernadette Cormier
Membership - Frank Kokocki and Julia Cormier
Public Relations - Richard Lorway
Fun Nights - Janet Gallivan and Kathy Gale
Ways and Means - Lynn Kelly
Website - Billy Farr
Newsletter - Billy Farr
Annual Golf Tournament Coordinators - Lynn Kelly and Gary Landry

Tuesday Tarbish

Tuesday nights were rather busy at the club this season with league curling, Chase the Ace and also our regular tarbish game that has been run on Tuesday evening for quite a while now. Anyone can come and play, members or guests, and no pre-registration is required. We currently have a good mix of members and non-members who take part each week. This is a single entry game with partners rotating after each game is finished. It's a great way to expand the use of our club and bring some new faces through the door. The card game gets going around 7pm. Join us any Tuesday.

Schooner Golf and BBQ



It was a rainy Saturday morning on June 24 and it didn't look like we were going to be able to get the Schooner Golf Day in but, as luck would have it, the rain started to move out around noon and by the first tee time at 1pm the skies were still cloudy but the rain had stopped. This year saw a large number participating in the event with 13 teams and 52 golfers taking part with another 6 or so coming just for dinner. Alderdale Greens was in great shape for the event and the rain from the night before and early morning hadn't had any detrimental effects on the course at all.

Teams started the day by playing a ball toss game before they teed off. Each golfer tossed three balls at a board attempting to hit holes that were worth points. When things were all tallied up, the foursome of Brian Laughlin, Gordie Cormier, Bill Farr and Gary Butler were the champs after a playoff round was held back at the club. There was also a second fun game played at the club where team members had to chip golf balls towards a target and were awarded points based on how close the balls came to that target. This game was won by John Donovan, Francis Sutherland, Bryant Cormier and Wayne Binns. The main event, actual golf, was won by the foursome of Eric Boutilier, Donnie Boutilier, Brad Boutilier and Mel Windsor. Other winners were Nathan Susen and Tanya MacDonald for longest drives for men and women respectively, Kenny Thomas for closest to the hole for the men and Cheryl MacKinnon for the women.

After Golf, everyone headed back to the club for a steak dinner. Once again, Brian Laughlin played grill master and did a fantastic job on everyone's steaks. A big thank you to Janet Gallivan, Joe Erickson, Yvonne Donovan, and Stephen Leslie who helped to get things ready at the club and had all the potatoes and other sides ready to go. Dinner was fantastic and enjoyed by everyone. For those who wanted something a little sweet after dinner there was a huge strawberry shortcake to enjoy. Some of the golfers hung around a while and played a bit of washer toss. Overall a great day for everyone.

A big thank you to Lynn Kelly and to Gary Landry for organizing and running the event, to everyone, once again, who helped prepare dinner and to everyone who helped to clean up afterwards, to all the golfers and to those who joined us just for dinner, especially to everyone from outside of the Schooner membership. It was great to have you take part. All golfers received a souvenir Schooner golf towel to commemorate the event. It was a hugely successful golf outing this year and now that the golfing, the bragging and the eating is all done we can look forward to next year's event. We hope it will be even bigger and more successful than this one.

Membership Fees

The Schooner Curling Club membership rates for all categories will remain the same for the 2017-18 season. A full adult membership is only \$220 plus HST (\$253). There are student and full-junior rates set at \$120 plus tax and a Junior or Little Rocker can curl all season for only \$60 plus tax. Visit the Schooner website's membership area for full info and to access a printable or an online application. Online applications are accepted anytime. All members are reminded that your membership fee must be **PAID IN FULL** on or before November 1, 2017. Anyone who has not paid in full will not be permitted to curl until all membership fees are paid. The club works hard to

Volunteer Appreciation

keep membership rates as low as possible and we are a big bargain for a winter full of fun so please pay before the deadline.

Volunteers are the heart and soul of the Schooner Curling Club and we are lucky to have a large number of our members willing and able to give time to make the club run as smoothly as possible. To thank some of the hard working volunteers, an appreciation night was held August 12 at the home of Thomas and Nadine Drover in Sydney River. It was a small token of appreciation for all of the executive committee, committee heads and bartenders who give up hours of free time to the club each season. Thank you to everyone who helps out in any way at the club and, a reminder to everyone, now that we are beginning another new season, any time you can give to the club is very much appreciated. Without the help of volunteers, the club could not exist as it does.

2019 Scotties Bid

As most people remember, the CBRM launched another bid in the spring of 2017 to bring the Scotties Tournament of Hearts, the Canadian Championship for women's curling, to Sydney. Paul MacDonald, executive director of Sydney's Center 200, paid a visit to the Schooner Club in April to address the executive, shed some light on the bid and to get our support. MacDonald told the club executive that the first bid for such an event was rarely successful and more of a trial run. He also said that they were much more confident in this second attempt, that the Province and Curling Nova Scotia were both much more behind it and that there would be some things done differently on this attempt. One big thing was that the deposits for ticket packages, an important yard stick in any area's bid to gauge the possible success of the event, would be dropped from \$100 to \$50 per package. The goal that was set was 1500 pre-sales deposits and, although that goal was not achieved, it was still a strong showing with just under 1000 deposits made. Tickets were being pushed much harder in this bid with much more advertising in print and other media, sales and info booths setup at malls and grocery stores and just a general overall bigger presence in the community this time around. The bid was submitted by the June 30 deadline with a decision not expected until late September. Recently, a contingent from Curling Canada including event Manager Gordon McNabb made a visit to evaluate Sydney as a host city for the event. Schooner's Thomas Drover was part of Sydney's welcoming committee while Lynn Kelly and Stephen Leslie hosted when they visited our club to check things out. Lynn said that Mr. McNabb was very impressed with our club and commented on the sand base we have and how hard it is to make ice on. Overall, the impression that was taken away from the visit by all involved was positive and it is definitely a step forward in securing the bid. Although no information is readily available about any other cities vying for the event. McNabb said there were others being considered. A final decision is expected to be made and a host city announced by late September or early October. Keep your fingers crossed.

Just one other quick note; If the Scotties is won by the CBRM, the Schooner Club has been approached by C200 staff to have a learn to curl session so they can learn the game and get background for dealing with patrons.

Point Of Sale System for Bar

With the bar cash register starting to show its age, becoming hard to get supplies for and starting to cost money in repair, it was decided last spring that we look into getting something to replace it. Nadine Neima-Drover had some experience in dealing with this type of thing through her work so she was asked to look into possible solutions that would replace our aging register. After doing some research she brought back a couple of possibilities for the Schooner Executive to consider. One was simply replacing the old register with a similar new unit. Another was a more elaborate point of sale system that could greatly increase the information we could get in the form of sales reports, inventory, etc. Club treasurer Thomas Drover said these reports would greatly streamline the work that the treasurer had to do as far as reconciling bar sales with inventory. It was decided that the POS system was the better way to go but that the one that we ended up using had to be easy to setup and change, generate the information we needed, be easy to learn and use and also be relatively inexpensive. Nadine came up with a great solution called Square POS. It's a free app that will run on an inexpensive touch screen tablet under Android or Apple's IOS that runs on Ipad. The Square software was easy to setup and use, generated the reports we needed and was expandable to allow for additional hardware like automated cash drawers and receipt printers if required down the road. All the information was presented at the spring general meeting on May 24 and a motion was passed to allow for a budget of \$1000 or less to be spent on the new system. With the software being free and the hardware required to operate it being relatively inexpensive, we were well under that budget. A tablet was purchased for testing and was setup in the bar for the summer. The new system was slowly brought online and tested with very successful results and we are now ready to make the switch from the register to the new POS software on October 1st. A second tablet is purchased to act as a backup and a new cash drawer is also on the way to complete the system. Total cost of the new system including the backup tablet was right around \$500. Training will be provided to all volunteer bartenders but the general consensus of those who have used it over the summer on Tuesday nights is that it is easy to learn and use.

Club Improvements

Over the summer, plans were made for club improvements that were made possible in no small part by the proceeds of our fundraising and, specifically, Chase the Ace. Last season saw a big upgrade to our electrical system that improved both its safety and reliability. This year we have the upgrade to our point of sale system in the bar that was already reported on, improvements to the parking lot with new gravel, very generously spread by Stephen Leslie who volunteered not only his time but his machinery as well and we are in the process getting quotes and applying to Efficiency Nova Scotia to have the lighting in both the ice shed and club area upgraded to energy efficient LED type lighting. Efficiency NS will pay up to 60% of the cost of such a project and, given the expense that this could incur, their participation is essential if it is to go ahead. The club has also purchased a new pebble can, a new shammy for sweeping the ice after games and a new digital measuring device to measure rocks when they are too close to call.

Money for club improvements doesn't come easily and is not available from membership dues and other general club revenue but comes from the fundraisers we have each season. Please support things like the Snowball, 649 draws and Chase the Ace so the club can continue to improve and keep the cost of membership down.



The Schooner Club held its second annual washer toss tournament on July 22 with a total of 11 teams taking part. That's up a bit from the previous year when there were 8 teams. Each team of two players paid an entry fee of \$20 and were treated to a day of good fun and a BBQ with hamburgers and hotdogs. All entry fees were returned as prizes in the two round competition. The winners of both rounds was the team of Gordie Cormier and Russell Fitzgerald. First round runners up were Wayne Binns and Marie Young while Justin and Nicole Humphrey took second in round two.

We're Ready for Our Closeup



The Schooner Curling Club executive has been contacted by a film crew from Germany that is travelling the world filming a made-for-television documentary and they are interested in using our club as a location for filming a segment on curling. They got the club's contact info through Destination Cape Breton who also provided them with contacts at the Sydney Curling Club. If they decide to use our facility, the film date would be Friday, October 27. We should have our ice ready by then without any unforeseen issues coming up. They want to have two people get instruction and try the sport out. Club President Gordie Cormier would like to have a number of people at the club on that day so we can actually let them play a real game and so there would be people to fill up the clubhouse as spectators. While nothing is finalized yet and details would still have to be worked out, anyone with free time on that day is asked to keep it in mind and attend if you can. This just may be your fifteen minutes of fame. Don't miss it!

Flood at the Sydney Curling Club

The Sydney Curling Club has sustained damage due to some sort of flood. According to an email from club president Rachel Baker to club members, the areas affected are the basement, including locker areas, and an equipment area on the main floor. The full email can be found on the Sydney Curling Club's website. The club is in the process of dealing with insurance and having a disaster recovery company come in to do the cleanup. While there aren't too many details in the email regarding the damage, it appears that it may be significant and that a 'large amount of water and mud entered the basement'. Baker says that she is hoping that restoration work can be done quickly and that it won't delay the start of their curling season that is scheduled to begin October 10th with clinics and the PEPSI open on October 17. The Schooner Club wishes the Sydney CC all the best and hopes they will have a quick resolution to this terrible situation.