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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 77

April, 2017

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
Saturday, May 6	Closing Banquet (tentative)
Saturday, May 27	Sydney CC Ticket Draw and Dance
Saturday, June 24	Schooner Golf and BBQ

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

League Roundup



All members are asked to make sure they are clear on when they are playing and, if there is a question re. the schedule, to contact their skip or draw master Cal Thistle. With many games being rescheduled due to weather and players not being able to make certain games, many makeup games are being scheduled and it is possible that not all changes are reported so they don't get added to the Schooner calendar.

The final Sunday of the Don Cherry's Team Entry League's regular season was March 5th and saw an abbreviated schedule of only three games instead of the usual five. This was due to only two games being played on a previous Sunday when some teams were away at the Ship Hector Spiel in New Glasgow in late January. Even though there were only three games, two of these were very important to the overall standings and in determining a regular season champ. The Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink and the Gordie Cormier rink have been neck and neck in Team Entry for some time now with the Wally MacDonald rink also in the mix for a while. MacDonald fell off the pace and didn't have a chance at first heading into the final week of play but Bonnell and Cormier were still fighting it out for top spot. In mid-February it looked like Bonnell had taken a stranglehold on the lead when he defeated Cormier head to head with only two weeks remaining to play. One more win could lock things up for him but he wasn't able to come up with it. Bonnell first lost to the Martin Campbell rink and then lost his final match against the Wally MacDonald rink even though he was leading going into the last end. MacDonald was able to tie the game with hammer and then steal the game from Bonnell in an extra end in what can only be described as a crushing defeat for the Bonnell squad. The Bonnell loss left the door open for Cormier who, with a win, would put himself in the driver's seat as he had a make-up game in hand over Bonnell. If Cormier could win his game against the Omar Roach rink and then the make-up against the Martin Campbell rink, he could steal the title from Bonnell. Cormier was

successful against Roach, taking a single point in each of the first four ends before Roach could get on the board with a single of his own. After trading single points in six and seven, Cormier defended his three point lead in the eighth end and took the win. Cormier was now tied with Bonnell and would play the Martin Campbell rink with a chance to take the regular season title with a victory. Bonnell was helpless and could only sit on the sidelines and wait for the outcome. If Cormier would lose, Bonnell could be champ as he had the tie breakers in his favor. The Cormier/Campbell game has not yet been played.

The Old Triangle Men's League finished up round one of its playoffs when a makeup game between the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink and the Wally MacDonald rink was played on Tuesday, March 28. This game was to decide who would be the second team from their pool to make it to play in the championship division with the Brian Laughlin rink who had solidified a spot by going 3-0 in round one. While Bonnell took an early lead and controlled the game for the most part, a couple of key misses at inopportune times cost Bonnell and MacDonald stole the game away in the eighth end, much like he did to Bonnell in their final meeting in Team Entry.

MacDonald's win sent him to the Championship round to join Laughlin to play for the Men's League playoff title. In the other pool there was a log-jam with three teams, Omar Roach, Gordie Cormier and Rob Agnew, tied with identical 2-1 records. Tie breakers determined that Roach and Cormier would advance to the championship round while Agnew would be relegated to consolation. The second round of the Men's playoffs got underway on March 30th. A late March storm threatened the cancellation of games on that night but the weather cleared in time to allow them to go ahead. Play in the top division saw Gordie Cormier taking on Brian Laughlin and Omar Roach take on Wally MacDonald. Laughlin and Roach, who finished one two respectively in the regular season, took wins in their first games and set themselves up well in this short round robin. Whoever comes out on top in the round robin will be the playoff champs.

The Pepsi Mixed League is almost to the end of the second leg of its season which again saw three teams in contention for the title just as we saw in leg one. Heading into the final week of play we saw the Rick Windsor rink in first place, two points ahead of the Greg Ferguson rink, who had also come close to winning in leg one, and the Gordie Cormier rink. Windsor had two games remaining while the two teams chasing him had three. Cormier had the enviable situation of having to play both teams he was in contention with, leaving his fate in his own hands. A win in both of those games would put Cormier into a very good position.

In the final week of March, Ferguson was successful in winning his game against John Donovan to temporarily put him in a tie with Windsor and keep his hopes alive. On the final night of play in the month, Cormier was scheduled to take on Windsor in a very important game for both sides. A win for Cormier would allow him to enter into a three way tie for first while a win for Windsor would push him back into first alone. Unfortunately there was some bad weather on the night this game was supposed to be played and it got postponed. For updated results on this and any league you can check the Schooner website.

Fun Spiel Wrap-up

The Schooner Junior program will be wrapping 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 recently competed in spiels in the Baddeck Curling Club and the Sydney Curling Club. There are two regular practices scheduled for the juniors in April, one on April 1 and the next on the 8th. The Juniors will also be on the ice on April 15 and that day will also see their end of year party take place. 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 Schooner Fun Spiel, sponsored by Daniel's Pub and The Bonnie Prince, was held from March 7-11 with a total of fourteen teams taking part, six in the Tuesday/Thursday division and a full slate of eight teams in the Wednesday/Friday division. There were also a lot of curlers from outside the membership taking part, many of them new to the sport. It's always good when new curlers take part in events such as these.

After competing within their own divisions for the first two games of the spiel, things got mixed up on Saturday when all fourteen teams took to the ice to go head to head and determine an overall winner. When the final rocks were thrown it was the Wally MacDonald rink who came out on top after winning all three of their games with an equal point total of eleven points per game. Joining skip MacDonald was Kelley Laughlin, Tyler Curtis and Matt Tubrett. Second place was taken by the Joe Erickson rink who, like MacDonald, were undefeated but fell just short of MacDonald in points, finishing two back. Joe was joined by Matt MacPherson, Bill Moss and Bernadette Cormier. In third was the Richard Lorway rink who, after winning their first two games with skip Lorway at the reigns, were still able to hold onto a top three finish even though they lost to the Gary Landry rink in their final match without Lorway who was away on personal business on Saturday. Landry wound up in fourth place after the victory over Lorway's team. Joining Skip Richard Lorway was George Plumridge and Greg Wall while skip Landry was aided by Kenny Thomas and Allen and Bev Young. Rounding out the top five finishers was the Russell Fitzgerald rink who had two wins against one loss. Russell was joined by mate Lynn Kelly and had to rely on fill-in players after his two front end players had to withdraw from the spiel.

There really were no losers in this spiel as everyone was treated to some great curling, good food on Saturday and all participants got a gift card from either spiel sponsors Daniel's Pub or the Bonnie Prince or from some other club sponsors. Everyone was a winner.

To finish off a great spiel and a great week, the Schooner Club had Full Circle take to the stage on Saturday night and rock the house with their eclectic mix of country and rock music from yesterday and today. A large crowd of approximately fifty people made their way back to the club after curling was done to party the night away. A great time was had by everyone.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Schooner Fun Spiel, especially those who joined us from outside the Schooner membership, to Stephen Leslie who had his hands full organizing the spiel, making teams and then finding spares for teams who were short throughout the week and to everyone who helped out with filling in for teams who needed them. A big thank you to sponsors Daniel's Pub and The Bonnie Prince who we hope to see back as sponsors for future events, to all the guys from Full Circle who put on such a great show and to Gordie Cormier and Brian Cathcart for filling in on the breaks, to Georgette Sparkes for making soup that was enjoyed by all curlers and guests on Saturday, to the bartenders for, as always, going above and beyond in what they do, to the ice crew for great ice, to housing for keeping the club in top shape all week and last, but certainly not least, to everyone who helped out in any other way. The final curling spiel of the season will be the Closing Spiel that will be held from April 18-22 and finished off in fine style with a dance, music provided by DJ Jimmy. We hope everyone who took part in the Fun Spiel can join us for our final curling event of the season.

Closing Spiel

Plan to join us for the final curling event of the season, the Schooner Closing Spiel. This spiel runs from April 18-22 and is open to everyone. There is single entry for a cost of \$20 per player and everyone will get three games, lunch on Saturday and there is a prize for everyone who takes part. How can you lose? Curlers can choose from two divisions, one playing on Tuesday and Thursday and one playing on Wednesday and Friday. Everyone will also play one game on Saturday. This spiel is open to everyone, no membership is required, and all equipment will be provided with the exception of a pair of clean sneakers for the ice. You can sign up at the club or you can send us an email and we'll get you registered. Again, this is your last chance to curl at the Schooner Club for the season. After the final rocks are thrown in this spiel, the ice plant will be shut down for the summer.

To end things off in true Schooner style, there will be dance at the club on Saturday, April 22 from 9-1 with music provided by DJ Jimmy. Plan to join us and party the night away with your Schooner friends. The dance is also open to everyone and you don't have to curl in the spiel to attend the dance.



Fundraiser

Chase the Ace continues at the club with a total of eight cards being drawn but the Ace of Spades still remains in the deck. Weekly sales were down slightly in March but still exceed any of the previous Chase the Ace fundraisers we have run in the past. Sales started strong for the first three or four weeks and were in the \$600-700 range but recent draws have seen weekly sales dip just below \$500. The last draw saw a jackpot of \$1856 up for grabs and the estimated jackpot for the next draw on April 4 is around \$2000. Given the importance of this fundraiser to the financial well being of the club, members are encouraged to participate whenever possible. Now, with the use of stub tickets and the move to week long sales, you can buy your Chase the Ace tickets any time you are in the club and any member can take tickets with them to sell at work or to family and friends. Tickets are

always available at the bar or you can see any member of the executive to get tickets to take and sell. If you or anyone you sell tickets to is drawn in the weekly draw, the winner will be contacted by phone and given the opportunity to come to the club to pick a card from the deck. If the winner chooses not to come or can't make it in the allotted thirty minutes, a proxy can be designated to draw the card on the winners behalf.

Fun Night

The month of March saw not one but two fun nights at the club. The first fun night, a bonus night sponsored by Disco Tirecraft, was on Friday, March 3rd and was held as a celebration for Schooner's own Nadine Neima-Drover who had been selected as one of four winners in the Tirecraft Hit the Button Sweepstakes national contest. Nadine would be off to Toronto late in the month to try for \$100,000 with a draw to the button. In keeping with the theme, we held our own Hit the Button Contest where anyone could enter for \$10 and have a chance to throw one rock to win a great basket of prizes from Tirecraft. Joe Erickson was the big winner, placing his rock just over ten inches from the pin. Joe took home the prize and all the money raised in the contest was donated to the Cancer Patient Care Fund at the Regional Hospital. In total, \$280 was raised to donate. The rest of the evening was reserved for regular fun night activities. Everyone got a chance to curl, eat pizza and there were lots of Tirecraft gift certificates to win compliments of Disco Tirecraft. Overall it was a great night with over fifty people in attendance and we want to thank Cheryl and her staff at Disco Tirecraft for not only sponsoring the event but also coming up and enjoying the Fun Night with us.

The second Fun Night in March was the regularly scheduled event that was held on Saturday, March 18. The crowd was down for this event with approximately 18 people showing up but everyone still had a good time and got some delicious pizza. A number of factors played part in the lower than expected crowd, the first of which was that it was the end of March break and that was couple with the St. Patrick's Day holiday coming the day before. Many people chose to celebrate St. Patrick's day as their night out for the week. The last factor was that there were a large number of club members in Port Hawksbury for the Elite 10 Grand Slam event that was going in there that weekend. There is still one remaining Fun Night scheduled for the season and that will be Saturday, April 15. We hope to see a good turnout for this final Fun Night of the year. We also hope to get a few people who enjoy curling on fun night to sign up for the closing spiel which is taking place the following week, April 17-22.

Congratulations Nadine



Schooner Curling Club member Nadine Neima-Drover went to Toronto on the weekend of March 24th for her chance to win the big money in the Tirecraft Hit the Button Sweepstakes. Nadine was one of four national winners who would make the all expense paid trip to have a chance to throw one stone and cover the button at the Leaside Curling Club for a prize of up to \$100,000.

After arriving in Toronto on Friday and having a day of site seeing, Saturday was the day of the big event. Nadine was taken from the hotel to the curling

Sydney Curling Club Coors Mixed Spring Spiel

club in style by a stretch limousine to meet with her fellow competitors and take her shot. Nadine's rock came close but not quite close enough as her shot came to rest twenty nine inches from the button on the center line. A very good effort indeed. The next closest competitor left their stone 156 inches away. While Nadine didn't win any of the big money, she did get a \$400 consolation prize and got to enjoy that great trip to Toronto compliments of Tirecraft. Check the Schooner Facebook page for an exciting video of Nadine taking her big shot. Thanks to Nadine for representing us well and also thanks to Tirecraft for giving her the opportunity and for the \$2500 prize the Schooner Club received for being Nadine's home club.

The annual Spring Spiel was held at the Sydney Curling Club from March 24 to 26 and was once again sponsored by the Coors Light Brewing Company. As always, a number of Schooner teams compete with this year seeing a total of four rinks from our club take part. Wally MacDonald, Gordie Cormier, Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell and Martin Campbell were all skips of teams representing Schooner. Other Schooner members joined up with various teams to take part as well. Georgette Sparkes and Kenny Thomas played with skip John Penney and Kristal Coffin played with the 'A' division winning Kris Granchelli rink.

Play got underway on Friday with all Schooner teams seeing action. Gordie Cormier and Martin Campbell were both in the winner's column while Wally MacDonald and Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell both dropped their openers. Martin Campbell's game had the most excitement as it saw skip Campbell make a triple takeout to score five in the seventh end to erase an early deficit and take the lead for good against an always tough Mark MacNamara rink. Saturday morning's second draw had two Schooner rinks back on the ice. Gordie Cormier played Sydney's Kurt Roach while the Wally MacDonald rink, with Brian Laughlin filling in for Wally at the skip's spot, was to play former Schooner member Bruce Johnson. Bruce curled at Schooner a number of years ago before making a move to the mainland and, ironically, was also a former team mate of Laughlin's. The Cormier/Roach game was won by Roach in a shortened six ends while the MacDonald/Johnson game was a closer affair with the MacDonald rink coming out on top after overcoming an early deficit. The next draw of the day saw the other two Schooner rinks, Campbell and Bonnell, take to the ice for their second matches. Campbell couldn't repeat his heroics of the previous night and lost his second game while Bonnell was victorious. Both would lose later that day and be eliminated. The Gordie Cormier rink also lost their final game on Saturday and didn't make it to Sunday play.

Schooner was represented in Sunday's playoffs however as the Wally MacDonald rink made it to play a semi-final game to get to the 'C' finals and other Schooner members, Kristal Coffin, Georgette Sparkes and Kenny Thomas, also played on Sunday with their respective teams. Skip Wally MacDonald was once again unable to play and had to turn over the reins of his team to Stephen Leslie. It was a well played, back and forth game against the Mark MacNamara rink that saw Leslie down one with hammer in the final end but with a shot to tie. It wasn't to be and MacNamara stole the

Club Executive and Elections

final end and the win to advance and the MacDonald rink was eliminated. Overall it was a great weekend at the Sydney Curling Club and a lot of fun was had by the Schooner contingent who were well represented on the ice as well as at the party Saturday night. Thanks to the Sydney club for your hospitality and thanks to all Schooner members who took part in the spiel and represented the club proudly.

Everyone is reminded that, as we approach the end of the season, we also approach the time when we pick a new club executive and committee heads. While we hope most current members will re-offer, anyone interested in any position is encouraged to make that known. A sign up poster is now up on the Schooner Club's bulletin board and members can put their names in for any position they would like to hold. If two or more people offer for the same position, an election will be held at the end of season general meeting.

Gordie Cormier, current club president, has already made it known that, after three years as president of the club, he may be looking to step down. Gordie has done a great job as president and we hope that he has a change of heart but, if he doesn't, we will need someone to fill that position. Other members of the executive and some committee heads have also held their positions for a long time and may be looking for a break if someone else was willing to step up. The executive and committees have all done an excellent job over the years and that is evident by how well the club is running and the strong position that it is in. Any member who has some free time to give is asked to consider joining the team that helps make the Schooner Club the great place that it is.

Tuesday Tarbish

Tuesday nights are 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. The games will continue all year, even after the curling season is done.

Skating Party



The Schooner Curling club will once again be holding what has now become an end-of-season tradition, the annual skating party. The closing spiel will finish up on April 22 and the skating party will be held on Sunday, April 23 from 2-4 and begin the demise of our curling ice. Members and their families are invited to bring their skates and have a different kind of fun in our rink. Refreshments for everyone will be provided by the club. Plan to join us for this final on ice event of the 2016-17 season.

Schooner Golf and BBQ



With curling season coming to an end we now start looking forward to summer time activities. For many, that means golf. To that end, the Schooner Curling Club has held a golf outing and BBQ for the last number of years that has proven to be very popular with golfers and non-golfers alike. This year's event will be held on Saturday, June 24 at the Alderdale Greens course in Point Edward. For an entry fee of \$35, golfers get nine holes of golf, a chance at some prizes and a delicious steak BBQ back at the Schooner Club when they are done. If golf is not your thing but you still want to attend the BBQ, you can sign up for dinner only for \$20. The event is being coordinated again this year by Lynn Kelly who, along with Mary Foley, started the event a few years back and Lynn has been looking after it since its inception. Watch the club's bulletin board for registration sheets. If you plan to take part you are asked to pay your entry fee to Lynn before the date of the event. You can see her at the club during curling season or on Tuesday nights during the Chase the Ace draws after the curling season is over. This event is open to everyone, you don't have to be a Schooner member, so you can bring your friends. This has always been a great event that has grown in popularity over the years so don't miss out.

The End of Another Season

It's always surprising how quickly the curling season seems to come and go. It doesn't feel like it was that long ago that Brian and his crew were making our ice for the upcoming year as we anxiously awaited the first rocks to be thrown in the opening spiel. Now the closing spiel is just around the corner and the ice crew will be getting set to turn off the plant and melt those two glistening sheets of ice, bringing our season to an end. It's been another great season at the Schooner Club even though membership numbers were a little bit low. While we only had membership that numbered in the mid sixties, there was still lots of great curling in both leagues and spiels and lots of great parties and dances throughout the year. We even had two live acts take the 'stage' at the club. First we had Jinx O'Neill and Donnie Campbell when we held our St. Patrick's Day in September party and, more recently, we had the band Full Circle who played to a full house to finish off the Schooner Fun Spiel. The 2016-17 season saw some changes to the league setup and those changes were all well received and seemed to work out well. Congratulations to all the league winners and soon to be named playoff champs as well. The season also saw a lot of great spiels held and a lot of new faces take part. The Women's Sweetheart spiel is always one of the most anticipated events of the season and it was, once again, a huge success. The Schooner Cash Spiel was also a very popular event that, this year, went off as scheduled and didn't have to be put off because of weather. Two on Two curling at the club remains popular as well which was evident in the waiting list to get in on the two on two spiel that was held in mid January. Schooner members also took to the road to compete with teams from our club taking part in the Port Hawskbury Cash Spiel, the Ship Hector in New Glasgow and the Sydney Coors Light Spring Spiel. Fun Nights returned to the club as well this season and were pretty well attended, bringing all important new faces to the club to try the sport of

curling. The Schooner Junior Program was active at the club again this season and, like regular membership, also saw some lower numbers in those taking part. Regardless, all the kids had a good year and learned a lot. They also competed outside the club in spiels at the Baddeck and Sydney curling clubs.

This season also saw the addition of some new sponsors to the club. GoCapeBreton.com and Firestop Services both came on as sign sponsors in the ice shed, the Old Triangle Irish Ale House is the new sponsor of the Men's League and we had Daniel's Pub and the Bonnie Prince co-sponsor the Schooner Fun Spiel this year. We want to send out a big thank you to all of the new and returning sponsors of the club since the generosity of these local businesses and organizations help us stay alive and keep costs to members down. Another way we maintain a healthy financial position is through fundraising and that is why the current Chase the Ace promotion is so important to us. Please don't forget to participate after the season has ended. We also got a big surprise this year when the club received \$2500 from Tirecraft after Nadine Neima-Drover was named one of four national winners in the "Hit the Button Sweepstakes". That money was very timely as we were just deciding to buy a new beer fridge when we found out. While money is very important in keeping the doors of the club open, volunteers are really the heart and soul of the Schooner Curling Club. Without the countless hours that are given by all of our volunteers, we would never be able to maintain the club as we know it. The executive and committee heads, the bartenders, the ice crew, those who help with fundraising, those who help with spiels and other special events, the list goes on. Thank you all. A special thank you goes out to Frances Ford who generously donated a very nice curling style shuffle board table to the club that has already proven very popular with members. Frances won the game in Port Hawksbury during the Elite 10 Grand Slam event. She was one of many Schooner members who went to the event and was a member of the Elite 11. Thank you to former Schooner member Tom Drover for transporting the table from Port Hawksbury to the club.

As our time at the club grows short and we look forward to our summer time activities, I encourage you all to keep the club in mind for upcoming events like the Schooner Golf outing and BBQ at the end of June, Chase the Ace that will continue every Tuesday until the elusive ace of spades is caught and our weekly tarbush game, also held on Tuesday evenings all year. Keep an eye on the Schooner website for other events that may crop up over the summer like a washer toss tournament, a kids fun day during Action Week or maybe an indoor curling tournament on our shiny new table.

As I finish this last 'In the Hack' for the season I want to thank everyone who takes the time to read it and I hope you find it both informative and entertaining. The same goes for the Schooner website and Facebook. I also want to thank all Schooner members for helping to make the club such a great place to spend time. We'll go our separate ways for the summer and enjoy the season but I always look forward to the time when the days grow shorter and the air gets cool because that is the time when we make our return to the Schooner Curling club for another season, raise our glasses and wish one another '*Good Curling*' once again. For now I wish everyone a '*Good Summer*'. See you in the fall.

