

Schooner Curling Club

61 Military Rd.
Sydney NS B1N 3K6
(902) 539-3992
schoonercurlingclub.com
schoonercurling@gmail.com

In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 110

April, 2022

Saturday, April 2	Fun Night
April 8-9	2 on 2 Mixed Spiel - Team Entry
April 8-10	Sydney CC Cash Spiel
April 21-23	John Boneparte Memorial Closing Spiel
Saturday, May 7	Schooner Banquet
TBA	Schooner Golf
NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.	

League Roundup



League play will be drawing to a close soon in all leagues with both Men's and Team Entry in playoff rounds now and Mixed and Doubles finishing up the last few games of their round robin seasons.

The Don Cherry's Team Entry league playoffs first round, a two division affair with all teams playing a round robin within their divisions, is wrapping up with three of the four teams that will advance to the crossover games decided as of April 1. Gordie Cormier and Kevin Gouthro have solidified their spots in one division and Stephen Leslie sits atop the other with a guarantee to move forward. Four other teams in that division have a chance at filling the final second round spot. There are still makeup games to be finalized before the team to move on can be named. Still in the hunt are Russell Fitzgerald, Mel Windsor, Jenna MacNeil and Sid Murray. There were no games scheduled for Sunday, April 3, in order to wait for the playoff order to be decided. Ice on that day was made available to any members who wished to play. Once decided, the top four teams will play a crossover game with the first place team from each division playing the second place team from the other. Winners will play one game for the playoff title.

The Schooner Men's League wrapped up its regular season in March and started a playoff round on March 31. The normal round robin format for Men's playoffs wasn't possible due to a time shortage so there will be a three week, single elimination draw to decide a playoff winner. The first week saw all teams in action with a chance to move forward with the first place team playing the eighth place and so on. Gordie Cormier, regular schedule winner defeated Mel Windsor and Wally MacDonald defeated Brian Laughlin and will meet in draw two for a chance to play in the finals. Kevin Gouthro defeated Keith MacEachern to earn his spot in a semi final game while the game between the Gary Landry and the Rob Agnew rinks didn't get played when Agnew could not ice a team. Landry technically took the game by forfeit but has agreed to try and play it given that some free ice time has opened up. The winner will go on to play Gouthro for a chance at a berth in the playoff final. Congratulations to Men's League regular schedule

Drawmaster's Musings

winner the Gordie Cormier rink. Joining skip Cormier was Bill Farr, Kirk Macneil and Eric MacLeod.

The Schooner Doubles League is set to wrap up its inaugural season with only three games left on the schedule. The first year was a great success with a full complement of twenty four players taking part. Over the season, some players started the year and dropped out and others took their places. Most who play in the league say they enjoy the format. There are still eight or nine players who have a chance at most points but, given the changes over the season and the disruptions caused by Covid, it will be hard to crown one overall winner. That aside, given the success and overall popularity of the league, it is likely going to make a return to the Schooner Schedule for the 2022-23 season.

The East Side Mario's Mixed League is also getting set to wrap up the second half of its schedule in April with the final games scheduled for April 19. Philip Edwards, skip of the first round winning team, sits at the top of the standings with an undefeated record while Peter MacIntyre and Gary Landry are close behind, also undefeated but both having earned a tie. Keith MacEachern also remains within striking distance and also has an undefeated season going so far but two ties have put him just behind the three front runners. The final three weeks of the season will play a big role in determining the second round champ in Mixed.

All members are reminded that Matinee Curling is wrapping up for the season soon. It takes place at the club each Friday from 1-3. It is open to all Schooner members and all you need to do is drop in. Teams are made from those who attend on any given Friday.

I'd like to welcome Schooner members to the home stretch. April is the month when we traditionally wrap up league play and look forward to the closing spiel and awards banquet.

It's been an amazingly successful year despite COVID. I hope that our new members enjoyed themselves, learned a lot about the sport we love, and are looking forward to joining us again in the fall.

I'd like to report that the knee-print and hand-print situation is much improved. Thank you for your cooperation in helping us to maintain a pristine ice surface. We take great pride in the quality of our ice at Schooner, and every little bit helps to keep it that way.

I do have a few points to make with regards to rules and etiquette.

The first one is with regards to "pre-sweeping" your opponents rock (or your own in 2 on 2). The rules state that you cannot begin to sweep in front of your opponent's rock until the front edge of the rock has crossed the T-line. I have seen curlers (old and new) start to sweep when the rock is still 2 or 3 feet away from crossing the line, essentially pre-heating the ice. This is not permitted. The same rule applies to sweeping your own stone in 2 on 2 before the front edge has crossed the hogline.

On a related note, I have also seen curlers (old and new) sweeping opponent rocks above the T-line, and this is strictly a no-no. I know this can happen in the heat of the moment. The thing to do in that case is tell the opposing skip or mate that you swept by mistake, and let the two skips resolve the situation.

My final comment is with regards to grippers. Grippers are made with soft rubber which enables them to grip the ice. But this also means that they begin to break down after a few months of play, leaving bits of rubber on the ice which sometimes cause the rocks to pick. You can see when a gripper is breaking down if you turn over your shoe and see pits or small bits of loose rubber on the bottom. Bad grippers also leave tell-tale dark circles or half-circles of old rubber on the ice. When you see these circles, you know somebody has a bad gripper. A new gripper is only \$15 or so. Players should make the effort to replace their gripper every year in order to keep our ice in good playing condition.

This was my first year as Drawmaster and I learned a lot. Thanks everyone for your patience. Thanks Julia and Bill for your support in my debut season. Good curling, and we'll see you at the banquet!

Richard

Schooner Team Scores Eight Ender

A rare occurrence in curling, an eight ender, was scored by Wally MacDonald while skipping the Kevin Gouthro rink in a playoff game in the Don Cherry's Team Entry League when skip Kevin was out with an illness. Joining Wally were teammates Walter Nichols and Anthony Boudreau. The equivalent to a hole in one in golf, maybe even more difficult to attain, an eight ender, as the name implies, is when one team scores eight points in any one end of a curling game. The difficult feat was accomplished against the Brian Laughlin rink on April 1st. There was another eight ender scored at the club but it was a number of years earlier. Ironically, that game involved former Schooner member and namesake for this year's Closing Spiel, John Bonaparte, and John was one of the first skips that Wally played with when he started curling at the club.

Curling Canada recognizes curlers who attain an eight ender with a certificate and pin to commemorate the event. Names and details will be submitted to our provincial organization, Nova Scotia Curling Association, who will then forward them on to the national organization. Congratulations again to Wally, Walter and Anthony on this amazing accomplishment in the curling world.

Mixed Doubles Spiel

The Schooner Club is holding a Mixed Doubles Spiel on April 8 and 9 at the club. This spiel is open to Schooner members only and the entry fee is \$20 per player. You must enter as a team of two, one male and one female curler. Play will begin on Friday evening and go all day on Saturday. Lunch will be served on Saturday. We will be using the hybrid doubles rules that we normally use for this type of event and they can be found online at the spiel page for the event on the Schooner website. Registration is now open and you can sign up at the club or send us an email. These events always prove to be popular so sign up quickly.

John Bonaparte Memorial Spiel

The final curling event of the season, the John Bonaparte Memorial Closing Spiel will be held at the club from Thursday, April 21 to Saturday, April 23. Open to everyone, not just Schooner members, entry fee is \$20 per player. We provide all the equipment and instruction for new curlers who need it. You are guaranteed three games, one on your choice of either Thursday or

Schooner Teams on the Road

Friday and two on Saturday. Lunch will be served on Saturday. Registration is now open at the club. All members are encouraged to take part and to try and find someone from outside the Schooner membership who might like to try curling. Sign up soon. After curling is done for the day, plan to stick around and join us to party the night away with DJ Jimmy from 9-1. There may even be a special 'Draw to the Button' event if enough people are willing. You never know.

There are two Schooner teams that hit the road to take part in the Highlander Curling Club's cash spiel on April 1-3. Taking part in the event in the Antigonish area are the Stephen Leslie rink and the Gordie Cormier rink. Skip Stephen Leslie is joined by Nick MacKenzie, Shane Langille and Ryan Ferguson while Skip Gordie is joined by Jenna MacNeil, Liam Flannigan and Erin Gould. Best of luck to both teams, safe travels and Good Curling!

Schooner Cash Spiel

The Schooner Curling Club played host to its annual Open Cash Spiel from March 18-20. A total of ten teams took part, a mix of Schooner and Sydney Curling Club rinks. Play got underway on Friday evening with eight of the ten teams seeing action. Winners would stay in the 'A' division and losers of their first game would move to play in 'B'. Two teams, the Brian Laughlin rink and the Thomas Drover rink, had a bye in the first round and would have to wait for Saturday to play their first matches against winners of two of the Friday night games. Draw one saw Kurt Roach of Sydney defeat Lynn Kelly of Schooner and move on to play Laughlin on Saturday while Gordie Cormier of Schooner defeated Jenna MacNeil to move directly to the semi-final game for 'A'. Draw two on Friday saw Stephen Leslie Defeat Russell Fitzgerald and Schooner's Kevin Gouthro defeat Sydney's Nadine Neima-Drover. Gouthro would face Thomas Drover in his next game while Leslie moved to a semi-final berth. On Friday, curlers and guests were treated to a wide variety of munchies, dips and finger foods that were prepared and brought by various members, curlers and guests. A large crowd stayed around and enjoyed socializing late into the night on Friday.

Saturday play got underway at 10am with the first games of the 'B' division taking place. Lynn Kelly defeated Jenna MacNeil and Russell Fitzgerald defeated Nadine Neima-Drover to move on in 'B' while losers moved to the 'C' division. The second draw on Saturday saw Thomas Drover and Brian Laughlin see their first action of the weekend with Laughlin taking on Kurt Roach and Drover faced Kevin Gouthro. Roach and Gouthro were victorious and moved to the 'A' semi while Drover moved to 'B' to face Lynn Kelly and Laughlin, also to 'B', faced Russell Fitzgerald. With the 'A' semi final set, the 'B' and 'C' semis would begin to shape after these games as winners would play in 'B' and losers in 'C'. After a short break for dinner, Chinese food from the New Moon restaurant, the 'A' semi final was played at 6pm on Saturday with both Kurt Roach and Kevin Gouthro taking wins and booking their spots in the final on Sunday afternoon while Cormier and Leslie would fill out the 'B' semi final, Cormier playing Laughlin who had earlier defeated Fitzgerald in a game decided on a draw to the button that

actually took two tries before a winner was named and Leslie taking on Kelly who has won their match against Thomas Drover. The 'C' semi final would be the final draw of Saturday with Russell Fitzgerald facing Jenna MacNeil and on the other sheet, a husband and wife face off, with Thomas Drover taking on Nadine Neima-Drover with a spot in Sunday's 'C' final on the line.

Sunday play started at 10am with the 'B' semi finals, one between Gordie Cormier and Brian Laughlin and the other saw Stephen Leslie take on Lynn Kelly's squad. Cormier and Leslie would punch their tickets to the 'B' final with victories while Kelly and Laughlin had their spiel come to an end. The 'C' final was the next draw with teams having been determined the night before, Russell Fitzgerald facing Thomas Drover. It was a well played game that Fitzgerald came out ahead in and won the 'C' title and the prize money of \$200 it came along with, sharing the victory with Benito DeLorenzo, Brittini Fernandes and Paul MacDonald. Drover won the runner up prize money of \$100 and was joined by Callum McNutt, Nolan Drover and Mitch McNutt. The 'A' and 'B' finals were played at 2pm on Sunday and there was a large crowd in the club to take in the action. In the 'B' final, Stephen Leslie and his team took an early lead and never looked back in defeating the Gordie Cormier squad in a shortened game. The 'A' Final was a closer game and went the distance before Kevin Gouthro took the win and the overall Cash Spiel title. Gouthro shared the \$600 first place prize with Wally MacDonald, Walter Nichols and Anthony Boudreau while skip Roach's team, Mark MacNamara, Robin Nathanson and Sebastian LeFort, split the \$450 runner up prize. In 'B', Skip Stephen Leslie was joined by Nick MacKenzie, Shane Langille and Ryan Ferguson in winning the \$450 first place prize while Cormier was aided by Carrie Cress, Philip Edwards and Julia Cormier to secure the \$250 runner up prize money.

Overall it was a great weekend and a great spiel. Lots of curling action, good food and some great parties that lasted well into the night. Thank you to everyone who took part, especially to the teams who joined us from the Sydney Curling Club, to everyone who helped organize and run the event, to the ice crew who worked extra hard all weekend to keep the ice in great condition, to the bartenders, housekeeping crew and everyone who helped out in any way throughout the weekend. A special thanks to everyone who joined us to watch some of the great curling action and stuck around to create the fun. We hope to see everyone back next year for an even bigger and better Schooner Open Cash Spiel.

Schooner Fun Spiel

The Schooner Club held an in-house Fun Spiel on March 11th and 12th at the club. Originally scheduled to be a three day event, it was shortened to two days as there was a limited number of teams. Play got underway on Friday night with all eight teams playing their first matches and then continued on Saturday with everyone playing two games. After all games were settled, Bryant Cormier's rink with skip Bryant, Justin Humphrey, Adam Vassallo and Gerard Polegato were the overall winners, winning all three of their games and amassing 31 points. Kevin Gouthro was second with a 2-1 record and 26 points, his only loss coming at the hands of spiel

winner Bryant Cormier. Joining Gouthro was Julia Cormier, Jen Haigh and Helen Joyce. Third place was the Keith MacEachern Rink with skip Keith, Walter Nichols, Yvonne Donovan and Georgette Sparkes, who sported one win, one loss and one tie and rounding out the top four was the Richard Lorway rink who had an identical record to MacEachern but only earned 22.5 points in their efforts against 24.5 points for MacEachern. Skip Richard Lorway had Bob Smith, Alison Grapes and Marnie MacDonald with him. Overall, another great event and a great weekend at the Schooner Club. Thank you to everyone who took part and to everyone who helped organize and run the event.

Bud Light Mixed - Sydney Curling Club

The Sydney Curling Club held their annual mixed spiel, the Bud Light Mixed, on March 25-27 at the club on George St. Three Schooner rinks were scheduled to take part, the Kevin Gouthro rink, Gordie Cormier rink and Philip Edwards rink. Unfortunately, Gordie Cormier's team had to withdraw at the last minute. It was a good weekend for the remaining two Schooner squads however as Gouthro wound up winning the overall title, taking the 'A' division championship game in convincing fashion over the Thomas Drover rink out of Sydney after Drover conceded the victory and Team Edwards took 'D' division honors with a hard fought win over Sydney's Barb Mercer rink. Gouthro was undefeated throughout the event on his way to the 'A' title while Edwards had a bit of a slow start, dropping their first two before finding winning form and playing their way to their title. Joining skip Kevin Gouthro was Samantha Livingstone, Anthony Boudreau and Julia Cormier. Aiding skip Philip Edwards was Brittini Fernandes, Rick Windsor and Alison Grapes. Benito Delorenzo also played a fill in roll at the skip's position when Phil has other obligations. Congratulations to both Schooner teams and thank you to the Sydney Club for hosting this great event again this year.

Sydney Curling Club Cash Spiel

The Sydney Curling Club will be holding it's Mercer Fuels Cash Spiel from April 8th to 10th. There will be a couple of Schooner Teams competing. The Spiel is full. Entry fee is \$200 per team with four games guaranteed and there will be a \$1200 first place prize. Drop by the Sydney Curling club during the Mercer Fuels Cash Spiel weekend and cheer on the curlers.

Schooner Fun Nights



Schooner Fun Nights were scheduled to return to the club on Saturday, January 22 but, given restrictions to events, we had no choice but to cancel. The next two Fun Nights, February and March, also had to be cancelled due to restrictions in place and scheduling conflicts. We have rescheduled the March Fun Night to Saturday, April 2. The April event is sponsored by the Nova Scotia Spirit Company and their products will be prominently featured at the Fun Night. It looks like we will finally be able to get back to having our Fun nights after two seasons of uncertainty.

Fun nights are social nights at the club that are open to both members and the general public. They are designed to introduce more people to the sport of curling and all members are encouraged to attend and bring some

friends. They get going at 7pm and curling takes place all evening. There's pizza for everyone and maybe even a few prizes to be given away. The cost is \$7 for the public and \$4 for Schooner members. There's no better deal in town for a night of fun. Participants must be 19 years and older. We supply the equipment, you just need clean, dry shoes for the ice. Schooner Fun Nights are a great way to get out of the house with family and friends and enjoy a night out for just a few bucks. Plan to join us.

Schooner Awards Banquet

The Schooner Awards Banquet and Dance will be held again this year after it was cancelled for two consecutive seasons due to covid restrictions. This year, things will be a little different than the past couple of banquets. We will be moving the event back to the Schooner Club again after hosting at the Sydney Pensioner's club for the last while. The dinner and prize presentation portion of the evening will be for member's only, no guests, as it has been in the past. There will be a dance from 9-1 that will be open to all members as well as guests. The evening will get underway around 6:00 and we will start with a cocktail hour, dinner will be at 7:00 and then we will have prizes for the season handed out. The real partying will begin after that. Registration will be required for dinner so please watch the Schooner website and club's bulletin board for more details on that. Again, everyone is welcome to drop into the dance portion of the evening. So plan to attend and party the night away to officially bring the 2021-22 season to an end.

Schooner Golf



With government mandated Covid restrictions being loosened and things starting to open up more and coming closer to getting back to normal, we are hopeful that we may be able to see a return of Schooner Golf after not having the event for the last couple of years. This was always a very popular event with both Schooner members and outside guests. In previous years, we would head to Alderdale Greens for 9 holes of golf and other golf related games and activities. Then everyone would head back to the club for a steak BBQ. It was always a great day. While there are no details available right now and holding the event at all is still just in the 'hopeful' stage, anyone who might be interested are encouraged to watch the Schooner website and Facebook page for more information and potential date when it's available. Fingers crossed.

Tuesday Tarabish and Social



With Covid restrictions being eased and things getting more and more back to normal, the weekly Tuesday tarabish game and social will be returning to the club. The first night will be Tuesday, April 26th. Everyone is welcome. We get started at around 7pm but, if you want to play tarabish, you are asked to arrive around 6:45. Partners for tarabish will rotate after each game and winners will be determined by individual wins and points accumulated. Even if you don't want to play cards, you can drop in anytime on Tuesday evening and play a game of darts, shuffle curling on our custom table or just sit and enjoy a cold beverage from our bar and socialize and catch up with your schooner friends. Join us any Tuesday this summer.

The End of Another Season

I seem to say this every season around this time and I am sure many fellow Schooner members will agree with me, "Where did the year go?". It seems like we just started the season and now we are looking at it coming to an end in a few short weeks. It has been a great, all be it difficult, season. Covid still played a negative part in our year but we are now looking at coming out of it and getting more back to the way things were. Membership number swelled and there were lots of new faces around the club this season. I haven't seen the energy and enjoyment that we had at Schooner this year in quite a while. I really hope all the first time members at the club enjoyed their time and enjoyed the sport and I sincerely hope you will all be back again next season. Until then, don't forget about our weekly socials and a couple of off-season events like our golf and BBQ and our washer toss tournament. Keep watching the Schooner website and Facebook page and stay informed on what's going on.

Even though we are getting close to the end, there's still lots of curling left in April. League play will be finishing up over the next couple of weeks, we have a mixed doubles spiel coming up soon and we will cap off a great year with our John Bonaparte Memorial Closing Spiel. There's lots of partying left as well with a dance on Saturday of the closing spiel and then a grand finally with our awards banquet and dance in early May. Plan to take full advantage of what's left of this season.

This is the final edition of 'In the Hack' for the 2021-22 season and I hope that everyone who has read it throughout the year has found it both entertaining and informative. Watch for new editions to return next season. Again, this has been one of the best seasons at the Schooner Club in a few years and it's a little sad to see it end. I always enjoy the time I spend at the club and the people who are there to share it with. We'll soon throw our final rocks and then go our separate ways to enjoy the warmer weather and summertime activities. I hope everyone has a great summer and gets out to enjoy the beauty and activities that Cape Breton is famous for but, in a few months when we start to feel the chill of fall in the air, I hope your thoughts, as mine do, return to curling and the Schooner Club and I hope to see you all back here again next season where we will once again raise a glass together and wish each other "Good Curling".

Take care everyone, enjoy your summer, stay healthy and safe and we'll see each other once again next season at the Schooner Curling Club.

Happy Easter

