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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 52

December 2013



Happy Holidays to Everyone



Club Calendar

Friday, December 6	Inter-Club Play
December 10-14	Turkey Spiel
Saturday, December 21	Coors Fun Night
December 22 – January 4	Holiday Break
Saturday, December 28 th	Junior Competitive - Strait
Sunday, January 5 th	League Play Resumes
January 10 th -11 th	JDRF Spiel
Saturday, January 18 th	Coors Fun Night
January 24 th -26 th	Ship Hector – New Glasgow
Saturday, January 25 th	Junior Fun Spiel – Strait Area
Friday, January 31 st	Inter-Club Play
Saturday, February 1 st	Super Saturday – Schooner/Sydney
Saturday, February 8 th	Coors Fun Night
February 14 th – 15 th	Sweetheart Spiel
February 21 st – 23 rd	Schooner Cash Spiel

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

Opening Spiel



The Schooner Club's opening spiel, held October 28-30 and November 1-2, was cut short when mother nature kicked up a fuss and some high winds and we ended up without power for our ice plant for about 5-6 hours. The ice began to melt in the unseasonably warm weather and then, when the power was restored and the plant was brought back online, one of the two fans failed and caused the plant to work at less than full capacity. Even though we couldn't finish the spiel and crown a winner, prizes were awarded to each curler by the luck of the draw. About 30-40 Schooner faithful showed up for the prize presentations and many stayed for the dance with DJ Jimmy and pizza from club sponsor, Kenny's Pizza. Thank you to sponsor Stephen's Rona and a big thank you goes out to bonspiel chair Kelley Laughlin for putting together a great spiel and to everyone who took part and/or helped out in any way. It was, even though shortened a bit, a great way to start the season.

Ice Crew Saves the Day

As mentioned above in the "Opening Spiel" piece, mother nature reared up on Friday, November 1st with great force and the high winds she brought with her that night caused a power outage at the club which started just as the two final evening games were heading into the fourth or fifth ends. One phase of our power went out and shut down our ice plant. The warm weather that night meant the temperature in the ice shed was already high and the ice would start to melt very quickly if power wasn't restored. Ice crew director Brian Laughlin called Nova Scotia Power to explain the

Ice Crew Saves the Day Part 2

Coors Fun Night



situation but it wasn't until around 2:30 am that power was restored and the plant was brought back online by the ice crew. By this time, water had already started to form on the ice surface and they knew curling in the final round of the Opening Spiel would have to be cancelled. Saturday morning brought more bad news as, when the ice crew arrived to work on the ice, there was still water on top. The plant was not able to freeze the water because one of the two cooling fans had failed and was causing the plant to work at a lower capacity. The ice crew repaired the fan and got the plant back to full capacity and waited for the ice to freeze so they could start to repair it for play. After shaving for a while on Saturday it was decided that a flood was required and curling on Sunday, the first day of league play, would also have to be cancelled. The crew arrived early Sunday morning and applied the flood and then later that day proceeded to shave for a few hours in order to bring the ice back to playable condition. By Sunday night, Brian and the crew had completed the task of restoring the ice and we were ready to go once again, just in time for the Monday Men's League. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Brian and the ice crew and to everyone who pitched in to help out during this emergency. If it wasn't for the great effort and many hours of work put in we wouldn't have the great ice we have to play on. Thank you to all of the "crew".

High winds and rain blanked Cape Breton on Wednesday night, November 27th. We once again lost a phase power at the club that caused our plant to shut off. As it was earlier in the month, uncommonly high temperatures made the situation even worse. Our ice began to melt for the second time since curling had started. Luck, however, once again trumped mother nature and power was restored in time to save the ice. The ice crew had to, as in the earlier case, shave and flood the ice to bring it back to playable condition. No problems occurred with the plant and cooling fans this time so the job went a bit smoother. Curling was cancelled for the mixed league on November 28th as well as on Friday for senior pickup and Saturday for the junior program. Thanks to our hard working ice crew for saving the day, again.

The next Coors Fun Night of the season will be held on Saturday, December 21st. Why not take a break from the Holiday hustle and bustle and join us for a relaxing night of curling and fun with your friends and the Schooner. And if Holiday shopping has you a little short of cash, don't worry because this is the biggest bargain on town. The fun gets going at around 7:00 and is only \$7.00 for the public and \$4.00 for Schooner Members. This gets you curling, pizza and a chance at some great Coors Light Brewing Company prizes. All the equipment you need for curling is supplied but we ask that you bring clean, dry shoes for the ice area. Hope to see you for the final Coors Fun night of 2013.

League Roundup



League play, Scheduled to begin November 3rd, was delayed one day due to a power outage but did get going on Monday, November 4th when the Men's League took to the ice for the first time this season. This season sees six teams competing in the Coors Light Men's League, down a bit from the full complement of eight teams we have seen for the past few seasons. The Men's League, as has been the case for the last few seasons, looks to be very competitive and evenly matched. There have been many close, well-curling games and each team in the league has suffered at least one loss with no one emerging as a potential front-runner yet. Only time will tell who will come out on top.

Colbourne's Sport and Trophy Team Entry was scheduled to get the season rolling on Sunday, November 3rd but got delayed due to ice problems caused by that power outage. It did get started on Sunday, November 10th where this season will see eight teams compete in the league, also down a bit from last year. The big news in the Sunday league this year is the separation of the Wayne "Bull" Bonnell rink into two teams. Given last year's turmoil and mediocre season, Bonnell and second Rick Windsor have gone one way after mate Wally MacDonald and Lead Chris "Slugger" MacLeod broke away to go another. Veteran skip Bonnell has promoted Windsor to the mate position and brought on Richard Lorway to play second and Bryant Cormier in the lead spot. MacDonald is now skipping his own team and has brought in Sid Murray to fill the mate spot and gave Chris MacLeod the duties at second. Lead spot is being filled by rookie Walter Nichols on the MacDonald rink. The season was only two weeks in when former team mates Bonnell and MacDonald met to do battle on Sunday. After taking an early lead, Bonnell saw that evaporate and MacDonald storm back and take a victory. Surely a crushing loss for Bonnell who fell to 0-2 after suffering another heartbreaking loss to the Brian Laughlin rink in extra ends in week one. The victory for MacDonald, his second in two outings, was surely a big confidence booster and justification of his decision to break away from Bonnell and start his own rink. As of now, Bonnell stands at 1-2 and MacDonald at 2-1 but the season is young and there is lots of curling to go. Many other teams in the Sunday league have seen changes as well. Only two teams from last season, the Brian Laughlin rink and last season's playoff champs, the Ray Cameron rink, are back unchanged. Last year's regular schedule champions, the Omar Roach Rink, are not back this year as skip Omar and lead Mike Cormier have not returned. That saw Gary Landry and Elaine Arseneau move to join up with skip Daryl MacAulay and lead Agnes Harriss. Skip Abbie Boudreau is reunited with third Dennis Crosby but has a new front end in veteran Bricky Brophie at second and Sunday newcomer Frances Ford at lead. Keith MacEachern saw his Sunday team from last season evaporate but has found a new spot as mate for skip John Donovan. Rounding out the eight team league is returning skip Greg Ferguson who has kept his team mostly intact from last season with the exception of a new lead in Steve Jurcina.

The one league bucking the downsizing trend is the Cape Breton Beverages Mixed League that started the season with sixteen teams vying for league honors this year but has since lost one team and now has fifteen, still up a few teams from the totals of the last few seasons. The number of teams has necessitated the use of a 9 pm draw once each week and a bye for one rink each week as well. As has been the case in the past, when ice maintenance is being done on Thursday night, the mixed league will move to 9:00 pm draws for that week as well to accommodate a full schedule. With four weeks of play in, the Gordie Cormier rink seems to be the team to watch with a 4-0 start. Cormier skipped the team that won the regular schedule in the mixed last season so he is no stranger to success in this league. Joining Gordie are Sid and

Skip's Meeting Held

Debbie Murray and Mary Foley. Many other teams in the mixed have also gotten off to a good start, remaining undefeated or suffering only one loss, but many of these teams have not played a full schedule of games this month due to postponements or weather cancellations. Overall, the mixed league is looking very good this year with its high number of teams and fun atmosphere.

The Junior program makes its return again this season at the club with the goal of the organizers to grow the program once again, this time with a target number of 15%. With our return to the Nova Scotia Curling Association the program will have more opportunities to tap into resources previously unavailable. Also, with more cooperation with the Sydney Club, the Schooner Junior program is looking stronger than ever. New this season is a special membership designation called full junior. This membership level, offered only to qualified members of our junior program, allows the member to play in one adult league this season. Gabby Drover, daughter of Thomas Drover and Nadine Neima-Drover, has taken advantage of this membership level and competes on a team with her parents in the mixed league. I have had an opportunity to curl with that team as a spare once this season and can say that Gabby is a fine curler and is doing very well in that league. We wish Gabby the best of luck this season and in her curling future.

So now that one full month is behind us and the season is well underway, we look forward to a long, successful and enjoyable season of curling at the Schooner. Check the website for league updates and check back here in the newsletter next month for another league round up. *Good curling everyone.*

In an effort to get things running smoothly in league play from the start this year, an all skips meeting was held on Sunday, November 10th with skips from each team in all leagues asked to attend. The main topic of discussion was the length of time to play a game. Skips were reminded that it is their responsibility to make sure all players are playing the game in a timely manner, are ready to play at the scheduled start time, are ready to make their shots when the time comes and that they do not delay the game in any manner during play. Eight end games will not exceed their two hour time allotment. If, when there is 15 minutes left in the game, the eighth end has not been started, the current end being played will be completed and the game will be over. No more ends can start after the game is underway for more than one hour and forty-five minutes. It was also recommend that all players arrive at least fifteen minutes prior to game time and that games can begin as soon as the ice and both teams are ready to go. Skips were also reminded that they are responsible for making sure the etiquette of curling is followed by all members of their team. Another topic of discussion was the use of spares. Skips were reminded to use the spares list to obtain replacement players, try to match a spare to the position that they are replacing and try to give equal time to all club members willing to spare. Lastly, rules regarding breaking a tie game in the Team Entry league were discussed and it was decided that tied games would be decided by playing a full end. Ties are allowed in both the Men's and Mixed so this rule does not apply. Also pertaining only to team entry, game time for the second draw was moved from 4:00pm to 4:15. Draw Master, Cal Thistle, said that rules for breaking ties in league standings for all leagues would be posted at the club and on the website so all skips would be aware of how ties in the standings will be broken.

Schooner Social Night

A new, featured event at the club this season is “Schooner Social Night”. The first one was held on Saturday, November 9th and saw about 10 people attend. The social saw some attendees curl a 2 on 2 round robin and others play cards and relax. Overall, even though the numbers weren’t big, the event was a success and enjoyed by everyone who attended. It is hope that the popularity of these events will grow over the season and they will continue to be held on various Saturday nights throughout the year. They are open to Schooner members and a guest and are not designed to be public events. On future nights you will be able to curl if you want, play darts, play cards or just sit around and have a beverage and chat with friends. It’s totally up to you. Some theme nights are also in the works. Keep an eye on the website, the club bulletin board and the club calendar for the next Schooner social that will be scheduled in the new year. Hope to see you there.

649 Fundraiser

The Schooner Club undertook a large fundraising effort at the beginning of this season, asking members to participate in selling entries in a 649 lottery draw. The funds raised were destined to be the start of a capital fund to be used to purchase new equipment for the club or repair equipment that malfunctioned. The draws began on Wednesday, November 20th but as of the time of print of this newsletter we still had no winner. Some participants are getting close needing only one or two more numbers. The prize payout is \$655 with the club keeping \$655 for the capital fund. Thanks to those who sold the entries and a big thank you to Gordie Cormier and Laura Rafuse who organized the draw and to Laura for tracking the numbers during the draws.

Inter-Club Curling

The first inter-club curling event was held on Friday, November 8th and saw a total of 32 curlers take part, splitting the four games played between Sydney and Schooner. Our club was well represented with well over half of the curlers being from the Schooner Club. Two sheets were used at each club. The feedback from the curlers who took part in the event was very positive and many are looking forward to the next event which will be held on Friday, December 6th. This event will again be open to any member of the Sydney or Schooner Curling Clubs and will take place at both facilities. Starting time will again be 7:00 pm. A signup sheet is posted at the club. All members are encouraged to take part as it is a great way to extend your membership benefits with no additional cost. For more information you can contact Schooner Draw Master Cal Thistle.

Volunteers Needed

As is the case every season, the club is asking for everyone’s help by volunteering some time. Matt MacPherson, our new Bar Steward, is looking for bartenders to work various league nights and club events. Matt says he would like to get enough bartenders so no one would have to work more than one night a week and promises to work around your curling schedule.

We are always looking for help in housing, ice maintenance, running spiels, planning events, etc. so any time you can give will be very much appreciated. See any member of the executive for more information or to sign up to volunteer. Without the help of volunteers the club could not exist. A big thank you all the members, friends and local business who help the club in any way.

Turkey Spiel



The annual Schooner Curling Club Christmas tradition, the Turkey Spiel, is scheduled to be held from December 10th to 14th. This spiel is open to all curlers and the cost is \$20 per person, single entry. Sign-up sheets are now available on the club bulletin board. Each curler gets three games and has the choice of curling on Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday or on Wednesday/Friday/Saturday. Come out and take a chance on winning your Christmas turkey. It's the last curling event of 2013 and it's always lots of fun. In conjunction with the spiel, the club will be holding a food drive in support of Kinsmen's Christmas programs. All curlers are asked to bring at least one non-perishable food item for the drive. Your generosity will be much appreciated.

Super Saturday

Super Saturday that was scheduled to be held on Saturday, November 30th at the Sydney Curling Club, was cancelled due to unforeseen events. It is hoped that this event can be rescheduled after the new year. Members are reminded to watch for this event which can be single or team entry. Teams can be mixed with any combination of male and female curlers. Curlers from all four Island curling clubs, Schooner, Sydney, Baddeck and Strait, are invited to take part.

Snowball



The Snowball fundraiser is back again this season. Enter for \$2 and have a chance to win the prize pot for that night. If the prize doesn't go then it carries over and "Snowballs" into a bigger prize. In November, one Snowball prize hit \$300!! The Snowball is drawn at the end of each regular club league and event, Men's League, Mixed League, Team Entry and Senior Pickup on Friday. You don't have to be curling and you don't even have to be present to win but you must enter for yourself, in person at the club. No one else can enter for you. Each member has a designated number assigned to them and, if your number is drawn and you are signed in, you win the prize. All members are encouraged to participate in the snowball when they are at the club because it raises much needed funds to help pay overhead costs and upkeep cost on the club.

Members and Local Business Help Out

In November there was a small plumbing problem in the men's washroom at the club and we had a minor flood. Clean water leaked out into the club area and soaked the carpet. Club members Cal Thistle, Dennis Crosby, Steve Jurcina and others helped out to get the problem under control and repaired. Steve then did some additional work to help prevent more problems. We thank you all. We would also like to thank member Wally MacDonald and local company Servicemaster for their help in cleaning up. Wally saw the wet carpet on Friday evening and knew the club was in use by the Juniors on Saturday. He brought down some industrial fans that Servicemaster donated the use of to help dry things up early Saturday morning. We are very grateful for the help and for the kindness of a local company. Servicemaster is owned and operated by Curtis Dolhanty who also owns Curval Construction and is a sign sponsor at the club.

Food Drive



All members, even those not participating in the Turkey Spiel, are reminded of the food drive now underway at the club in support of the Kinsmen Club's Christmas programs. You are asked to bring non-perishable food items to donate to this worthy cause. The donations will be used by the Kinsmen to help people in need during the Holiday season. A donation box is now located at the club where you can place your items. Thank you for your support for this worthy cause and Happy Holidays.

