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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 66

December, 2015

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| December 15-19 | Turkey Spiel |
| December 21 – January 1 | Holiday Break |
| Saturday, January 2 | General Meeting and Wine and Cheese |
| January 3 | League Play Resumes |
| January 8-9 | Women's Club Playdown |
| Saturday, January 16 | Fun Night |
| January 22-24 | Ship Hector - New Glasgow |
| January 29-31 | Open Cash Spiel |
| February 5-6 | Men's Club Playdown |
| February 12-13 | Sweetheart Spiel |
| Saturday, February 20 | Fun Night |
| February 26-27 | Traveler's (Men's and Women's) |
| March 1-5 | Coors Fun Spiel |
| Saturday, March 5 | Dance with DJ Jimmy 9-1 |
| March 19-20 | Blarney Stone (Baddeck CC) |
| Saturday, March 19 | Fun Night |
| April 1-2 | 2 on 2 Spiel |
| April 19-23 | Closing Spiel |
| Saturday, April 23 | Dance with DJ Jimmy 9-1 |

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



Fun Nights

Members are reminded that there will be no Schooner Fun Night in December but they will make their return early in the new year. The first fun night of the season will take place on Saturday, January 16th starting at 7pm. Everyone is encouraged to attend and bring family members, friends and co-workers so they can be introduced to the sport of curling in a fun and relaxed environment. All equipment and instruction is provided but please bring clean running shoes for the ice area. On top of a great night of curling, there's delicious pizza for everyone and you get a chance at winning a great prize, all for just a few bucks. Best deal in town. This is an age restricted event to those 19 years of age and older.

The sponsorship of our Fun Nights is still undecided. Long-time sponsor Coors Light may not be back this year and we are still looking for alternatives. Regardless of that, the Fun Nights will begin again and they will be a great time for all. Hope to see you there.

League Play



League play got underway early in November with the Men's league kicking it off on Monday, November 2nd. The men's league consists of eight teams again this season and plays two draws every Monday, one at 7pm and one at 9pm. With five games played in this league already the parity among teams that we have seen in the last few seasons appears to be back again. Every team has at least one loss so far and it looks like there's not any one team that will run away with this league.

The Mixed league also got underway early, kicking off its season on Tuesday, November 3. The mixed league has fewer teams this season with only ten rinks competing, down from twelve last season and as many as sixteen the season before. As play wrapped up in November it's obvious that it's way too early to make any predictions in this league as well. The Brian Laughlin rink has taken an early lead in the mixed with three wins and a loss but there are five other teams that are either one or two points behind and can easily overtake the leader. At this point, any one of the ten teams could turn it up and win this league.

While Team Entry is usually the first league to get things underway each season, this year it was the last league to start play and didn't get going until November 8. This was mainly due to the Opening Spiel finishing up on the first Sunday in November. The big story for the Team Entry league early in the season was the loss of one of our longtime teams, the Ray Cameron rink. The three remaining team members that were formerly skipped by Ray Cameron were still planning to make a return to Sunday curling even after their longtime skip decided to retire this season. Martin Campbell, Russell Fitzgerald and Les Ferguson were all set to enter the first week of Sunday play when Les suffered an accident and hurt his leg, putting him out for the season. Starting with only three for the season already, the loss of Ferguson put the team down to two players and it was decided that they would drop out all together. The loss of this team leaves the Team Entry League with ten teams, the same number that it ran with last season. As can be expected, it is also too early in the season to pick a front runner in this league. The Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink was the only 3-0 team going into the final Sunday of play in November and, late in the game against the Brian Laughlin rink, it looked like they were going to keep their winning streak alive. Bonnell's foursome played well and controlled most of the game but after Bonnell squandered a point by missing an open draw in the fifth and Laughlin scored two points to Bonnell's one in the next two ends, they entered the final end with a two point lead but without hammer. The squandered point from the fifth came back to hurt Bonnell as he ended up giving Laughlin three points in the last end after missing a couple of takeouts, either one of which would have guaranteed Bonnell at least a tie. Laughlin had suffered his only loss a couple of weeks earlier when he was defeated by his former mate Gordie Cormier and his new rink. For Cormier it must have felt like validation to beat the Laughlin rink after leaving to start his own team with his brother Dennis who also played for Laughlin. The Cormier brothers are joined by lead Mel Windsor and mate Stephen Leslie. Brian Laughlin is joined again this season by Kelley Laughlin and newcomers Lonnie Howe at mate and lead Joe Erickson. After the high of beating his former skip, Cormier suffered a tough loss to Bonnell the following week when he failed to remove an opposition rock with his final shot and gave up a steal of two to lose. Sophomore skip Rick Billard has gotten off to a good start and put a couple of wins under his belt. Returning skip Omar Roach was only able to squeeze out one victory on November when he won on the last Sunday of play for the month but two of the three losses for the Roach squad came in extra ends so this will still be a team to keep an eye on. If play in November is any indication, the Team entry will be a tough league to win this year and returning regular season and

playoff champs the Wally MacDonald rink will have to continue the strong play that they exhibited in November is they hope to repeat one or even both of their titles of last year. MacDonald's good start is due in no small part to the fact that they return to the league with no roster changes from their championship team of last season. The Schooner Junior Program has returned this season and again has a strong membership. The membership has shifted to a younger group this year but coaches and organizers are optimistic about the season and the future of the program. The Juniors take the ice on Saturday afternoons with a few schedule changes to Sunday morning to make up time lost to other club activities. They also have plan to take part in a couple of spiels this season.

While a lady's league hasn't quite made it off the ground yet, the ladies did get together for an evening of 2 on 2 curling one Friday in November. The 2 on 2 format may be perfect to try and start a lady's league that has always struggled with not enough players to make teams of four work. While nothing is for certain, keep an eye on the Schooner website and the club bulletin board for more information on future ladies only events and possibly, at some point, a league.

While technically not a league, all members are reminded of Friday afternoon "Matinee" curling. This runs from 1-3 on Friday afternoons and is open to any and all Schooner members.

649 Fundraiser

The 649 Fundraiser at the club started on Wednesday, November 25th was won in record time after only two draws. Ellen Blundon was the winner when she got two numbers on the first draw and four numbers on draw number two on November 28. Total sales for the event were \$1440 making for a prize of \$720. There was also a \$50 prize for the member who sold the most entries and that was won by Bill Farr with \$220 brought in. We wish to thank everyone who entered, who sold entries and a big thank you to Lynn Kelly for organizing the event and to Gordie Cormier for helping out. This fundraiser brings in important funds for the club that allow us to operate each year while keeping costs to members to a minimum. There are tentative plans to run one more 649 fundraiser this season and more information will be available in the new year.

2 on 2 Spiel

The second ever 2 on 2 spiel at the club was held on November 6 and 7 with twelve teams taking part. Of the twenty four spiel participants, nine of those were female curlers which was great to see. Play got underway Friday night with the first draw at 7pm with the team of Nadine Neima Drover and Thomas Drover taking on Joe Erickson and Kelley Laughlin. Thomas couldn't make the game so Rick Windsor filled in. Windsor, half of the winning team from last season's 2 on 2 spiel with Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell, wasn't taking part this year due to the notable absence of Bonnell. Bonnell's reasons for missing the event and not defending the championship he and Windsor shared in the previous spiel were sketchy and unsubstantiated. The other game of draw one saw Jolene MacLellan and Lynette Chiasson taking on a second women's tandem in Lynn Kelly and Frances Ford. The second draw of the night saw Rick Billard and Greg Wall take on Walter Nichols and Anthony Boudreau on one sheet and Stephen Leslie and Sid Murray take on Peter MacIntyre and Bill Moss on the other sheet. Four teams were given byes for the first round and the winners of draws one and two were set to take on these teams later in the evening. Since games in the 2 on 2 spiel are only six ends with each team only throwing six rocks without sweeping per end, games are quick and generally only take one hour to

play, allowing for these draws to all be completed on Friday night. The third draw of the evening had Matt and Amy MacPherson take on game one winners Erickson/K. Laughlin. Wally MacDonald and Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod took on Winners MacLellan/Chiasson in that same draw. The final draw of the night had Gordie Cormier and Brian Laughlin take on Billard/Wall and Georgette Sparkes and Laura Rafuse took on Murray/Leslie. Losing teams on Friday night would start the day Saturday in the consolation bracket while teams who kept winning would stay in the top bracket and play for the overall championship.

Play got underway on Saturday with the first two draws, 11:00 am and 12:00 noon, being made up of the eight teams who had suffered a loss on Friday night. Play switched back to the top bracket at 1:15 for two semi-final games, one having Joe Erickson and Kelley Laughlin take on Wally MacDonald and Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod and the second one seeing Gordie Cormier and Brian Laughlin take on Stephen Leslie and Sid Murray. The winners of this game would play for the overall championship and the losers would be dropped to the semi-final of the consolation division. MacDonald/MacLeod and Cormier/B. Laughlin were both victorious, setting up a showdown in the Spiel's final draw between these two teams for the overall title. Erickson/K. Laughlin would end up playing Nadine Neima-Drover and Thomas drover in one consolation semi-final while Leslie/Murray would take on Walter Nichols and Anthony Boudreau in the other, winning teams playing for prizes, losing teams being finished. Both Leslie/Murray and Erickson/Laughlin came out victorious in their games and earned their way into the consolation finals and the right to play on for a share of the prizes.

In the consolation final it was the team of Joe Erickson and Kelley Laughlin defeating Stephen Leslie and Sid Murray to take home that title and third place overall. The championship final was a tightly played game that saw both teams trade points throughout the game and wound up with everything riding on the final end.

MacDonald and MacLeod kept the house clean for a chance at scoring with the all important hammer. The strategy worked when MacLeod was left with a draw on his final stone that could win the game for his team. MacLeod was not, however, up to the task and left his draw light, leaving the score tied and forcing an extra end, an end that saw Cormier/B. Laughlin score and steal first place and the championship title away from MacDonald and MacLeod. Truly a disappointing defeat. The Spiel, however, was anything but disappointing with lots of great curling and lots of fun had by curlers and spectators alike. The 2 on 2 game is gaining popularity and is enjoyed by almost everyone who tries it. If you missed out on this Spiel and are regretting your choice, there will be another opportunity for you to take part in early April when another 2 on 2 event will be held. Make plans to sign up. Rumor has it that Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell will actually be back to take part but that remains to be seen.

To top off the great weekend of 2 on 2 curling there was a dance held at the club on Saturday night with music by DJ Jimmy. About twenty members and guests partied the night away and had a great time. Thanks to everyone who took part and to everyone who helped out in planning and running the weekend 2 on 2. Hope to see you all back in April.

Winners:

1. Cormier/B. Laughlin
2. MacDonald/MacLeod
3. Erickson/K. Laughlin
4. Lelsie/Murray

Turkey Spiel



As much a Christmas tradition as hanging the stockings, singing Christmas carols and standing under the mistletoe, the annual Schooner Turkey Spiel will be back again this Holiday Season. This year's spiel will be run from December 15-19 with curlers having a choice between two divisions, Tuesday/Thursday/Saturday and Wednesday/Friday/Saturday. The spiel is open to everyone and entry fee is \$20 per player. We are very happy and grateful to welcome back Tamarind Optical as our returning sponsor for this event. Watch the club for a signup sheet and plan to take part. You could win your Christmas dinner!

Port Hawksbury Cash Spiel

Schooner was represented once again this year at the Strait Area Community Curling Club's annual cash spiel. The rink, skipped by Gordie Cormier, also included Stephen Leslie, Russell Fitzgerald and Joe Erickson. John Halliday was originally going to make the trip but had to withdraw at the last minute for personal reason. Joe Erickson stepped in to take his place. The Schooner rink didn't win any games at the spiel but all were well curled and they gave themselves a chance. Regardless of that it was a good time and the club was well represented. It is hoped that by attending some of these out of town spiels that clubs will reciprocate by sending teams to our Open Cash Spiel being held in late January. Schooner teams will be hitting the road in January as well when an estimated five teams will make the trip to New Glasgow to compete in the Ship Hector Spiel.

Junior Fundraiser

The Junior curlers currently have a fundraiser underway selling fudge from the Cape Breton Fudge Company. You can choose from a wide variety of flavors such as Rocky Cabot Trail and Skor Bar, for example, for \$8 per box or premium flavors such as Glen Breton Whiskey for \$10 per box. For those who want something that's not quite so sweet, you can also choose Rita's Tea Room oatcakes, 24 for \$8. You can order from any junior member, parent or coach or order forms are available at the club. This is a great way to finish up that Christmas shopping since fudge makes a great gift without having to worry about what size or color to buy or it's also a great treat for yourself for the Holiday season. And remember, you are not only getting a delicious treat but you are also supporting the Schooner Junior Program. It's a win-win so get those orders in. Ordering deadline is December 5th.

Mid-Season General Meeting

There will be a Mid-Season General Meeting and New Year's social at the club on Saturday, January 2nd. This second annual event will begin at 7pm when the general meeting will take place. This meeting will give members a chance to get an update from the executive on what's gone on and what will be taking place for the remainder of the season and to discuss those and any other issues that have arisen. Immediately following the meeting will be a wine and cheese social to help ring in the new year. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. What better way to finish off the Holiday Season than with a party at the Schooner.



Fundraiser

Chase the Ace has made its return to the Schooner Curling Club with the first draw being held back on November 5th. This time around the jackpot started out at \$500. Draws are being held every Thursday evening with ticket sales from 6:30 to 8:30 and the draw following. The rules are pretty much the same as last time. Tickets are \$1 each and must be purchased in lots of five. You must be present or have someone present on your behalf with the winning ticket. The winner has fifteen minutes to come forward after the ticket is drawn and in the event the time expires, another winning ticket will be drawn and the holder of that ticket will have the same fifteen minutes to claim the prize. The winner will get 20% of daily sales for having their ticket drawn and will have a chance to cut the deck of cards to try and find the ace of spades. The jackpot will grow each week by 30% of that day's sales until it is won. The card that is cut by the winner does not go back and is destroyed, making the odds of winning better each week as there is one less card. Tickets will only be sold on the designated day and at the designated time but Schooner members can leave money to purchase tickets at the bar anytime they are at the club. Tickets will be purchased on your behalf and, if you are the lucky weekly winner, someone will represent you, present your ticket and cut the cards on your behalf.

This is an important fundraiser for the club. It gives us much needed operating capital and allows us to do some little extras around the club to spruce things up. If you look around you will see the fresh coat of paint, the new tables and chairs and the much needed renovations in the ladies washroom, all a result of proceeds from last year's Chase the Ace. With all the competition from other organizations we need the support of members to make this successful. And remember, even if you can't make it on Thursday, you can leave your money behind the bar whenever you are at the club and take your shot at winning the jackpot which currently stands at \$710 as of the last draw and is estimated to be around \$775 the next time. That's some great Christmas cash so why not take a chance and Chase the Ace at the Schooner Curling Club.

Food Drive



In conjunction with the Schooner Turkey Spiel and the Holiday Season, the Schooner Curling club will again be doing a food drive in aid of needy families in Cape Breton. The drive is organized by Russell Fitzgerald and Martin Campbell on behalf of the Kinsmen Club. There is now a collection box set up at the club where members can deposit non-perishable food items to be distributed by the Kinsmen during the Holiday Season. Please help this worthy cause.

Weekly Tarbush Games

Members are reminded that the weekly tarbush games on Tuesday nights are still going on at the club. They get started at 7pm and are open to members and guests so you can bring a friend. Pre-registration is recommended and you can get more info at the club. These games have been very successful in bringing new people into the club and have been a great benefit at the Schooner bar.

Snowball



The Snowball is back at the club once again this season and we've already seen a couple of jackpots creep up over \$100. For those who don't know, the snowball is an even split game that is open to all members. It's run during regularly scheduled Schooner events and costs \$2 per night to play. Each member in the club has an assigned number that is posted on a list at the bar. When you are at the club you can pay your \$2 entry and sign up for your chance to win. If your number is drawn and you

are signed in, you win the jackpot. If the number drawn belongs to a member not signed in, the jackpot carries over the next draw and 'Snowballs' into something bigger. While you don't need to be present at the club at the time of the draw to win, you must pay and sign yourself in personally on the day of the draw. You cannot have someone else sign you in and you cannot pay up and sign in ahead of time. Members can take part in the Snowball anytime it is being run and you don't have to be scheduled to curl to sign in. This is a great fundraiser for the club and a great chance to pick up some extra Holiday cash for you. The jackpots are getting up there so next time you are at the club sign up for the Snowball.

Membership

The Schooner membership is down a bit this year with only 65 members opposed to approx. 75 last year at this time. Anyone wishing to curl for the remainder of the season can take advantage of our pro-rated membership fees that allow you to pay for the remainder of the curling season rather than for a full membership. There's still lots of curling to be played after the Holiday Season and it's a great way to get yourself out of the house during those long winter months, have some fun and get some exercise. Membership forms are available at the club or on the Schooner website.

Holiday Break

The Schooner Curling Club will be closed for the Holidays from December 20th to January 1. The final day of curling will have Team Entry take the ice on Sunday, December 19th and we will get things going again on January 2nd when the Schooner Juniors will take the ice in the afternoon with the general meeting and social scheduled for 7pm that evening. Curling will resume on Sunday, January 3 when Team Entry returns to the ice. From the Schooner Curling Club, our president, Gordie Cormier, and all of the executive committee we wish you a very joyous Holiday season and a very happy and healthy new year. 2015 was a great year at the Schooner Club and we hope to make 2016 an even better one.