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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 53

January 2014

Club Calendar

December 22 – January 4	Holiday Break
Saturday, December 28 th	Junior Competitive - Strait
Sunday, January 5 th	League Play Resumes
January 7 th – 12 th	Scottie's Provincials, Sydney Club
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.

649 Winner

The ink was barely dry on the last newsletter that reported the 649 draw was still underway with no winner when, in fact, someone won. Our lucky winner was Gary MacKinnon who took home prize money totaling \$655. Gary completed his six numbers on the draw held Saturday, November 30th. It only took four draws to get a winner. The lucky entry was sold by club vice president, Gordie Cormier. Congratulations to Gary and a big thank you to everyone who took part. Thank you also to Laura Rafuse and Gordie Cormier for organizing and running the event.

League Roundup



League play is in full swing now with November and December in the books. Winter seems to have come a little early to the Island this year and we have already had a few rounds of league play cancelled due to weather. Couple that with some nasty cold viruses floating around and making people sick and it creates lots of headaches for our beloved draw master, Cal Thistle, to try to reschedule games and make up play. Cal will be up to the task I'm sure.

Weather and ill curlers notwithstanding, there has been a lot happening in all of the leagues at the club. The Coors Light men's league, as it has been in previous years, is proving to be very competitive with teams being evenly matched for the most part. With only six teams in that league this year we expect the standings to remain tight and the champ crowned with a narrow margin of victory. At the Christmas break, Brian Laughlin's rink and Gary Landry's rink are up top with eight points while two other sit with six and still two more with four points. Very close for the first part of the season. There are certainly no games in this league where a clear winner would be obvious.

Colbourne's Sport and Trophy Team Entry has supplied us the biggest surprises in the

young season so far. Sitting tied atop the standings are rookie skip Wally MacDonald and veteran John Donovan, each sporting identical records at 4-1 and 8 points. While Donovan is always a tough competitor and never easy to defeat, MacDonald as a skip was an unknown in this league and probably not expected by most to do as well as he has done so far. The big news going into the season was MacDonald's split from former skip Wayne "Bull" Bonnell and MacDonald taking the reins of his own squad. MacDonald has proven his worth so far, having already bested Bonnell in a thrilling come from behind, extra-end victory and also besting him in the standings where Bonnell sits with only two wins and four points, putting him in the bottom half of the league. With still lots of play remaining, Bonnell still has time to redeem himself and we will see if MacDonald has the depth to continue his winning ways or if he is just a flash in the pan. Another surprise in the Team Entry league is the sudden troubles of two teams that got off to good starts but now seem to have fallen on hard times and are struggling to win. The Ray Cameron rink, a pick of most to do well in this league, has lost two in a row going into the Christmas break after winning their first three. While six points is good for third place on Sunday so far I'm sure most expected more from the Cameron rink. The Brian Laughlin rink, again another strong team finding it hard to win, has fallen to a losing record of 2-3 after having won their first two games. There is lots of season left for these two teams to turn their fortunes around and get back to the winning ways they started the season with.

The mixed league started the season with sixteen teams but has seen that number drop with the withdrawal of one rink, leaving fifteen teams to compete. The odd number now means that there is a weekly bye for one team and also means that the 9:00pm draw that is required is down to one game per week, notwithstanding weeks where there is ice maintenance. Curlers in the mixed league are reminded to keep a close eye on their schedules for the next couple of months because there will be more frequent ice maintenance in January and February with the increase in the number of spiels and special events in these months. So far this season there has been lots of great curling in the mixed. The standings see Cal Thistle and Gordie Cormier sitting in a tie at the top with identical 4-0-1 records and nine points. Following closely are veteran skip Darrell MacAulay and rookie Bill Farr with 4-1-0 records and eight points. The Brian Laughlin rink sits at six points with only one loss, the same as MacAulay and Farr, against three wins as this rink has played only four games due to cancellations. Given the amount of curling left, the equality of most teams and the fact that many teams have not played all scheduled games due to weather or other cancellations, these early standings can and likely will change over the remainder of the season with pretty much any team having a chance to take this league's title. After the Christmas break, the Bill Farr rink will see a change in leadership when Russell Fitzgerald will take the reins when Farr steps down to have surgery done in the early part of the new year. With the heart of the curling season coming up and still lots of league play remaining, we look forward to seeing lots of good quality and competitive curling and we know that, no matter what, there will be lots of fun and good times at the Schooner club. *Good curling everyone.*

Snowball



The Snowball saw one of its biggest jackpots to date won early in December when Rick Windsor took home \$366 in prize money that had been building for weeks. Congratulations to Rick and thank you to all members who take part in the Snowball when they are at the club. It is an important source of funds for the club to cover expenses and help keep membership rates down. When you are at the club during a regular event and the Snowball is being run we ask that you take part It's only \$2 and you have a chance to win a great jackpot. Just ask Rick.

Turkey Spiel



The Schooner Curling Club's Annual Turkey Spiel, held from December 10-14, was another great success. A total of 12 teams, 6 in each division, competed, making for a week of great curling. Saturday saw all teams from all divisions play to determine our winners. In the end it was Keith MacEachern who led his rink to first place. Even though Keith lost his last game to Cal Thistle on Saturday, two previous wins and enough ends won on Saturday vaulted him to the overall title. Joining Keith in victory was mate Side Murray, second Debbie Murray and lead Julianna King. Julianna is a member of the Schooner Junior program which shows us how far these young curlers have come in a few short years since the program was brought back. Second place was taken by Tom Drover who was joined by Darrel Crane, Kathy Gale and Laura Crane. The final two Turkey winners were the John Bonaparte rink and the John Donovan rink. Skip Bonaparte was joined by Bryant Cormier, Georgette Sparkes and Amy Sparkes while skip Donovan was aided by Richard Lorway, Yvonne Donovan and Janet Gallivan. Congratulations to the top four rinks and we hope you enjoy your Christmas turkey. All curlers were treated to pizza during the day on Saturday that was from Club Sponsor Kenny's Pizza. A big thanks to Ken Fraser and the Atlantic Superstore in Sydney River for all your help and generosity in sponsoring the spiel. Thank you to everyone who took part and/or helped out in any way and a big thank you to Barry Smith who stepped in to skip a team when Ray Cameron was forced to withdraw. Lastly we would like to thank all those who donated items to the Kinsmen food drive that was held during the week of the Turkey Spiel. Judging by the overflowing donation box, this was also a great success. Kinsmen club members Russell Fitzgerald and Martin Campbell would like to thank everyone for their donations. Overall it was great way to bring in the Holiday Season at the Schooner. Happy Holidays to everyone. Here are the full results from the spiel.

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| 1. Keith MacEachern | 7. Barry Smith |
| 2. Tom Drover | 8. Gordie Cormier |
| 3. John Bonaparte | 9. Wayne "Bull" Bonnell |
| 4. John Donovan | 10. Bill Farr |
| 5. Wally MacDonald | 11. Cal Thistle |
| 6. Brian Laughlin | 12. Darrell MacAulay |

New Club TV

Thanks to the money raised for the capital fund by the 649 fundraiser that was held at the beginning of the season, the club is the proud owner of a new Samsung 46" television. The new TV has already started to pay dividends as some club members have been staying a bit longer to watch sports on the new screen and supporting the bar at the same time. Even though the club didn't have a high-def feed for the Canadian Curling Trials in December, watching the games on the new screen was very nice and I'm sure we will all get a lot of enjoyment from this new acquisition.

NS Provincials to be Held in Sydney



The Sydney Curling Club will be hosting the 2014 Women's Nova Scotia Provincial Scottie's Tournament of Hearts Championships from January 7th – 12th 2014. The very best of women's curling in Nova Scotia will be competing to represent the Province at the National Scottie's Championship event being held in Montreal from February 1st – 9th at the Maurice Richard Arena. Based on results posted on livecurling.com and the NS Curling site, there will be no local entry in the event as Coralie Duchemin and her rink, Mate Heidi Bishop, second Krista MacEachern and lead Patti Marigan and coach John Marusiak, apparently failed to make it in after competing in two qualifiers, one in Port Hawksbury and one in Antigonish. They are coached by John Marusiak. Regardless of that, this event will highlight the best of women's curling the province has to offer and it will be well worth taking in a few games. Check the Sydney Curling club website or the NS Curling Association website for more details.

JDRF Spiel

The JDRF Fund Raising Spiel, celebrating its 9th year, will be held on January 10th and 11th. This spiel was started and is organized by Lena Chiasson, a young lady who herself suffers with Juvenile Diabetes, and her family who have long and strong ties to the Schooner Curling Club. The spiel is open to the first 28 teams and entry fee is \$100 per team. Single entry is also accepted at \$25 per player. Teams will be separated into two categories, experienced and not experienced or "new" curlers so no one has to worry if you haven't had much or any curling experience. All teams will play two, four-end games. There will be prizes and lots of food for everyone all weekend. Along with entry fees, money will be raised through other donations, a silent auction, prize draws and a penny drive. Last year saw the spiel raise approximately \$4500 for their charity and organizers hope to better that this year. In all its years of existence, each year has raised more money than the last. So why not shake off those winter blues and join us at the Schooner Curling Club for a weekend of fun, food and laughter, all in the support of a very worthwhile cause. To register a team or as an individual, you can contact the Schooner Curling Club or contact organizer Lynnette Chiasson at 564-9474 or 565-9821 or you can email her lynnettechiasson@hotmail.com. Spiel organizers would like to thank the generous support of all sponsors and participants. Hope to see you there.

Save the Dates

Everyone is reminded to pencil in two big events that will be held at the club in February. First, the ladies take the ice in the annual Sweetheart Spiel. This event will be held on February 14th and 15th and is always a popular event both with curlers and spectators. What better way to spend your Valentine's Day weekend than at the Schooner?

The following week is the Schooner Cash Spiel, being held February 21st – 23rd. This is the marquee event of the season at the club. Unfortunately it was cancelled last year due to a lack of interest but this year the executive has promoted the spiel early to try and bring it back to its former stature. This spiel is open to both men and women and teams can have any combination of curlers. Why not get a team together and take a shot at the money. Even if you aren't curling in either of these events you can plan to drop by the club. There's always lots of good food and fun times during these events. Hope to see you there.

Inter Club Play

Inter-Club play continues in January with this month's event being held on Friday, January 31st. The previous inter-club event that was held on December 6th was not as well attended as the first event in November. Due to a lack of curlers, the event was held at the Schooner Club only with no games being played in Sydney. To accommodate playing on only two sheets of ice, some members who had signed up for the event were asked to withdraw. Organizers and executives from both clubs are hoping the January event will rebound and be more successful given that it is far removed from the Holiday Season. Inter-club play is free for all members of the Schooner and Sydney Curling Clubs and is a great way for curlers who play only once a week to expand their play to a second night and also get to play in a different club. In the two events held so far this year, participation of the Schooner membership seems to be pretty good, indicating that there is an interest in these events at our club.

Ship Hector Spiel

The 42nd annual Ship Hector Bonspiel will be held from January 24th – 26th at four area curling clubs in New Glasgow. The Bluenose Curling Club in New Glasgow, The New Caledonian Club in Pictou, The Westville Curling Club and the Stellar Curling club in Stellarton which is this year's host club. The spiel has again hit its full capacity, the eighth year in a row it has done so, with 56 teams competing, approximately 30% of which come from outside the Pictou County area. The schooner will be well represented again this year with three rinks making the trip to compete. The Brian Laughlin rink with Brian, Gordie Cormier, Kelley Laughlin, Rick Billard and fifth Russell Fitzgerald will be competing again this year along with the Cal Thistle rink that has Cal and Barb Thistle and Sid and Debbie Murray. The third rink representing Schooner will see skip Wayne "Bull" Bonnell reunited with former mate Wally MacDonald for the first time since they went their separate ways at the end of last season. Also rejoining the Bonnell rink at lead position will be Chris "Slugger" MacLeod who also departed the Bonnell rink to join MacDonald on a new team this season. Rounding out the Bonnell rink at the Hector will be Rick Windsor who now plays mate for Bonnell in league play but will move back to second in the New Glasgow spiel. The Bonnell rink also carries a fifth on the roster, Eileen Bonnell. It will remain to be seen if Bonnell and MacDonald, now skipping in the Team Entry league and having some good success early on, can put aside their past differences and come together as a team to find the chemistry they need to win games. We want to wish all the Schooner rinks heading to the Hector the best of luck and we hope you have some success. We are all rooting for you.

Super Saturday

Saturday, February 1st, will see the four island curling clubs come together to compete with and against each other on Super Saturday, this time being co-hosted by the Sydney and Schooner curling clubs. There was a Super Saturday event scheduled earlier in the season but was cancelled due to lack of interest. It was felt that the event was being held too close to the Holiday season and it is hoped that there will be more involvement in the one scheduled in February. The event is open to all members of the Sydney, Schooner, Strait and Baddeck curling clubs and you can enter a team or as a single entry. There will be lots of curling, food and fun so keep an eye open for sign-up sheets at the club and plan to attend.