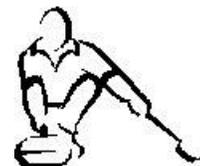


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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 67

January, 2016

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| 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. | |

Welcome back

On Behalf of the Schooner executive committee we would like to welcome back all the members after our Holiday break. We would also like to welcome any new members who are joining us for the remainder of the season. We are hoping for a good turnout at the general meeting being held January 2nd so members can be brought up to speed on what's happening at the club and also ask questions and provide their input on the direction we are taking. We will welcome in the new year with a wine and cheese social following the meeting.

There's lot's to look forward to at the Schooner Club for the remainder of the season. Along with the return of league play we also will see fun nights make a comeback in January and continue monthly for the remainder of the season. We have our Open Cash Spiel coming up, the Sweetheart lady's spiel, club play downs for both men and women for the upcoming Traveler's competition, more fun spiels and another 2 on 2 event which are gaining in popularity. Watch the schedule for more lady's Friday night 2 on 2 games and don't forget about Matinee curling each Friday from 1-2 which is open to all members. Happy new year everyone and *Good Curling!*

Fun Nights

The first fun night of the season will be held at the club on Saturday, January 16. These nights have always been very popular and we hope that trend continues. Fun nights are open to everyone, no membership required, with a cost of \$7 for non-members and \$4 for members. You get to curl, delicious pizza and a chance at some great prizes. It's really a super deal. For non-curlers, all equipment and instruction is provided, you only need to bring clean, dry sneakers for the ice area. It's great fun and a great night out. All Schooner members are encouraged to bring some friends, family, co-workers, whoever and introduce them to the great sport of curling. Many current Schooner members got their start at a fun night.

League Play



League play was abbreviated a bit in December with the Turkey Spiel and the Holiday break cutting the schedule down in all leagues. Luckily, so far this season there have been no weather delays that affected league play and cut things even further. Play will resume in all leagues in January beginning on January 3 when Team Entry will kick off the 2016 portion of our schedule.

The Men's League finished up round one of its schedule just before the Holidays and will begin round two when it resumes on January 4. After one time through with each team playing all others in the league it is the Stephen Leslie rink sitting on top of the standings with ten points. Leslie won his final game of round one over Cal Thistle who, with a victory in that game, could have taken over first place himself. Currently Thistle sits with seven points along with Gordie Cormier with two teams one point ahead at eight points and two teams one point behind with six. This shows that no one team in the men's has distanced themselves from the pack and that this league won't be decided until very late in the season.

The Mixed League was the most affected by the December schedule interruptions and had only two weeks of play in the month. Heading into the Holiday break it was the Peter MacIntyre rink who held top spot, followed closely by Brian Laughlin only one point behind and last year's playoff champion in this league, Wally MacDonald, only two points out. MacIntyre will have to continue his strong play and winning ways if he hoped to hold onto the lead in this league. There are also many other teams that can catch him and the league championship is still within pretty much anyone's grasp.

The Team Entry league has followed the trend in league play this year and sees a logjam of teams fighting for first overall. With a strong first half we have Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell sitting atop the Team Entry standings with twelve points. Three teams, The Brian Laughlin rink, the Gordie Cormier rink and last year's champions, the Wally MacDonald rink, all sit just two points behind Bonnell but all have a game in hand that, if won, could even them with Bonnell. Thomas Drover sits just behind that trio with eight points, also holding a game in hand over Bonnell. Returning skip Omar Roach has struggled a bit to re-find his winning form after some time away and has managed only two wins so far. However, he and his team have played well and has suffered a couple of very close extra end losses so it would be no surprise to see the Roach rink start winning in the second half and become contenders for the league title. Sophomore skip Rick Billard has had a little trouble finding winning form this season thus far as well but has two victories under his belt. A strong showing as skip in the Turkey Spiel heading into the Holiday break may be the confidence booster he needs to kick start the second half for him and his rink. This league, as it is with the others, is far from being decided and there are a number of teams that can end up in first overall at the end of the season.

Ship Hector Spiel

The Schooner Junior Program continues at the club on Saturday afternoons. This season has seen the ranks tend to lean toward the younger curlers so there is only one session instead of the usual two. The Schooner Juniors will be competing in a spiel being held at the Sydney Curling Club the last weekend of January.

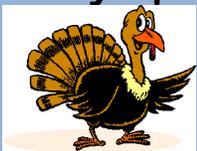
A lady's league didn't quite get off the ground this season again but there was one Friday night event held where the ladies had a 2 on 2 game. Watch for more of these lady's fun nights to be held at the club in the new year. Information will be made available at the club and on the Schooner website and signup sheets will be posted on the club bulletin board.

The Ship Hector Spiel, held in four curling clubs in the New Glasgow area, is set to go from January 22-24. Schooner will be well represented there this year with five rinks from our club making the trip to take part. Skips making a return to the Hector include Brian Laughlin, Wally MacDonald and Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell. Gordie Cormier will be making a return to the new Glasgow event as well but this time as skip of his own rink. Cormier has competed as mate with the Brian Laughlin rink in his past Hector appearances. Rounding out the Schooner contingent will be the Thomas Drover rink. The three day event is held in the Bluenose curling club in New Glasgow, the New Caledonian in Pictou, the Stellar in Stellarton and the Westville Curling Club in downtown Westville. Each team is guaranteed four games with a grueling schedule on Saturday of three games for each team on that day. Some of the Schooner rinks are taking a fifth player to help ease the burden of such a hectic schedule. Twenty teams will share in the prize money which is estimated to total over \$7000 based on 48 teams entering. Many years that number is exceeded with over 50 teams taking part in the event. Best of luck to all Schooner rinks competing at the Hector and we know you will represent our club well.

Power Issues

A rainy and windy night in early December played havoc at the club by causing a power issue with the ice plant. We lost one phase of our three phase power supply which caused the plant to shut down. What made it worse was there was some damage to the wiring in the compressor room that had to be repaired before the ice plant could be returned to operation, causing further problems with the ice that the ice crew needed to repair before play continued. While there is power protection on the circuit, whatever happened went by that and did the damage. Luckily, all the damage was repaired in relatively short order and things got working again. The only cancellation that had to be made was Friday afternoon's Matinee curling. As a result of this incident, the Schooner executive has decided to bring in an electrician to evaluate our system and what protection is in place and make recommendations and repairs where needed. These precautions will hopefully minimize any future damage caused by weather related power issues.

Turkey Spiel



After a bit of a rough start thanks to an early visit from ol' man winter, the annual Schooner Turkey Spiel ended up being another huge success. This year saw twelve teams in total take part, six in the Tuesday/Thursday Division and six on Wednesday/Friday with all teams coming together to compete on Saturday. With an early winter snow on Tuesday evening that cancelled play, bonspiel chair Stephen Leslie was forced to juggle the schedule a bit to make up the cancelled games.

Friday night's schedule was changed to accommodate one make-up with the other two being played early Saturday, prior to the regular scheduled games. After a great week of curling and fun it was the Rick Billard rink that came out on top, distancing himself from the field with three decisive wins. After two games it was only the Keith MacEachern rink that was close to Billard, two points behind, but a win for Billard combined with a loss for MacEachern in their final games solidified first place for the Billard rink. The loss for MacEachern dropped him into third place overall, being overtaken and edged out by half a point by the Gary Landry rink. Landry's second place effort included two wins and a tie. Joining skip Rick Billard in first place was mate Lonnie Howe, second Jolene MacLellan and lead Steve Jurcina. Gary Landry was joined by Walter Nichols, Anthony Boudreau and Ursula Hynes and Keith MacEachern's third place finish was shared by Joe Erickson, Allen Young and Bev Young. All of the top three teams got a Christmas Turkey as a prize. Going into the final draw of the day the Sid Murray rink had a chance of a second place finish but a loss to the Gordie Cormier rink in their final game left them in fourth place. Joining skip Murray was Bill Farr, Dennis Cormier and Darrell Crane. After a tie and a loss in his first two games, a big win on Saturday for Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell vaulted him into fifth place overall. He narrowly edged out the Richard Lorway rink on plus minus. Lorway had one win and two ties to finish in sixth place. Prizes for teams four through six were hams. Joining skip Bonnell was former schooner member Rob Agnew at mate, Georgette Sparkes at second and Laura Rafuse at lead. With Richard Lorway was Mike Cormier, Frances Ford and Bill Moss. No one went home from the Schooner club empty handed as the remaining six teams all won boxes of chocolates. To see a list of full results visit the Schooner website.

To keep everyone warm and energy levels high on Saturday, all curlers and guests were treated to delicious turkey soup made by Frank Kokocki and Georgette Sparkes along with wraps, sandwiches and sweets. The food was all very delicious and very popular with the spiel participants. A big thank you to Frank and Georgette for the soup and to Lynn Kelly and the Schooner executive for organizing the rest of the meal. We also would like to send a huge thanks out to local business Tamarind Optical who very generously sponsored our Turkey Spiel again this year. This is the second year Tamarind has supported us and we hope they will be back again next year. Thank you to Stephen Leslie for organizing and running the spiel and for doing a great job in getting things on track after the early cancellation. Thank you to the ice crew, the bartenders, Schooner housing and to everyone else who helped out in any way. Last but certainly not least we would like to thank all the curlers who took part who are not members of the club. We hope you enjoyed your curling experience and will join us again in the future. Congratulations again to all of our winners and we hope everyone had a happy Holiday season.

Open Cash Spiel



The annual Schooner open cash spiel will take place at the club from January 29th to 31st. This spiel is open to any team from any club and can be made up of any combination of men and women curlers. Entry fee for the spiel is \$160 per team and that guarantees you three games and gets you dinner on Saturday night and snacks throughout the weekend. All entry fees will be returned as prize money with prizes being determined by the number of teams entering. We will be accepting a maximum of 16 teams for this event. Everyone is encouraged to get a team together and take a shot at the cash. It's a great weekend filled with good curling, good food and good fun. Hope to see you all there.

Junior Fundraiser



The Schooner Junior Program fundraiser, selling fudge and oat cakes from the Cape Breton Fudge Company, was very successful, thanks in no small part to the support of many Schooner members. The coordinators, coaches, parents and members of the junior program would like to thank everyone who supported them. In the end the Juniors raised over \$700, money that will be used by the program to attend spiels and events and have extras for the kids involved in the program. Part of the proceeds were used to fund a Christmas party at the club. With the great success of this fundraiser and the support of Schooner members and the community, it is very likely you will see this become an annual event according to Junior Coordinator Nadine Neima-Drover.



Fundraiser

Chase the Ace continues at the club into the new year since no one has been lucky enough to draw the elusive Ace of Spades as of yet. Draws will continue to be held on Thursday nights with sales from 6:30 to 8:30 and the ticket draw held at 8:45. There is talk of possibly moving the draw to Tuesday but that is still under discussion. So far, since the start on November 5th, there have been seven cards drawn, leaving 45 left in the deck when we get going again on January 7 after a Holiday break. The jackpot for the last draw in December was \$966.50 so we should see it creep up over \$1000 when we get rolling in January. The jackpot was set at \$500 to get started.

Members are reminded that they can leave their money at the bar anytime through the week for Chase the Ace tickets. On the night of the draw, tickets will be purchased on your behalf and, if you are that night's lucky winner, someone will represent you and cut the deck on your behalf. The price of entry is \$5 which buys you five tickets. There are two colors of tickets, red and blue and you can specify which color you want or leave \$10 and get 5 of each. If you can make it for the draws on Thursday evenings you can also represent others and buy tickets on their behalf. The money raised from the Chase the Ace draws has been very important to the club and has put us in a much better financial position, allowed us to do a few extra things around the club and has also allowed us to hold costs to members down at a very reasonable level.

Food Drive



In conjunction with the Schooner Turkey Spiel there was a food drive held at the club that was organized by the Kinsmen club. Donation boxes were setup at the club and thanks to great support from Schooner members the boxes were well packed. Schooner members Russell Fitzgerald and Martin Campbell, both members of the Kinsmen Club, organized the drive at the club and, on behalf of the Kinsmen, would like to thank everyone who took part and donated non-perishable food items for needy families at Christmas.

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.

Traveler's Club Championships



The Sydney Curling Club will once again play host club this year to one of the Traveler's Club Championships for our province with this year being the women's event. Last year they hosted the men's championship. This year the men's event will be held in Yarmouth. Both the women's and men's championships will be held on the weekend of February 26 to March 1. Last year our club was represented at the event in Sydney and the Schooner executive are hoping to send teams again this year, at least to the women's event that is being held right here in town. There has been a bit of interest from some of our female members in putting a team together to represent the club. If more than one team steps forward either for the men or the women, time has been set aside to do an in-house playoff to determine who our representative will be. For the women, January 8th and 9th are designated and for the men it's February 5th and 6th. Any team that wished to take part should make their intentions known to the Schooner executive ASAP.

Learn to Curl Program

There is a "Learn to Curl" program getting underway on January 2nd at the club. This program will be held on Saturday afternoons from 3-4:30 and will run for three weeks. Cost is \$45 and there are both adult and children's programs available. The program is being coordinated by Nadine Neima-Drover and at last report just prior to the Holidays she said there were five adults registered to take part. There may be more involved by the time the program gets underway. Participants will be taught the basic rules and techniques of the game by our certified coaches. We hope that, after the program is complete, that some of the participants will take to the sport and become members or participants in some of our open events. The program is being run through the Cape Breton Curling Association and was originally scheduled to take place at both the Sydney and Schooner clubs. For this event, only Schooner is involved. There is a second 'Learn to Curl' program planned for late February and it is yet to be determined if Sydney will be involved with that or not. If anyone knows of someone who is interested in curling but has held off because they don't know the game, this is a great opportunity to have them come up to our club and learn. All equipment is provided to students but they need clean, dry sneakers for the ice area.

Matinee Curling

All members are reminded of Matinee Curling that takes place at the club on Friday afternoons from 1-3. This is open to all members. Anyone available on Friday afternoons can drop by the club and teams are formulated from those curlers attending on that day. This is a great way to get a little extra curling in and stretch your membership's value even more. So whenever you have some free time on Friday just drop by.