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In The Hack



SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER

Volume 61

March 2015

March 6 th – 7 th	Coors Fun Spiel
Saturday, March 7th	Coors Spiel Dance
Saturday, March 14th	Coors Fun Night
March 14th - 15th	Blarney Stone - Baddeck
March 20 th – 22 nd	Spring Fling Mixed – Sydney Club
March 27th - 28th	2 on 2 Spiel
Saturday, April 18 th	Coors Fun Night
April 20 th – 25 th	Closing Spiel
Saturday, May 2 nd	Closing Banquet

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

Coors Fun Spiel and Dance



The annual Coors Light Fun Spiel will be held at the club on March 6th and 7th. This is an open spiel so Schooner membership is not required. It will be single entry for a cost of \$20 that will get you three, six end games. The spiel is sponsored by the Coors Light Brewing Company and all prizes will be donated by Coors. This yearly spiel is always a great time and it will be made even better this year when everyone's favorite DJ, DJ Jimmy M, joins us on Saturday night for a evening of dancing and entertainment from 9-1. So plan to join us at the Schooner for a fun weekend of curling and partying at the annual Coors Light Fun Spiel and bring your friends.

League Roundup



League play has been hampered a bit by weather cancellation this past month after few, if any, cancellations before February. Draw master Cal Thistle has been working hard to reschedule games as needed and make sure all leagues remain on track. All curlers are reminded that, with playoffs now underway or starting soon in all leagues, new schedules are being made and new team numbers are being assigned. Everyone is asked to pay close attention so as not to miss any games.

The Mixed League completed its regular schedule early in February and saw the Gordie Cormier rink take top honors as regular schedule winners. This is a repeat for Gordie who also won the mixed league last season. This year, joining Gordie were mate Mike McGrath, second Josee Montpellier and lead Bill Inkpen. Congratulations to you all. The playoff schedule in the Mixed got underway the week immediately following the completion of the regular schedule. Round one will see the twelve teams divided into two divisions and play a round robin in those divisions. The top three teams from each division will advance to the championship round and the bottom three will be relegated

to the consolation division. It was a bit of a case of déjà vu for Gordie Cormier as he started the playoffs when he dropped his first game to the Gary Landry rink. Cormier also lost out in the playoffs the previous season after winning the league title. Cormier was not alone among the top teams who had a slow start in the playoffs as all four top finishers went down to defeat in their first games. However, Cormier was able to right the ship after that opening loss and won his next two outings. Things for the second place Sid Murray rink haven't gone quite as well. Sid won one and lost one of his next two games after losing game one and sits with only one victory. He still has a chance to make it to the championship round but will likely need victories in his two remaining games to have a chance. Third place and fourth place finishers Greg Ferguson and Cal Thistle are well positioned after three games, Ferguson with three points and Thistle with four. The Wally MacDonald rink has found its way into the win column twice, one victory coming against the strong Greg Ferguson rink. MacDonald has no losses thus far as one of his games was postponed. Also doing well and vying for a chance at the championship round are the John Donovan rink and the Thomas Drover rink, both with four points after three games played. With two round robin games left it's still up for grabs and everyone still has a chance to advance.

The Men's league wrapped up its regular schedule late in February and saw Gordie Cormier take the league title, his second of the season. Joining Gordie was mate Brian Bernier, second Les Ferguson and lead John Halliday. Gordie was being closely followed by Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell and had to win his final regular season outing to solidify the title. Cormier beat the always tough Sid Murray rink in their game and took first place. League playoffs will begin in the Men's the first week of March with a round robin being played in two divisions. Schedules are now out and all Men's league curlers are asked to check the website or the league board at the club to make sure they are aware of the new schedule.

The Sunday Team Entry playoffs are also set to get underway early in March but a regular schedule champ is yet to be crowned. There have been a number of games cancelled in Team Entry due to weather and schedule conflicts and the make-up games that are yet to be played will factor in determining who will finish first over all. The Brian Laughlin rink, who have had a banner season and sit with only two losses, are in the lead but the Wally MacDonald rink, last year's regular schedule winners and the team has handed the Laughlin rink both of their losses, is close behind and has an outside chance to catch Laughlin. Laughlin has maintained his league lead with timely wins, one huge victory coming early in February when the team was down 6-1 to the strong Ray Cameron rink but mounted a huge comeback to steal the victory away. Laughlin also beat the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink in February who had been on quite a roll recently since Christmas and was carrying a lot of momentum into the end of the season. Other teams also may have a slim chance depending on the outcome of some games. Given Laughlin's play so far this year and his current position in the league, it would have to be a 'Mapleleafesque' collapse that would cause Laughlin to lose the championship at this juncture.

Check the Schooner website for league schedule and standings updates.

Sweetheart Spiel Wrap up

The annual Schooner Sweetheart Spiel took place on the weekend of February 13 and 14 at the club and was, as it has been for the last number of years, a huge success both on and off the ice. A very slight delay due to some bad weather on Friday could not dampen the festive spirit of the event and, after snow was cleared with some help by Schooner member Wally MacDonald, spectators were treated to some great curling and inventive outfits throughout the two day event. When the points were all tallied it was Schooner's own Mary Foley who came out on top, narrowly defeating Baddeck's Evelyn Hebb by plus/minus. Both teams ended up with an identical 33 points but Foley's plus 14 rating bettered Hebb's plus 10 and gave her and her team top spot and the coveted Sweetheart jackets. Skip Foley was joined in the victory by Rachel Baker, Ann Lange and Amanda Windsor. Evelyn Hebb was aided in her second place finish by Heather MacIntosh, Rachel Kelly and Bernice Grant. Third place was taken by Schooner returnee Amy MacPherson who curled for the first time this season in the Sweetheart. Amy was joined by Frances Ford, Agnes Harriss and Meg Herman. In fourth place was skip Cheryl MacKinnon with Yvonne Donovan, Sandra Haley and Rose Henry. Along with the team competition there was also a "Chase the Monkey" contest where any curler who made a double take out would be the holder of the monkey until the next double take out was made and ownership would change to that curler. The last person with the monkey would be our prize winner. The lucky curler left holding the monkey was Jean Smith who was rewarded with a \$25 cash prize.

As most who have attended a Sweetheart spiel in the past know, the weekend is about much more than just the curling. Friday night curlers and guests are treated to a wine and cheese sponsored by Schooner member Martin Campbell. Saturday saw everyone treated to homemade turkey soup compliments of Frank Kokocki and later have a delicious roast beef dinner catered by Tommy Young and sponsored by donations from the Schooner men. Along with dinner came prize presentations with all curlers getting a chance to choose from the wide variety of great prizes on the table. Overall, a great weekend and a great spiel. As is it is with any spiel like this, a lot of effort from a lot of people is required to pull it off and make it successful. There are a group of ladies at the club who help out every year with Lynn Kelly taking the lead on this event with organizing and running it. Thanks to Lynn and all the other ladies who help out and make this event not only possible but also so successful. A big thank you to Russell Fitzgerald and, again, Martin Campbell for making sure all the curler's and guests are looked after. Thanks to Wally MacDonald who plowed the snow we received on Friday to allow everyone to access the club, to Frank for his delicious soup and Tommy for a great dinner, to Brian, the ice crew and to all the people who helped with pebbling and other ice maintenance all weekend, to the bartenders, the housekeeping crew and to everyone else who helped out in any way. Also, thank you to our sponsor, Compu Clone Computer Solutions Inc., for once again supporting the Sweetheart Spiel and helping to make it possible. Last but certainly not least we want to thank all of the ladies who take part in the spiel, the Schooner members, the ladies from the Baddeck and Sydney Clubs and all of the women who don't curl regularly but join us for this event. We certainly hope you had a great time and will join us again next year around Valentine's Day for the 2016 edition of the Sweetheart Spiel.

Travelers Men's Club Championship



The Travelers Nova Scotia Men's Club Championship spiel was held this year at the Sydney Curling Club from February 26th to March 1st and will be wrapping up just after this newsletter is released. The Schooner club was represented in the event by our own club champions Brian Laughlin, Gordie Cormier, Stephen Leslie, Wally MacDonald and fifth Joe Erickson. The Schooner champs were crowned after winning an in-house event held on February 6th and 7th at the club. The Laughlin rink was joined in the event by the Sid Murray rink with Sid, Cal Thistle, Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod and Walter Nichols, the Greg Ferguson rink with Greg, Peter MacIntyre, Dennis Cormier and Greg Wall, and the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink with Wayne, Rick Windsor, Richard Lorway and Bryant Cormier.

When things got underway Friday in the double knockout event it was the Laughlin foursome taking on the Bonnell rink. It was a closely played game with each team exchanging single points in each of the first four ends for a 2-2 tie. Laughlin broke things open in the fifth with a score of two and then increased the lead with a steal of one in the sixth. Going into the seventh end Laughlin held a three point lead which looked to be pretty comfortable but Bonnell got two with hammer in the seventh and then stole one in the eighth to force an extra end. With hammer in the ninth, the Laughlin rink still were confident they could come out on top but, with too many rocks in play out front and Bonnell buried behind them on the four foot, Laughlin had little chance to score with his last stone and Bonnell completed the unlikely comeback and stole the victory away. The Sid Murray rink took on the Greg Ferguson rink on Friday night as well. This was also a close, well played game with the lead switching back and forth between the two all evening. It came down to the last end with Murray in the lead and Ferguson trying to equal Bonnell's comeback effort on the other sheet. It was not to be for Ferguson however and Murray took the win on day one.

Play got underway early on Saturday afternoon when Friday's winners, the Bonnell rink and the Murray rink, faced off while Laughlin took on Ferguson. The Murray rink continued their strong play from Friday with a stellar game while Bonnell was unable to equal his heroics of Friday night and Murray put their second victory in the bank. The Laughlin / Ferguson game was do or die for both teams in the double knockout event. The winner would keep playing, the loser would be eliminated. Laughlin jumped out to a quick lead on Ferguson and was determined not to see a repeat of the previous night were he saw a lead disappear into a loss. Laughlin took the game and moved on to play while Ferguson was eliminated with his second defeat. The next draw of the day would see a rematch from the previous night with Laughlin again facing 'Bull' Bonnell. With both teams now sporting a 1-1 record this was also an elimination game with the loser being ousted from the competition.

Bonnell was unable to equal his performance of the previous evening and Laughlin carried the momentum he has been building to victory over Bonnell. This meant that Laughlin would face the undefeated Sid Murray rink to decide who would represent our club at the provincial event. Since Laughlin already had one loss, Murray's rink only had to win one more game to move on while Laughlin needed to hand Murray two losses in order to be club champ. The first meeting of the two remaining rinks took place Saturday evening at 7:00. The start of the game was played tight by both teams, neither wanting to take too many risks early. Laughlin opened up a lead after three ends but Murray

had a chance to tie in the fourth, already sitting one and having a partially open take out to get two. At this point, the game took a huge turn in Laughlin's favor when Murray threw a bit heavy and his rock stayed out, not only missing the take out but chipping Laughlin's rock close enough to out count his own and give up a steal of one. This increased the Laughlin lead and, as it turned out, Murray was never able to recover from that and dropped the first game. Murray's loss meant that there would be one more game Sunday morning to decide our representative in Sydney. Sunday morning saw a more wide open style of play with Laughlin scoring early and often to defeat Murray in a shortened game to take the club championship and earn his trip to the Provincials. A disappointing loss on the first draw of the event wasn't enough to slow the Laughlin rink as the built momentum with each game and have proven themselves to be a worthy representative of our club.

At the Traveler's play down in Sydney there were twelve teams from across the Province vying for the championship and the right to represent Nova Scotia at the national event in Ottawa being held in November of 2015. With many seasoned teams, most of which had experience in this type of event, the Laughlin rink new they would face some tough competition. Their first draw was on Thursday at 12:30 against one of the top seeds. The Schooner foursome showed their nervousness in the early going and had some trouble getting used to the fast, competition style ice. They gave up a big first end and then a steal in the second to go down by eight after only two ends. After that, the team seemed to settle in a bit better and wound up outscoring the competition by a margin of 4-2 in the next four ends. The fast start by their opponents was too much to overcome however and the game ended after six ends. The Schooner rink would play their second game on Friday at 8am.

While they had some chances to score, a few missed opportunities put the boys behind again and they would suffer their second loss of the event. With two losses they could not afford another or their spiel would be over. Their next game was at 4pm on Friday and, with calmer nerves and a better feel for the ice conditions after having played two games, the Laughlin foursome had a much stronger performance than in the previous two draws. Laughlin carried a 5-3 lead into the seventh end and even though that lead evaporated when they gave up two to tie the game, the boys held strong and scored one with hammer in the eighth to solidify their first victory in the event. There was no time to celebrate however as they were to take the ice again in the next draw at 8PM. The Laughlin rink, carrying some new found confidence into the game after their victory earlier in the day, had another strong performance and saw the game once again tied heading into the final end. This time, however, they did not hold hammer and saw their opponent take full advantage of last stone, scoring one in the eighth end to win. This loss, their third of the event, eliminated the Schooner men from further play. Still, a strong showing at this level of play and we are very proud of team Schooner.

Joining the Schooner rink as a second local representative at the event was the Kurt Roach rink who were representing the host Sydney Curling Club after winning their club championship over Kris Tynski. Kurt and his team mates, third Mark MacNamara, second Kevin Gouthro and lead Robin Nathanson, are well known at the Schooner club as they regularly join us for our Open Cash Spiel each year. Roach was the fourth seed in the championship and for that was granted a bye, not having to play his first game until Thursday night

in the 9PM draw. Roach lost that game 6-5 to a very strong team representing the Mayflower Curling Club, the Mike Callaghan rink. Roach played three games on Friday and sported a 2-1 record for the day, giving him two wins against two losses and the right to carry on and play Saturday. The Sydney foursome took the ice in the first draw on Saturday morning at 9 AM and came out with their third victory of the event. Each game for Roach at this point is a must win given that they already had two losses and a third would see them eliminated from play. With that in mind the Roach foursome took to the ice again at 1:30 on Saturday, this time facing the Mike Callaghan rink, the team that had beat them in the first game they had played in the event, for the second time. Unfortunately for Roach, the Callaghan rink was once again the better team and defeated the Sydney squad, eliminating them from further play.

The event continued into the first of March at the Sydney curling club. Full results are available at livecurling.com. Congratulations to the Sydney Curling Club in putting on a great event and to the two teams who proudly represented the area clubs, the Kurt Roach rink from Sydney and our own Brian Laughlin rink from Schooner.



Chase the Ace continues at the club for the start of another month since we still have no one lucky enough to cut the ace of spades at any of the weekly draws so far. The jackpot has grown to a substantial amount and currently stands at over \$1000. The winner of the weekly draw gets 20% of daily sales and a chance at that jackpot. Chase the Ace has been good for the club as well and it was reported at an executive meeting early in February that the club had already taken in over \$1300 at last report, a number which has most definitely grown since then. These funds are very important to the well being of the club and help us keep membership rates and other costs to members to a minimum. We hope that all Schooner members will spread the word about the draw in order to build up weekly sales. The draw is held every Sunday with ticket sales going between 3:30 and 5:30 and the draw taking place at 5:45.

Everyone is also reminded that the Chase the Ace draws will continue until the Ace Jackpot is won and may go beyond the curling season. The Schooner executive hopes that all members will continue to support the Chase the Ace fundraiser even if it goes beyond the point when curling finishes.

Juniors Compete in Baddeck Event

The Schooner Junior Program continues to evolve and grow and that was evident at a recent spiel held in the Baddeck Curling club in February. The Schooner little rockers made up three of the five teams from that category ages 6-11. The kids had a great showing and also had a great time both on and off the ice. The main focus of the event for this age group was to give the young curlers some exposure to a real game environment and it was very successful in that regard as the kids learned a lot about playing in a real game and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The older juniors who competed in the event as well also had a great showing and were able to capture 12.5 points out of a possible total of 15, one of the best of the spiel. And while success on the ice was a good bonus, the real focus of the whole event was for

Coors Fun Night



649 Fundraiser

Save the Dates

the kids to have fun while competing which was certainly accomplished. Congratulations to our Junior curlers and thank you to the coaches and parents who made this spiel and the Junior Program in general possible. The Schooner Juniors will again be going out-of-club in March to compete, this time at a spiel held at the Sydney Curling Club. Best of luck to all of our Junior curlers and **GO SCHOONER!!**

There are still two more Coors Fun Nights left to go this season. The March fun night will be held on Saturday, March 14th and the final night will be held on Saturday, April 18th. Both nights start at 7pm. With the traditional slow start to the fun nights early in the season over with, the last two have been very well attended and very successful. There were a lot of new people who have never tried curling before and have now been introduced to the sport. Many at the February fun night enjoyed it so much they even signed up for the Coors Spiel being held early in March. The Coors Fun Nights have been responsible for many of the new members the club has gotten over the last few years. For just \$7, people get to try the sport of curling, eat delicious pizza and even get a chance at a great Coors prize. That's probably one of the best bargains in town for a night of fun. All equipment and instruction is provided, we just ask that you bring clean, dry shoes for the ice area. So round up for your friends and plan to attend the final two fun nights of the season. It's a great night out and the Schooner club can really benefit.

The club started another 649 fundraiser in February, the first draw taking place on February 25th. The prize to the winner(s) for this 649 will be around \$650. While sales for this fundraiser were lower than the one held earlier in the year, the money raised is still very important to the operation of the club. The results of each draw and the progress of each participant can be seen on the Schooner website. Click the 649 tab on the main menu bar then click the results button. Updates for Wednesday night draws are done Thursday and for Saturday night draws the updates are available Monday. Thank you to all members who sold entries and especially Eric Boutilier who was the member who sold the most entries for the draw and took home the \$50 prize for that. A huge thanks goes out to Laura Rafuse who organizes and runs this fundraiser and thanks also to everyone who took part and bought entries. Good luck to you all.

Club members are asked to keep in mind a few events that are a little ways off but will be of interest to everyone. The closing spiel for the season will be held in April from the 20th - 25th and the closing banquet will be held on Saturday, May 2nd. The banquet will once again be held at the Sydney Pensioner's Club on the corner of Prince and Inglis streets and the meal this year will be roast beef. There will be a dance to follow dinner. For the Schooner Junior members and parents, the year end party is currently scheduled for Saturday, April 11th.

Watch the club website or the club bulletin boards for more info on these and other upcoming events.

Blarney Stone Spiel in Baddeck



The Schooner ladies will be hitting the road to Baddeck in March for the annual Blarney Stone Spiel being held March 14-15. At least three teams from the Schooner club will be taking part and all members who are going are looking forward to making the trip, many of whom have curled in the event in the past. Since this spiel is based on the Irish culture and, more specifically, the celebration of St. Patrick, the order of the weekend will be wearing your green and showing your Irish pride, even for those who aren't Irish. The Schooner ladies have been making the trip to take part in this spiel for a number of years and a good time is always had by all. Best of luck to the ladies but most of all, have fun.

Spring Fling at the Sydney CC

The Spring Fling Mixed Spiel (formerly the Moosehead) will be held at the Sydney Curling Club March 20th - 22nd. There will be a few Schooner teams taking part in this weekend event so why not drop by and cheer them on. A dance will be held on Saturday night as well which is usually well attended and lots of fun. Best of luck to all Schooner entries taking part in the Spring Fling.

Two on Two Spiel

Two on two curling is gaining in popularity in the curling world and at the Schooner Club it's no different. A group of members have been using some free time to play two on two games and it has been very well received. The club will be holding its first two on two spiel late in March on the 27th and 28th. This will be a team entry spiel, not a single entry. You must enter as a team of two curlers.

A two on two game consists of six ends and takes about one hour to play. One member from each team are at opposite ends of the ice. You are not permitted to cross the midway point of the sheet at any time during game play. The first end sees curler one from each team throw six rocks while curler two skips the house from the opposite end. There is no sweeping until the rock crosses the hog line at the opposite end from the thrower. Once the rock crosses the line, the skip of the throwing team can then starting sweeping. The same rules apply to sweeping an opponent's rock as in a regular game, you cannot sweep it until it is behind the T line. The first three rocks of each end, whether they are in front of or in the house, cannot be removed by the opposing team. Once the six rocks from each team are delivered in the end, the points are counted and then curler two from each team throws their six rocks back while curler one now skips in their end. Scoring is done the same way as in regular team curling. Full rules will be posted at the club.

Two on Two curling is commonly played by both slide and stick curlers and curlers of all skill levels can be competitive in this format. With a six end game, each team member will throw eighteen rocks, six rocks in three ends each. Given the high repetition and lack of sweepers, it's a great way to hone your shot making ability. A sign-up sheet is now posted at the club so get your team together and join us for our very first two - two spiel.

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Sweetheart Spiel Wrap up

The annual Schooner Sweetheart Spiel took place on the weekend of February 13 and 14 at the club and was, as it has been for the last number of years, a huge success both on and off the ice. A very slight delay due to some bad weather on Friday could not dampen the festive spirit of the event and, after snow was cleared with some help by Schooner member Wally MacDonald, spectators were treated to some great curling and inventive outfits throughout the two day event. When the points were all tallied it was Schooner's own Mary Foley who came out on top, narrowly defeating Baddeck's Evelyn Hebb by plus/minus. Both teams ended up with an identical 33 points but Foley's plus 14 rating bettered Hebb's plus 10 and gave her and her team top spot and the coveted Sweetheart jackets. Skip Foley was joined in the victory by Rachel Baker, Ann Lange and Amanda Windsor. Evelyn Hebb was aided in her second place finish by Heather MacIntosh, Rachel Kelly and Bernice Grant. Third place was taken by Schooner returnee Amy MacPherson who curled for the first time this season in the Sweetheart. Amy was joined by Frances Ford, Agnes Harriss and Meg Herman. In fourth place was skip Cheryl MacKinnon with Yvonne Donovan, Sandra Haley and Rose Henry. Along with the team competition there was also a "Chase the Monkey" contest where any curler who made a double take out would be the holder of the monkey until the next double take out was made and ownership would change to that curler. The last person with the monkey would be our prize winner. The lucky curler left holding the monkey was Jean Smith who was rewarded with a \$25 cash prize.

As most who have attended a Sweetheart spiel in the past know, the weekend is about much more than just the curling. Friday night curlers and guests are treated to a wine and cheese sponsored by Schooner member Martin Campbell. Saturday saw everyone treated to homemade turkey soup compliments of Frank Kokocki and later have a delicious roast beef dinner catered by Tommy Young and sponsored by donations from the Schooner men. Along with dinner came prize presentations with all curlers getting a chance to choose from the wide variety of great prizes on the table. Overall, a great weekend and a great spiel. As is it is with any spiel like this, a lot of effort from a lot of people is required to pull it off and make it successful. There are a group of ladies at the club who help out every year with Lynn Kelly taking the lead on this event with organizing and running it. Thanks to Lynn and all the other ladies who help out and make this event not only possible but also so successful. A big thank you to Russell Fitzgerald and, again, Martin Campbell for making sure all the curler's and guests are looked after. Thanks to Wally MacDonald who plowed the snow we received on Friday to allow everyone to access the club, to Frank for his delicious soup and Tommy for a great dinner, to Brian, the ice crew and to all the people who helped with pebbling and other ice maintenance all weekend, to the bartenders, the housekeeping crew and to everyone else who helped out in any way. Also, thank you to our sponsor, Compu Clone Computer Solutions Inc., for once again supporting the Sweetheart Spiel and helping to make it possible. Last but certainly not least we want to thank all of the ladies who take part in the spiel, the Schooner members, the ladies from the Baddeck and Sydney Clubs and all of the women who don't curl regularly but join us for this event. We certainly hope you had a great time and will join us again next year around Valentine's Day for the 2016 edition of the Sweetheart Spiel.

Travelers Men's Club Championship



The Travelers Nova Scotia Men's Club Championship spiel was held this year at the Sydney Curling Club from February 26th to March 1st and will be wrapping up just after this newsletter is released. The Schooner club was represented in the event by our own club champions Brian Laughlin, Gordie Cormier, Stephen Leslie, Wally MacDonald and fifth Joe Erickson. The Schooner champs were crowned after winning an in-house event held on February 6th and 7th at the club. The Laughlin rink was joined in the event by the Sid Murray rink with Sid, Cal Thistle, Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod and Walter Nichols, the Greg Ferguson rink with Greg, Peter MacIntyre, Dennis Cormier and Greg Wall, and the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink with Wayne, Rick Windsor, Richard Lorway and Bryant Cormier.

When things got underway Friday in the double knockout event it was the Laughlin foursome taking on the Bonnell rink. It was a closely played game with each team exchanging single points in each of the first four ends for a 2-2 tie. Laughlin broke things open in the fifth with a score of two and then increased the lead with a steal of one in the sixth. Going into the seventh end Laughlin held a three point lead which looked to be pretty comfortable but Bonnell got two with hammer in the seventh and then stole one in the eighth to force an extra end. With hammer in the ninth, the Laughlin rink still were confident they could come out on top but, with too many rocks in play out front and Bonnell buried behind them on the four foot, Laughlin had little chance to score with his last stone and Bonnell completed the unlikely comeback and stole the victory away. The Sid Murray rink took on the Greg Ferguson rink on Friday night as well. This was also a close, well played game with the lead switching back and forth between the two all evening. It came down to the last end with Murray in the lead and Ferguson trying to equal Bonnell's comeback effort on the other sheet. It was not to be for Ferguson however and Murray took the win on day one.

Play got underway early on Saturday afternoon when Friday's winners, the Bonnell rink and the Murray rink, faced off while Laughlin took on Ferguson. The Murray rink continued their strong play from Friday with a stellar game while Bonnell was unable to equal his heroics of Friday night and Murray put their second victory in the bank. The Laughlin / Ferguson game was do or die for both teams in the double knockout event. The winner would keep playing, the loser would be eliminated. Laughlin jumped out to a quick lead on Ferguson and was determined not to see a repeat of the previous night were he saw a lead disappear into a loss. Laughlin took the game and moved on to play while Ferguson was eliminated with his second defeat. The next draw of the day would see a rematch from the previous night with Laughlin again facing 'Bull' Bonnell. With both teams now sporting a 1-1 record this was also an elimination game with the loser being ousted from the competition.

Bonnell was unable to equal his performance of the previous evening and Laughlin carried the momentum he has been building to victory over Bonnell. This meant that Laughlin would face the undefeated Sid Murray rink to decide who would represent our club at the provincial event. Since Laughlin already had one loss, Murray's rink only had to win one more game to move on while Laughlin needed to hand Murray two losses in order to be club champ. The first meeting of the two remaining rinks took place Saturday evening at 7:00. The start of the game was played tight by both teams, neither wanting to take too many risks early. Laughlin opened up a lead after three ends but Murray

had a chance to tie in the fourth, already sitting one and having a partially open take out to get two. At this point, the game took a huge turn in Laughlin's favor when Murray threw a bit heavy and his rock stayed out, not only missing the take out but chipping Laughlin's rock close enough to out count his own and give up a steal of one. This increased the Laughlin lead and, as it turned out, Murray was never able to recover from that and dropped the first game. Murray's loss meant that there would be one more game Sunday morning to decide our representative in Sydney. Sunday morning saw a more wide open style of play with Laughlin scoring early and often to defeat Murray in a shortened game to take the club championship and earn his trip to the Provincials. A disappointing loss on the first draw of the event wasn't enough to slow the Laughlin rink as the built momentum with each game and have proven themselves to be a worthy representative of our club.

At the Traveler's play down in Sydney there were twelve teams from across the Province vying for the championship and the right to represent Nova Scotia at the national event in Ottawa being held in November of 2015. With many seasoned teams, most of which had experience in this type of event, the Laughlin rink new they would face some tough competition. Their first draw was on Thursday at 12:30 against one of the top seeds. The Schooner foursome showed their nervousness in the early going and had some trouble getting used to the fast, competition style ice. They gave up a big first end and then a steal in the second to go down by eight after only two ends. After that, the team seemed to settle in a bit better and wound up outscoring the competition by a margin of 4-2 in the next four ends. The fast start by their opponents was too much to overcome however and the game ended after six ends. The Schooner rink would play their second game on Friday at 8am.

While they had some chances to score, a few missed opportunities put the boys behind again and they would suffer their second loss of the event. With two losses they could not afford another or their spiel would be over. Their next game was at 4pm on Friday and, with calmer nerves and a better feel for the ice conditions after having played two games, the Laughlin foursome had a much stronger performance than in the previous two draws. Laughlin carried a 5-3 lead into the seventh end and even though that lead evaporated when they gave up two to tie the game, the boys held strong and scored one with hammer in the eighth to solidify their first victory in the event. There was no time to celebrate however as they were to take the ice again in the next draw at 8PM. The Laughlin rink, carrying some new found confidence into the game after their victory earlier in the day, had another strong performance and saw the game once again tied heading into the final end. This time, however, they did not hold hammer and saw their opponent take full advantage of last stone, scoring one in the eighth end to win. This loss, their third of the event, eliminated the Schooner men from further play. Still, a strong showing at this level of play and we are very proud of team Schooner.

Joining the Schooner rink as a second local representative at the event was the Kurt Roach rink who were representing the host Sydney Curling Club after winning their club championship over Kris Tynski. Kurt and his team mates, third Mark MacNamara, second Kevin Gouthro and lead Robin Nathanson, are well known at the Schooner club as they regularly join us for our Open Cash Spiel each year. Roach was the fourth seed in the championship and for that was granted a bye, not having to play his first game until Thursday night

in the 9PM draw. Roach lost that game 6-5 to a very strong team representing the Mayflower Curling Club, the Mike Callaghan rink. Roach played three games on Friday and sported a 2-1 record for the day, giving him two wins against two losses and the right to carry on and play Saturday. The Sydney foursome took the ice in the first draw on Saturday morning at 9 AM and came out with their third victory of the event. Each game for Roach at this point is a must win given that they already had two losses and a third would see them eliminated from play. With that in mind the Roach foursome took to the ice again at 1:30 on Saturday, this time facing the Mike Callaghan rink, the team that had beat them in the first game they had played in the event, for the second time. Unfortunately for Roach, the Callaghan rink was once again the better team and defeated the Sydney squad, eliminating them from further play.

The event continued into the first of March at the Sydney curling club. Full results are available at livecurling.com. Congratulations to the Sydney Curling Club in putting on a great event and to the two teams who proudly represented the area clubs, the Kurt Roach rink from Sydney and our own Brian Laughlin rink from Schooner.



Chase the Ace continues at the club for the start of another month since we still have no one lucky enough to cut the ace of spades at any of the weekly draws so far. The jackpot has grown to a substantial amount and currently stands at over \$1000. The winner of the weekly draw gets 20% of daily sales and a chance at that jackpot. Chase the Ace has been good for the club as well and it was reported at an executive meeting early in February that the club had already taken in over \$1300 at last report, a number which has most definitely grown since then. These funds are very important to the well being of the club and help us keep membership rates and other costs to members to a minimum. We hope that all Schooner members will spread the word about the draw in order to build up weekly sales. The draw is held every Sunday with ticket sales going between 3:30 and 5:30 and the draw taking place at 5:45.

Everyone is also reminded that the Chase the Ace draws will continue until the Ace Jackpot is won and may go beyond the curling season. The Schooner executive hopes that all members will continue to support the Chase the Ace fundraiser even if it goes beyond the point when curling finishes.

Juniors Compete in Baddeck Event

The Schooner Junior Program continues to evolve and grow and that was evident at a recent spiel held in the Baddeck Curling club in February. The Schooner little rockers made up three of the five teams from that category ages 6-11. The kids had a great showing and also had a great time both on and off the ice. The main focus of the event for this age group was to give the young curlers some exposure to a real game environment and it was very successful in that regard as the kids learned a lot about playing in a real game and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The older juniors who competed in the event as well also had a great showing and were able to capture 12.5 points out of a possible total of 15, one of the best of the spiel. And while success on the ice was a good bonus, the real focus of the whole event was for

Coors Fun Night



649 Fundraiser

Save the Dates

the kids to have fun while competing which was certainly accomplished. Congratulations to our Junior curlers and thank you to the coaches and parents who made this spiel and the Junior Program in general possible. The Schooner Juniors will again be going out-of-club in March to compete, this time at a spiel held at the Sydney Curling Club. Best of luck to all of our Junior curlers and **GO SCHOONER!!**

There are still two more Coors Fun Nights left to go this season. The March fun night will be held on Saturday, March 14th and the final night will be held on Saturday, April 18th. Both nights start at 7pm. With the traditional slow start to the fun nights early in the season over with, the last two have been very well attended and very successful. There were a lot of new people who have never tried curling before and have now been introduced to the sport. Many at the February fun night enjoyed it so much they even signed up for the Coors Spiel being held early in March. The Coors Fun Nights have been responsible for many of the new members the club has gotten over the last few years. For just \$7, people get to try the sport of curling, eat delicious pizza and even get a chance at a great Coors prize. That's probably one of the best bargains in town for a night of fun. All equipment and instruction is provided, we just ask that you bring clean, dry shoes for the ice area. So round up for your friends and plan to attend the final two fun nights of the season. It's a great night out and the Schooner club can really benefit.

The club started another 649 fundraiser in February, the first draw taking place on February 25th. The prize to the winner(s) for this 649 will be around \$650. While sales for this fundraiser were lower than the one held earlier in the year, the money raised is still very important to the operation of the club. The results of each draw and the progress of each participant can be seen on the Schooner website. Click the 649 tab on the main menu bar then click the results button. Updates for Wednesday night draws are done Thursday and for Saturday night draws the updates are available Monday. Thank you to all members who sold entries and especially Eric Boutilier who was the member who sold the most entries for the draw and took home the \$50 prize for that. A huge thanks goes out to Laura Rafuse who organizes and runs this fundraiser and thanks also to everyone who took part and bought entries. Good luck to you all.

Club members are asked to keep in mind a few events that are a little ways off but will be of interest to everyone. The closing spiel for the season will be held in April from the 20th - 25th and the closing banquet will be held on Saturday, May 2nd. The banquet will once again be held at the Sydney Pensioner's Club on the corner of Prince and Inglis streets and the meal this year will be roast beef. There will be a dance to follow dinner. For the Schooner Junior members and parents, the year end party is currently scheduled for Saturday, April 11th.

Watch the club website or the club bulletin boards for more info on these and other upcoming events.

Blarney Stone Spiel in Baddeck



The Schooner ladies will be hitting the road to Baddeck in March for the annual Blarney Stone Spiel being held March 14-15. At least three teams from the Schooner club will be taking part and all members who are going are looking forward to making the trip, many of whom have curled in the event in the past. Since this spiel is based on the Irish culture and, more specifically, the celebration of St. Patrick, the order of the weekend will be wearing your green and showing your Irish pride, even for those who aren't Irish. The Schooner ladies have been making the trip to take part in this spiel for a number of years and a good time is always had by all. Best of luck to the ladies but most of all, have fun.

Spring Fling at the Sydney CC

The Spring Fling Mixed Spiel (formerly the Moosehead) will be held at the Sydney Curling Club March 20th - 22nd. There will be a few Schooner teams taking part in this weekend event so why not drop by and cheer them on. A dance will be held on Saturday night as well which is usually well attended and lots of fun. Best of luck to all Schooner entries taking part in the Spring Fling.

Two on Two Spiel

Two on two curling is gaining in popularity in the curling world and at the Schooner Club it's no different. A group of members have been using some free time to play two on two games and it has been very well received. The club will be holding its first two on two spiel late in March on the 27th and 28th. This will be a team entry spiel, not a single entry. You must enter as a team of two curlers.

A two on two game consists of six ends and takes about one hour to play. One member from each team are at opposite ends of the ice. You are not permitted to cross the midway point of the sheet at any time during game play. The first end sees curler one from each team throw six rocks while curler two skips the house from the opposite end. There is no sweeping until the rock crosses the hog line at the opposite end from the thrower. Once the rock crosses the line, the skip of the throwing team can then starting sweeping. The same rules apply to sweeping an opponent's rock as in a regular game, you cannot sweep it until it is behind the T line. The first three rocks of each end, whether they are in front of or in the house, cannot be removed by the opposing team. Once the six rocks from each team are delivered in the end, the points are counted and then curler two from each team throws their six rocks back while curler one now skips in their end. Scoring is done the same way as in regular team curling. Full rules will be posted at the club.

Two on Two curling is commonly played by both slide and stick curlers and curlers of all skill levels can be competitive in this format. With a six end game, each team member will throw eighteen rocks, six rocks in three ends each. Given the high repetition and lack of sweepers, it's a great way to hone your shot making ability. A sign-up sheet is now posted at the club so get your team together and join us for our very first two - two spiel.