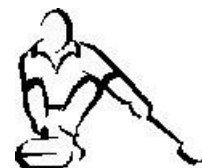


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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 90

March 2019

CBRM Learn to Curl 16+	Saturday, March 9
CBRM Junior Learn to Curl Under 16	Thursday, March 14
Fun Night - St. Patrick's Day Edition	Saturday March 16
Coors Light Spring Mixed Spiel - Sydney CC	March 22-24
Ladies Doubles Spiel	April 5-6
Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser	Friday, April 12
Closing Spiel	April 25-27
Skating Party	Sunday, April 28
Closing Banquet	Saturday, May 4
NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.	

League Roundup



League play took a week long break in February for the Scotties Tournament of Hearts. The Don Cherry's Team Entry League lost two weeks of its schedule and, given other lost weeks, the league will complete the first round and then go right into playoffs. The twelve team league will be split into two divisions with all teams playing a round robin within their respective divisions. The two top teams in each division will then play for the playoff championship. Playoffs begin on Sunday, March 3 with the championship game scheduled for April 14. There are still a number of regular season make-up games for many teams that will ultimately affect the outcome of the league. Currently, the Gordie Cormier rink sits in first and remains undefeated on the year. Early in February they faced another undefeated rink, Coralie Ayre. Cormier won that game and put himself in the driver's seat in his quest for a regular season title. He does, however, still need to play the Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod rink who sit right with him in the standings. A win by MacLeod would open up a slight advantage for him to take the season title because all he would need would be a tie in the standings with Cormier. Cormier does, however, still have two more games to play than MacLeod and would have to lose at least one of the two for MacLeod to take first place. Cormier will need to play John Donovan and the Bonnell rink which is now skipped by Richard Lorway. Coralie Ayre is also still in the mix for first overall as she still has three make-up games to play as well. The Pepsi Mixed League has another month or so to go in its second round schedule and there are still a number of teams in the mix to take the round two championship. Keith MacEachern continues to be one of the front runners but a loss for him in the final week of February has made things even tighter in the standings. Even though there are only four games left it's still not clear who will come out on top.

The Old Triangle Men's League is coming down to the end of its regular season with only two games remaining in the schedule. The Kevin Gouthro rink sits atop the standings and was able to extend his lead a bit and put himself out of reach of the other teams with a victory over the Gary Landry rink who were one of the teams that were challenging Gouthro at the top of the standings. For Landry, this was his second loss in as many starts to top teams and has fell out of contention because of that. The Wally MacDonald rink was another team challenging for top spot in the league but missed a golden opportunity to keep pace with the leader when he dropped a decision to the Keith MacEachern rink in his final game in February. That loss to MacEachern must be hugely disappointing for MacDonald given that it pretty much eliminated him from first place contention. While MacDonald has a game remaining with Gouthro, even a win in that match would not be enough to give MacDonald an opportunity at first place now. The other rink that was challenging all season for first was the Gordie Cormier rink. A loss to Gouthro and MacDonald and a tie thrown into the mix for Cormier has made a title unattainable for Cormier now. Once the regular schedule concludes, the Men's League will begin a playoff round robin with top teams competing to the overall playoff title.

All curlers in the Old Triangle Mixed league should note that games that were scheduled for Thursday, February 14 and were not played are now rescheduled for Thursday, March 14.

The Schooner Junior Program continues to enjoy a good season and that is certainly evident in the required schedule change to split the Juniors into two groups because the numbers were too large to handle in one. In February, Schooner Junior Colton McVarish competed at Centre 200 between the semi final and championship games of the Scotties in the Tim Horton's Hit/Tap/Draw competition. He won a local event to get into the final competition. Although Colton didn't win, the club is very proud that he was there to compete and thank him for representing the Schooner Club so well.

The Schooner Juniors will be hitting the road in March to compete in the Sydco Spiel at the Sydney Curling Club. Best of luck to you all. The Schooner Junior program is set to wrap up on April 20 with their final on ice session and year-end party.

All members are reminded that Matinee curling will continue for the remainder of the season. It goes every Friday from 1-3 and is open to all members. Drop by if you have some free time any Friday.

Doubles Curling Friday Nights

Even though the 2 on 2 Spiel scheduled for the first weekend in March was cancelled, there is still a good increase in popularity of 2 on 2 or doubles curling at the club. That has sparked some discussion on whether or not a league dedicated to the format would be warranted. To that end, it has been decided that we will run a doubles or 2 on 2 league on a trial basis in Fridays during the month of March. For now at least, the Friday night doubles will be pretty informal with no set teams. Everyone who signs up to play will be paired with a partner each night for their games. This, again, is just a trial run to see if there is enough interest in the format

Schooner Teams Hit the Road

to dedicate a night to a league next season. The rules will be the same as what we normally use, a hybrid game based on true doubles curling and developed into what has become known as Stirling (stick and slide curling), a game that is designed for play by all levels of physical ability, including wheelchair curlers. A sign-up sheet has been posted at the club to see just how many members will be partaking. If you are interested, even if you can't make it for all of the Friday nights, you should sign up as soon as possible.

Also, just a reminder, there is a Lady's 2 on 2 spiel scheduled for the first weekend in April. Given that the March spiel was cancelled, we may open this back up to the general membership. Keep an eye on the Schooner website and the club's bulletin board for information and opportunities to register.

Two Schooner Teams plan to hit the road the first weekend in March. The Gordie Cormier rink will be heading to St. Andrews Nova Scotia in the Antigonish area to take part in a cash spiel and the Highlander Curling Club. Skip Cormier will be joined by Kevin Gouthro and Stephen Leslie. Their fourth at this type of event, Brian Laughlin, won't be able to compete at this event due to an injury that prevents him from sweeping.

The Coralie Ayre rink with Skip Coralie, Heidi Bishop, Carrie Cress and Samantha Campbell will be travelling to Amherst on February 28 to compete at the Nova Scotia Women's Club Championship, formerly known as the Traveler's Club Championship. Travelers Insurance has dropped out of a lot of their curling sponsorship this year. The girls have been holding practices and working very hard to prepare for the event and we're sure you will represent the club well.

Good luck to you all!

Canadian Visually Impaired Curling Championship

Team Nova Scotia out of the Sydney Curling Club featuring Skip Louise Gillis, Terrylynn MacDonald and Mary Campbell, are the 2019 AMI Canadian Vision Impaired Curling Champions. Team Nova Scotia also has coach/assistant Sidney Francis and Garth Nathanson.

The CVICC is a national curling event held during White Cane Week which is the first week of February every year. White Cane Week is a week for celebration of ability and sport is a great way to demonstrate it. This was the CVICC's 15th year. There were 7 teams participating from 6 different provinces, BC, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta and Saskatchewan as well as a team from Kelowna, BC, who were back as Team Canada to defend their title from last year. The event is held annually in the Ottawa Curling Club.

Team Nova Scotia posted a 4-2 record in the round robin, good enough to book a semi-final meeting with Team Canada who they went on to defeat 8-7. That set up a championship game against an undefeated Ontario rink who had breezed through the round robin at 6-0. Nova Scotia handled the powerful Ontario rink easily, opening up a 7-1 lead after seven ends before Ontario conceded.

Gillis has been competing at the CVICC's for 12 years and this is her best

finish, having won bronze before but never better. In fact, this is the first time that a team from outside of Ontario or BC has ever won the event. Congratulations to team Nova Scotia on this historic victory.

Learn to Curl



The Schooner Curling Club, in partnership with the CBRM Recreation Department and the Taste of Winter Festival, will be hosting two more Learn to Curl events over the next two months. These events are sponsored by the CBRM and are free of charge to those who want to take part. There was an event held in February just prior to the Scotties. In March, there will be one on Saturday, March 9 at 7:00 pm and is for anyone sixteen plus and another on Thursday, March 21 at 11:00 am for anyone under 16 years of age. This last event is during March break. These events are open to everyone in the designated age groups and all you need is a clean pair of sneakers for the ice and a desire to learn and try one of Canada's signature sports, Curling. Plan to join us. No registration is required. For more information visit the CBRM Taste of Winter website at <http://cbrm.ns.ca/taste-of-winter.html>



Fundraiser

The date has been set for the spaghetti dinner fundraiser. It will be held on Friday, April 12. Dinners will be \$10 each and are being prepared by Tommy Young. All members are asked to participate and sell as many dinners as possible. Delivery will be available for multiple orders. Even if every member can sell a minimum of two dinners that would be a great help. Volunteers will be required for Thursday, April 11, in the evening for prep and on Friday morning to fill and prepare orders for delivery and pickup. Tommy's spaghetti is delicious and the dinners almost sell themselves. Money raised in these fundraisers goes directly into the club and benefits all members.

Snowball



Don't forget to play the Snowball anytime you are at the club. It's open to members only and runs during any regularly scheduled curling league event. It only costs \$2 to play and we have already had a few big winners, most recently when the jackpot grew close to \$200.

All members are assigned a number on the membership list posted at the bar. On any night that the Snowball is running, members can sign in and pay the \$2 entry. While you don't have to be present to win, you must be at the club on the day of the draw to sign in, you can't have someone else sign you in on your behalf or sign in for any future draws ahead of time. If the number drawn belongs to a member who is signed in for that draw, they win the jackpot. If the number drawn is for a member who is not signed in, the jackpot carries over and "snowballs" into a bigger jackpot. Each entry means \$1 more toward the total prize while \$1 goes to the club. Do don't forget to sign in for the Snowball the next time you curling and you may win a great cash prize!

Fun Night

The final Schooner Fun Night of the season will be held on Saturday, March 16. We will be celebrating St. Patrick's Day so wear your green. We'll also be celebrating our ice maker, Brian Laughlin's, birthday so there **will be cake!!**

So far this season the Fun Nights have been pretty good with decent crowds for the most part. Let's all get together and make this final Fun Night the best of the season. Fun Nights are open to everyone so round up your family, your friends, co-workers, whoever and get down to the club for a great time. For only \$7 (\$4 for Schooner Club members) you get to try curling, eat delicious pizza and maybe even get a chance at winning a great prize. There's no better deal in town for a night of fun. If you haven't tried curling before or are relatively new to the sport, we will supply all the equipment you need and the instruction. You just need to have clean sneakers for the ice.

Tuesday Tarabish

Tuesday night tarabish continues at the club and continues to be popular. The games are open to everyone and are single entry. Partners rotate throughout the evening and points and wins are tallied on an individual basis. Once the designated number of games are played, the points are added up and the winners determined. These games are lots of fun and the bar is open to purchase refreshments. Take a chance at the even split and enjoy some free snacks. Join us any Tuesday. The games get going at 7pm.

Schooner Online

Most members are familiar with the Schooner website and use it on a regular basis to access information on league schedules, special events and spiel and other things. We do get a fair bit of traffic on the site considering that we don't actively promote it. On average, we get around 1500 visits per week and 500 unique visitors. The site was originally created as a place for our members to get game schedules and other basic info but has evolved a bit more to now allow for more online content and feedback such as online application forms and other printable media. A few years ago, the Schooner Club also added a Facebook account to our online presence and shortly after, Twitter. Our use of social media has grown from simply promoting a few events to posting more information about leagues and schedules and now has evolved to a point where some members use it exclusively to get information. We also use Facebook to store and display all of the club's photos and promote all events. Early into the 2018-19 season we hit a milestone of 350 like on facebook. Since then, only a few months later, we now have over 400 likes and that's growing almost daily. The quick growth lately is due in part to the Scotties being in Sydney and generating a lot of interest in the sport of curling. It is important that the club have a good online presence and that the information we post online gets out to people. Members are encouraged to like us on Facebook if you haven't already and to like, share and comment on posts. The more activity a post gets the more likely others will get to see it and learn more about our club and what it offers. As always, if anyone has anything they would like to see added to our



website or posted on Facebook or if you have suggestions about changes we can make that would make our online presence better, feel free to contact anyone on the executive or simply send an email to the club's address, schoonercurling@gmail.com . If you aren't on the club's mailing list but would like to be, simply send an email to that same address and request to be added. You will get periodic emails with info about events and you will receive the monthly newsletter in your inbox. So check us out online and keep coming back to stay up to date with what's going on at the club.

The 2019 Scotties is over now but what a fantastic event it turned out to be. There were great crowds at Sydney's Centre 200 all week and they were treated to some wonderful curling. It all started with the Wildcard game on the opening Friday night and built from there. And how about that exciting finish. An extra end, comeback victory for Chelsea Carey and her Alberta team. We couldn't ask for any better. Congratulations to team Alberta, skip Chelsea, Sarah Wilkes, Dana Ferguson and Rachel Brown. We wish you all the best at the World Championships in Silkeborg, Denmark in March.

On the Thursday night before the Scotties got underway, local curlers from both the Sydney and Schooner curling clubs got the rare opportunity to play on professional quality arena ice. It was a great experience for a lot of people. While the arena ice was very good and very fast, I think some Schooner members got an appreciation for our own club's ice in comparison. While the arena ice is probably the best you can find, our own Schooner ice is fast and consistent as well and in similar fashion. Some of the Schooner ice crew got a treat when Dave Merklinger visited the club the weekend before the Scotties and sat and chatted with our own crew. He was at the club to meet with Gordie Cormier who was the volunteer ice coordinator for the Scotties event but after he met with Brian, Russell, Rick and a few others he invited them to help out with the Scotties ice. What an experience for them.

Sydney and its business community embraced the Scotties experience and welcomed the curlers, fans and executives with open arms. Local business decorated, put up signs, had Scotties specials all week and really went all out to maximize the experience. Michelle Wilson of the Waterfront District Office coordinated some window space on Charlotte St. for both the Schooner and Sydney Curling Clubs to decorate. Michelle and Julia Cormier did a great job on the Schooner entry, using some equipment, old trophies, some photos provided by Bill Farr and some other things to make a great display.

And you simply can't say enough about the volunteers for the event. Hundreds of people, including many Schooner members, gave up their time and worked very hard to make the Scotties the great event it was. On top of the work on the ice already mentioned, there were the ones involved with transporting the curlers, executives, officials and other around all week and made sure they got whatever they needed. People sold programs and souvenirs, checked credentials, escorted teams on and off the ice and did whatever else needed to be done to make the week run smoothly. A huge thank you goes out to you all.

The Heart Stop Lounge was also very popular throughout the week. It was located in the Joan Harris Cruise Pavilion, about a five minute shuttle ride away from the main venue, Centre 200. The shuttles ran constantly all day and worked out very well, evident by the great crowds that were at the lounge each night. And they were treated to some of the best local entertainment.

The Schooner and Sydney Curling Clubs combined forces to run a 50/50 during each draw and they turned out to be very successful. An electronic printing system was used to make it easy for the many volunteers to deliver tickets to the public. Some of the prizes got really big, peaking in the championship game when the winner received over \$10,000 as a prize. Total sales for the week were somewhere in the \$135,000 range, an enormous amount. The two clubs are in line to split half of the proceeds after expenses and lottery taxes are removed. Even given that, both clubs stand to make a lot of money from this, money that is certainly well appreciated. A big thank you to all of the volunteer sellers and to Lynn Kelly of Schooner and Rachel Baker of Sydney who were at the forefront organizing this great money maker.

The Scotties shone a great light on Cape Breton and it's curling community throughout all of Canada and even beyond. TSN broadcast every draw and ESPN even picked up the feed of the finals for the US market. The fans in the arena certainly didn't disappoint. coming out in good numbers and cheering on all of the women, maybe rooting a little bit harder for some than others.

So now that the Scotties are over we are left with our fond memories of the event. Congratulations to the organizers for putting on a great week and to all the teams who work hard to get there. Congratulations to Chelsea Carey and Team Alberta and good luck at the worlds. Don't forget to tune in and watch them compete when they are on TV. Thank you to Curling Canada for this opportunity and, once again, thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who made this all possible. Go to the Schooner Website or facebook page and check out some photos from the Scotties and some from the Thursday night local curlers got on the Scotties ice.

We can only hope that we have another opportunity sometime in the future to host another great curling event and that is will be as successful as the Scotties was.