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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 97

March, 2020

March 5-7	Fun Spiel
Saturday, March 7	Fun Spiel Dance
Sunday, March 8	649 Entries Due
Wednesday, March 11	649 Draws Begin
Saturday, March 14	Fun Night - St. Paddy's Day Edition
March 20-21	Mixed Doubles Spiel
Friday, April 3	Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser
April 23-25	Closing Spiel
Saturday, April 25	Closing Spiel Dance
Saturday, May 16	Year End Banquet and Dance
June 2020 (Date TBA)	Schooner Golf
NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.	

League Roundup



The first round of the Pepsi Mixed League finished up early in February and it looks like Keith MacEachern's rink is our first round winner. There are a few teams with makeup games in round one but a win in his final game of the schedule put MacEachern out of reach for those teams. MacEachern finished the schedule with only one loss and one tie blemishing an otherwise perfect record. Other teams that were in the hunt until the end were the Coralie Ayre rink and the Carrie Cress rink but they needed MacEachern's foursome to falter down the stretch to be able to catch them and they did not. Joining Keith in top spot was mate, Julia Cormier, second Anthony Boudreau and lead Jess Dilney. Congratulations to you all. Teams have been shuffled and round two of the Pepsi Mixed is now underway. With only a few games played it's too early to pick a favorite. Play will continue until April 22 in round 2.

The Don Cherry's Team Entry League finished up its regular season schedule on the last Sunday in February but, due to makeup games, a winner of the regular season cannot yet be determined. Playoffs get underway on March first as further delays were not possible due to time constraints. At that point, it looks like a three team race for the regular season crown with Coralie Ayre, Wally MacDonald and Gordie Cormier all still in the hunt. The Kevin Gouthro rink has fallen off the pace after suffering losses to the Walter Nichols rink (Formerly Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod rink) and the Russell Fitzgerald rink in February. Ayre still has a game against Gouthro as well as another front runner, Gordie Cormier and a third game against Walter Nichols, a team who has come on as of late. Cormier has three makeup games and MacDonald one. A loss to the Robert Agnew rink

on the final Sunday in February by MacDonald has put his chances of a title in jeopardy and opened the door for Ayre and Cormier a little wider. MacDonald was still the top seed heading into the playoffs but a win over Agnew would have really improved his chances at a season title. With time winding down and weather playing a big role in scheduling this season, it will be difficult to play all of the makeup games required. The saving grace may be the open sheet of ice each week during the Mixed League schedule. With eleven teams competing in round two of the mixed and one of those teams having a bye each week, a free sheet of ice is available every Wednesday night at 7pm. Ice is also available at 9pm on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Everyone who is trying to schedule makeup games or move games around on the schedule in any league are reminded to coordinate with Drawmaster Julia Cormier to avoid double booking ice. The Old Triangle Men's League is set to finish up round two of the regular season very soon and it looks like the Gordie Cormier rink will take the regular season title. Cormier had a fantastic campaign in the Men's, only suffering his first loss of the season to the Gary Landry rink in the last week of February, the second last game on the schedule. Until that point, he had been undefeated. Even if he drops his last game of the schedule, there is no one in a position to overtake him. Playoffs will begin as soon as the regular schedule is completed. Although Cormier was almost perfect on the season, there are many good teams in the Men's and anyone can win on any given night so playoff success for Cormier is not guaranteed. He and his team will have to maintain the high level of play they showed all year to continue their winning ways.

The Schooner Junior Program continues to run well at the club, recently taking part and kicking off Curling Day in Canada celebrations for Schooner. First year coordinator Ceilidh Forrest is doing a great job in her inaugural season and says she will be back next year. She said she will be even better prepared after having a full season of experience under her belt. The Schooner Club sends out a big thank you to Ceilidh for taking on the program and all of her hard work all season. Thanks also to everyone who helped out with the Junior Program this season and if anyone has any time available for the rest of the year, feel free to drop up and lend a hand. Junior curling will go into April and will finish off with a year-end party.

Women's Sweetheart Spiel

The Schooner Club's Sweetheart Spiel was held on February 7th and 8th once again being sponsored by CC Computer Solutions. A total of ten teams took part coming from the Schooner, Sydney and Baddeck Curling Clubs. Miranda Bullen (Fitzgerald) joined us as well and she plays at the SACCC in Port Hawkesbury.

Play got underway on Friday with all ten teams seeing action on day one. Many teams got into the spirit of the event and dressed in team uniforms, many being very colorful to say the least. Team Cormier with Skip Julia, mate Ceilidh Forrest, second Jess Dilney and lead Helen Joyce, paid homage to Schooner stalwarts Gordie Cormier, Brian Laughlin, Wally MacDonald and Russell Fitzgerald by dressing like them, wearing their name tags and taking on their actions and style. Those four guys never looked so good and Julia and her crew did a great job. Another long

standing tradition of the Sweetheart is the wine and cheese social on Friday night were curlers and guests are treated to their choice of red or white wine along with a large selection of finger food, dips and many other goodies. Always very popular. A big thank you to Martin Campbell and Russell Fitzgerald for their continuing support in sponsoring the wine and cheese. Play got underway early on Saturday at 10AM and went throughout the day. There were some really close games and some great curling but, in the end, it was Schooner's own Cheryl Mackinnon and her foursome who came out on top, taking home the coveted Sweetheart Sweatshirts. MacKinnon's victory wasn't secured until the final game was over as the Marie Young rink still had a chance to catch and pass MacKinnon for first place but they couldn't muster enough points in their final match against the Julia Cormier rink. Joining skip MacKinnon in her first Sweetheart title was mate, Barb Thistle, second Debby Murray and lead Bev Young. Congratulations on your first place Sweetheart title. Second place was taken by the Barbie Cooke rink out of the Baddeck Curling Club. Skip Cooke was joined by Ruth Morrison, Gretchen Landry and Heather MacIntosh. Another Schooner rink rounded out the top three when Carrie Cress led Yvonne Donovan, Colleen MacLeod and Sydney's Rachel Baker to the bronze position. The Sydney rinks of Marie Young and Joann Hunston finished the top five with skip Young joined by Joan Latimer, Cynthia Boutilier and Karen Ramsay while Joann was aided by Jill Ramsay-Stewart, Paula MacRae and Mary Lou Andrea.

After all the stones were thrown and the winners determined, it was time for all the ladies to sit down to a delicious dinner of roast beef prepared by caterer Tommy Young. Desert was supplied by Bernadette Cormier, Yvonne Donovan and a few others who all brought delicious treats to enjoy. When dinner was over it was time for prize presentation and to present the champs, the Cheryl MacKinnon rink, with their jackets. After that, teams were drawn at random to come up and select a prizes from a great selection that adorned the prize table. All curlers received a prize. Lynn Kelly closed the event by thanking everyone for taking part, congratulating the winners and inviting everyone back for next year's Sweetheart. Overall it was another hugely successful Sweetheart Spiel that is certainly one of the premier events at the club each season and only seems to get better and better every year. That success is due in no small part to the efforts of coordinator Lynn Kelly and the team of volunteers that work very hard to make this such a great event every year. A big thank you to you all. Thanks also to spiel sponsor CC Computer Solutions for helping out again this time around, to Martin and Russell for helping put on the wine and cheese on Friday, to Tommy Young for providing the delicious meal enjoyed by all and to the Schooner men who helped fund the dinner with their donation as well as the guys who helped serve. Thank you also to the ice crew for great conditions, to the bartenders, housekeeping and anyone else who helped out in any way. Finally, a big thank you goes out to all the ladies who take part in the spiel every year putting on some great curling and making it so much fun. We hope to see you all back next year.

Visit the Schooner Facebook page to see photos from the Sweetheart Spiel.

Schooner Cash Spiel

The Schooner Open Cash Spiel was held on the long weekend in February, this year seeing twelve teams compete, and was a great success. Top prize was \$1000 thanks to sponsorship of two local businesses, Firestop and Jeff Ellis Enterprises. Entry fees were also returned as prizes.

Play got underway on Friday, February 14, with all twelve teams seeing action on the first night. The first draw of the evening was at 5pm and had Schooner teams skipped by Kevin Gouthro and Wally MacDonald facing off while Schooner's Robert Agnew faced Kurt Roach of the Sydney Curling Club on the other sheet. Gouthro and Roach were victorious in those games. The next draw would have a team of Junior curlers from the Sydney Club take on Schooner's John Donovan while Coralie Ayre from Schooner took on Sydney's Brandon Toner. Both Sydney rinks prevailed in those tilts. The final draw of Friday saw the four rinks who essentially had a bye for the first round take the ice with winners going directly to the semi-final of the top division. Once again, Schooner rinks faced off against Sydney rinks on both sheets. Gordie Cormier faced Yvon LeFort and Gary Landry faced Sebastian LeFort, Yvon's son. The senior Lefort, Yvon, was a winner but Sebastian fell to Landry, who would face Yvon in his next game in the top division. Losers from Friday dropped to the consolation round to continue playing.

Play got underway early on Saturday with winners from round one facing off to see who would make it into the second semi final game for the top division. On one sheet, Kevin Gouthro was facing Kurt Roach and on the other it was the Sydney Junior squad facing Brandon Toner's rink. Losers of these games would move to the 'B' division to continue play. Toner and Gouthro were both victorious and would move to the semi final game later that day. The other semi, as mentioned earlier, between LeFort and Landry had been decided the previous evening.

Next up we had play get underway in the 'B' division which now contained eight teams, all who had a loss in a previous match. Winners of these games would move on to the semi-final of that division later that evening while losers would still have a chance to compete in the 'C' division.

Schooner rinks Wally MacDonald and Coralie Ayre won their way to the semis and would face each other for a chance in the 'B' title game while Sydney's Kurt Roach and Sebastian Lefort would face off in the other for their chance at a spot in the 'B' final. John Donovan, Robert Agnew, Gordie Cormier and the Sydney Junior team all would move to compete in the 'C' division. After this, any further loss would mean elimination for all of these teams.

The top division was back on the ice after play in round one of 'B' was sorted out, four teams vying for one of two spots in the 'A' final on Sunday afternoon and a chance at the \$1000 first prize. Losers of these games would still be alive and play in the 'C' Division semi final on Sunday morning. The Kevin Gouthro rink continued their strong play and defeated Brandon Toner to advance while Yvon Lefort remained in the mix, defeating Gary Landry for his chance at the top spot in 'A'. Gouthro and LeFort would face off on Sunday afternoon for the championship while Landry and Toner would play on Sunday morning to try to make it to the 'C' final.

Play would continue into Saturday evening with teams in the 'C' division set to take the ice, winners moving on to the semi final on Sunday and losers of

these games being eliminated from further play. Gordie Cormier's rink was successful in one game and would move on to face Gary Landry while Robert Agnew punched his ticket to the semis to face Sydney's Brandon Toner. To cap off curling action on Saturday we had more 'B' division action with semi final games between Wally MacDonald and Coralie Ayre as well as Kurt Roach and Sebastian LeFort, winners playing for the 'B' top prize on Sunday and losers seeing their weekend come to an end. In the end, the 'B' final would feature Schooner's Ayre rink facing off against Sydney's Kurt Roach. This final was scheduled to go just before the main event on Sunday.

Once curling was done, the lights were lowered and the club was turned over to DJ Jimmy who provided some great tunes for everyone to party to late into the evening. A large crowd of curlers and fans stayed around and had a great time late into the night.

Sunday play would begin at 10am when the 'C' division semi finals would go off to see who would play for title in that division later that same day. Two Schooner rinks were successful in making it through and the final in 'C' would have Gordie Cormier facing off against the Robert Agnew rink. The final game was scheduled for mid afternoon and would be played opposite the 'A' final. Before that, the 'B' division finalists, Coralie Ayre and Kurt Roach, would take the ice to decide a winner. Roach defeated Ayre to take first overall in that division and the \$600 prize. Joining Roach was Mark MacNamara, Travis Stone and Robin Nathanson. Ayre and her foursome that also included Heidi Bishop, Patti Merrigan and Marcie Bungay, won \$400 for their efforts.

The last two games of the 2020 Schooner Open Cash were set for early Sunday afternoon and a big crowd of supporters filled the club to watch the finals in both the 'A' and 'C' divisions and cheer on their favorite teams. In the 'C' final, Gordie Cormier won over Robert Agnew to take the division title and the \$400 prize while Agnew took home \$200 as runner-up. Skip Cormier was joined by Stephen Leslie, Phillip Edwards and Carrie Cress but, do to some scheduling conflicts with his players, also needed the services of Julia Cormier and Russell Fitzgerald over the weekend. Skip Agnew was joined by Walter Nichols, Chris 'Spider' Webb and Eric MacLeod.

The 'A' division final didn't disappoint fans as it was filled with great curling. While Team Gouthro got off to a lead thanks to an early steal, the game was never really out of reach for the LeFort rink who always looked like they could get back into it at any time. Some timely shot making by Skip Gouthro and some untimely misses by team Lefort were ultimately the difference in the match that saw skip Kevin Gouthro, mate Brian Laughlin, second Kelley Laughlin and lead Anthony Boudreau emerge victorious and take home the Schooner Open Cash title for 2020 and a \$1000 first prize. Congratulations to you all. Skip LeFort and his team had a great weekend as well and took home a \$600 cash prize in the runners-up position. Joining Skip Yvon was Thomas Drover, Mitch McNutt and Aidan McNutt.

Congratulations to all of our winners again and thank you to everyone who took part. Thank you also to the team of spiel organizers who worked so hard organizing and running the event, to Tommy Young who provided curlers and guests with delicious food all weekend long, to the ice crew for

working hard to keep ice conditions so good throughout the spiel , to bartenders, cleaners and everyone else who works behind the scenes to make an event like this not only possible but so successful. A big thank you also goes out to spiel sponsors Stephen Leslie and Firestop and Jeff Ellis of Jeff Ellis Enterprises for your generous donations. Without the help of community minded businesses like these, events like this would not be possible at the club.

So that puts the 2020 edition of the Schooner Open Cash Spiel in the books as another great success. We hope to see you all back next year when the event will once again be held on the Heritage Day long weekend in February. Mark your calendars and plan to join us.

Mixed Doubles Spiel

The Schooner Club will hold a members only Mixed Doubles (2 on 2) spiel on March 20 and 21, 2020. This will be a team entry spiel but all teams must be mixed, consisting of one male and one female curler. Entry fee will be \$40 per team and that includes lunch on Saturday. Rules, as always, are a hybrid of the traditional doubles curling rules and will be posted prior to the start of play. Watch the Schooner Website, club bulletin board and Schooner Members Facebook group for more information and start of registration.

Schooner Fun Night St. Paddy's Day

The next Schooner Fun Night, the final Fun Night scheduled for the season, is Saturday, March 14th, and will be our very popular St. Paddy's Day edition. Everyone is welcome to come out and give the great sport of curling a try. It's only \$7 per person (\$4 for Schooner members) and that includes curling, pizza and you may even have a chance to win a great prize. There is no better deal for a night of fun anywhere in town. We provide all equipment and instructions, just bring clean sneakers to wear on the ice. Since it's St. Patrick's Day, wear your green and help us celebrate. We also celebrate the birthday of our icemaker, Brian 'Patrick' Laughlin, at this fun night as well so there will be cake! Grab your family, friends, co-workers, whoever and plan to join us for a night of food, fun and St. Paddy's Day celebrations and find out how much fun curling at the Schooner Club can be.

Matinee Curling

Matinee curling is still ongoing at the club and is held most Fridays from 1-3. It's open to all Schooner members. Attendance has been up and down for the season but things have been going well lately. Keep an eye on the Schooner website or Facebook members group for weekly updates. Plan to join us some Friday afternoon if you are available. It's a great way to get a little bit more curling out of your membership.

Schooner Stick Spiel

There's still a few days left to sign up for the Schooner Stick Spiel that will be taking place from March 5-7 at the club. Entry fee is \$20 per person and it's single entry. All participants must use a curling stick, there will be no slide curling allowed. Play one game on either Thursday or Friday and two

Curling Day in Canada 2020

games on Saturday. Stick curling is a great way for people of all ages and physical abilities to keep playing the great sport of curling even if they have a handicap or some type of mobility or pain issues. This is an opportunity for slide curlers to give stick curling a try and see just what it is like. There are a number of members at the club who use a stick to curl and, for most, if they didn't have that option, they couldn't curl any longer. There will be lunch on Saturday and a dance on Saturday night from 9-1 with music by DJ Jimmy. Plan to join us.

February 22 was Curling Day in Canada and the Schooner Club celebrated with a number of different events being held throughout the day. The Schooner Junior curlers started the day off at 1pm. After that, members curled in the Canada wide curling game where scores of games in clubs all across the country were tabulated and posted on the Curling Canada Website. Clubs taking part in the national game were entered into a draw for \$10,000 in club improvements. Scores were submitted as top line and bottom line of the scoreboard. The final score of the nationwide game was 7807-7022. Pretty close when you think about it. Thousands of curlers participated in the game, some of those at our little club in Sydney. The Club also had an alumni reunion where past members were invited to come back to the club and share their stories and memories. Some of these members were instrumental in getting the club on its feet after the military left and in keeping it alive through the years. Some of those in attendance were Jackie Pearson, Jerry Landry, Tommy Youden, Frank Kokocki, Brickie Brophy and others. Thank you all for coming back and helping us celebrate. In the evening, we held a special Fun Night that was free of charge for everyone who wanted to come to the club and give curling a try. It was very well attended. From 6-9pm we also had live entertainment with music by the duo Harbourtown. The guys in the band even tried their hand at curling during one of their breaks. While they may not have been great curlers, they are great musicians and everyone there enjoyed the music. There were refreshments and special 'Curling Rock' cookies available to enjoy. Thanks to everyone who brought something and to Bernadette for the cookies. It was a great day and a great celebration of curling at the club that went almost a full twelve hours. Next year, Curling Day in Canada will be on February 21, 2021. Plan to join us for another great day.

Schooner Teams Hitting the Road

Two teams from the Schooner Club will be hitting the road to compete this month. The Gordie Cormier rink will be taking part in a cash spiel at the St. Andrews Curling Club just outside of Antigonish from March 6-8. Joining skip Cormier will be Stephen Leslie, Chris Glibota and Julia Cormier. The Coralie Ayre Rink will be travelling to Amherst to take part in the Women's Nova Scotia Curling Club Championships, formerly known as the Traveler's, from March 5 to March 8. Along with Coralie there will be Heidi Bishop, Patti Merrigan and Marcie Bungay. There are currently twelve teams listed to compete at the Curl NS website. The winner of this event will represent Nova Scotia at the Canadian National Club Championships. Good luck to all Schooner Curlers.

Roach Rink Seeks Third Trip to Nationals

The Kurt Roach rink from the Sydney Curling Club is competing at the Nova Scotia Curling Club Championships (formerly the Traveler's) from February 27 - March 1st. Skip Roach is seeking his third trip to the National Championships representing Nova Scotia. The event is being held at the Bridgewater Curling Club. Skip Roach is joined by Mark MacNamara, Travis Stone and Robin Nathanson. As of Saturday morning, February 29, Roach had only one loss against four wins. Best of luck to the Roach rink.

Sydney Blind Curling Team back to Defend Title

A team of blind curlers from Sydney was back at the AMI National Blind Curling Championships this year as Team Canada to defend the title they won at the event last year. This national championship is held each year at the Ottawa Curling Club as part of White cane week, this year taking place from February 4-7. White Cane Week is a week for celebration of ability and sport is a great way to demonstrate it. Six teams competed this year, Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia, two entries from Ontario and Team Canada. While the Nova Scotia team didn't repeat as champs this year, they did post up a respectable 3-2 record in the round robin and lost the gold medal game to Alberta after defeating Manitoba to make it to the championship match. Congratulations team Nova Scotia.

649 Fundraiser

The Schooner Club is currently running another 649 Fundraiser. Draws will begin on Wednesday, March 11 and entries are to be submitted by Sunday, March 8. Rules are the same as in the past. For each entry, six numbers between 1 and 49 are selected. Those number get crossed off when they are drawn in the 649 lottery draw on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Results will be updated after each draw and posted online as well as at the club. The first entry to cross off all six numbers will win the prize, 50% of sales. In the case where more than one entry finishes up on the same draw, the prize will be split equally among all winners. Entries are \$5 each or three for \$10. The last time we ran this 649 fundraiser, the prize was well over \$700. This is an important fundraiser for the club and goes a long way in helping to cover day to day expenses, keeping costs to members down as low as possible. If each members sells only two \$10 entries, the prize will be close to \$700 and the club will make the same amount. Please try to sell as many entries as possible and help the club as much as you can.

Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

After the great success we had with our spaghetti dinner last year, the Schooner Executive have decided to go ahead with one this year as well. Tommy Young will once again be preparing the dinners and has been booked for Friday, April 3. Dinners will be \$10 each and the club will get half that amount for each one sold. Last season we made over \$1600 on the sale. Dinners can be picked up at the French Club on the corner of Ferry and Dolbin streets and delivery will be available for multiple dinner orders. Tommy is well known in the community for his spaghetti dinners, they are very popular and practically sell themselves. All members are asked to make an effort to sell as many dinners as possible. Like other fund raisers we do, money raised goes to help covering day to day expenses at the club

Tuesday Tarabish and Social

to help keep costs to members down so we all benefit. Sell them at work, to family or even just buy a couple for yourself for dinner that night. All sales help. Watch the club bulletin board, website and Facebook page for more information and order sheets coming soon.

Everyone is reminded that the club is still hosting its Tuesday Night Tarabish Game and Social and everyone is welcome. Tarabish is single entry with partners rotating after each game and individual wins, losses and points being recorded to determine winners. Registration starts at 7pm and games get going around 7:30. If you don't want to play cards you can still join us, enjoy a beverage from the fully stocked bar, play a game of shuffle curl or just enjoy some of the curling action in the Pepsi Mixed League. Members are encouraged to join us and bring along some friends to introduce them to the club. Join us any Tuesday at 7pm and enjoy some time at the Schooner Club.

Facebook Following Continues to Grow

It was just last month that we announced we had hit a Facebook Milestone by going over 500 likes. Since that time, we have continued to gain followers and now stand at over 675 likes, a pretty big increase in a short time. This is due in no small part to members and others who follow the club on Facebook spreading the word and getting the people they know introduced to the club and following along as well. Every person who likes Schooner Curling Club will see all of the posts we put up. This is important as we use Facebook to advertise events and try to get people interested in curling and in the club itself. The more people who see that information, the more successful we can be. So if you are on Facebook please like Schooner Curling Club and invite your online friends to do so as well. Club members are also reminded that we have a private group open to Schooner members only. This is a place focused more directly on posts that only members would be interested in and a place where more private info can be shared. It has been used widely this season, with pretty good success, to get spares. If you are a Schooner member who is on Facebook and haven't joined the group yet, we encourage you to do so.