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In The Hack

SCHOONER CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER



Volume 64 **October 2015**

Club Calendar

Opening General Meeting	Tuesday, September 30 th 7pm
Opening Spiel	Late October
Start of league play	First week of November
Remaining Schedule	COMING SOON!!
NOTE: All dates are tentative and subject to change. Check the club website or bulletin board for changes and additions.	

Another Season of "In the Hack"

Just as quickly as summer came, it is gone. Some may say it never really arrived. Now fall is in the air and we are starting to once again turn our thoughts to curling. Right now the club is filled with ice making equipment and the floor in the ice shed is still brown sand. Over the next couple of weeks the ice crew will transform that sand into two great sheets of glistening white curling ice and the club will once again be filled with members laughing and joking about their summer activities and the sound of rocks gliding down the ice towards skips who are yelling as loud as they can to encourage curlers to sweep just a little harder. As it is with every new season there are changes. Some old faces won't return but new faces will take their places. I want to wish returning club president, Gordie Cormier, and the Schooner executive a successful and enjoyable season.

This is the start of the tenth year for In the Hack. I look forward to another season and once again hope everyone finds these newsletters both informative and entertaining. As always I encourage everyone to provide feedback and submit ideas to help make the newsletter better. If you want to receive In the Hack every month in your email inbox be sure to provide your email address on your club application or send an email to the club's address, schoonercurling@gmail.com, telling us you want to receive club emails and I will add you to the mailing list. Anyone who has previously subscribed but had changes to your email address can update their information in this way as well. Also, don't forget to keep an eye on the Schooner website at www.schoonercurlingclub.com for schedules, special events, club news and more. And you can always follow us on Twitter or like us on Facebook. It's the start of another great year of curling and fun at the Schooner Club. Welcome back returning members and greetings to new ones. *Good Curling Everyone!*

Closing Spiel Results

The closing spiel of 2015, held April 21-25, was a rousing success with a full roster of 16 teams taking part. This was due in no small part to the efforts of bonspiel chair Laura Rafuse who worked hard to fill the spiel, attracting a large group of curlers from outside the club, many from the Sydney Curling club, which is a good thing for both clubs. There were also some of our junior and former junior members and some other curlers who don't play full time. Teams competed in one of two divisions, playing either on Tuesday/Thursday or Wednesday/Friday during the week, with all teams coming together on Saturday to finish the spiel and determine a winner. Heading into Saturday there were two teams, the Brian Laughlin rink and the Stephen Leslie rink, who had distanced themselves from the crowd and were tied with an identical twenty four points and only separated by plus minus with Leslie holding a small advantage. Both teams would play the 4:15 draw on Saturday, Laughlin facing the Peter MacIntyre rink and Leslie facing veteran Russell Fitzgerald. Both MacIntyre and Fitzgerald were winless in two previous games so it looked like Leslie and Laughlin would be fighting it out for first. However, earlier in the day the Kurt Roach rink, who entered Saturday play 6 points behind the two front runners, had won big and vaulted themselves forward into first place with 31.5 points and a +10 rating. Laughlin and Leslie would both have to overcome the 7.5 point deficit if they wanted to take over first from Roach. The Laughlin rink was up for the task and went on to defeat MacIntyre and take 11 points in the game, good enough for the first spot over Roach but the Stephen Leslie rink still had a chance to overtake them. Unfortunately for Leslie and his team, things did not go well on Saturday and they suffered a monumental loss to Fitzgerald and were only able to salvage two points of a possible fifteen in the game. This dropped Leslie out of contention and to fifth place overall. That solidified first place for Laughlin as no one in the final draw had a chance to overtake him. The Richard Lorway rink was the only team left to play that had a chance to overtake Roach for second but would need all fifteen available points to do so. Lorway ended up losing his final game, leaving Roach in second place. Joining skip Brian Laughlin in victory was Kelley Laughlin and Dave Boudreau. Laughlin's team only had three players and relied on spares throughout the spiel to fill in. Skip Kurt Roach was joined by Eric Boutilier, Joe Erickson and Andrea Cullen. Third place was taken by rookie skip Rick Billard who lost his opening game to the eventual first place Laughlin rink but was able to bounce back with two strong victories to build up his points to 28. Joining skip Billard was Cheryl MacKinnon, Matt MacPherson and Steve Jurcina. Close behind Billard in fourth with 26 points and a 2-1 record was the Cal Thistle rink. Aiding Skip Thistle in his fourth place finish was Bryant Cormier, Barb Thistle and Reid MacInnis. Rounding out the top five was the aforementioned Stephen Leslie rink with skip Leslie, Butch MacLean, Allan Townsend and George Plumridge.

After curling was done for the week there was a draw to the button competition where anyone could enter to have one shot to try and come as close to the center as possible without the aid of sweepers. Twenty entrants took part but it was Schooner's own Laura Rafuse who made a near perfect shot that ended up tucked right next to the center pin. It was a great shot, especially considering Laura did not have the help of any sweepers. Laura took the prize money but, instead of keeping it for herself, she generously bought drinks for everyone who was left in the club. Thank you to Laura and congratulations on your great draw to the button.

The final order of business for the spiel was prize presentations. Every curler who participated got to pick from a wide array of great prizes, all in the order that they finished.

After the spiel was all wrapped up, DJ Jimmy took over for a dance that went late into the evening. There was a large crowd that stayed to party and it was a great time had by all. The night even included another draw to the button competition, this time with the added twist of having to do it barefoot.

Overall it was a great spiel and a great way to end the 2014-15 season. Thank you to all the people who took part, especially the curlers from the Sydney Club and the people who joined us from outside Schooner just to have some fun in the spiel. Thanks you to bonspiel chair Laura Rufuse who did another great job putting the event together, to the ice crew for keeping the ice in great shape even at this late time in the season, to bartenders, housekeeping and anyone else who helped out in any way. Thank you also to DJ Jimmy and everyone who stayed to party the night away on Saturday and help us finish up the 2014-15 closing spiel with a bang. We hope to see everyone back next year.

Coors Fun Night



Fun Nights will be back for the 2015-16 season. The fun nights are open to both members and the general public and are not only a great way to get people to try curling but are an important source of new members for the club each and every year. Given the lack of participation in November and December for the last couple of years, there is discussion that the Fun Nights will not begin until January this season. We are also unsure at this point if long time sponsor Coors Brewing Company will be back in support of these events. The club executive is looking at other options for sponsorship if Coors decides not to come back this year. Regardless of all that, Schooner Fun Nights are coming back and are a huge bargain with curling, pizza and prizes for only a few bucks. Members are encouraged to get groups of co-workers, family and friends together and have a night out at the club. We hope to see lots of people take part and have the success this year that we have enjoyed in the past. Watch for the Fun Night schedule to be announced soon.

League Roundup



League play went further into April last season than it had any time in recent history as the final league game was played on Sunday, April 19. This game was the final in the team entry league and was between the Brian Laughlin rink and the Wally MacDonald rink. Laughlin had a great campaign in 2014-15 but seemed unable to beat MacDonald and his foursome all year. It was with some disappointment that Laughlin, who had held down first place in team entry for most of the season, faltered down the stretch and suffered some untimely losses in makeup games that caused him to relinquish the first place spot to MacDonald. For MacDonald it was justification that the regular season title he had won the year previous in his rookie campaign as skip was no fluke. Unlike the previous year where MacDonald wasn't able to win a game in the playoffs after taking the regular schedule crown, he was able to make his way into the final game to have a chance to win both regular season and playoff championships in the Sunday league. MacDonald had beaten the very strong Ray Cameron rink the week before in the crossover game to earn his spot. Cameron had won the playoff title in team entry the previous two season. Laughlin needed extra ends against the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink to earn his spot in the final game. The game between Laughlin and MacDonald started out as a tightly played affair with the two teams tied 2-2 after four ends. MacDonald blew the game wide open in the fifth however when he was able to steal four points from Laughlin and take a commanding lead. Laughlin mounted a comeback and made the score close by scoring in the sixth

and seventh ends but was unable to overtake MacDonald, losing the game after being run out of rocks in the eighth. The win gave MacDonald the playoff championship, the first time in a long while that the same team has won both the regular schedule and playoff titles on Sunday. Skip MacDonald was joined by mate Sid Murray, second Chris 'Slugger' MacLeod and lead Walter Nichols.

Wally MacDonald was also victorious in the mixed league playoff, taking that title after having moderate success in the regular season. MacDonald breezed through the first round of the playoffs and earned a spot in the championship round against five other teams, one of which was the Gordie Cormier rink who had won the regular schedule title in this league. MacDonald continued his winning ways in the championship round and took the title. Also sharing in victory were mate Kelley Laughlin, second Alan Young and lead Bev Young.

The men's league final saw the two top teams of the regular season face off for the playoff championship. The Gordie Cormier rink had won the season title and the Wayne 'Bull' Bonnell rink had finished a close second. Cormier had a great season in the men's league but was unable to beat Bonnell in the final game, giving Bonnell and his rink the playoff title. Joining Bonnell in the victory were Richard Lorway at mate, second Rick Billard and lead Todd Fraser.

Congratulations to all of our winners and especially Wally MacDonald who was able to chalk up three titles in the 2014-15 season and Gordie Cormier who had two regular season titles and a chance to be part of five of six league championships heading into the playoffs. Even though Cormier fell short of that feat it was still a great season for him.

League play will begin for the upcoming season sometime around the first week of November. Watch the club bulletin board and the website for league schedules to be posted as they become available.

Schooner Golf Day 2014



With curling season done in early April, many curler's thoughts had turned to golf. For the last number of years, the Schooner Club has accommodated the passion of some and the curiosity of others and held an annual golf outing. We would like to pass along a huge thank you to Lynn Kelly and Mary Foley who, as they have for the past number of years, organized and ran the very successful and enjoyable event. Unfortunately, mother nature stepped in this year and made it rain, forcing the cancellation of golf. That didn't stop us from having some fun though. All registered golfers and guests still made their way to the club to enjoy a delicious steak barbeque with all the trimmings. The pitmaster duties were handled by Brian Laughlin who had a couple of helpers. Brian did a great job on the steaks again this year. Desert was handled by Laura Rafuse who made a golf themed cake. It was both beautiful and delicious. Check out our online photos on the website to see the cake before it was cut and enjoyed by all in attendance. Since we didn't get to golf all those registered received a "rain cheque" for 9 holes of golf at Alderdale for another time during the season. So even though we didn't get to hit the links a good time and a great meal was had by all. Thanks once again to Lynn Kelly and Mary Foley for organizing and running the event and to everyone who came to the club to help out with dinner. Thanks to our cook, Brian Laughlin and his helpers, thanks to Laura for the great cake and thanks to everyone who took part. Hope to see you all back again for Schooner Golf 2016.

649 Fundraiser

With the great success of the 649 fundraisers last season and the demise of our spaghetti dinner fundraiser, it was decided that the 649 would be run again this year to raise additional operating funds for the club. The club executive is still discussing the details but they are planning on starting one early in the curling season. In order to accomplish the same financial benefit of the spaghetti dinner, the 649 will likely be run twice during the season, once in the fall as mentioned and once more through the season, likely in late January or February. With ever increasing costs of running the club this fundraiser provides important money to cover expenses such as power and rent and allows us to keep membership rates as low as possible. All members are strongly encouraged to participate and sell as many entries as possible.

Grant Money

It was reported at the spring general meeting in April by Nadine Neima-Drover that some of the grant money that had been applied for by the CBRM Curling Association had come through and some equipment was purchased. You may have noticed at the end of last season the new Goldline brooms that lined our broom racks in the ice area. Nadine said that the more money was possible and would be shared by the Sydney and Schooner Clubs to purchase other equipment in the future. This included a set of Junior rocks to be shared by the clubs. A wish list was drawn up by our executive and ice director Brian Laughlin and presented to Nadine to guide future purchases. Watch for updates on this subject in the future.

We Are On Facebook



That's right. The Schooner Curling Club is on Facebook. You can visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/schooner.curling>. When you visit don't forget to "Like" us and you will get a news feed of all of the club events and other information that gets posted to our Facebook page. You can then share that info with your friends. We hope by using Facebook we will be able to get information to our members faster and to have more people know what's going on at the Schooner Club by having the word spread by everyone who is on Facebook. If you don't have a Facebook account you can go there and sign up for free. If you are not into Facebook, don't worry, the club will still get information out via our website, email blasts, Twitter and telephone.

Schooner and the NSCA

The Schooner Curling Club had planned to rejoin the Nova Scotia Curling Association in the 2013-14 season but, due to a lack of response from the association to the requests of our executive for information, we never did get our membership up and running. During the 2014-15 season it was decided that we would rejoin the provincial curling body and take advantage of the benefits membership gave us, mainly the ability to play in Provincially sanctioned events. The fee for the season was prorated since we joined part way in. There was a team representing the Schooner Club at the Traveler's Spiel held in the Sydney Curling Club last season. There was a discussion at the Closing General Meeting last spring regarding the benefits of staying a member of the association. Given the favorable results of taking part in a Provincial Spiel and the fact that the Schooner Club was once again a noticeable member of the curling community, it was decided that we would rejoin the NSCA for the 2015-16 season.

Membership Fees

Membership fees for the Schooner Curling Club for the 2015-16 season have not changed from last year. The full, adult membership is still \$220 plus HST. Full Junior and Student memberships stand at \$120 and Junior and Little Rockers will pay \$60, HST being added to all of these prices. Our fees continue to remain some of the lowest in the Province and offer the most return. Please note, payment terms for your membership dues have changed for the coming season. Full membership must be **PAID IN FULL** by November 1st, prior to the start of regular league play. Failure to pay your dues will result in membership privileges being revoked and you will not be permitted to curl. Full student, Junior and Little Rockers must be paid prior to the start of curling for these groups. The club executive believes that, given our already low rates and no increase in fees for this season, these terms are very fair and are in line with payment terms offered at many other clubs. Your cooperation is very much appreciated. Application forms are available at the club or you can download one from the Schooner website. Payments can be made by cash, cheque or debit at the club. Again, no one is permitted to curl unless your dues are paid in full.



As many know, the Schooner club took advantage of the Chase the Ace craze and ran our own draw. While not as successful as some other local draws that saw jackpots reach up into the six figure range and beyond, the club did see the jackpot grow to almost \$5000 before it was won by Steve MacLean who split the prize with Schooner's own Rick Billard. Steve, who had been coming to the club regularly to take part in the weekly tarbush game run all summer, drew the Ace of Spades on August 11 from a deck that had been whittled down to 19 cards through previous draws. Draws had started way back in November just as curling season was getting into full swing. During the curling season they were held on Sunday evenings in conjunction with team entry curling. When curling season ended it was decided to move the draws to Tuesday with ticket sales from 6-8 pm and the draw immediately following. Not long after that, the tarbush game was setup with two groups taking part every Tuesday, bringing more people up to the club, helping both chase the ace and bar sales. The tarbush game continued after the chase the ace draws were finished. Overall, the chase the ace fund raiser benefitted the club with close to \$8000 profit after expenses, good bar sales during a time when the bar would not have even been opened and by bringing people to the club to enjoy Schooner during a time that we are usually shut down. We would like to send out a big thank you to everyone who took part and bought tickets, to Darrell MacAulay, Frances Ford and Lynn Kelly who regularly sold tickets and helped out immensely with the event and to everyone else who pitched in during the fund raiser to help out. Given the success of the first Chase the Ace for the club it has been decided that we will have a second event starting early in the curling season. The club executive has picked Thursday night to run the draws with the first one being November 5th. Ticket sales will run from 6:30-8:30pm every Thursday with the draw being made shortly after sales close for the night. Weekly results and rules of play will again be posted on the Schooner website. Club President Gordie Cormier has started the licensing procedure for this new event so we will be ready to go. We hope to enjoy the same or better success with this second Chase the Ace and hope club members and the public will support it and our club.

Volunteers Needed

As is the case every season, the club is asking for everyone's help by volunteering some time. The club is always looking for bartenders to work various league nights and club events. We would like to get enough bartenders so no one would have to work more than one night a week and we will try to work around your curling and personal schedule. We are also looking for help in housing, ice maintenance, running spiels, planning events, etc. so any time you can give will be very much appreciated. See any member of the executive for more information or to sign up to volunteer. This year there is also a spot on the application for you to say you will volunteer time. Without the help of volunteers the club could not exist.

Cell Phone Use

The Schooner Curling Club would like to ask all members to show consideration to fellow members with regard to the use of cell phones during game play. While it is recognized that some members require they have their cell phones with them at all times to receive calls related to work or family emergencies, it is asked that, when playing a game, you turn the ringer of your phone off and set it to vibrate only. Also, if you need to take a call, please leave the ice area and take the call in the clubhouse area only. Keep the call short and return to play as soon as possible so as not to hold up the game. It is hoped that all members can follow this policy of common courtesy and you are thanked for your cooperation.

Rules to Remember

Members are reminded that as a "Place of public assembly" as defined by the CBRM we are subject to their by-laws, most specifically the smoking by-law. Smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the club which includes the furnace room. If caught, a first offence can carry a fine of \$100 for the individual and \$500 for the club. Maximum penalties can reach \$1000 and \$5000 respectively. We are also a "Licensed" facility and are subject to the Provinces liquor licensing rules. We have previously received a warning from the liquor inspector for violations and need to be more careful in following the rules. Two rules of note are that there is no alcohol permitted outside the doors of the club and no one is allowed to bring their own liquor into the club. If we are caught violating the rules we may be subject to suspension of our license or possibly even have it revoked. Without the cash flow that the bar produces for the club we could never survive financially. Your cooperation is appreciated

Club Repairs and Improvements

With the club being in a better than usual financial position thanks to Chase the Ace and other summer activities, the executive decided it was time to spruce the club house up and make some repairs and improvements. The club has recently received a fresh coat of paint, the walls being painted white with accents and trim being painted blue. Thanks to Gordie Cormier, Cal Thistle and anyone else who helped in this project. Keeping costs down with volunteer labor is the only way we can afford to undertake projects like this. There have been new plastic top tables bought to replace the aging wooden ones we have now and there are plans in place to start replacing some of the club's chairs. There are also plans to do some repairs in the lady's washroom, spruce up the outside entranceway and to install some new lighting. Anyone who has some skills and some free time is encouraged to pitch in and help out to get these repairs and upgrades done. As mentioned, without the help of volunteers we wouldn't be able to accomplish these improvements.

Curling Etiquette

Curling is a very social game. Curlers all try to get along and treat each other with respect and sportsmanship. There are certain rules of etiquette and common courtesies that we should all follow that will make the game move along quickly and smoothly and ensure good feelings between curlers, win or lose. These are just a few general rules that new curlers may not know and experienced curlers may have forgotten.

- Be on time. Always try to be a few minutes early for a game and be ready to play at the scheduled time. If you cannot make a game, notify your skip in plenty of time for them to get a replacement.
- Start the game with a handshake and a wish of good luck. The Mates will toss a coin for choice of hammer.
- Be ready to play. Always be ready to play when it is your turn to throw your stone or sweep a teammates stone. Avoid leaving the playing area unless absolutely necessary. **Don't hold up the game.**
- Keep the ice clean. Make sure you wear clothing and footwear that will not leave debris on the ice. Also, if you notice debris, always remove it for you and your fellow curlers.
- Never disturb a player when they are in the hack. Be quiet and avoid excessive movement when a fellow curler is delivering a rock. Never cross the ice just before a delivery and always try to be in position along the side as quickly as possible. **Never intentionally try to distract a curler.**
- Don't crowd into the house. Only the skip and the mate are permitted to be in the area of the house to discuss strategy or count up points at the completion of an end. **Leads and seconds should always stay between the hog lines** in the middle section of the sheet during play unless it is your turn to throw or sweep a stone.
- Don't be in the way. Stay as far to the sides of the ice as you can when walking back after sweeping a stone so you don't block the view of a player that is trying to see their skip and position of the skips broom to deliver their stone. Keep yourself and your equipment as far to the side of the ice as possible leaving the playing surface clear for the opposing team and never get in the way of opposing sweepers.
- If a game is taking place on an adjoining sheet, afford them the same courtesy you show any fellow curler. Don't allow stones from your sheet to enter their area of play.
- Always play by the rules. You are responsible to report when you have burned a rock, moved a stone in play or have broken any other rule of the game.
- Skips and mates who are in the area of the house while the opposing team is delivering a stone should avoid excessive movement and noise so as not to distract the opposing team.
- Mates are the only ones who decide scoring and perform measurements. All other players should stay away from the house until opposing mates have decided the scoring for an end and have completed any required measurements. **NEVER** move a rock until scoring has been decided or until you are told to do so by your mate.
- Skips are the leaders of their team and are responsible for making sure they and their players follow both the rules of play and the rules of good etiquette. Correction by the skip is warranted if a player breaks either.
- Always end a game with a handshake and congratulations. Winners always offer to buy the first round of drinks.

For more information on curling etiquette and courtesies, see these websites:

<http://www.curlnavy.com/members/etiquette.asp>

<http://www.curldc.org/about/courtesy.php>