
GERALDTON CURLING CLUB NEWS

JANUARY 28, 2014



A belated Happy New Year to everyone! Hope you are all managing to keep warm during this long cold winter!

LEAGUE UPDATES:

Ladies League – The second event sponsored by RBC Royal Bank is now underway and plans are being made for the 70th Annual Ladies Bonspiel coming up on Feb. 28 – Mar. 2nd. The theme is Country and Western this year. Teams are asked to dress up in Denim & Plaid for our country music evening on Friday. The Men's league will be looking after another fabulous dinner for us, followed by a dance on Saturday. Get those thinking caps on for ideas for our usual Saturday night Costume Parade before dinner. For more information contact Darlene at 0805.

Mens League – Second events for both nights sponsored by MacIver's Auto Service and Daneffs Food Market are also in full swing. Congratulations to League Chair Jamie and his wife Erin who just added another boy to their family last Friday!! Kurt Pristanski is again organizing this year's Men's Bonspiel with snacks being provided Friday night, a delicious Prime Rib supper on Saturday, skills contest and much more!

Mixed League – The second event sponsored by Stedman's finishes next week on Feb. 7th. There still will be mixed curling after that on Feb. 14, 21, Mar. 14, 28 (our bonspiels take up the other Fridays). Beth and Steve are planning a fun event with some different formats so please plan on continuing to come out on Friday evenings!

The Second Annual Mixed Business Bonspiel will be held on Mar. 21-22 with Kurt organizing this as well. 4 end games, cash prizes, beef on a bun Saturday night, teams may challenge other teams for their first game. Contact Kurt at 0018 or 4107.

Help will be needed for all of these spiels so if you can offer some assistance contact Darlene or Kurt please.

For more information on the bonspiels, check out the posters at the club or on our website www.geraldtoncurlingclub.ca or check out the Club's Facebook page Geraldton Curling Club. SIGN UP AT THE CLUB!!

Afternoon League – Between 8 and 12 regulars have been coming out on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. for a social afternoon of curling and conversation (as well as a few treats we hear). So instead of lounging around on the coach if you have nothing to do, why not come out and join the gang!

Wednesday Juniors – 30 Kids took part in the first session which ended a couple of weeks ago. Second session is now underway, and will run until April 2nd with a few new recruits joining. Our volunteers have been doing a great job with the kids who are having fun both on and off the ice!

AREA BONSPIELS

A number of area clubs are hosting bonspiels over the next few months. Many are not sending out posters, but there is a Master List of dates and locations posted on the bulletin board downstairs in the hallway. Information is also available on Facebook and club websites. Check it out – there may be one or two you might be interested in.

NORTHERN ONTARIO CURLING ASSOCIATION:

Competition season is well underway. The Men's Provincial will take place starting Feb. 5th in Timmins, with 8 teams vying to be the Northern Ontario representative at this year's Brier, including Bryan Burgess formerly of Longlac, who will be one of the favorites to win the event.

Brad Jacobs and his Soo team are off to Socchi next week as Canada's Men's representative in the OLYMPICS! Jacobs along with Jennifer Jones are hoping to bring back gold medals for Canada. There will be plenty of coverage on TV and online from Feb. 7 – 23 so be sure to check it out. First game is scheduled for Mon. Feb. 10th 9 a.m. Socchi time (midnight our time as we are 9 hours behind).

DOMINION CLUB CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP:

Dave Barker and his team of Brian Aaltonen, Ron Melhuish and Ray Blanchard will be competing against a club team from Marathon on Saturday, Feb. 22nd, with the winner advancing to the Dominion Provincial Club Championship being held in Copper Cliff Mar. 27 – 30. Draw times are scheduled for 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. with a third game if necessary at 7 p.m. Come on out and cheer on the Barker team!

No other Ladies teams from other clubs in Region 3 entered the Dominion event this year, so the local team of Karen Saarimaki, Heather Dyke, Tara Evoy and Sylvie Fortier will be playing in the Provincial event at Copper Cliff as the Region 3 Ladies representative.

CALENDARS

We still have a few Northern Ontario Curling Calendars available for sale at the bar - only \$10 each with \$5 from each calendar going towards our Junior Club. The calendar contains pictures of the Brad Jacobs team, also last season's teams that won NOCA provincial championships as well as pictures from the Amethyst curling camp.

SPONSORS

We still are looking for 3 more sponsors in order to obtain 4 more ice logos for next season – this is a great way of advertising - if you know of any business/company that might be interested please let Karen Saarimaki know.

REMINDERS

IF YOU ARE THE LAST ONE RETURNING FROM EITHER THE MEN'S or LADIES' WASHROOM PLEASE REMEMBER TO CLOSE THE DOOR BEHIND YOU! Those washrooms are open to the public, when the access door between the arena and curling club is open, so if the washroom doors are open, anyone can walk into the locker rooms and walk off with stuff that is left laying around, or stored in unlocked lockers.

NON-MEMBER SPARES must pay \$5/game to the Bartender (if they have not purchased a Club spare membership which is \$50 for the season). Skips are asked to please make sure your spares have paid their fees.

THANK YOU!!



SEE YOU ON THE ICE!

House Call: Six Ways to Be a Better Sweeper

I have been asked many times if sweeping actually makes a difference or if it's just a giant conspiracy to keep the players who aren't throwing or skipping busy. The truth is this – sweeping can make a huge difference if it is done with proper technique. Unfortunately sweeping is often dismissed as something not worth practicing and some players do not develop the skills needed to be truly effective.

I cannot emphasize enough how much improving sweeping skills can add to your team's overall shot-making ability. That's right; you need to make shots as a team and the sweeping is just as important as the throwing and the skipping. By using the following six tips you can take your team to a whole new level of awesome!



B.C.'s Kevin Folk takes a look. "Looking up to see how fast the house is coming up is a great way to judge if you need to keep givin' it all you've got or if you can let up a little." (Photo CCA/Michael Burns)

1. Start Close and Stay Close – Do NOT wait at the hogline to start sweeping. It is perfectly legal to stand nice and close to the thrower. I usually suggest starting at the T-line closest to the thrower. This way you can make sure you and the thrower both know what the shot is and what weight is expected. You'll also have a clear view of whether or not the thrower should happen to push the stone or pull it back.

You may be wondering how you'll possibly keep up to the stone if you start that close. Here is the trick: when you see the thrower begin their backward motion, you start to walk and you continue to stay with the thrower as he or she slides.

Remember to stay close to the stone all the way, even if it's too heavy or obviously not going to make the requested shot. Your skip may have an alternate shot idea and if you've already given up and walked away, there's less chance of sweeping to make plan B, C, or even D.

2. Communicate, Communicate, And Communicate – As soon as the stone is released, call out your best guess on where it's going to end up immediately, loud and proud, and make sure the skipper can hear you. Sure, you might be wrong... in fact I guarantee you'll be wrong more than once. The key is to keep giving your skip updates on the weight as the stone moves toward the other end. The more you practice guessing the weight and calling it out, the better you'll get. Being a good judge of weight is an invaluable skill. Remember it takes time to develop this instinct so be patient and stick with it.

3. Look Up Often – It's really easy to sweep like crazy because a stone is supposedly light, only to watch it sail out the back of the house. Looking up to see how fast the house is coming up is a great way to judge if you need to keep givin' it all you've got or if you can let up a little. Think of looking up like taking a breath (breathing is something you should also remember to do when you sweep). You may find it easier to agree with your sweeping partner that the sweeper further away from the stone is the one who looks up. Just remember to share the information with your sweeping partner and skip, especially if you discover you need to stop or sweeping.



Jill Officer and Dawn Askin in action. "If you are sweeping wider than the width of the handle you can afford to tighten your strokes. Keep your strokes tight and quick." (Photo CCA/Andrew Klaver)

4. Put Some Pressure On – Sweeping works by breaking down the pebble (bumps on the ice) to make a slicker surface for the rock to travel on. In order to effectively break down the pebble, friction is required. If you're not putting enough pressure on your broom you may not be creating enough friction to be effective. Think about trying to force all of your body weight down on to the brush. It helps to get your head over top of the brush head.

You can test your pressure by borrowing a hair broom. Try sweeping as you normally would with it. Do all the hairs on the brush spread out nice and evenly and wide when you push down and stay that way as you sweep down the ice? If not, add more pressure until you get the hairs to spread out. If you go back to a synthetic head or if you keep using hair (either is perfectly fine by the way; you should use whatever you find most comfortable) remember the amount of pressure you needed to spread the hairs and try to push that hard all the time.

5. Keep Sweeping Strokes and Tight and Quick – Remember you only need to sweep the running surface of the stone to be effective. You can use the surface area of the rock handle as a guide. If you are sweeping wider than the width of the handle you can afford to tighten your strokes. Keep your strokes tight and quick and you'll soon see an improvement in your overall effectiveness.

Sweeping is not supposed to be a walk in the park. After sweeping as hard as you can to the far end you should absolutely be out of breath... a lot. Here's your chance to get a great workout every game. And if you think you can sweep harder, do it! You don't want to have to question if you could have dragged a rock to the button instead of the eight-foot.

6. Sweep in Front of the Rock – This seems as if it should be obvious, but you'd be amazed if you knew how many curlers are awesome sweepers but completely ineffective! Take a look around at the other sweepers next time you play, and within moments, I bet you'll see someone not sweeping in front of the rock.

Often it is hard to tell if you are not sweeping in front of the rock. Ask your skip to let you know (gently and quietly of course) if you happen to stray from the path of the stone.

Sweeping is fun and challenging and a great way to stay in shape. If you can incorporate any of these tips into your game I think you'll be surprised by how quickly you start to see results. These six strategies combined are a wonderful secret weapon for any team to possess.



Marc Kennedy and Ben Hebert show how it's done. "Think about trying to force all of your body weight down on to the brush. It helps to get your head over top of the brush head." (Photo CCA/Michael Burns)