



ENNISMORE CURLING CLUB NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2017

SEASON OPENING

Our autumn curling season, surprisingly, is already at its mid-point. Things are going reasonably well at the Club but the season start had its problems. As John started cooling the concrete floor, the high temperatures outside (welcome as they were for golfers, cyclists and other fair-weather folk) kept triggering the automatic sensors, shutting down the ice plant. We lost about four days of the ice-in schedule, but fortunately cooler weather arrived and some long hours by John and his crews got us back on schedule – and the ice was available for practice on 15 October, as planned. But some other clubs were not so lucky. Peterborough Curling had such high humidity that condensation rained from the wooden ceiling creating big lumps of frozen water all over the ice, and delayed the PCC opening. Peterborough Golf had not only an ice plant malfunction, but just as they got a bed of ice laid, they had a power outage during a storm and had to start again. Lakefield faced a different problem: the renovation that was underway from summer was behind schedule and although they were able to get ice in, they had no facility to use until a week or so into the scheduled season. The moral of this story: getting ice in and opening a curling rink on schedule are precarious undertakings. Thanks for the extra work John and crews.

ICE CONDITIONS – NOTHING IS PERFECT

While I am on the topic of ice, I can't help but draw your attention to the difficulties the professionals have faced with ice conditions in early season. The Everest Challenge in Fredericton, NB faced high temperatures and humidity as was the case for the Grand Slam in Regina, Sask in early September. Teams had trouble reading the ice; there were runs, frost and slow spots, and lots of shots were missed. The games were a bit like our own (just a bit; not a lot). I remember one of the announcers saying that it was the kind of ice found in club rinks, and "we're not used to that," she said. Even this past weekend in Sault Sainte Marie, the pro teams had trouble with some spotty ice. I'm sure that those of us who have already played in local clubs this season would agree that, other than Lindsay CC, the ice John has made is as fast as any in the area and has more curl than what we've had elsewhere. Admittedly, we all know about the persistent lack of curl on one side of a couple of sheets, but as the Grand Slam ice has shown, even the very best have ice with imperfections. Reading the imperfections and adapting are (often frustrating) parts of the game.

TRY CURLING OPEN HOUSE

In addition to pre-season advertising, the Club took part in a "Try Curling" program that was an initiative of the Ontario Curling Association (now "CurlOn"; ontcurl.com). Board members installed the CurlOn "Try Curling" signs around the community. Then the Club held an Open House on 22 October, which was aimed at gaining new members.

We had 13 people visit the Open House. Four had already registered for the Instructional program; one couple had seen the signs and then discussed the Open House with Kathy Reid through our Facebook page, and the rest were friends of current members. Six others joined the Instructional program that day. So, of the 13 in attendance, only 2 are not signed up - for a good reason - they are here as students from Mexico and will be returning home soon.

Obviously the Open House was a worthwhile endeavour! The Board and overall membership owe a vote of thanks to SHARON STAFFORD, who stepped in to do the organizing and advertising, and to KATHY REID who headed up the curling aspects. We also need to thank PAT MCCLEAN, who looked after refreshments, and the team of NANCY HERR, SUSAN PLANT, MIKE RICHARDSON, MARSHALL FERGUSON and DIANNE HARRIS who staffed the event.

NEW MEMBERS

I'm happy to welcome the group of new members to our Club, NINETEEN of whom are enrolled in the Sunday afternoon "INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM" run by KATHY REID and her volunteer instructors. As of this writing, our membership is slightly over 200, a size that is generally regarded as adequate for ECC to operate, down a bit from last year but up over two years ago. All clubs lose a percentage of their membership each year (moving, aging, health problems, other activities and so forth) which means maintaining a viable club is a constant battle. So, our new members are indeed valuable additions – MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME; HELP THEM ENJOY THE FUN OF CURLING AT ECC.

LEAGUES

From reports I have heard, all the leagues are running well. While each league has a workable number of teams, there is room for more teams and for spares in all leagues except Friday's "CURL N'DINE. The inspired leadership of NANCY HERR and MARILYN SMITH has resulted in a full draw and a legion of spares to call on. It can't just be the food.

I understand that the new DOUBLES LEAGUE on Tuesday evening is proving to be a lot of fun – maybe we will have more curlers join it for the next session; the new COMPETITIVE LEAGUE on Friday morning is living up to its name: the teams are indeed competitive. They are very close to each other in the standings and no match can be seen as a shoo-in for any team.

BONSPIELS

As well as active league schedules, the instructional program and Interclub matches, we've already hosted two bonspiels. First up, RUSTY SHOTS, sponsored by RUSSELLE TOYOTA, continued its tradition of providing an early season opportunity to eliminate the "rust" that might have arrived in your curling skills over the summer. Overall winners were the foursome skipped by MIKE BOSILJEVAC, with his wife, LINDA and DEREK STEPHENSON and CATHIE STALKIE. Second overall was the winner of the other draw, LARRY WOOD's team of MARILYN

WOOD, COLE MUDRUFF and KATHY REID. It was a day of a lot of fun, good food and good beer, this last under the auspices of PUBLICAN HOUSE BREWING who provided flights of their products for all the participants. Whether or not all the rust was eliminated by day's end for the curlers is unknown, although there were many comments indicating that rust played a significant role in missed shots. Some players said that their rusty skips made bad calls.

The other early bonspiel was the annual women's WINTER WARM-UP, once again sponsored by WINNIE NORMAN RE/MAX EASTERN REALTY, one of the longest serving sponsors in the region. The spiel had two full draws with teams from all the local clubs, and a FASHION SHOW by STYLE BOUTIQUE. The overall winner was MARY ELLEN BANNON's team of DONNA FARTHING, WENDY STAMPLECOSKIE and FREDA LATOUR from Peterborough Curling Club. Following Bannon in the standings were the KATHY REID (ECC) and JOANNE GRAHAM (Lakefield) foursomes, second and third respectively in the later draw and the teams of BRENDA LOVE (PCC), MARILYN WOOD (ECC) and LINDA MURRAY (ECC) first, second and third respectively in the early draw. As you can see, ECC teams certainly did well. A notable highlight: Praise is due to ANNETTE and STEVE THOMSON who created the memorable lunch and snacks for the day.

ECC men also have been active in the spiel world, notably in the INTERCLUB BONSPIEL at Peterborough Golf where the overall winner was skipped by COLIN JERRY with ROGER BEAUSOLIEL, MARSHALL FERGUSON and STEVE GUERIN. The team of ROBERT CONNORS, BILL INGRAM and DICK PLANT skipped by the always modulated REG SINCLAIR finished in third place in their draw.

UPCOMING SPIELS: Bob Reeve Memorial Stick Spiel, 25 Nov – almost full but still room for a couple of teams; Chicken Spiel, 9 Dec – room for one team at this point; After Christmas break: 13 Jan, Robel; 20 Jan Glen Fiddich – special spiel for new curlers; 3 Feb MS Spiel – join the fight to conquer MS.

LADIES LEAGUE SUPPORTING LOCAL CHARITY AT CHRISTMAS

Our Club has a history of significant charitable events, for example, the "Curl for a Cause" bonspiel has raised in the neighborhood of \$30,000 for local charities over the years. This year, the LADIES LEAGUE has earmarked the SWEET DREAMS charity and will be setting out a bin to collect CHILDREN'S PAJAMAS which CAROLYN MILLS will donate to the YWCA CROSSROADS and the CHILDREN'S FOUNDATION, an arm of the Peterborough and Haliburton Children's Aid. Many families at these shelters arrive with only the clothes on their backs. Sweet Dreams provides pj's to shelters so that children have sleepwear from their first night. The warmth and comfort help calm the children and give them a better night's sleep. ECC members are encouraged to consider supporting Sweet Dreams and Carolyn's efforts by placing a donation of pajamas in the marked bin.

PROSHOP MERCHANDISE

Speaking of Christmas takes me to the subject of our ProShop. KAWARTHA EMBROIDERY clothing featuring the ECC logo will make a great gift. Curling equipment – grippers, brooms, gloves – will not only tell your favourites that you love them but will improve their game. (Caveat: The Pro Shop can't offer a guarantee in this last case because straying rocks and the

skipper's broom placement are not under ProShop control.) But watch for any CHRISTMAS SPECIALS.

WI-FI: Observant media users will have noticed the little sign next to the bar with the Club's new Wi-Fi address. SWEEP123 should get you an internet connection at the Club

VOLUNTEERISM AND VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

As a result of inquiries I have dealt with, I discovered that information about volunteering and the volunteer process for the Club was in limited supply. To remedy that, the board has taken steps to make that information more visible beyond the brief statement in our Registration forms. This newsletter is one source. As well, you will now find a description of the volunteer process and responsibilities on our website and in any future "Information for New Members" pamphlets.

The ECC is essentially a member volunteer club. Our leagues and bonspiels are organized and staffed by volunteers, a lot of facility maintenance and operating work (e.g. ice-in, ice-out) is volunteer work, and your conveners and board members are all volunteers. While this is necessary for financial reasons, volunteer involvement is the basis of our curling community and the social interactions that help make curling a rewarding activity.

CLUB REQUIREMENT: To allow the Club to operate financially and efficiently, all members are required to help out with a minimum of four hours of service each year during bonspiels. These hours are over and above any other volunteer service members provide.

Each year there are members who go far beyond others in their contributions to our Club. To recognize those special people, we have an annual VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD. In the past, the award has been announced at Registration night, but that has generally been an ineffective venue because the audience at Registration is constantly changing as people drop in to sign up, pay fees and often do not stay long. This year was no exception to that ebb and flow of the gathering. With that in mind, the board has looked for a better time to make the announcement. The Annual General Meeting has been suggested, and may be used for this next time. The discussion is in progress. But, because we have not announced it officially to this date, we are using this newsletter.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The names are already inscribed on plaques on the VOLUNTEER board in the downstairs lobby, but you may have missed that. So, I am pleased to announce that there were two awards this past year: TOM ANTONOPULOS and DIANNE HARRIS. CONGRATULATIONS and THANKS FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE.

HOW THE VOLUNTEER PROCESS OPERATES

BASIC HOURS IN BONSPIELS: Shortly after the start of each season, a schedule is set up by the VOLUNTEER CONVENER and is posted on the "Volunteer Schedule" bulletin board showing the member's assignment in the respective event. If you are unable to do your scheduled assignment, you must switch with someone else and notify the KITCHEN or BAR CAPTAIN.

BAR DUTIES FOR LEAGUE PLAY: The CONVENER(s) for each league will normally arrange a schedule for teams to look after the bar at some point during the season. These assignments

are incidental to your required four hours. While anyone can help around the bar, to serve alcohol a person must have a SMART SERVE certification, which can be gained through arrangements made by the ECC. Serving alcohol is a highly regulated area. Inspectors can arrive at any time, request your certification and take notice of any serving infractions – they could cost the ECC its license under the Alcohol and Gaming authority.

OTHER VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES: Apart from those assignments, your LEAGUE CONVENERS or BOARD MEMBERS can provide you with information on taking part in other ways. You might be surprised to discover how rewarding it can be personally to use your skills and knowledge in helping the Club.

GRIPPER and BROOM POLICY

As was reported at the Annual General Meeting, the board has established a policy to prolong the life of the Club's new brooms and grippers by controlling the amount of use they receive. There are two principles in place here: one is that the brooms and grippers were purchased on a one-time grant from the RETIRED TEACHERS OF ONTARIO organization to be used in educational programs -- our school and instructional leagues. The other is that, like grippers, a broom is considered part of a curler's personal equipment. As in other sports, regular players are expected to have their own gear. **BROOMS AND GRIPPERS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE FROM OUR PRO SHOP.**

BROOMS: With those two principles in mind, the board set a policy that a small number of the "educational" brooms will be in the on-ice racks for occasional use by those who do not have brooms of their own, for example, people who are trying out curling or participants in a rental bonspiel who do not usually curl, hence would have not have equipment. Otherwise, the stock of brooms will be reserved for the school and instructional programs.

GRIPPERS: Recognizing not only a safety issue but the need to eliminate obstacles that make entry to curling difficult for new curlers, the board devised a policy of providing grippers for people trying out curling at our Club, such as those who are in an instructional program or who come to Open Houses and "Try Curling" events. These novices, in particular, could not be safely allowed on ice without grippers. (Many new running shoes have soles that turn hard and slippery on the ice.) In light of those concerns, the stock of "educational" grippers for the school programs has recently been supplemented by the purchase of a secondary stock paid for by funds generously donated by the MEN'S MONDAY NIGHT LEAGUE, the SENIORS LEAGUES and the WENESDAY NIGHT MIXED LEAGUE. This new stock is meant to be used for instances such as those just mentioned.

A REMINDER ABOUT GRIPPER AND BROOM MAINTENANCE

Yes, it is true that brooms and grippers require maintenance. Their residue is often the cause of rocks picking and going adrift. Broom heads that are not cleaned regularly leave bits of sludge on the ice. **CLEAN YOUR BROOM OFTEN.** Grippers do not last forever. They wear out and shed bits of rubber onto the ice. **CHECK YOUR GRIPPERS OFTEN FOR WEAR AND FOR DIRT, BOTH INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE GRIPPER.** Depending on amount of use, your gripper might need to be replaced at least each season.

RINK RAT CLINIC

On Saturday October 28, ECC hosted a RINK RAT CLINIC run by the Ontario Council for Curling. Participants came from various local curling clubs and spent the day on issues and techniques that prepare Facility Operator Assistants (aka "Rink Rats") to support ice technicians (such as John Norton). MARSHALL FERGUSON took the course on our behalf. The clinic was a full day of sessions, for which LAURA TOMS and JULIA FERGUSON provided lunch and refreshments for the group. I can add a wee sidebar: when I said some words of welcome, I mentioned our reputation as a friendly club. On my way out the door, I overheard the instructor saying to the group that the warm welcome he received when he arrived really confirmed that, yes, this is a friendly club.

ELEVATOR OPERATION REMINDER

Signs are now up reminding people not to block the door of the elevator when loading or unloading it. Please follow the instructions. We do not want to replace the door motor again.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Newsletter and Website

Creating a newsletter or putting together a web site takes a lot of time, much of which is simply identifying the items and issues and then finding the information to include. I've signed my name to this newsletter in the hope that you will contact me with items you feel should be covered in the newsletter. When a bonspiel takes place, for example, send me information and photos about it and send that to our Web manager also. [rplant@nexicom.net]