

# IT'S OUR HOUSE

FIFTH EDITION • NOVEMBER 2019



Curling Alberta President, Curtis Fairhurst, left, and Treasurer, Steven Young, right, accept the MA Cup from outgoing Curling Canada Board Chair, Maureen Miller.

Photo credit: Curling Canada/Neil Valois

## CURLING ALBERTA IS AWARDED THE MEMBER ASSOCIATION (MA) CUP!

Curling Alberta is honoured to be the recipient of the 2018-'19 MA Cup, presented by TSN. On behalf of Curling Canada, outgoing Curling Canada Board Chair, Maureen Miller, presented the award to Curling Alberta President, Curtis Fairhurst, and Treasurer, Steven Young, at the 2019 Curling Canada Celebration Dinner in September.

The Cup is presented to the Member Association that posted the best average results at Canadian championships in 2018-'19. This is Alberta's fifth Cup, having previously claimed it in 2015-'16, 2013-'14, 2011-'12 and 2010-'11.

Thanks to all of the teams and coaches that made this possible, including the 2019 National Champions.

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## THE EDMONTON GRANITE CURLING CLUB TURNS 100

The 2019-2020 season marks the 100th for the Granite Curling Club. The Club was incorporated on April 24, 1920 and the rink opened for curling on Monday Dec 20, 1920. As one of the oldest curling clubs in the City of Edmonton and the Province of Alberta, the Granite has been instrumental in the evolution of the game. The Granite was the first club with colored rings, now the game's trademark, and the first with artificial ice in Edmonton.

Over the past century the Club was proud to have hosted many auspicious events both curling and otherwise. Curling events include many City, Provincial, Western Canadian and National Championships such as the Provincial Men's, the Provincial Senior Men's, the Canadian Juniors, the Western Canadian Blind Curling, the Western Canadian Dental and Canadian Curling with Pride to name only a few.

The Club has also been host to some interesting non curling events. Renowned figure skater Michael Slipchuk performed in one of many Fringe Plays that used the Granite as their venue. The Granite also hosted 'blues festivals', many weddings, and became a holding cell for the Edmonton Police Service throughout the Stanley Cup celebrations on Whyte Ave during the Oiler dynasty era.

The Granite has also been home to Alberta, Canadian and World champion curlers such as Randy Ferby, David Nedohin, Scott Pfeifer, Matt Baldwin,

Hec Gervais, Tom Reed and Tiffany Odegard to name just a few.

**Mark your calendars!** Plans are underway for a Centennial Anniversary celebration to take place Saturday May 02, 2020 at the Granite Club. Everyone is welcome. Tickets will be on sale soon. It promises to be an epic event not to be missed with a delicious roast beef buffet dinner and dancing to the sounds of local indie rock band Sweet Vintage Rides. Watch the [Granite Website](#) for more information. Hope to see you there!



### ATTENTION UMPIRES!

We are inviting you to the **first annual meeting and orientation of umpires for Curling Alberta!**

We are hosting two sessions this season: **Saturday, November 2 1:00 -4:00 pm** at the Granite Curling Club in Edmonton and **Saturday, November 16 1:00-4:00 pm** at the Curling Alberta South Office at the Calgary Curling Club.

We will review all new Curling Alberta Competitor Guide and Appendices, Cresting Policy, procedures, remuneration for umpires as well as new Policies as administered by Curling Alberta. We will highlight changes and encourage you to review the Guide and Appendices as posted on the Curling Alberta website.

There will be open discussion of rules and policies and hopefully answer any

questions that you may have.

Although this is mainly geared to Chief and Game Umpires, we welcome all curling umpires to participate.

If you are unable to attend in person, we offer that you can phone/dial in to hear the discussions.

[Click here](#) or visit the Curling Alberta website for more information or to RSVP.

# MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The wait is over. At curling centres across the province, the ice is in and most curlers have brought the shoes and brooms out of summer storage. Curling Alberta has now been in existence for more than a year, and we're thrilled to welcome you to 2020 championship season!

As a "new" organization, we've gained tremendous experience and we've had the summer months to utilize our learning, working hard to improve our existing processes and to develop new programs and services. Without a doubt, this will continue to be a year of transition and growth, but we're continually gaining momentum and honing in on areas of focus.

As we head into the season there are a few items that we'd like to highlight for your attention:

- **There have been some relatively substantial changes to the policies for competitions this season aimed to increase participation, align with Curling Canada's Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, and promote fairness.** Notably, in order to build our base of participation for generations to come, two new provincial championship categories, U21 Mixed Doubles and U15, will be piloted this season. In the U15 category, a singles competition will be a part of the competition, highlighting development and fun. For a summary of the changes and to view the complete policy set, please [click here](#).
- **We have an updated policy manual, which focuses on providing safe and welcoming environments for our players, coaches, volunteers, staff, and other stakeholders.** Within the Concussion and Return to Play Guidelines, you'll also see that Curling Alberta has published a recommendation that clubs adopt and implement its guidelines, as well as recommend the use of double grippers (when not delivering a stone) and helmets (or other approved head protection) by novice curlers, or curlers who are at high risk of falling. Curlers who register for provincial qualifiers or championships should be aware that Curling Alberta's Code of Conduct and Ethics has been revised, and that a new Event Discipline Procedure has been approved. Please [click here](#) to view the new policy manual.
- **We're taking steps to improve engagement and the flow of communication, including the launch of new website.** [Curlingalberta.ca](#) has a fresh new look and we hope that it will be much easier for users to navigate. There's a new "Classifieds" section where players and coaches can connect, or where clubs can sell and donate used equipment. In addition, there's a new club and bonspiel search function, which will highlight member clubs' programs and events. This will continue to be a work in progress as we build content and functionality throughout the season. If you're ever looking for something you can't find, or if you have a question, concern or any feedback for Curling Alberta, never hesitate to reach out to us. We have a new phone number, 780-454-CURL (2875), and emails can still be sent to [info@curlingalberta.ca](mailto:info@curlingalberta.ca).
- **At the governance level, Curling Alberta's Board of Directors will continue to focus on supporting the financial viability of not only our own organization, but of our affiliated clubs.** As stewards of curling, there are many potential risks that may or are currently posing a serious threat to the ongoing health of our sport over the long-term. Recently, for example, based on the provincial budget documents that were released last month, government funding to sport was cut approximately 1.5 million for the 2019-20 fiscal year. While we await word regarding what that exactly means and where the reductions will be applied, the Board will take measures not only minimize financial risks, but also seek out new opportunities.

Curling Alberta has only just begun to realize the benefits of operating as a single governing body for curling in our province. This transition will continue to take time, courage, and collaboration. True to our Alberta heritage, we are grateful for the strength and support of our community. We continue to be proud to serve you.

Cheers to a new season!

**Jill Richard**  
Executive Director



**Jill Richard**  
Executive Director  
of Curling Alberta

## UPCOMING COACHING, ICE TECH AND UMPIRE COURSES

### LEVEL 1 ICE TECH

Fox Creek CC: November 29 -  
December 1 (Deadline Nov. 20, 2019)

### LEVEL 2 ICE TECH

Sherwood Park CC: March 27 - 29  
(Deadline March 18, 2020)

### LEVEL 1 UMPIRE COURSE

Lloydminster Curling Club:  
November 23 (Deadline Nov. 13,  
2019)

Okotoks Curling Club: December 7  
(Deadline November 27, 2019)

### LEVEL 2 UMPIRE COURSE

Lloydminster Curling Club:  
November 24 (Deadline Nov. 13,  
2019)

Lethbridge Curling Club: December  
14 (Deadline December 4, 2019)

### COMPETITION COACH

Innisfail Curling Club: November 23  
& 24 (Deadline Nov. 13, 2019)

Sexsmith Curling Club: December 14  
& 15 (Deadline Dec. 4, 2019)

Okotoks Curling Club: March 7 & 8  
(Deadline Feb. 26, 2020)

Ellerslie CC: March 28 & 29  
(Deadline March 18, 2020)

### CLUB COACH

Fox Creek CC: November 2 & 3  
(Deadline Oct. 23, 2019)

Sexsmith CC: November 9 & 10  
(Deadline Oct. 30, 2019)

Rose City CC (Camrose): November  
9 & 10 (Deadline Oct. 30, 2019)

Stettler CC: November 16 & 17  
(Deadline November 6, 2019)

Lethbridge CC: December 7 & 8  
(Deadline November 27, 2019)

# CURLING ALBERTA LAUNCHES THE HIT, DRAW, TAP PROGRAM

CurlION first launched the “Hit Draw Tap” program in the 2015-2016 season. It was an instant success, with more than 450 kids participating in that first year. Since then, it has spread throughout the country thanks to the leadership of Curling Canada, and Tim Hortons as the program’s presenting sponsor. For the 2019-2020 season, Curling Alberta will officially be on board!

Hit Draw Tap is modeled after the NFL’s Punt Kick Pass or Master’s Golf – Drive, Chip, Putt. In short, it’s an individual skills competition for boys and girls aged six to 13. For a low \$50 fee, clubs can sign up to receive a program kit, which contains instructions, a prize package, and online access to the scoring app.

Each participating club is responsible to make arrangements to deliver the competition at their convenience at the club level. Participants are divided into three age categories (6-8, 9-10, and 11-13) where they each perform three different shots (a hit, a draw, and a tap) five times. The attempts are scored and entered into an app which feeds results into a provincial leaderboard.

From across the province, the top five scorers from each category (and any ties) as at Tuesday, December 31, 2019 at 12:00 pm will be invited to compete in the Hit Draw Tap Provincial Championship, presented by Tim Hortons. This exciting opportunity will take place on arena ice during the 2020 Alberta Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Okotoks on Sunday, January 26, 2020.

Every club affiliated with Curling Alberta that junior program is encouraged to host a Hit Draw Tap competition. Depending on the number of participants, instructors, and sheets of ice, it only takes about an hour and a half to complete the skills competition.

Please [click here](#) for more information and to view the program guide. To sign up your club, please email [Lee Smith](mailto:lee.smith@curlingalberta.ca) (lee.smith@curlingalberta.ca).



HIT DRAW TAP™

PRESENTED BY

Tim Hortons

## KIDS ROCKING Every Shot!

HIT

DRAW

TAP

Curling Alberta and Curling Canada know that amazing things happen, on and off the ice, when kids are supported throughout their curling journey.

CURLING ALBERTA



## VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT TIPS FOR CLUBS

All curling clubs use volunteers to some extent. Some clubs are run exclusively by volunteers, and simply could not exist without them. While overall volunteer hours across Canada have not seen much decline in recent years, that work is being done by fewer and fewer volunteers. So what can you do at your club to ensure that you're attracting new volunteers, setting them up for a rewarding experience by putting their time and talents to good use, and recognizing their contributions? Managing volunteers is every bit as challenging as managing paid staff, perhaps even more challenging in some ways. Below are some practical tips you can use when creating a volunteer management program at your club:

### 1. RECRUITMENT

This is the planning part. Establish a record of every volunteer role, including job description, time frame, and the benefits. Then create a list of your members detailing their areas of knowledge, experiences, and abilities. Match members up with potential volunteer roles and try to make a personalized ask, rather than using something like a generic email. Long gone are the days of the volunteer signup sheet. It is also important to remember that volunteers are busy people, and be sure to respect that time is now worth more than money in the eyes of many.

### 2. TRAINING

Develop an orientation process and a shadowing/mentorship system for all new volunteers, and make sure that they feel that their talents are needed. Be accurate in communicating the expectations and time commitment required for the role. Simply put, be honest with what you need them to do, provide support, and remember to have fun!

### 3. RECOGNITION

All volunteers should be thanked in a timely and appropriate manner, ideally with a personal touch. An in-person or public thank you, a phone call, a hand-written note, a complimentary lunch, or something more creative. Volunteer recognition is critical but it shouldn't break the bank.

### 4. RETENTION

This is the culmination of all prior planning. Retention is successful only if all other elements of a fully functional volunteer management program are in place. To retain volunteers: address motivational needs, address a sense of belonging, treat volunteers as equal, promote opportunities for interactions, emphasize the benefits, and make sure they have fun.



*Submitted by Lee Smith based on a presentation by Jack Bowman at the Business of Curling Symposium in Canmore June 22, 2019.*

## OLDS CURLING CLUB OFFERS CURLING AND BABYSITTING!

The Thursday morning ladies' league, which is paired with low-cost babysitting services, has returned to the Olds Curling Club after a brief hiatus for a number of years. This innovative leagues is once again focused on encouraging women to either try curling for the first time, or supporting them as they return to the sport, after having children. Babysitting is only \$5 per child for each session, creating an affordable option for new moms to stay active and connected.

"I regret that I didn't start curling again until my youngest was four and in pre-kindergarten. It's a great way to meet new people. And also with the childcare that we offer, moms can get a break from their kids for a few hours!" says Holly Pederson, league representative.

The relaxed league offers a great mix of young moms learning to curl as well as older, experienced curlers who are happy to teach and help get younger people curling; to help keep the sport thriving in Olds.

"Personally, I have had a lot of sentimental ties with this program because it was the very league that got me started in curling 25 years ago!" said Vice President of the Olds Curling Club, Jennifer Lutz. "This league was a lifesaver for me. I was a new mom and new to Olds, and the league was really how I started to make connections with the community. Some of the ladies I met back then, are still my friends and curl with the club today."

The primary challenge keeping this league going is the player turn-over as some of the moms join or go back to the workforce as their children grow. However it is hoped that the ladies will continue to participate in curling for life, and pass that passion on to future generations of curlers.

Contact league rep Holly Pederson at 403-507-2935 or [lhpederson08@gmail.com](mailto:lhpederson08@gmail.com) for more information.

*Email your club story to [info@curlingalberta.ca](mailto:info@curlingalberta.ca) for a chance to be featured in an upcoming It's Our House Newsletter.*

## HOW TO ALLEVIATE PICKS AS GAME SPOILERS

Picks are a pain and often spoil a good game; at some point every curler has missed a shot because of a picked rock. The three biggest culprits of picks are dirt, grippers, and body parts (knees, hands) on the ice. The good news is that all curlers can help to eliminate all three of these causes. Almost every ice maker and curling manager can predict the sheets where the picks will happen, because it tends to be the same teams every week, causing their own picks.

**DIRT:** Players often walk from the dressing rooms to the ice surface with their curling shoes on, bringing the dirt from the floors/carpets with them. How can we help 'fix this'? Most curling clubs have boot boys at the entrance to the ice, and it is amazing how many people walk around them as they enter the rink and carry all that dirt out onto the ice surface. So the first remedy is a simple one: use the boot boy. Players can also carry their shoes with them to the ice surface, and stay on the playing surface during the entire game. Also take the time to make sure that your equipment is free of dirt before you enter the ice area. As an extreme example, there was one curler who used his curling broom to clean the snow off of his car, then would walk in and use the same broom for curling.

**GRIPPERS:** Older, worn out grippers tend to peel off small pieces of rubber that can definitely cause picks. What is less noticeable is that grippers are being worn out from the inside. The Teflon or metal sliders dig away at the inside of the gripper causing small pieces to break off. These pieces fall onto the ice when the sliding foot gripper is removed for throwing. It is recommended that if you curl once a week that you replace your gripper minimum of once a year; if you're curling more than once a week, it should be replaced at least twice a year. An added benefit of replacing your gripper regularly is that it will grip the ice better.

**BODY PARTS ON ICE:** This might be the biggest culprit of picks in most recreational leagues. Body parts (hands and knees) touching the ice during the slide have virtually no impact on the ice surface. Body contact in one spot on the ice for a period of three plus seconds after releasing the stone renders that spot "damaged" and it will not be improved until it is scraped and re-pebbled. Imagine the damage a knee causes as it sits on the ice during a 14.5 second draw. Without a doubt, a knee print causes the greatest amount of damage to the ice surface. How can we help 'fix this'? A pretty simple adjustment: get your hands and knees off the ice following release at the conclusion of the delivery.

*Content provided by Gerry Peckham, Director, High Performance for the Canadian Curling Association.*

## UPCOMING COMPETITION DEADLINES

Curling Alberta **Junior** Provincial Qualifiers (all locations) - Registration Deadline: **November 13 @ 12:00pm**

Curling Alberta **Women's** Provincial Qualifiers (all locations) - Registration Deadline: **November 27 @ 12:00pm**

Curling Alberta **Men's** Provincial Qualifiers (all locations) - Registration Deadline: **December 11 @ 12:00pm**

**REGISTER NOW**

Did you know registration information for each competition will be published online in real time on Curling I/O prior to the registration deadline? Follow these steps to stay up-to-date with the registrations:

- Visit <https://ab.curling.io/en/competitions>
- Search for the event you are interested in and click on the event title (do not click 'register'). For example, scroll down to 2019/20 Mixed Doubles Provincial Qualifier

- Canmore Curling Club or search Mixed Doubles;

- Click on the event (red writing);
- Once in the event, click the 'Registrations' tab on the top.

Visit the **Curling Alberta website** or **click here** for a printable version of the provincial schedule to post at your club!

# SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

## CURLING ALBERTA PARTNERS WITH BELAIRDIRECT

Curling Alberta and belairdirect have partnered together to provide discounts on insurance for curlers and their families. Members at Curling Alberta clubs are eligible to receive a group discount on their car, home, condo and tenant's insurance, on top of any other discounts, savings and benefits customers are already eligible for at belairdirect.

In addition to saving money on insurance, when a residential or auto insurance policy is purchased, belairdirect will donate part of the premium collected to Curling Alberta, which in turn supports local curling clubs and events.

Anyone associated with one of Curling Alberta's member clubs or Curling Alberta itself (e.g. athletes, coaches, managers, officials, volunteers, employees and family members) are eligible to participate provided that they reside within the Curling Alberta boundaries.

"belairdirect insurance has a prominent history, and their brand is rightfully trusted. We're pleased to partner with them on a program which will benefit our curlers at a community level," said Curling Alberta's Executive Director, Jill Richard. "Not only will our curlers and their families receive real value in form of significant discounts and great support, but their clubs will also benefit as our organization reinvests belairdirect's donations back into grassroots initiatives."

"At belairdirect, we understand the important role that curling plays and the positive impact it has on the community," said Travis Melnychuk, Business Development Account Manager, belairdirect. "We are excited to be a part of the curling community and to offer members with additional savings on both car and home insurance."

More information on how curlers and their families can benefit from exclusive discounts with belairdirect, please [CLICK HERE](#). To get started with belairdirect, call them at 1-844-357-1970 and mention that you are Curling Alberta member to receive your exclusive premiums.

belairdirect has been providing car and home insurance products to Canadians since 1955. More information about belairdirect can be found at [www.belairdirect.com](http://www.belairdirect.com).



**belairdirect.**  
car and home insurance



## UPCOMING EXCEL SKILLS CAMPS

Curling Alberta Excel Skills Camps are aimed at U15 and U18 curlers with a strong desire to improve their technical and tactical skills. These innovative one-day camps have been designed to help aspiring competitive curlers build the technical and tactical foundation required to support their ongoing development.

The Excel Skills Camps initiative will be coordinated by 2012 Scotties champion, Beth Iskiw. Excel Skills Camps coaching staff are defending Scotties champion Dana Ferguson (Saville), Renee and Les Sonnenberg (Grande Prairie), as well as Penny Duncan and Allison Earl (Okotoks). In an effort to enhance the learning environment, each Excel Skills Camp coach will work with a maximum of eight curlers at a time and will follow a carefully developed and cutting-edge curriculum.

### Grande Prairie Curling Centre

- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 8, 2020
- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 9, 2020

### Saville Community Sports Centre

- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 8, 2020
- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 9, 2020

### Okotoks Curling Club

- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 8, 2020
- Excel Skills Camp (Winter): Feb. 9, 2020

## WHY SLOW PLAY IS A PROBLEM & TIPS ON HOW NOT TO BE THAT TEAM

### Why should we care about slow play?

Slow play can be very frustrating for competitors, umpires, ice technicians, staff, and volunteers. Unfortunately, due to the cost and availability of equipment and limited volunteer capacity, not every event can be timed. But whether you're playing in a bonspiel, a provincially sanctioned event, or in your weekly league, the facility and its staff and volunteers are operating on a schedule that is important to keep. Slow play can set off a chain reaction that can pose serious problems for everyone involved. It can set schedules behind for staff, umpires, and ice technicians, and force changes on the fly. This can all lead to increased event/club expenses, and can

diminish reputations and players' overall enjoyment. Ultimately, it can be a reason why people quit the sport every year. Our time is our most valuable commodity, and many participants simply won't spend it standing around waiting.

### What can be done about it?

Ultimately, the responsibility for speeding up play lies with each curler. Simple courtesy for your opposition and the people who work to provide you with the playing opportunity is the surest remedy for slow play. Practically speaking, be ready to deliver the next stone as your turn approaches by being near the hack or backboard. You should also limit the time spent debating before each shot, and check in regularly with the time to ensure you're on track. Eight end games should be completed in two hours and ten end games in two and a half hours.

Players and coaches should be aware that at the mid-game break, you should be no more than half way through the time allotted.

During officiated play, in order to keep pace, an umpire is instructed to talk to teams at the mid-game break if they are not within the time allotted. As well, in accordance with the rules, an umpire can warn an offending team that the next stone must be delivered within 45 seconds or it will be removed from play.

If teams are honest about their habits and commit to make just a few adjustments, it is possible to avoid slow play and its negative impacts.

*Submitted by Brenda Rogers, Head of Officials, Curling Alberta*

## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS



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