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Curling Alberta Announces 2020-2021 Excel Team Program

Curling Alberta is pleased to announce the details of the 2020-2021 Excel Team Program, which has been designed with our current health-related and financial realities in mind.

“The Excel Coaching Staff has worked hard to develop a streamlined program that responds to reduced funding from the Alberta government, while still meeting the needs of the most promising young curlers in our province,” says Executive Director, Jill Richard. “Furthermore, considering the uncertainty surrounding what will be possible during the COVID-19 pandemic, we are prepared to downsize both the benefits offered and fees charged if it becomes necessary to do so.”

One of the key changes for 2020-2021 is related to the size and composition of the Excel Team Program. The program will now support a total of 10 teams, which is down from the 15 teams that were involved last season. This new total continues to include three male and three female teams in the U20 (i.e., Junior) category, and has been expanded to include two male and two female teams in the U25 category. This expansion is based on the number of high quality U25 teams that have emerged in Alberta in recent years, and on how close these teams are to reaching the elite level of our sport.

With this said, the biggest change for 2020-2021 is the new approach that will be taken to the U18 category. Last year our approach was to identify a small group of U18 teams up front, and to invest in those same teams over the course of the season. However, the reality is that curlers in this age group develop at very different rates,

and as a result some of very promising teams ended up being left out. We have therefore decided to replace our previous approach with a series of one-day, U18 Excel Skills Camps. In our view, these camps represent the most efficient and effective way to reach the many deserving teams that exist in this category.

“In light of our reduced budget, we have done our level best to put together a programming mix that meets the needs of the top young teams in Alberta,” says Excel Program Director, Rob Krepps. “Of course, none of this would be possible without the ongoing contributions of our three Regional Coaches - Atina Ford Johnson, Renee Sonnenberg, and Jeff Hoffart - who quite simply are essential to the Excel Team Program’s success.”

Please note that the application deadline for the 2020-2021 Excel Team Program for U20 and U25 teams is September 2, 2020, while the U18 teams also have until that date to apply for the Excel Skills Camps of the season. For more information, or to access the application links, please [CLICK HERE](#).