IT'S OUR HEIDEN

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2023 AWARD RECIPIENTS!

Photo credit: Ella Mack Photography & Events

YOUTH SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS

Awarded to an individual athlete who exemplifies the ideals of sportsmanship both on and off the ice with ethical behavior, fair play, respect for others, and a love for curling.

JACOB STRIKER

Jacob Striker of the Wetaskiwin Curling Club is a shining example of an athlete who demonstrates the ideals of sportsmanship both on and off the ice with ethical behavior, fair play, respect for others and a love of curling.

As a Special Olympics athlete that has curled from a very young age, Jacob has never let his disability stop him. He began curling with the stick, competing in the Special Olympics at the provincial and national levels, and has since transitioned to throwing from the hack so he could compete at the high school level.

"He is the first player on the ice, during any game, to encourage new players, congratulate an opponent on a great shot, praise a teammate on how well they played, and always dawns a smile while he is playing, even if the game isn't going his way."

- Robyn Gerrard, President & Youth Coordinator, Wetaskiwin Curling Club Jacob has an amazing love for the game of curling, and is a pivotal member in helping grow the Wetaskiwin Curling Club. He is always willing to step in and help coach the younger youth members, and this season has stepped in as a coach to help with the Adult Learn to Curl nights. Jacob even volunteered his time to help with cleanup duties at the 2023 Sentinel Storage Alberta Scotties Tournament of Hearts in Wetaskiwin. At such a young age, he embodies the community of the curling club and encourages everyone around him as to the positive future of the sport in Wetaskiwin.

Congratulations to Youth Sportsmanship Award Recipient, Jacob Striker.



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KAYLEIGH SHANNON

Kayleigh Shannon is a talented athlete, dedicated volunteer, and a leader on and off the ice. She always plays fair, shows respect for her opponents and "Kayleigh has been a huge asset to the Junior Curling Program at the Lethbridge Curling Club and I would not have been able to run the program without her. I firmly believe that many of the junior program's successes are because of Kayleigh's continued commitments to inspire and motivate all participants. Her positive energy, enthusiasm and dedication are hard to come by."

- Mattea Pittman, Junior Program Coordinator, Lethbridge Curling Club

teammates, and earns that same respect in return. Kayleigh's positive energy and demeanor on and off the ice does not go unnoticed.

On top of her own busy competition schedule as skip of Team Shannon, a U18 girl's team, Kayleigh volunteered as an instructor for the Lethbridge Curling Club's junior program and was certified as a club coach. Kayleigh is inclusive with kids of all abilities, so no one was ever left behind and always gave them her full attention.

Her coach Andy Jones adds, "her opponents respect her and like her because she is always calm and reserved but with the heart of a champion. They know she is immensely talented and a tough opponent, but she always respects her fellow competitors, umpires, organizers, coaches, and parents. Her conduct and actions honour our sport."

Kayleigh promotes the level of sportsmanship and kindness that curling is supposed to exemplify, and she is most deserving of this recognition.

Congratulations to Youth Sportsmanship Award Recipient, Kayleigh Shannon.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR MURRAY GIESBRECHT

Awarded to a volunteer who has made an extraordinary contribution to the sport of curling.

Murray Giesbrecht is very special to the Taylor Curling Club, as evident by the sheer number of nominations he received for the Volunteer of the Year Award. His never-ending enthusiasm and support are matched by few, and he continually puts the club and its members first. Everyone there feels the love and dedication he has for this sport and his community.

For over 40 years, Murray has always been that person who stands out. He continues to give 100% to his community, and to his second family at the Taylor Curling Club. Always welcoming to new members, Murray does whatever he can to keep new teams and people coming in



"Murray put aside his own personal agenda for curling and took on three youths that wanted to learn to curl, and with his passion and mentorship, those boys have become a real force to reckon with 4 years later. Even today those boys hang out and pay their respects to someone they look up to, and that's hard to achieve in today's day. Murray is what we all should be striving to be like within our communities."

- John Lind, Taylor Curling Vice President

to have fun and join the club. He's done it all from ice maker to serving as Club President and always gives these roles his best. He greets everyone with a huge grin and usually a hug.

As a club member, Marlene Miller says, "Every club needs a *Murray*!"

Congratulations to Curling Alberta's Volunteer of the Year, Murray Giesbrecht.

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TEAMS OF THE YEAR – TEAM PLETT AND TEAM TAO

Awarded to a team who is a shining example to others.

TEAM PLETT

Myla Plett (Skip), Alyssa Nedohin (Third), Chloe Fediuk (Second), Allie Iskiw (Lead), Blair Lenton (Coach), David Nedohin (Coach)

With a 19-game winning streak to kick off the season and undefeated runs at both the U18 and U21 National Championships, Team Plett has made their mark in Alberta's curling history books. They even achieved record book status as the first team ever to win both the New Holland Canadian Junior Women's Curling Championship and the Canadian Under-18 Girls Curling Championship in the same season. Adding to their accolades, the unstoppable foursome of Myla Plett, Alyssa Nedohin, Chloe Fediuk, and Allie Iskiw, also brought home the silver medal at the Canada Winter Games. "They continue to perform at very high levels and help build stronger teams across the province by pushing us all to be better every time we step on the ice against them."

-Atina Ford Johnston

It has been a dream of a season for this team of all stars, finishing first in the Alberta Junior Curling Tour U18 standings and second in the U20. Outside of the provincial events, they were crowned champion at several events, including the highly coveted Ray Kingsmith Bonspiel. After playing together for two years, they consider themselves family and are the best of friends on and off the ice. As a team, they continue to show up to help with their club's junior curling program and learn to curl events, while as individuals, they maintain excellent marks in school, compete in other sports and volunteer in their communities.



This level of success for a junior team in Alberta is unprecedented, and Team Plett shows no sign of slowing down. Team Plett will wear the maple leaf to represent Canada at the 2024 World Junior B Women's Curling Championship Finland, aiming to qualify for the World Junior A Division.

Congratulations once again, to Team of the Year, Team Plett.



TEAM TAO

Johnson Tao (Skip), Jaedon Neuert (Third), Benjamin Morin (Second), Adam Naugler (Lead), Skip Wilson (Coach)

Johnson Tao, Jaedon Neuert, Benjamin Morin, Adam Naugler, and Coach Skip Wilson had an exceptional season this year. They are dedicated curlers on and off the ice, and take the time to share their love of the sport with others. As a team, they consistently demonstrate great sportsmanship in all aspects of the game by supporting not only each other, but by cheering on other University of Alberta athletes, friends, and even competitors. Despite each hailing from different provinces, they represent the Alberta spirit "Team Tao always shows tremendous team spirit. The University of Alberta program is like a little family, always cheering for their fellow Bears and Pandas, and Team Tao is right at the heart. This team knows the value of teamwork and friendship, and expresses that in everything they do, not only within the program, but to everyone within Alberta's curling community."

-Zoe Cinnamon

with pride and truly encapsulate the values Curling Alberta strives to achieve.

Each of these young men are exceptional curlers. Dominating the Alberta Junior Curling Tour, Team Tao finished in first place with a whopping 284.75 points. They also found success in the men's bracket, finishing 11th in the province, with an A qualifying berth to provincials. They were the youngest team competing at the 2023 Alberta Boston Pizza Cup, presented by Best Western, a great feat to achieve in such a strong curling province. The team also made their Grand Slam of Curling debut at the Tour Challenge in Grande Prairie, narrowly missing the playoffs after losing in a tiebreaker. On top of a full tour schedule, each player also competed in the U21 Mixed Doubles category and as part of USPORTS. At the Canada West Championships, they went undefeated to claim the Western title, qualifying them for the USPORTS National Championships, where they finished fifth overall. To cap off an already stellar season, Team Tao won the New Holland Junior Championships, and will represent Canada at the World Junior B event in Finland.

Team Tao is truly dedicated to the sport. They understand what it takes to be professional athletes as that is what they strive to be, and even with full academic schedules, volunteering and social commitments, they put in the necessary time to achieve their goals. They volunteer with the Saville Community Sport Centre's Youth Curling Program, inspiring young curlers to chase their own curling dreams. They are kind, generous, thankful, humble, dedicated athletes who work tirelessly to make our sport something special.

Congratulations to Team of the Year, Team Tao.

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PARTNER OF THE YEAR POMEROY LODGING

Awarded to a sponsor or partner of curling that has shown tremendous support to the sport.

Pomeroy Lodging is committed to being ambassadors and investing in the communities and the province they are located in. They forge strategic partnerships and provide sponsorships to build strong, sustainable communities. Pomeroy Lodging is not only one of Alberta's largest sponsors of curling, but they invest heavily in support for museums, hospital and community foundations, including Big Heart for Kids, and Big Brothers and Sisters. A primary mission of Pomeroy Lodging is "that we give where we live and through our partnerships, we contribute over \$3 million annually into community support." A significant portion of that community support has been firmly behind curling in Alberta and northeastern British Columbia for the past two decades.

The Kananaskis Nordic Spa, the Office Restaurant, and the Rural Discovery



Destination Marketing Fund are all key affiliates of Pomeroy Lodging, which has been the title or major sponsor for 14 world, national and provincial championships held here in Alberta. This season alone, they stepped up to partner with the U15 and Masters Provincial Championships and have gone above and beyond in support of the Grande Prairie Curling Centre. Welcoming world class curlers and teams to their community and province has been tremendously valuable in sustaining and promoting the sport itself within the region, while simultaneously providing a vast entertainment opportunity for local citizens.

2024 will mark the 15th year of Pomeroy's title sponsorship of the Peace Curling Tour, which was formed to provide curlers and teams of all ages and abilities "The vast contributions that Pomeroy Lodging has collectively invested in our sport is monumental. There is no room for doubt that they are "fiercely invested" in the communities and the provinces in which they operate. Our sport, our communities, our curlers, teams, and fans have all been major beneficiaries."

- Colin Griffith, Executive Director, Grande Prairie Curling Centre

within the Peace County to engage in competitive events. Each event features curling coupled with a major focus on friendship, good times, and good food. A Peace Country Championship is held annually to declare champions in the Competitive, Challenge, Junior, and Special Olympics categories. The Peace Curling Tour has been fundamental to the Peace regions' capacity to offer opportunities for young curlers as well as curlers from all ages and abilities to hone their skills and to be able to represent the Peace Country to the world.

Congratulations to this year's Partner of the Year, Pomeroy Lodging.



"Bernie is a great mentor. He is helpful, open, and honest, and makes time for everyone from athletes to his fellow officials. He is thoughtful, kind, and always gracious to everyone who crosses his path. Bernie is a good man, a good official, and a good friend."

-Sherry Cormie

OFFICIAL OF THE YEAR BERNIE PANICH

Awarded to an outstanding official who has demonstrated a high level of knowledge, strength, leadership, dedication, and integrity.

Bernie Panich is known to be fair and to possess a calm and collected demeanor, especially when presented with a challenge. He is able to sort through difficult situations while always maintaining his professionalism, and his knowledge of the game from the perspective of both an umpire and a coach is profound. Over many years, Bernie has honed his skill set through the levels of officiating, providing a thorough understanding of the processes. He may know the umpire rules inside and out, but

will not hesitate to reach out to others if he is unsure or needs clarification.

Always generous with his time, Bernie has volunteered countless hours to the sport of curling. Bernie serves as a mentor to many of Curling Alberta's team of umpires, especially those that are new. He is quick to step in wherever and whenever he is needed, usually with a smile on his face.

Congratulations to this year's Official of the Year, Bernie Panich.

INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR TENIELLE BACHEK

Awarded to an instructor who has been a difference-maker in his or her club and community.

Since 2016, Tenielle Bachek has served as the Junior Coach Coordinator at the Okotoks Curling Club and taken it on with gusto. She manages two junior programs that have grown exponentially under her leadership, including the Learn to Curl and Little Rockers group which has over 90 participants, and the intermediate level curlers that has more than tripled in just one season. This past year, Tenielle advanced both programs to the next level by piloting Curling Canada's U12 "Learn to Curl" curriculum. Alongside her team of coaches, she test-drove the program to see what worked well and what needed to be changed. Her feedback and thoughtful ideas contributed not only to the program's growth, but to its implementation in clubs across Canada.

Tenielle always takes the time to learn and develop her own skills as an instructor and coach. She dedicates an enormous amount of time designing lessons, guiding coaches, and looking for opportunities for young curlers, even contributing to junior curling podcasts which are heard across Canada.

Outside of coaching, Tenielle is involved with many different events throughout her curling community. She can be found many weekends and evenings volunteering, organizing, playing in events, leagues and helping out with the Adult Learn to Curl program. The Okotoks Curling Club would not be the same without Tenielle's incredible spirit and commitment to not only to the club, but to the sport of curling. Her determination to grow the sport and create success for junior curlers is inspiring and wonderful to see.

Congratulations to this year's Instructor of the Year, Tenielle Bachek.

"She is a tireless volunteer, with a huge heart for giving kids opportunities and for designing meaningful learning for them."

-Atina Ford Johnston



ICE TECHNICIAN OF THE YEAR ROGER MISKOLCZI

Awarded to an ice-maker who has provided significant leadership, excellence, and dedication to his or her craft.

As Head ice Maker of the Grande Prairie Curling Centre since 2010, Roger Miskolczi is one of the most dedicated and talented ice makers in the province. Roger has an extensive list of achievements as evidenced by his recruitment to be the head icemaker, assistant icemaker, or volunteer at numerous major events on the regional, provincial, national and international stages. He is highly respected and recognized as one of the best in the business.

Roger makes himself available to the icemakers in the region and is a source of



"Roger is totally dedicated to his icemaking art and sets extremely high standards for world class ice conditions at all times for regular league play and every one of the Curling Alberta regional qualifiers, and our menu of local bonspiels. He also has the ice perfectly prepared for anyone who comes to practice, whether stick curlers, junior curlers, special Olympians, or a visiting high-level competitor looking for a chance to hone and maintain their skills."

-Colin Griffith, Executive Director, Grande Prairie Curling Centre assistance, guidance and advice, freely sharing his knowledge and experience and extending a helping hand to any icemaker within his local community or around the province. He provides invaluable support to all the staff and volunteers in delivering the programs and activities that fully support the goals, plans, and mission of the Grande Prairie Curling Centre.

Over and above using his expertise and skills, Roger welcomes and engages everyone who walks through the door of the club whether curlers, spectators, or guests. He is friendly and outgoing and plays a significant role as a major ambassador of the club, the region, and the community.

Congratulations to this year's Ice Technician of the Year, Roger Miskolczi.







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COACH OF THE YEAR DALE FUKAMI

Awarded to a coach who has directed his or her team with sportsmanship and integrity.

This past season, Dale Fukami brought together four young women, with very different curling backgrounds and experiences, and turned them into a brandnew collaborative and competitive team. From the initial meeting and throughout weekly practice sessions, and weekend events, he demonstrated his unwavering dedication and patience, spending countless hours coaching players on an individual basis, as well as developing the team as a whole.

Team McMahon exceeded even their own expectations, qualifying for both the U18 and U20 provincial championships. It was a great learning experience for everyone and a testament to Dale's excellent coaching that



the team is sticking together for the 2023-24 season as they begin to compete at the U20 level. Dale has taught the team that although curling can often be frustrating, fun and friendship are key elements of the game. This teams' success was not measured by wins and losses, but rather by improving their skills and working together.

Dale set an excellent example of dedication for his team. He attended every game at every bonspiel, was at every Tuesday night league game, even stepping in to play when someone was away. Dale always shows up, as a coach and mentor, not only for his

"Dale managed to keep the team on an even keel even as they struggled early in the season. His positive reinforcement was part of his teaching plan and kept the growing pains as a team to a minimum. The players appreciated and emulated his positive attitude. He turned individual and team errors into teaching moments, always displaying a positive attitude, and focusing on helping the players learn the game without becoming too frustrated when things weren't going their way. As the season went on, Dale did not deviate from his plan, and the team improved their skill level as well as the mental part of playing a competitive sport."

- Lorelei Lachambre and Randy Renkas

team, but as part of the North Hill Junior Curling Program. Anyone who has had the opportunity to learn from Dale, has benefited from his knowledge, positivity, and legendary love of the game.

Congratulations to this year's Coach of the Year, Dale Fukami.

CLUB OF THE YEAR WETASKIWIN CURLING CLUB

Awarded to a member club or community curling centre which displays outstanding impact in and on their community.

The Wetaskiwin Curling Club is home to 175 members, ranging in age from 6 – 90, including adult, youth, and learn to curl leagues. As an active partner with the Wetaskiwin school division, the Wetaskiwin Curling Club strives to create a sense of community involvement throughout the curling season.

This season, the Wetaskiwin Curling Club hosted the 2023 Sentinel Storage Alberta Scotties Tournament of Hearts, spearheaded by leadership from Club President, Robyn Gerrard. Robyn was able to connect local businesses with the curling community, and showcase the strong volunteer membership of the Wetaskiwin "What is truly remarkable about the Wetaskiwin Curling Club is the clear dedication that came shining through during the preparation stages and throughout the Scotties event. As an outsider looking in, I was so very fortunate to witness a Club that has a strong bond, a joyful call to purpose, and a love of the sport of curling."





Curling Club. Robyn assembled a committee of 7 Committee Chairs and 113 volunteers to run the event. Through their respective committee roles, Robyn and team were able to secure 15 Wetaskiwin-based sponsors, utilize over a dozen local businesses for event needs, invite over 800 kids to watch curling live, and set up two social evenings with live entertainment.

Above and beyond the regular league play and annual bonspiels, the Wetaskiwin Curling Club utilized the talents of each volunteer member and worked together in a way that no one person could have successfully put on such a great event on their own. It is important to note that the 2023 Sentinel Storage Alberta Scotties Tournament of Hearts was the first time since the pandemic closure that all barriers for spectators, participants, and volunteers have been lifted. The Wetaskiwin Curling Club certainly saw this as a reason to celebrate, and welcomed the province to their city with open arms.

Congratulations to this year's Club of the Year, the Wetaskiwin Curling Club.





The Foundation provides Alberta curlers, 20 years of age or younger, with the financial opportunity to further expand and refine their curling abilities and accomplishments.

The board of directors for the Hec Gervais Academic and Curling Scholarship would like to congratulate this years recipients of the scholarship in the amount of \$3,000:

Zach Davies | Logan Thomas | Myla Plett

There were many outstanding applications this year and the selection was difficult. The criteria that is considered is based on involvement in curling and community, as well as the pursuit of furthering education. All three of the recipients excelled in all areas and we wish them all the best in the future for their curling and education.

For more information about the Hec Gervais Academic & Curling Scholarship Foundation, please visit **CurlingAlberta.ca/hecgervaisscholarship**





PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Awarded to anyone as selected by the President of Curling Alberta for outstanding service to the sport of curling.

CURTIS FAIRHURST

Anyone who has ever had the good fortune and honor to work alongside Curtis Fairhurst will immediately realize what an exceptional person he is. While his spreadsheets and data gathering skills are legendary, it is his rare ability to both inspire and connect with others that truly makes him shine.

Curtis was an integral part of Curling Alberta's amalgamation process, serving a two-year term as the new organization's first President. The process was a labor of love and involved significant time away from his family, but Curtis' efforts and hard work had a profound impact in shaping the present and future of Curling Alberta, as well as those individuals who served alongside him.

Executive Director Jill Richard describes Curtis as a unicorn. "Not often in life do we meet these people, with a mind that is brilliant and analytical; his spreadsheets and graphs are world famous. But the truly unique part is that he is also someone who people want to follow."

As one of the driving forces behind uniting the Northern Alberta Curling Association, the Southern Alberta Curling Association, the Alberta Curling Federation, and the Peace Curling Association, it was his leadership and fortitude that was the final catalyst in bringing it all together. "It has enabled us to speak with one voice, and to be more effective in all that we do, and to unite under a single and strong identity," adds Richard. "Now curlers in Alberta are one community. He embodies our value of fearless leadership and I'm so happy that he has this tremendous legacy to hang his hat on."

Board of Directors President Steve Young shared a memory of how Curtis proudly showed him a video of his son's curling delivery when they would curl in their hallway at home. "He was absolutely beaming because in the video after his son stretched out and made his delivery, he lifted his front heel and went up on his toe! See, he said, he will be a tuck slider."

It was that sense of family and community that carried over into how he viewed the work to be done at Curling Alberta. "The health of the curling community was just as important to Curtis as financial performance and successful championships," said Young. "He cared about the betterment of the game for all and its overall health and well-being, like a father caring about his son."

What is it about Curtis that makes him stand out? As Steve Young points out, "Curtis' super power is his ability to tackle complex problems. He finds the root cause or opportunity and calculates meaningful data to provide logical and well supported arguments for his position."

On every project and task he tackled, Curtis' ability to use data to find patterns and trends and make sound decisions, enabled him to lead those he served alongside with trust and confidence. He then kept his deliberation void of emotion to recommend and present a path forward. Thanks to Curtis, Curling Alberta is in a great place to continue pushing forward, upward and onward, and is stronger today because of him.

Welcome to the President's Award club, and congratulations to Curtis Fairhurst.





CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR 2023 CURLING ALBERTA AWARD NOMINEES!

Lucas Sawiak

Team Booth (Claire Booth, Kaylee Raniseth, Raelyn Helston, and Lauren Miller)

Penny Duncan

Nancy McInerney

Moe Sonier

Lynne Entz

Joyce Thrush

Dennis Goodhelpsen

Bo Fransen

Colin Griffith

Team Davies (Zach Davies, Benjamin Kiist, Terren Algot, Lucas Sawiak, Logan Thomas)

Team Kennedy (Julia Kennedy, Sarah Yarmuch, Camryn Adams, Savannah Dutka)

MNP Lethbridge

Darren Moulding

Mike Libbus

- Grant Randell Byron Jagoe
- Terry DeValter
- Glen Kennedy
- Blair Lenton
- David Nedohin
- Atina Johnston
- Andy Jones
- Sylvan Lake Curling Club

THE SCOTTIES ARE COMING TO CALGARY!



After hosting the world's most famous national women's curling championship in a closed bubble, there will be fans in the building for the 2024 Scotties Tournament of Hearts! The 2024 Scotties Tournament of Hearts will be held February 16th-25th, 2024 at the WinSport Event Centre.

Get involved with a National curling event by registering as a volunteer. Roles include, 50/50, ice support, event services and accreditation, celebration and game day, transportation and dispatch, timing, and more! Volunteers will receive an event pass (no assigned seat) as well as a volunteer uniform. Click here for volunteer registration. Not able to volunteer but still want to go or know someone who does, below is the ticket information:

Tickets are selling fast and limited seats are available! Get your tickets now:

- Full Event Package (\$408-\$444): A single ticket to every draw of the 2024 Scotties Tournament of Hearts.
- Championship Weekend Package (\$198-\$228): A single ticket to every draw from Friday, Feb. 22, to Sunday, Feb. 24.
- Opening Weekend Package (\$108-\$132): A single ticket to all draws from Friday, Feb. 15, to Sunday, Feb. 17.
- Weekday Package (\$60-\$69): A single ticket to all three draws on either Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.

Click here to purchase tickets.

CURLING ALBERTA'S BRENDA ROGERS PASSING THE TORCH AS HEAD OF OFFICIALS

A passionate volunteer, Brenda has served as the Head of Officials for SACA, the Alberta Curling Federation and for Curling Alberta for 20 years. She is always kind, thoughtful and a champion of promoting the learning and love of curling to curling athletes of all ages and abilities. While Brenda will continue serving as a Level 5 Umpire at events as well as mentoring and training, she will be transitioning out of the Head of Officials role at the end of the 2022-23 season.

Over many years and countless events, Brenda has made an outstanding contribution to the sport of curling by giving back at all levels as a player, fan, organizer, official, promoter and leader. Through her leadership she has trained and promoted several umpires to the National level that are active today. Brenda always leads by example with attention to detail and integrity and we are grateful for her commitment and passion for our sport.

Under her leadership, Brenda has raised the bar in terms of professionalism, knowledge and experience as an official. On behalf of Curling Alberta, we thank her for her tireless service and wish her all the best in the future.

As Brenda departs, Curling Alberta is proud to welcome Cheryl Minns as Head of Officials for the 2023/24 season. For nearly 30 years, Cheryl has volunteered for NACA, Curling Alberta, Curling Canada, and the World Curling Federation, in many capacities from game timer to chief umpire. After stepping up to volunteer at an event hosted by her home club as a game timer, the experience captured her interest and she decided to volunteer for other events.



With the support and encouragement from more experienced umpires, Cheryl continued to advance her certifications, earning her Level 4 in 2017. She received her first national assignment in 2013, working at the Canadian Junior Championship in Fort McMurray, and has continued to volunteer at several Men's, Women's, Junior, Senior, and Wheelchair championship events.

Behind every successful curling event, from local qualifiers to those at the national and international level, is a dedicated team of officials. Cheryl is eager to lead her team of fellow umpires and inspire those who are interested in becoming involved, by providing the same high level of support and encouragement she received throughout her umpire journey.

Please feel free to contact Cheryl at cheryl.minns@curlingalberta.ca for any rule interpretations and questions.

Congratulations, Cheryl, and welcome to the Curling Alberta team.

THE ALBERTA CURLING TOUR IS EXPANDING

Curling Alberta is pleased to announce that the U15, U18, and U20 divisions will now fall under the umbrella of the Alberta Curling Tour. Going forward, the Alberta Curling Tour Standings will now feature an Under-18 Division and an Under-20 Division. The Alberta Curling Tour will also host Under-15 events.

The Alberta Junior Curling Tour (AJCT) has been dedicated to leading junior curling in Alberta since 2011. In that time the AJCT has had many dedicated champions in the role of chair. Since 2018, Mark Taylor has taken on the leadership role and has been instrumental in the growth of curling in the province. With Mark leading the charge, the AJCT teamed up with Curling Alberta to develop and implement the Alberta Junior Tour Ranking System (AJTRS) to determine pre-qualifying berths to Under-18 and Under-20 Provincial Championships. More recently, the AJTRS was used to determine the secondary berths to the Under-18 and Under-20 National Championships. Curling Alberta recognizes Mark's passion and dedication to youth curling in Alberta and cannot thank him and the AJCT enough for their hours of hard work and dedication to

growing junior curling. With Mark stepping down as chair this season, Curling Alberta will add these divisions to the Alberta Curling Tour. Mark believes that now is the right time for this change;

"The AJCT has been an advocate for competitive junior curling in the province for many years, a strong voice that did not exist during the days of the Alberta Curling Federation, where the province was divided in to the three districts. With the not-so-new amalgamation in to Curling Alberta, I believe now that CA has the governance structure, funding and drive to support and grow junior curling well in to the future."

Curling Alberta has been in discussions with many past AJCT hosts to form a schedule that best fits the Long-Term Curler Development model for every age and stage, and is still finalizing tour schedule for U15, U18, and U20 events. To ensure your event is on our schedule, please contact Jason Ginter at jason.ginter@curlingalberta.ca.

To keep in line with some trainingcompetition-recovery ratios listed for to the Learn to Compete (U18), and Train to Compete (U21), Curling Alberta will be making the following change to the U18 and U20 categories:

"For the 2023-24 season, if Curling Alberta is awarded an additional berth to the Under-18 or Under-20 National Championships, this berth will be awarded to the team that places second at the Under-18 or Under-20 Provincial Championships."

Curling Alberta wants to ensure that all teams and coaches take a firm look at their training and competition schedules this upcoming season, and compare it to recommendations made by Curling Canada's Long Term Curler Development model. As the Under-18 and Under-21 age categories are the first on the Competitive Pathway, competition is important, but it is also important to develop technical, tactical, physical, mental, and social skills in a daily training environment.

Please find the newest update of Curling Canada's Long-Term Curler Development Guide here.



UNIVERSITY OF LETHBRIDGE WELCOMES CURLING TO U SPORTS LINE UP



We are thrilled to announce a fantastic addition to the athletic program at the University of Lethbridge. Starting this upcoming season, the University will include curling as a competitive

club participating in the U Sports Curling Championships. This decision reflects the University's commitment to offering a diverse range of sports and promoting an active and well-rounded student experience.

To lead this new venture, we are delighted to announce the appointment of Casey Scheidegger as head coach. Casey brings a wealth of experience, expertise, and an impressive track record in the world of curling. Her appointment is sure to bring a new level of excellence to the curling program. Casey Scheidegger is no stranger to the sport, having made a significant impact both nationally and internationally. Her curling career spans over two decades and is marked by numerous achievements, defining her as a true force to be reckoned with on the ice. Some highlights of Casey's remarkable career include several Grand Slam Titles including the Canadian Open Championship, the Player's Championship and the Tour Challenge. Casey has also represented Alberta at multiple Scotties Tournament of Hearts. Casey's appointment as head coach brings not only a wealth of experience but also a passion for the sport and a desire to inspire and develop young curlers. Under her guidance, the U of L curling program is poised for success, with a focus on teamwork, skill development, and sportsmanship.

"This is a very exciting addition for Pronghorn Athletics and the curling program. Anytime we can add someone of Casey's character, coupled with her skills and experience, it really is a nobrainer. I'd like to thank both Casey and Shannon Kleibrink of Curling Alberta for their interest in revitalizing Pronghorn curling and look forward to the impact both have on our student athletes and curling in southern Alberta,"

- Spencer Pommells, Manager of Athletics

We encourage all students who are interested in joining the U of L curling program to reach out to Shannon Kleibrink at **shannon.kleibrink@**

curlingalberta.ca for more information. Whether you are an experienced curler or fairly new to the sport, this is an incredible opportunity to be part of a growing legacy at the University of Lethbridge.

Go Pronghorns!



	PROVINCIAL QUALIFIERS				
EVENT	DATES	LOCATIONS	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	PRE-QUALIFYING BY POINTS DEADLINE	CHAMPIONSHIPS
U18	Dec. 7-10 Dec. 14-17 Dec. 15-17	Okotoks CC Granite CC Grande Prairie CC	Nov. 8	Nov. 27	Jan. 2-7 Sylvan Lake CC
WHEELCHAIR			Dec. 13	N/A	Jan. 11-14 TBA
WOMEN	Dec. 7-10 Dec. 28-31	Westlock CC SLS Centre, Cochrane (Last chance)	Nov. 8	Nov. 27	Jan. 23-28 St. Paul
MEN	Dec. 7-10 Dec. 15-17 Jan. 4-7	Granite CC Grande Prairie CC Calgary CC (Last chance)	Nov. 8	Nov. 27	Feb. 6-11 Hinton
MIXED DOUBLES	Jan, 5-7 Jan. 18-21 Jan. 18-21	High Prairie CC Taber CC Cold Lake CC	Dec. 6	Dec. 18	Feb. 13-18 Coaldale CC
U20	Jan. 12-14 Feb. 1-4 Feb. 1-4 Feb. 1-4 Feb. 1-4	High Prairie CC (Men & Women) Hinton CC (Men) Wetaskiwin CC (Women) Oilfields CC, Diamond Valley (Men) Innisfail CC (Women)	Dec. 13	Dec. 20	Mar. 5-10 Avonair CC
U15	Jan. 18-21 Jan. 19-21 Feb. 1-4	Leduc CC Grande Prairie CC Sundre CC	Dec. 20	N/A	Feb. 27 – Mar. 3 Lacombe CC
MASTER	Jan. 25-28 Jan. 26-28 Feb. 8-11	Rocky CC (Men) Grande Prairie CC (Men) Lamont CC (Men)	Dec. 27	N/A	Feb. 27 – Mar. 3 Morinville CC
SENIOR	Feb. 2-4 Feb. 15-18 Feb. 15-18	Grande Prairie CC (Men) Brooks CC (Men) Beaumont CC (Men)	Jan. 3	N/A	Mar. 12-17 Calgary CC
MIXED			Feb. 21	N/A	Mar. 19-24 Grande Prairie CC
CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS	Mar. 7-10 Mar. 7-10 Mar. 7-10 Mar. 7-10 Mar. 8-10	Thistle CC (Women) Leduc CC (Men) Hanna CC (Women) Airdrie CC (Men) Peace River CC (Men & Women)	Intent – Feb. 1 Roster – Mar. 4	N/A	Apr. 2-7 Airdrie CC
U21 MIXED DOUBLES			Mar. 6	N/A	Apr. 3-7 Lethbridge CC

TEN TRENDS TO CONSIDER THIS PLANNING SEASON

Submitted by Bobby Ray, Manager of Curling Club Development, Curling Canada

In 1985 David Cook opened his own videorental store in Dallas, Texas. One year later he opened three more. In 1988, under new management, the company expanded to eight-hundred stores. By 1992, twothousand-eight-hundred stores operated in locations across the world. By 1999 – sixthousand stores. By 2004 – nine-thousand stores. And in 2010 – bankruptcy.

The story of Blockbuster Video should be of interest to those in the curling industry because a lesson learned from the mistakes of others is a lesson learned nonetheless, and without the cost.

I won't recount the entire saga here, but if we skip to the end what you will learn is that Blockbuster did not go out of business because of a decline in the popularity of watching movies. Blockbuster went out of business because of a decline in the popularity of the way in which they delivered movies to consumers.

Those who know me can testify that not much gets under my skin, but to have to listen to people say, or to have to read what people write on the internet that "the popularity of curling is in decline" gets under my skin, in my hair, and on my nerves. It's not true. Curling is a growing sport internationally, and according to a survey of one thousand people conducted in 2022 by Abacus Data, 40% of Canadians are interested in curling (that's a lot by the way – for a sport that penetrates, on average, 2% of the population).

The popularity of curling is not in decline. The popularity of the way in which we deliver curling is in decline.

At the most macro level, a curling business must only achieve two feats to acquire more customers. Offer something that people want (is desirable) and offer something that is easy to take action on (is accessible). At the intersection of desirability and accessibility is an abundance of prospective new curlers.

The following are ten trends that leverage the desires of emerging generations and make the sport more accessible to the 40% of Canadians that are seeking a curling experience that suits their lifestyle. As part of your off-season planning, aspire to make curling more...

Inclusive

We have the audience we have today because of the systems that are in place today. And we don't have the audience we don't have today because of the systems that are not in place today. It doesn't take away from anybody else's experience to diversify the ways in which we allow participants to discover a sense of belonging in our community. Performing a customer journey audit is a great way to reveal barriers new people may face in an attempt to participate in curling (including, but not limited to barriers that are physical, attitudinal, communicational, technological, or systemic).

Agnostic

In business, the term agnostic means to "transcend multiple sectors". All curling programs, leagues, and events must be more accommodating of participants regardless of age, gender, or other identities by implementing more "open"style formats. The era of the Monday Night Men's League, Tuesday Night Women's League, Wednesday Night Mixed League, and Daytime Seniors League is of the past. The next time someone inquires about your schedule wouldn't it be nice to be able to say - "Do you want to play in our Monday Night League, our Tuesday Night League, our Wednesday Night League, or our Daytime League?"

Developmental

Not unlike golf or tennis – curling is technical, it's difficult, and anyone who has teed up, swung a racquet, or delivered a stone for the first time (or second time, or fiftieth time) knows... it can be frustrating. We like to throw new curlers in the deep end of the pool, then force them to play front end for a decade with a grumpy old skip that has vacancies on their team (for some reason...). In pursuit of the confidence to stand on their own, today's prospective curler is prepared to invest in instruction, develop skills more quickly, and submit their rookie team of friends to a journey beginning at the bottom of the ladder. The only divisions needed in today's curling programs are skill divisions.

Digestible

The popularity of curling is not in decline. The popularity of the three-hour curling excursion, every week, for six months is in decline. It's too much. Why can't curling be six ends? Sixty minutes? Six weeks? Once a month for six months? And why is it a requirement to curl on a regularly recurring schedule, or that every participant be a "member"? I golf four times a year and pay more for golf than I do curling (...they seem happy to take my non-card-carrying money). The answer to these questions, by the way, is – because you have failed to ask *"why not?"*

Flexible

Remember the days of the fall open house and registration fair? Wine and cheese galore, a booth for every league, and a sign-up sheet for the free beginner curling clinic on the first Sunday of the season. If you blinked, you might have missed it - and then you would be S.O.L. (Sh*t. Out. Of. Luck). We must develop mechanisms to integrate curlers at more points of entry throughout the season. And not in some sort of haphazard manner - the curling season should stop, reset, and start again, integrating new participants who only just cheered on Team Canada, tried curling at the office holiday party, or watched a viral curling video on Tik Tok.

Want to go curling? You can't. You need to be a member, you need be in a league, you need to follow a bunch of rules that were written a century ago. You can't just spontaneously go curling like you would go bowling, go golfing, or go out for dinner – and it's a problem. A problem for consumers, and a red flag for municipalities whose master recreation plans prioritize investment in forms of recreation that are more flexible. Take frisbee golf for example – one can play frisbee golf individually or as a group, for two hours or fifteen minutes, any time of the day, with little equipment required, and at little cost to the taxpayer.

Want an inside tip on what may possibly be the most game-changing trend of 2023? Two words – "Flex Work". Life after the pandemic has shifted indefinitely, and it is incumbent on us to meet this moment. Curling has traditionally lost young adults to budding careers and young families; but fret no more – with the flexibility of many professions today, the scope of profitable ice time just boomed. I for one curl Mondays at noon, in a doubles league, and a majority of participants go back to work afterwards.

Digital

No more excuses. A curling business that is not promoting, enrolling, and transacting online is choosing to be irrelevant. 2.9% + \$0.30 is the cost of doing business today; and it's a heck of a bargain compared to the 97.1% of every deal that is lost when a potential participant views curling on television, does a Google search for curling near them, and abandons their impulse to make a purchase when a visit to your website returns no other opportunity than to *"Visit Betty-Sue Tuesday or Thursday afternoons at ye olde Granite Club"*.

Remarkable

Seth Godin is one of my favourite authors and thought leaders. He routinely writes about transforming businesses by being remarkable - "Something worth talking about. Worth noticing. Exceptional. New. Interesting." The emerging generation, that curling businesses say they want, leads a more minimalist lifestyle; they value experiences over material possessions and quality over quantity. The primary currency of the emerging generation is time, not money. We must create curling experiences worth lining up for, allow people to pay with their mobile device (they like that, it makes a cool sound), and leave their precious limited time alone. YOLO.

Professional

Volunteerism is in crisis, but in every crisis lies opportunity. Curling must move towards a hybrid business model that integrates its tradition of volunteerism with paid and professional work that places people with the skills and capacity to deliver enhanced instruction, ice conditions, customer service, and curling experiences in positions to generate a financial return greater than the outlay.

Endogenous

Thanks to my thesaurus for permitting me to sound smart with this one. Endogenous means "having an internal cause or origin". The legacy business model in which facilities outsource curling to other bodies (clubs within clubs, rental leagues, committees, and the like) met satisfaction when rinse and repeat was the strategy of the day; but, in a world that is constantly changing, the outsourcing of curling risks a lack of control over product development, the inability to manage the consistency of one's brand, and the powerlessness to invest in the growth of new audiences.

Fun

The modern curling business operator ought not measure their success by the number of banners hanging from the rafters; but by the number of curlers playing air guitar on their broom halfway through Bohemian Rhapsody. The market for recreational curling – where participants are listening to music, chatting with peers on the adjacent sheet, and improving upon their personal bests is generous. Add to that a quality post-game experience with good food and beverage, big screen televisions, and comfortable furnishings and you will have something that people today desire.





UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

JULY 21 Curling Alberta Annual General Meeting

AUGUST 31 - SEPTEMBER 1

Curling Alberta Casino, Pure Casino Edmonton

Call for Volunteers is Now Open

AUGUST 12-15 Alberta Junior Rocks Camp 1

SEPTEMBER 1 Competition Registration Opens AUGUST 17-20 Alberta Junior Rocks Camp 2

SEPTEMBER 23 Women in Curling Summit

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARTNERS





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MIXED DOUBLES Sherwood Park Curling Club / Granite Curling Club Ashley Kalk, Craig MacAlpine, Jim Weber (Coach)



SENIOR WOMEN Okotoks / Sherwood Park / Irricana Curling Club / Calgary Curling Club Atina Ford Johnston (Skip), Shannon Morris (Third), Sheri Pickering (Second), Cori Morris (Lead)



MASTERS MEN & 2023 CANADIAN MASTERS CHAMPIONS Crestwood Curling Club Wade White (Skip), Doug McLennan (Third), Dan Holowaychuk (Second), George Parsons (Lead) PHOTO: GREG SUILLIVA



WHEELCHAIR Garrison Curling Club Jack Smart (Skip), Martin Purvis (Third), Terry Fowler (Second), Wendy Frazier (Lead), Kendra Ohama (Alternate), Fran Purvis (Coach) YRIGHT © JEAN DOYON/CURLING CANAD PHOTO: CO



U21 MIXED DOUBLES Saville Community Sports Centre / **Cochrane Curling Club** Serena Gray-Withers, Ky Macaulay, Gord Copithorne (Coach)



U20 WOMEN & CANADIAN U21 GOLD MEDALISTS Airdrie Curling Club / Sherwood Park Curling Club Myla Plett (Skip). Alyssa Nedohin (Third), Chloe Fediuk (Second), Allie Iskiw (Lead), Blair Lenton (Coach)



Sherwood Park Curling Club James Pahl (Skip), Mark Klinck (Third), Kelly Mauthe (Second), John Schmidt (Lead), Cory Wilson (Alternate)



U18 GIRLS AND CANADIAN U18 GOLD MEDALISTS Airdrie Curling Club / Sherwood Park Curling Club Myla Plett (Skip), Alyssa Nedohin (Third), Chloe Fediuk (Second), Allie Iskiw (Lead), Blair Lenton (Coach) PHOTO: COPYRIGHT © CURLING CAN



WHEELCHAIR, TEAM ALBERTA 2 Avonaire Curling Club Don Kuchelyma (Skip), Stefan Vindis (Third), Emma Nagel (Second), Marie Laframboise (Lead), Rick Jenkyns (Coach) TO: COPYRIGHT © JEAN DOYON/CURLING



U15 CHAMPIONS Ellerslie Curling Club Julia Kennedy (Skip), Sarah Yarmuch (Third), Camryn Adams (Second), Savannah Dutka (Lead), Sierra Wyatt (Alternate), Glen Kennedy (Coach), Julia Harrish (Mentee Coach)



U20 WOMEN, TEAM ALBERTA 2 Glencoe Club Claire Booth (Skip), Kaylee Raniseth (Third), Raelyn Helston (Second), Lauren Miller (Lead), Deryk Kuny (Coach) PHOTO: CHRISTIAN I FOUC/CURLING CANAD



Glencoe Club Kevin Koe (Skip), Tyler Tardi (Third), Brad Thiessen (Second), Karrick Martin (Lead), Ted Appelman (Alternate) PHOTO MICHAEL BU

U18 GIRLS, TEAM ALBERTA 2

Lacombe Curling Club

Emma DeSchiffart (Skip), Morgan DeSchiffart (Third),

Abby Whitbread (Second), Natalie Cholin (Lead),

Rhiley DeSchiffart (Alternate), Mark DeSchiffart (Coach)

CUF



U20 MEN Okotoks Curling Club / Lethbridge Curling Club James Ballance (Skip), Lowell Whittmire (Third), Ethan Drysdale (Second), Neil Donovan (Lead), Warren Ballance (Coach) PHOTO: CHRISTIAN LEDUC/CUBLING CA



WOMEN Garrison Curling Club Kayla Skrlik (Skip), Brittany Tran (Third), Geri-Lynn Ramsay (Second), Ashton Skrlik (Lead), Crystal Webster (Alternate), Shannon Kleibrink (Coach) PHOTO: ANDREW KI AVER PHO



U20 MEN. TEAM ALBERTA 2 & CANADIAN U21 GOLD MEDALISTS Saville Community Sports Centre Johnson Tao (Skip), Jaedon Neuert (Third), Ben Morin (Second), Adam Naugler (Lead), Skip Wilson (Coach) PHOTO: CH



MASTERS WOMEN Sherwood Park Curling Club / North Hill Curling Club / Calgary Winter Club Debbie Santos (Skip), Judy Pendergast (Third), Barbara McDonald (Second), Cheryl Hall (Lead) PHOTO: PETER HARD



U18 BOYS Sherwood Park Curling Club Jaxon Hiebert (Skip), Oliver Burton (Third), Kolby MacDonald (Second), Nate Burton (Lead), Aidan Snider (Alternate), Brent MacDonald (Coach) PHOTO: COPYRIGHT © CURLING CANADA





U18 BOYS, TEAM ALBERTA 2 & CANADIAN GOLD MEDALISTS

CLUB CHAMPIONS MEN Beaumont Curling Club Dan Sherrard (Skip), Brandon Klassen (Third), Shawn Donnelly (Second), Kyle Reynolds (Lead), Cody Brown (Alternate)



CANADA WINTER GAMES MIXED DOUBLES & CWG GOLD MEDALISTS Calgary Curling Club Kaylee Raniseth, Evan Crough, Deryk Kuny (Coach)



2023 MIXED CHAMPIONS Thistle Curling Club Evan Van Amsterdam (Skip), Danielle Schmiemann (Third), Benton Boychuk-Chorney (Second), Paige Papley (Lead)

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EXCEL CUP WOMEN Glencoe Club Claire Booth (Skip), Kaylee Raniseth (Third), Raelyn Helston (Second), Lauren Miller (Lead), Deryk Kuny (Coach)





EXCEL CUP MEN

Okotoks Curling Club

Evan Crough (Skip), Garrett Johnston (Third),

Ky Macaulay (Second), Reece Brigley (Lead),

Carolyn McRorie (Coach)





Ξ. CANADA WINTER GAMES GIRLS & CWG SILVER MEDALISTS Airdrie Curling Club / Sherwood Park Curling Club Myla Plett (Skip), Alyssa Nedohin (Third), Chloe Fediuk (Second). Allie Iskiw (Lead), Blair Lenton (Coach)

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