

The Backline



... a newsletter for the members of the Vancouver Curling Club

Team Mallett: What a Season!

The 2009 Scotties Tournament of Hearts wrapped up on the first of March, and it completed a month of outstanding curling by the VCC's own Team Mallett.

Skip Marla Mallett, third Grace MacInnes, second Diane Gushulak, lead Jacalyn Brown, alternate Adina Tasaka and coach Ken MacDonald began their run of success by capturing the 2009 Scotties Tournament of Hearts BC Women's Curling Championship at the end of January in Parksville. Team Mallett won the provincial final with a 8-5 victory over Team McInnes from Kamloops.

The club celebrated this fantastic accomplishment - the club's 44th Purple Heart - with a small celebration on February 10th. Members of the Tuesday

Night Women's League and the Motors League gathered to wish the team all the best and present them with a good luck banner.

Team Mallett took the banner, their competitive spirit and strong curling abilities to Victoria for the 2009 Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

Team Mallett began the Women's National championships with four wins in a row and eight wins in their first nine games in round robin play. They finished first overall after the round robin. The team then defeated Team LaRouche from Quebec 7-5 in the 1-2 playoff game. Their victory secured them a spot in the National Finals.

In the final, Team Mallett matched Team Canada shot for shot with great offensive and defensive execution. Team Canada, skipped by Jennifer Jones, just made a couple more shots than Team

Mallett in the second half of the game to repeat as national champions.

"Of course it's very disappointing," said Mallett after the loss, "but we did have a great week. We learned a lot, and we'll bring it back next year."

Congratulations to Team Mallett on a fantastic run through the 2009 provincial and national women's curling championships.

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The Ups and Downs of Ice at the VCC ...



The following is an open letter to the VCC membership from the club's Head Ice Technician, Don Swann.

First of all bear with me if I seem rather down about some of the "nice things" we have going

on out in the ice shed. The resulting heaves in the ice floor are a combination of the weather, water table problems, reduced insulation under our building's ice slab and more.

I began this season by only putting 1-1/4" of ice above the paint surface. Having a thinner ice surface means the ice plant machinery uses less energy and typically reduces ice maintenance time. However, the thinner ice surface also means that the impact on the ice is greater when the permafrost layer of ground underneath our sand base shifts with the water table.

As you may (or may not) be aware, the club has a continuous water flow from Queen Elizabeth Park across the road that runs down our sloped property beside our parking lot and under the main building. This happens year round - even when we have no rain for lengthy periods of time. We also have water

leaks from the city pipes to our building (which the city is in the midst of investigating). These leaks have created runs under our property. These water runs are another contributing factor to the heaves out in the ice shed.

When you build ice up from a sand-base, which is what we have at the VCC, it is very susceptible to many factors around it and we tend to get heaves in the ice during this time of year. Even with me scraping all the sheets every morning, as well as doing heavy maintenance, scraping and the burning on Friday, the ice still gives me problems.

I appreciate that those members who are aware of the floor problems often take it with a grain of salt from year to year. But I do take it to heart when I hear members complaining that the VCC has bad ice, for what ever reason. My ice team (Jen, Luke, George and me) is working hard and keeps chipping away at the problems. Our goal is to do our very best, to provide the best possible ice to you - the members - and help ensure your final month on the ice at the VCC is an enjoyable one.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE: Don and Jen, in particular, have been working extremely hard and many long hours in the past couple of weeks. From mid-February onwards, Don and Jen have adjusted some of their hours so they are working into the wee hours of the night/early morning as they burn, scrap, and flood the ice shed to help create as consistent ice as they possibly can!

Are you a VCC Champion?

You can plan a few shots ahead – even make plans for next end. How about for next season?

Now is the time for us to find champions for an important undertaking – the VCC Board of Directors.

At the end of this season, six vacancies will need to be filled. Our Business Plan for the new facility is coming

together, but we need a skilled team to see us through two more years in our present facility.

Is it you, one of your teammates, or someone in your league? The success of our curling club lies in the hands of its members. So think ahead for potential nominees for our upcoming AGM on April 23rd.

The Flame was Proudly Carried ...

The Pacific Rim Curling League (PRCL) hosted its annual **Pac Cup Bonsel** on the weekend of January 30th to February 1st.

The theme for this year - the 26th edition of the event - was "Carrying the flame", to symbolize the PRCL moving forward into the next quarter century of gay curling on the West Coast.



There was fantastic curling by 32 teams from across Canada and the United States. A local hockey team even gave this ice sport a try!

The winner of the 26th Annual Pac Cup was Team Schneider from the PRCL. Winning team members included Stephen Schneider, Shawn Eckland, Glenn Smith and Justin MacDonald.



Social events throughout the weekend kept the VCC a very "hot" place to be. Prizes were awarded to those wearing the most impressive flaming fedoras. A gala awards banquet, followed by the Survivors' Party, closed the event off on the Sunday.



The excellent support from the Vancouver Curling Club staff and management, and from the enthusiastic volunteers from the PRCL made this bonspiel another great success!

VCC Members Show their Hearts

The **Sandra Schmirler Tribute Day and Open House** took place on Saturday, February 14.

Over 50 people attended this special one-day open house where all attendees are encouraged to make a donation to the Sandra Schmirler Foundation. Combined with the registration fees from the Mixed Doubles Championships, the VCC donated \$370 to the foundation.

Members and their guests had a chance to get out on the ice with instructors available to help the newly-initiated to our great game. Everyone in attendance was treated to two special curling events: members of the VCC Blind League (assisted by Carol Kent and Jim Hall) put on a curling demo; and members of Scotland's National Wheelchair Curling Team visited the club and showed off their world-class skills.

Special thanks to Be Bryck, Jan Bos, Dianne Petrant, Rob Hodgins, Pat McSherry and Gary Lubin for their assistance on and ice ice. Special kudos also go out to our terrific staff, George Opacic and Marilyn Everett. Final thanks to Art Hawkins for the loan of the Sandra Schmirler picture.

REGISTER NOW!
A FEW SPOTS REMAINING

13TH ANNUAL Barry Naimark Charity Skins Bonspiel MARCH 12th - 15th, 2009

Cost: \$260 / team

Deposit: \$65 (payable at the club office or bar)

To register, email:
manager@vancouvercurlingclub.com

Complete event details:
vancouvercurlingclub.com/skins



entry guarantees at least 3 games with cash up for grabs in every end
saturday night banquet / 50/50 draws / prize raffles
limit of 32 teams

Mixed Doubles Champions are crowned ...

On Saturday, February 21, the VCC hosted our club's annual **Mixed Doubles Championships**... and the winners were the daughter and father team of Sheri and Ken Grahame (pictured below centre & right, with club president, Scott Allen, on the left).



After winning their pool in the morning's round-robin play, Sheri and Ken continued their winning ways through the afternoon's playoffs. They won the 2009 VCC Mixed Doubles when they defeated the husband and wife team of Brian and Grace Giroday.

The one-day event featured four-end games and followed the unique mixed doubles format and rules established by the World Curling Federation. Special thanks to the event organizers - Shari Cotter and Scott Allen (who also happened to capture the consolation final) - and to all of the participating teams. All of the monies raised during the event were donated to the Sandra Schmirler Foundation.

In the Spotlight ...

showcasing VCC members

Mike Howey -- VCC member & volunteer at '09 World Wheelchair Curling Championships

What league do you curl in at the VCC, and how long have you been a club member?

I curl in the Super Seniors league on Wednesday nights. I have been a VCC member for 10 years or so.

Why did you decide to be a volunteer at the World Wheelchair Championships? What attracted you?

The main reason was that I had the Olympics in mind. I want to do my part to see that the Games and related events will be a success.

What role are you serving & what are your duties?

As a volunteer, I am the Chief of Athlete Services. That means that I stay in the lounge area and that I provide the athletes with whatever they might need. I will work every day through this event.

What was your experience like with the athletes, the event staff, and the public?

Everyone was happy about this event, including the volunteers. I've enjoyed meeting the teams but especially the individuals. Also, this is my first chance

to see wheelchair curling. I've been so impressed with their abilities. Nothing holds them back at all. They are all so positive about everything.



Mike & Sandy Howey

Would you tell your fellow members at the VCC to volunteer too? Why?

I would have to tell others to volunteer – my wife, Sandy, is here with me too! I believe that the Olympics are our chance to show our city to the world. We can't miss this opportunity.

Is there any other comment you would like to make about this event, about the facility, or about the curling community as a whole?

This is our legacy facility – a very exciting time for the Vancouver Curling Club. We all have to work & volunteer together to build up our base of curlers, use of all the sheets, and to make a difference.

Upcoming Events ...

The second half of the season has only one month left of league play, but there are a few exciting events happening before the 2008-2009 season comes to a close:

Thursday, Mar. 12 to Sunday, Mar. 15
Barry Naimark Charity Skins Bonspiel

Sunday, Mar. 29
Last day of league curling - 2nd half

Monday, Mar. 30 to Thursday, Apr. 2
VCC Championship (VCC Members only)

Thursday, Apr. 2
Past Presidents' and Honourary Life Members' Dinner

Thursday, Apr. 23
Volunteers' Barbecue, League Reps Meeting & Annual General Meeting

More details for all of the above events can be found on the club's website at:

www.vancouvercurlingclub.com/EventSummary



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WiFi Password Correction

Quick update to provide you with the revised password to log-on to the WiFi connection at the VCC. The password is 1223334444. *Reminder: the club is not able to assist with any access difficulties.*

For more information on any of the events scheduled at the VCC, please contact the Club Manager - Ken MacDonald - at 604-872-0122 or manager@vancouvercurlingclub.com.



Vancouver Curling Club
4460 Dinmont Ave • Vancouver, BC • V5Y 2M2
604-874-0122 • 604-874-2865 (fax) • manager@vancouvercurlingclub.com

www.vancouvercurlingclub.com