

Your Curler

keeping you connected with Scottish Curling



CLUBS & RINKS

Updates from both the incoming USWCA tour and the outgoing USA tour, as well as more local news...

FEATURES

How to buy your tickets for the SCC 2017 finals and info about the new curling rink in Stirling!

COMPETITIONS

Gold for Aitken/Mouat at the Scottish Curling Mixed Doubles Championships for the fourth time!

Merry Christmas

CLUBS & RINKS

US LADIES LIFT THE SCOT TOUR TROPHY

After three weeks and 21 games, the 20 US ladies came out on top with an overall score of 807 shots to the Scottish ladies' score of 568 shots. The Marguerite Roberts Quaich was presented to them by Gilean Hoenke, Marguerite's daughter, at the closing banquet held in the Radstone Hotel, Larkhall.

Throughout their tour, the ladies of the USWCA also enjoyed tourism in perfect winter weather, were provided with good old fashioned Scottish hospitality and were entertained by a range of local talent. The tourists were home-hosted by 100 hosts. Many friendships were formed.

They were able to take advantage of a favourable exchange rate in their efforts to support the Scottish economy - shopping was a favourite off-ice hobby it seemed!

Their tour concluded

with the US attending finals day at the European Championships at Braehead before spending the night in Edinburgh and flying home early next morning. Thanks to members of RCCC Ladies' Branch, ice rinks, local authorities, sponsors and other contributors, the tour was a great success. So many of them, too numerous to mention individually, gave of their time and energy voluntarily to ensure that our visitors received the warmest of welcomes and greatest of memories which they will cherish for the rest of their lives.

We wish them haste ye back and are already we looking forward to the outgoing US tour in 2021.



REPORT: JAN HOWARD

PHOTO: TAKEN AT LOCKERBIE ICE RINK

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INAUGURAL OCTOGENARIAN NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

On Thursday 1st December at Stranraer Ice Rink sixteen octogenarian curlers with an accumulated age of 1363 years between them and nearly 900 years of curling took to the ice for the Inaugural Octogenarian Curling National Championships.

Many of these curlers started curling on outdoor ice at local ponds during the winter when the ponds would freeze over and latterly moved to indoor ice rinks. The four rinks who competed had curlers from Kelso, Hamilton and Stranraer.

Two games were played during the day with the first game of five ends starting at 11am, this saw the Hamilton rink skipped by Ena Smith play Stranraer 1 skipped by J Norman Brown, there was some very impressive curling and a home victory; six shots to two. The other game with Stranraer 2 skipped by John Wilson play against the Dumfries rink skipped by Ian Shuttleworth, again some fine curling skills on view, however with the

advantage of playing on home ice John Wilson took the lead straight from the off and never let the 'doonhammers' in winning 10shots up. After a break for lunch and catching up with old friends it was Ena Smith's rink playing the John Wilson's rink, again some fine curling was played and was appreciated by fellow curlers watching, this was a close game ending with a 5-2 win for John Wilson's rink. Over on the other sheet it was a local darby with J Norman Brown's rink playing the Dumfries rink skipped by Ian Shuttleworth however after five ends it was the local Stranraer rink who came out on top winning 5-2.

After the scores were added the rink of John Wilson Kirkmabreck Curling Club, Hugh Aitken Limekiln Loch Curling Club, David Higgins Stoneykirk Curling Club, Betty Downie Stranraer Ladies Curling Club, who lifted the trophy. In Second place was the other Stranraer rink skipped by J Norman Brown, Ena Smith's rink taking 3rd place and the Dumfries rink skipped by Ian Shuttleworth in 4th. Ice Rink Manager Gail Munro presented the rose bowl to the winning rink of John Wilson, Hugh Aitken, David Higgins and Betty Downie, John thanked his rink for playing so well and the other three rinks for the game. He also thanked David Higgins for sponsoring the event and everyone for supporting the event and hoped to see everyone again next year.

REPORT: JIM RYDER

PHOTO OF ALL COMPETITORS WHO TOOK PART IN THE INAUGURAL OCTOGENARIAN CHAMPIONSHIP ON THE ICE PRIOR TO THEIR GAMES.



PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT:
ALISON CLOUDSLEY, BLAIR MURRAY, DAVID MORGAN, MARY BELL, AND MICHAEL SHAW.
REPORT: ISOBEL COWAN

WHEELCHAIR CURLING COMPETITION AT LOCKERBIE

Twenty-eight wheelchair curlers travelled to Lockerbie Ice Rink in early December to compete in the annual Pick & Wick Wheelchair Curling Competition, which was sponsored by R A Wilson of Lockerbie and the Tesco Lockerbie Community Team.

Players travelled from as far away as Bridge of Allan and Newcastle and were drawn into eight teams. They played three round robin games followed by finals. The winners were Team Cloudsley (Alison Cloudsley from Gourrock, Mary Bell from Dumfries, David Morgan from Airdrie, and Michael Shaw from Hightae).

Following an excellent afternoon tea in the ice rink café the prizes were presented by Blair Murray on behalf of the sponsors.

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CAIRNGORM LADIES CELEBRATE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Cairngorm Ladies celebrated their 50th anniversary with banners, balloons and a cake during the Grampian Province Presidents Bonspiel. The club has become very small since Aviemore Ice Rink closed but we all curl in the Inverness rink on a Friday night.

CURLATHON RAISES OVER £2,500 FOR CHARITY

On Tuesday 6th December, Dundee Ice Arena hosted their 1st fun filled 12 hour Curlathon to raise funds for the charity Bliss that supports the parents of babies born premature or sick. The event was organised by Scott Colston whose son Sam was born prematurely due to his wife, Gillian, developing HELLP Syndrome during pregnancy.

The event involved a '12 hour team' who played six two-hour curling games back to back against six different local teams from 10am to 10pm. The ice was donated by Dundee Ice Arena and players donated their ice fees to Bliss.

On the day, there was a raffle organised by Karen Smith, and a bake sale organised by Linda Smith of Happie Cakes. As well as the raffle, signed Scotland Curling tops donated by Eve Muirhead and Anna Sloan were auctioned. Special visitors on the day included Bruce Crawford (RCCC CEO), Duncan Menzies (Scotland International Curler) and Heather Esplin (Bliss).

The total amount raised was an amazing £2,730! Which is over five times the original expected target due to the generosity and support of Dundee curlers and their families and friends.

Thanks to everyone who took part, helped out, donated, baked and purchased cakes, raffles tickets and made auction bids! Thanks also to all staff at Dundee Ice Arena.



PHOTO: DUNDEE EVENING TELEGRAPH
REPORT: SCOTT COLSTON



FARMERS COMPETITION AT HAMILTON

Between the 5th and 9th of December, Lanarkshire Ice Rink hosted their 36th annual Farmers Competition. Thirty teams participated from the north, south, east and west of the country. There was also a vast range in age groups from teenagers to octogenarians.



The Low Road final was a tight affair between Team Duncan (Kilsyth) v Team Reid (Kilmarnock) with 5th player Howie standing in. Going into the final end Duncan was up by one point, with the line score at 6-5. As the end progressed Team Duncan piled on the pressure. A reasonable port had developed by the skips stones but was manageable with the swinging keen ice. John Duncan played a perfect draw to take shot fully into the front of the 4 foot, Dougie Reid struck it out but rolled out himself. John tried again for a draw to Jim Strang's stone at the back of the 4 foot, forcing Reid to do the same and possibly go to an extra end. John Duncan's last stone was slightly heavy and hung out causing it to clip one of the port stones. Reid had to attempt Duncan's intended shot but he now had the wider port and played it to perfection; just coming to rest on their own shot at the back of the 4 foot and taking a two to win the game 7-6.

The High Road Final between last year's Low Road winners Team Waddell (Hamilton) v Team Strang (East Kilbride) started well for Craig Waddell, blanking the first, then taking a two followed by a steal of one. As the fourth end progressed each team piled in the shots to the 4 foot, continually changing the angles of the stones touching each other and at one point there were 7 stones in or touching the 4 foot. Team Strang lying one shot managed to get a long guard on Team Waddell's stones to prevent them from being utilised to change clutter of stones the head. This worked but the two stones in front of the T were Team Waddell's and George Strang settled for one shot as opposed to risking chipping a Waddell stone into shot and did not play his last stone.

Trailing 4-1 in the 6th Team Strang attempted to keep the game on a draw footing but it was Team Waddell who succeeded in changing the tactics into a striking end. The result being Stang with his last shot drew to an empty house for a 1. By the time it came to the skips last stones in the 7th Team Waddell were lying 2 in the 4' partially covered by their own guards. Strang had to be fully into the 4' to take shot. He got the right line but dropped his weight and came up short of the house. Craig Waddell came round this short stone and drew into the house for a 3. With the score now at 7-2 Team Strang shook hands.

Katie Allan from the sponsors team Central Farmers & Galloway MacLeod presented the prizes, she is pictured with High Road winners Team Waddell – Craig Waddell, Kyle Waddell, Cammy Smith and Jamie Allan.

REPORT: GORDON GILCHRIST



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**January
18th 2017**

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or click >>**

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STRANRAER TO HOST MASS TRY CURLING WEEKEND!

Stranraer Ice Rink are hosting a mass Try Curling weekend, with sessions taking place on Friday 20th January! There will be qualified coaches running the Try Curling sessions throughout the day, these sessions aim to provide non-curlers with their first on-ice experience of curling.

Stranraer has a strong curling tradition; North West Castle was actually the first hotel in the world to have its own indoor curling rink! There are other events taking place over the weekend, including a ceilidh on Saturday evening.

For more info, contact North West Castle (details below).



OUTGOING 2017 MEN'S TOUR TO USA

Competition for the Herries-Maxwell trophy is played out every five years between men from Scotland and the USA. Touring parties travel to play for the trophy on a 10-year cycle. The last Scottish tour was in 2007 when we toured the USA and brought back the trophy. Unfortunately, it was recovered by the USA in their return tour in 2012.

RCCC President, Clive Thomson, will captain the party of twenty curlers selected from clubs across the breadth of the country. Some 30 games will be played by each curler over the three-week tour of the northern states and preparations for the challenge are well under way. Over the summer, the Tourists have had a series of meetings and practice sessions to make the necessary arrangements and to help the party get to know each other. Now, with the countdown measuring in days, the itinerary has firmed up and we know where they are headed, who they are playing and when.

The tour will start in Chicago with a practice game on Sunday, January 15th and finish off in Boston with the final game and closing banquet at Brookline Country Club on Sunday 5th February.



Check out the tour website for details >>

NORTH WEST CASTLE

- Stranraer Ice Rink -

Come and join us for a truly Scottish Weekend!

Friday 20th & Saturday 21st January 2017

Come along and 'Try Curling' or improve your skills at North West Castle during our Scottish Weekend. Included in the weekend:

- 2 Nights Dinner, Bed & Breakfast
- A 'wee dram' on arrival
- 2 Hours **FREE** Curling Coaching with a team of qualified RCCC coaches
- **FREE** ice for curling practice
- Ceilidh on Saturday evening with the Life O'Reilly
- Complimentary upgrade (subject to availability)

Our Scottish Weekend rates are from £112 per person

BOOK NOW t: 01776 704 413 | e: hotel@northwestcastle.co.uk

Rate based on 2 people sharing a classic room, conditions apply.

FEATURES

SCOTTISH CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS – TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Tickets are now on sale for the 2017 Scottish Curling Championships Finals at Dewars Centre, Perth.

The Scottish Championships women's final will take place at 11am and the men's at 4pm on Saturday 25th February - both the men's and women's finals sold out in advance last year, so make sure you book early to avoid disappointment!

All seating will be located rink side in the ice hall for the finals, tickets will be sold separately for each final so you'll need one ticket for each session, should you wish to attend both. A pre-booked hot buffet lunch option is available to purchase in advance. Tickets will only be available to purchase online.

This is a great opportunity to see world-class curling teams in action and is not to be missed!



Purchase your tickets now at [Eventbrite >>](#)

Scottish Curling Championships 2017
25 February, Dewars Centre
PERTH

Finals tickets now on sale!
Available from **Eventbrite**

The Royal Caledonian Curling Club, National Governing Body for Scottish Curling

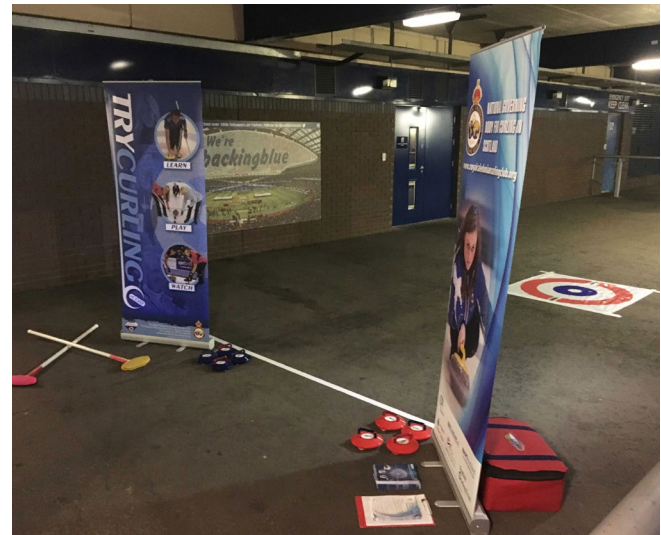
CURLING AT MURRAYFIELD STADIUM!

'Just a Sports Quiz' has been taking place at Murrayfield to raise funds for the Euan MacDonald Centre for the past few years. This year there was a new element – with an interactive curling round!

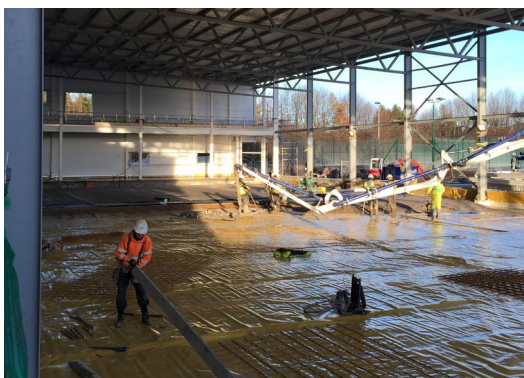
The RCCC supported the event by hosting the curling round by taking a new Age Kurling set to Murrayfield – where we were set up outside, it was very cold, which gave all the competitors a good feel for what it's like to play in an ice rink! It was run as an extra interactive round where we invited members from each team to throw stones that would count to their overall quiz score on the night.

With over 300 people in attendance – the majority of whom were rugby players - it was a great chance to promote curling, especially with it being the night before the European Curling Championships started.

We are delighted to hear that as part of our support on the evening, Just a Sports Quiz have raised over £25,000 already!



NEW CURLING RINK IN STIRLING



Fifteen years since it was first proposed, a new ice rink is being constructed in Stirling. Ground was broken in August 2016, the roof went on in November and construction is on track for completion in June 2017. This will be followed by the gradual preparation of the ice for curling in time for the start of the 2017-18 Olympic and Paralympic season.

This new facility will provide four sheets of dedicated curling ice in addition to the existing six sheets currently available at The Peak, which will see more ice skating on spare ice. It will be open almost all year and will be used by club curlers. It will also be the base for the Curling Performance Programme and known as the National Curling Academy.

The building is being funded by Stirling Council and Sportscotland and will be accessed via the main entrance to The Peak.

COMPETITIONS & EVENTS

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Simply click on the dates for more information.

28th – 29th December
ASHAM UNDER 17 SLAM –
FORFAR
Forfar Indoor Sports

3rd – 10th January
WORLD JUNIOR-B CURLING
CHAMPIONSHIPS 2017
Östersund, Sweden

5th – 8th January
MERCURE PERTH MASTERS
Dewars Centre

6th – 8th January
SCOTTISH CURLING SENIOR
CHAMPIONSHIP – QUALIFIER
Forfar Indoor Sports

6th – 8th January
SCOTTISH CURLING SENIOR
CHAMPIONSHIP – QUALIFIER
Ayr Ice Rink

7th – 8th January
SCOTTISH JUNIOR CURLING CLUB
CHALLENGE – DIVISION 1 & 2
Murrayfield Curling

12th – 15th January
BERNESE LADIES CUP
Switzerland

13th – 15th January
DUTCH MASTERS MIXED DOUBLES
Zoetermeer, Netherlands

17th – 22nd January
SCOTTISH CURLING JUNIOR
CHAMPIONSHIPS
intu Braehead

17th – 19th January
BRITISH WHEELCHAIR OPEN
Lanarkshire Ice Rink

19th – 22nd January
CERAMTEC GERMAN MASTERS
Hamburg, Germany

19th – 22nd January
GLYNHILL LADIES INTERNATIONAL
intu Braehead

You can also view
these dates @
royalcaledonianscurlingclub.org

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EUROPEAN CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS



Meanwhile Scotland's women stormed through the round robin – going undefeated until the crucial semi-final game, where they lost to Russia. This frustrating result put the girls out of contention for the gold that they had been aiming for, however they recovered from their devastating semi-final loss by beating the Czech Republic by 6-2 to win the bronze. Afterwards Muirhead said

“Seven consecutive medals is pretty special. It's not the colour we wanted, but we fought hard for that bronze medal.”

The Russian team who thwarted Scotland's hopes of an undefeated record went on to take the gold, while Sweden had to settle for silver after their skip played a nightmare last stone.

It wasn't just the curlers who were working hard all week though – with over 170 volunteers helping the event run as smoothly as possible all week.

“This event wouldn't have been possible without the incredible amounts of hard work put in by the whole group of technical officials, World Curling Federation staff, our excellent partners, venue personnel, the whole local organising committee and of course our fantastic team of volunteers. [They] have given up so many hours and days to deliver an outstanding and memorable European Championships.”

– Susan Murrin, Event Manager.

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For game by game reporting from the ECC, click here >>

International championship curling returned to Scotland with the 2016 Le Gruyère AOP European Curling Championships which took place 19th – 26th November. Altogether 26 men's teams and 20 women's teams took part in the event's 'A' and 'B' Divisions, with round-robin play taking place throughout the week.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday there were over 2,500 schoolchildren from all over Scotland in to cheer on their favourites. It was a great opportunity to inspire thousands of potential future stars and they really enjoyed it! RCCC Development Manager Ailidh Hood was really encouraged by their reaction to curling:

“The kids are loving it, they're singing the chants, they're waving their flags and they've been engaging with it so far. There's a lot of school teachers asking how they can get their kids to try curling themselves which is really what the whole point of this was.”

On the ice Scotland's men had a mixed week with impressive wins against strong teams – they defeated Sweden, Norway and Switzerland, teams who would eventually go on to claim the gold, silver and bronze – however they also suffered surprise defeats, losing out to Denmark and Finland, the two bottom-ranked teams, who will be relegated to Division B for next year's event.

These highs and lows can to a conclusion with a tightly fought final round robin game against Russia, which came down to the last end. A loss for Scotland meant the end of their campaign. After the game, a deflated Brewster described his last shot.

“We had the game, we had the win. It felt like I threw it the same as the one directly before and it just went heavy. It felt exactly the same throw, the sweepers liked it but it just slid on ... I didn't see that coming.”

Sweden went on to win the gold, leaving Norway with the silver and Switzerland took the bronze.



PHOTOS: © RICHARD GRAY

SKILL AWARDS CHALLENGE

On Saturday 10th December the Skill Awards Challenge took place at Dewars Centre in Perth. A full 16 teams took part in the competition in which 64 juniors from across the country enjoyed a fun and full competitive day of curling. After three group stage games, the teams were split into High Road, Low Road and Fun Challenge meaning that all children took part and competed for the whole day.

In the final stages, the High Road semi-finals were between Perth vs Highland and Dumfries vs Stranraer, with Perth and Stranraer going through to the finals. After an error with Stranraer's last stone Perth had a draw to the eight foot to tie the game up. The stone was swept furiously, but unfortunately he came up short only scoring two and Stranraer (pictured) claimed the victory!

The low road semi-finals were Braehead Rockers vs Lockerbie and Ayr vs Dundee. After close games Lockerbie and Ayr progressed through to the finals with Lockerbie taking the win.



For more from the Skill Awards Challenge, [click here >>](#)

DOUBLE RINK

The Scottish Double Rink Championship was held on the 2nd to 4th December at Stranraer Ice Rink, the championship is open to RCCC affiliated clubs, each represented by two teams. After several late withdrawals, six teams competed, this meant that the competition could be run as a full round robin and a final.

In the first session there was fairly high scoring as the teams settled in after their journeys. The quality of curling throughout was high competition intense. After eight sessions, with one game still to play, four teams were still hopeful of a place in the final. After Suttieside and Duns took a win each the finalists were confirmed as Dunfermline and Suttieside. In the final, after a evenly matched start, Dunfermline gradually gained the advantage in both games to emerge as winners.



DUNFERMLINE 1: SKIP ROBBIE STEVENSON, DAVE THOMSON, COLIN LOW, EDDIE MCFARLANE
DUNFERMLINE 2: SKIP JAMIE STEVENSON, JIM BARR, DEREK LAIRD, JOHN GEYER

For a full report and line scores [click here >>](#)



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SCOTTISH CURLING MIXED DOUBLES

Team Aitken/Mouat were crowned Scottish Curling Mixed Doubles Champions after an 8-0 win against Team McCleary/McCleary – in the final at intu Braehead on Sunday 11th December.

At the conclusion of the round robin there were three teams sitting on six wins and one loss – Aitken/Mouat, McCleary/McCleary and Jackson/Whyte. Two teams – Aitken/Aitken and Paterson/Reid – were tied on three wins and four losses so there was a tiebreaker on Saturday night to determine the team that would fill the last semi-final slot. The teams were fairly evenly matched and traded ends throughout the game. A three in the seventh for the Aitkens, followed by the first steal of the game in the final end saw Aitken/Aitken through to the semi-finals, end score 10-7.

The semi-finals both showed clear cut winners – with Aitken/Mouat winning their game against Aitken/Aitken in six ends, with the final score 12-4. In the other game Jackson/Whyte almost managed a late come back, but eventually conceded to McCleary/McCleary, final score 9-5.

Aitken/Mouat were in control of the final from the start. After taking a one in the first end they then stole for the rest of the game. By the seventh end Aitken/Mouat were up 7-0, desperately needing some points on the board, McCleary/McCleary tried to open things up with their penultimate stone, they moved the long guards out front but all the stones stayed in play. Gina then took out a yellow that was sitting out the front and rolled into the house behind a guard, Lee tried his best with a big weight with his final stone, but it wasn't meant to be and handshakes were offered.

Bruce and Gina secured their fourth Scottish Curling Mixed Doubles title with a final score of 8-0. They will represent Scotland at the 2017 World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship in Lethbridge, Canada from 22nd – 29th April 2017.



PHOTO: © JEFF HOLMES PIX



For a full report from the final day of competition, [click here >>](#)



Tweet of the Month...



mark callan
@mcsharky1



Following

A big thank u 2 my ice crew for the Euro Championships for a great job ! #ecc2016 #roadto2018 #awesometeam



For more like this, follow [@mcsharky1](#)

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