

Media Packet 2026



@CurIDC



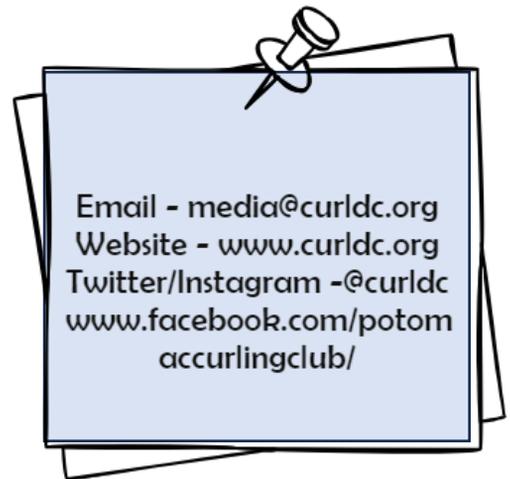
curldc.org



potomaccurlingclub



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About Potomac Curling Club

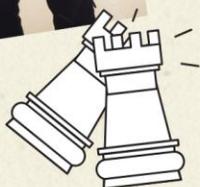
Potomac Curling Club (PCC) of the National Capital Area Inc., a 501-C3 non-profit organization, is located at The Gardens Ice House in Laurel, MD. PCC opened in 2002 and has around 300 members. Founded by six employees of the Canadian Embassy in 1961, the club is an all-volunteer club running leagues nightly for curlers of all levels. More information about the club can be found at curldc.org.



Curling is for Everyone

Curling is often called "chess on ice," but its true beauty lies in its remarkable accessibility. Unlike many high-impact sports, curling welcomes individuals of all ages and athletic abilities, from young children to seniors in their eighties.

Because the game relies more on strategy, finesse, and teamwork than raw speed or strength, it levels the playing field for everyone. Furthermore, with the use of "delivery sticks" for those with limited mobility and the growth of wheelchair curling, it stands as one of the most inclusive sports in the world. At its heart, the "Spirit of Curling" fosters a culture of mutual respect and socializing, making the rink a welcoming community hub for anyone willing to pick up a broom.



About Curling

Curling is a rapidly growing winter sport. Curling debuted as a medal sport during the 1924 inaugural Olympic Winter Games in Chamonix, France. It was not recognized as a medal sport again until the 1998 Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan. The Pete Fenson rink made U.S. history by winning the nation's first Olympic medal in curling at the 2006 Games in Torino, Italy. The US Men's Olympic Curling Team won the gold medal in 2018, in a game dubbed the "Miracurl on Ice."

A standard curling game consists of two teams of four players each. Each player will "throw" two rocks down a sheet of ice towards a target, called the "house." While one player "throws" two players will sweep, or brush, the ice to persuade the rock to run straighter and further. The fourth player, or "skip" will stay in the house, calling the shots and directing the sweepers. Players will rotate until 16 rocks have been thrown, this completes an "end." A standard game will consist of either 8 or 10 ends, lasting around two hours. Players will then "broomstack," meaning that the two teams will share a beverage, perhaps a snack after the game, all in the "Spirit of Curling."

Reference: USA Curling



In doubles curling, teams consist of only two players—one male and one female—rather than the traditional four. The game is faster-paced and more strategic, as each end begins with two rocks already positioned on the ice (one for each team) before any shots are even thrown.

Because there are fewer teammates to sweep, the person who delivers the stone often has to immediately jump up and start sweeping their own shot. This makes the format physically demanding and requires a high level of versatility, as both players must be excellent at throwing, sweeping, and calling the strategy.



CURLING TERMS

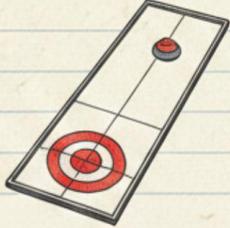
ROCK OR STONE

The 43lbs of polished granite that curls down slide down the ice.



SHEET

The area of ice on which a game is played.



BUTTON

The middle of the target, or house.



END

One segment of a game, comparable to an inning in baseball. A game consists of either 8 or 10 ends.



There is no difference between Men's and Women's curling.



FUN FACTS ABOUT CURLING



16TH CENTURY SCOTLAND

Curling started in 16th century Scotland.



GRANITE ROCKS

Curling Rocks are made of granite and weigh around 43lbs.



TWO DIFFERENT SHOES

Curling is the only sport where players wear two different shoes. One shoe is grippy while one shoe is slippery.



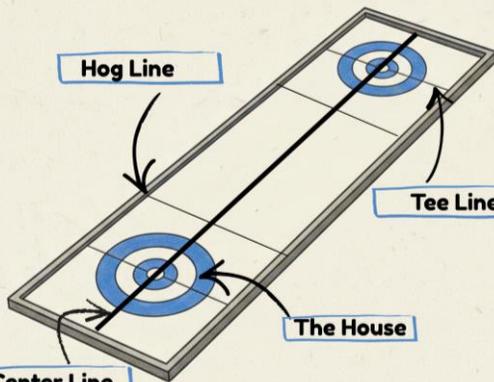
PEBBLED ICE

Curling ice is very different from Figure Skating ice. It has "pebble" or tiny droplets of water the ice. This helps for the rocks to "curl."



BONSPIEL.

A curling tournament is called a Bonspiel.



Why are you
sweeping the ice?

Naomi Huang, a PCC member and
member of Team Chinese-Tiapei in
the World Mixed Curling
Championship 2022



Photo Credit: World Curling Federation

DISTANCE

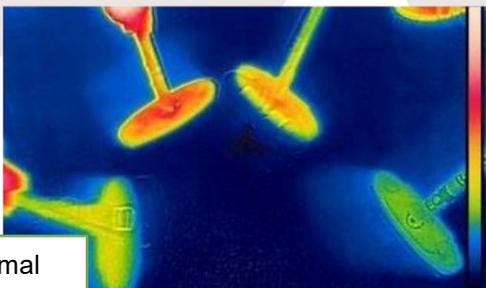
It makes the stone go further

Contrary to popular belief, you can't speed a stone up after it's thrown, but you *can* stop it from slowing down.

The Physics: Curling ice isn't smooth; it's covered in tiny frozen water droplets called **pebble**.

The Action: By scrubbing the ice vigorously, sweepers create friction. This friction generates heat, which momentarily melts the tops of those pebbles into a microscopic layer of water.

The Result: This thin film acts like a lubricant, reducing friction and allowing the stone to glide much further—sometimes as much as **10 to 15 feet** further.



This thermal
image shows
sweepers
warming the ice.

DIRECTION

It keeps the stone straighter

Because the stone is thrown with a slight rotation, it naturally wants to "curl" (arc) to the left or right as it slows down.

The Action: Sweeping reduces the friction that causes the stone to grab the ice and turn.

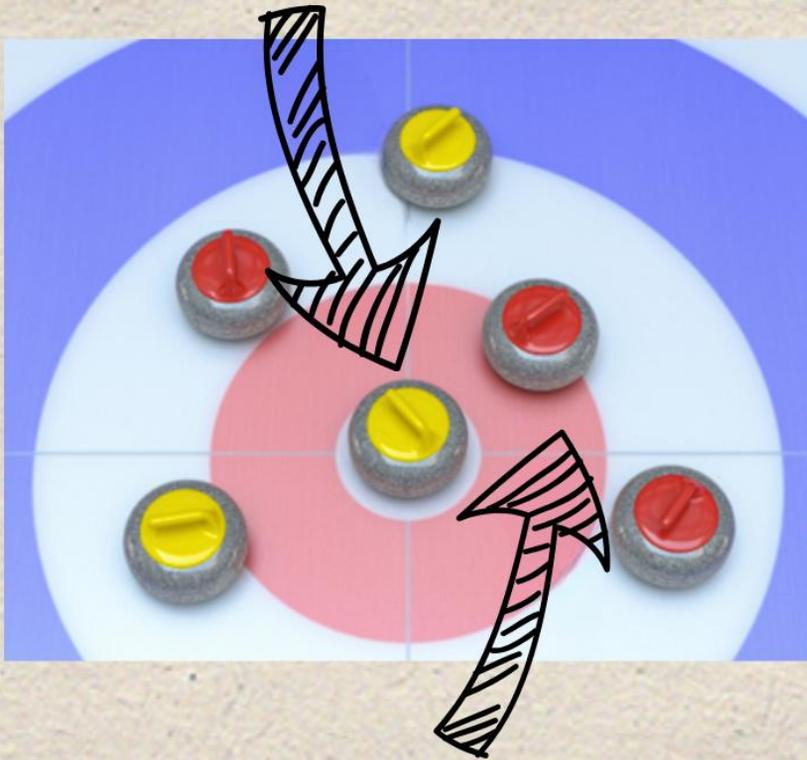
The Result: If a stone is curling too early and might miss its target, the sweepers "hold it straight" by sweeping. Once they stop, the friction returns, and the stone begins to curl again.

Cleaning the Path

Sweepers also watch for "picks." Even a tiny hair, a piece of lint, or a grain of dirt can get caught under the stone's running edge. If the stone hits a piece of debris, it can suddenly veer off course or stop completely.

HOW TO SCORE IN CURLING

After all rocks are thrown, the team with the rock closest to the center "button" scores points. Only one team can score per end. Here, The yellow rock is closest, so yellow scores one point for that rock.



The scoring team gets additional points for each rock that is closer to the button than their opponent's stone. Here, the next closest rock to the button is red, so yellow only gets one point.

The Roaring Game

Curling is often called "The Roaring Game," not just for the sound of stones on the ice, but for the thunderous amount of tradition that surrounds it. Here is a breakdown of the customs that make the sport unique:

The Ceremonial Start: Handshakes & Bagpipes

Every game begins and ends with a hearty handshake. Before the first stone is thrown, opponents wish each other "Good Curling." This isn't just a formality; it's a pledge to play with integrity. At bonspiels (tournaments), the final games are led onto the ice with bagpipes. Pipers traditionally lead the players onto the ice, a nod to the sport's 16th-century Scottish roots, often playing "Scotland the Brave."



"Good Curling"

On-Ice Flair: Costumes & Pins

While serious competition has its uniforms, "bonspiel culture" is famous for its costumes. It's common to see teams dressed as anything from superheroes to lumberjacks, bringing a festival-like energy to the ice.

Beyond the outfits, curlers are prolific collectors. Pin trading is the "social currency" of the sport. Players exchange small lapel pins representing their home clubs or past tournaments.



The Ultimate Tradition: Broomstacking

Perhaps the most sacred tradition is Broomstacking. Historically, curlers would literally stack their wooden brooms in a pile after a game (or even at the halfway mark) and gather around a fire to warm up with a drink.

Today, it refers to the social hour after the match. The etiquette is strict but friendly:

- The winners buy the first round for the losers.
- The second round is usually reciprocated by the losing team.
- Players sit with their opponents and build friendships that often last long after the game has ended.



Some FAQs about Curling!



WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN'S AND WOMEN'S CURLING?

THERE ISN'T ONE. MEN AND WOMEN PLAY ON THE SAME ICE, WITH THE SAME ROCKS, AND SAME EQUIPMENT. SOME PEOPLE WILL SAY THAT THEY TEND TO PLAY DIFFERENT STRATEGIES, BUT STRATEGY IS DETERMINED BY THE INDIVIDUAL TEAMS AND NOT DETERMINED BY GENDER. THERE ARE ACTUALLY MIXED CURLING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS WHERE MEN AND WOMEN PLAY ON THE SAME TEAM. AT THE CLUB LEVEL, MOST TEAMS ARE COMBINATIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN PLAYING TOGETHER.

HOW YOUNG DOES CURLING START? AM I TOO OLD?

CURLERS CAN START WITH SMALLER ROCKS AROUND THE AGE OF 5. THEY MOVE TO FULL SIZE ROCKS AND CAN START SERIOUS TRAINING AROUND THE AGE OF ELEVEN. HOWEVER, MOST CLUB LEVEL CURLERS ARE ADULTS WHO ENJOY THE GAME, LOVE THE SOCIAL ATMOSPHERE, AND PLAY FOR FUN! WE HAVE HAD CLUB MEMBERS THAT CURL INTO THEIR 90S, SO CURLING IS A SPORT THAT CAN BE ENJOYED BY ALMOST ANY AGE!

WHO IS THE SWEEPER AND WHO IS THE PERSON WHO THROWS THE ROCK?

ALTHOUGH THERE ARE DIFFERENT POSITIONS, ALL PLAYERS SWEEP AND ALL PLAYERS THROW ROCKS.



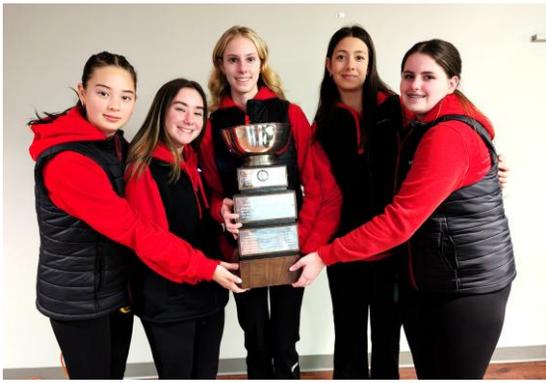
I HAVE TROUBLE WITH MY HIP/LEG/KNEE. CAN I STILL PLAY?

CURLING IS A VERY ADAPTIVE SPORT. THROWING STICKS CAN BE USED TO DELIVER THE ROCK WITHOUT HAVING TO GET INTO A SQUAT OR LUNGE POSITION. STABILIZERS CAN HELP SUPPORT CURLERS WHO NEED MORE SUPPORT, AND WHEELCHAIR CURLING IS VERY POPULAR. CURLING CAN BE ENJOYED BY ALMOST EVERYONE!



CAN I RENT A LANE?

UNLIKE SOME OTHER SPORTS THAT PEOPLE MAY BE FAMILIAR WITH, SUCH AS BOWLING, WE DO NOT RENT LANES, AND THERE IS NO OPEN TIME FOR THE PUBLIC. BECAUSE WE PUT SLIPPERY SHOES ON ICE, PROPER INSTRUCTION IS REQUIRED FOR SAFETY. WE HOLD "TRY CURLING" OPEN HOUSE STYLE EVENTS AS WELL AS MORE INTENSIVE "LEARN TO CURL" CLASSES. ALL ARE AVAILABLE FOR SIGN UP ON [CURLDC.ORG](http://curldc.org)



2026- Potomac Members Freya Stilp and Sahana Venugopal Win the regional championship (GNCC) qualifying them for the Junior Nationals for players under 18 (U18) where they finished 2nd in their pool!
 USCA U18 Women's National Championship
 (Lafayette, CO)



COMPETITIVE CURLING AT POTOMAC CURLING CLUB



2026 USCA Senior Men's National Championship (Wauwautosa, WI)
 Potomac Curling Club Team Qualified! - David Schlanger, Brian Dauernheim, Mark Carlson, J.r Grohs



2017/2018 Potomac Players
 Hunter Clawson
 Katherine Gourianova
 Eli Clawson
 Were national champions and represented Team USA at The World Championships



Potomac Curling Club Members, Andy Dunnam and Hunter Clawson competed at Olympic Trials in 2022, coming in 4th!



Curlers from several national teams train or have trained at our curling center.

The Spirit of Curling

The Potomac Curling Club is 100% volunteer run. We have no paid employees. Meaning everything from, building and maintain ice, to cooking up amazing meals for our bonspiels is all done by incredible volunteers. There is a place for everyone in the curling community. Bakers, broadcasters, bartenders, and board members, can find their place on and off the ice as part of the community surrounding The Roaring Game! We call this The Spirit of Curling.

It is in this spirit that we are launching our #WeAreCurling Campaign. We want to show that Curling is for Everyone!

Held at Potomac Curling Club



PCC members officiate at national competitions.



Bonspiels are all about the food!

