



August 19, 2011

Fellow Schenectady Curlers,

I hope that after a pleasant, relaxing and enjoyable summer, you are all looking forward to the beginning of the 2011-2012 curling season.

The Board of Managers and a dedicated group of volunteers have been guiding the club through its traditional summer maintenance, upkeep and improvement activities. Much of this is 'behind-the-scenes' activity that is not always immediately apparent to the eye, but it is nonetheless critical to ensuring the club's continued success.

Two major initiatives this summer involve the repair of Sheet 1 and the first phase of a multi-year project to improve the air quality inside the curling shed. During June, July and August, a significant portion of Sheet 1 was excavated and inspected, a diagnosis was made and a corrective plan was implemented. The Board is confident that this solution will prevent last year's problems that manifested on Sheet 1 from recurring this season. Jim Ridenour, with volunteer assistance from several club members, spent many hours on this project over several weeks, and I would like to thank them for the time and effort that they invested in addressing this problem.

The second major initiative, relating to humidity levels in the ice shed and their impact on the quality of the playing surface, has proven to be a complex effort that the Board of Managers felt would best be accomplished in phases. By taking a longer-term view of this project, this allows the Board to better manage available funds, but also to assess the impact of each phase of the project as we move forward. As was mentioned in a previous letter to the membership, the Board is comfortable with the notion that it is far more important to do this project correctly than to do it quickly.

To that end, beginning in late August and early September, the north, east and south exterior walls of the ice shed will be insulated with 2" of spray foam insulation and covered with metal siding. This should minimize any air infiltration through the walls, in addition to reducing conductive heat transfer between the exterior and interior of the ice shed, and should also begin to reduce large swings that sometimes occur in the interior humidity levels. In addition, this extra insulation should cause the club to consume less energy at start-up in September. The ice committee will assess the impact of these changes during the 2011-2012 season, which will enable the Board to decide on the next phase of this project.

In the past two seasons, informal and anecdotal feedback indicated that curlers from other clubs may have avoided participating in Schenectady bonspiels because of a perceived deterioration in our ice conditions. With this recent investment in our facility, as well as planned future improvements, it is extremely important for all of our members who travel to other clubs to mention these upgrades to our facility.

The membership survey that was offered during the month of June provided the Board with some valuable feedback of how the membership wants the club to progress. We received more than 125 responses, which exceeded our expectations. The Board will be presenting some of the more notable findings from this survey in the early part of the season.



As the 2011-2012 season is a non-Olympic year, the club's orientation is going to be shifted more towards member retention, rather than member recruitment. While we always welcome any opportunity to recruit new members, we have seen some exceptional growth in the past few seasons, and this year presents an opportunity to consolidate those gains and provide our returning members with enhanced instruction, training and playing opportunities. As you should know by this point, we are hosting, in cooperation with Brooms Up Curling Supplies, a training seminar in late September with instruction from 3-time curling World Champion Glenn Howard and members of his team. In addition, Amy Howansky, Charlie Brown and Dion Warr have assembled an aggressive and comprehensive calendar of curling schools and other training opportunities for curlers in October and November.

There are some important changes to some of our established leagues for this season:

- The All-American and Dr. Ack will be switching places this season; the All-American will happen during the first half of the season, and the Dr. Ack will happen in the second half.
- The Friday evening open league, which had its inaugural – and very successful – season last year, has been renamed the Stopera League.
- Beginning this season, the Pletenik and Graham leagues will become more integrated, with a ladder system that promotes the 2011-2012 Pletenik champion and runner-up skips into the 2012-2013 Graham league. In order to accommodate these two successful Pletenik skips, those skips that finish in the bottom two spots of the Graham in 2011-2012 will be provided an opportunity to skip in the Pletenik in 2012-2013. The final few details of this system are being completed and will be communicated to interested participants within the next few weeks.
- The Van de Car has now been expanded to nine teams, providing additional opportunities to play in the men's high-level league.

Also, the Board has adopted a new policy on dues collection for the 2011-2012 season; a copy of this new dues policy is included in this membership packet. The large majority of members will notice no change. However, in accordance with the club bylaws, the Board is going to be more rigorous in ensuring prompt payment from members who may, in the past, have carried a balance past January 1st.

The current startup plan for this season has the compressors being started on Friday, September 2nd, with other icemaking activities flowing from that date. As always, the ice committee can use lots of volunteer help in making our playing surface ready. If you would like to volunteer in our most important annual project, please contact Jim Ridenour.

The Board of Managers and I are looking forward to a new season of curling – we hope that you are, too. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or any member of the Board of Managers.

Good curling!

Jim Jordan
President
Schenectady Curling Club