

## Best Practices: Hosting a Curling Bonspiel

*Thank you to the Grand River, North Bay and Windsor-Essex Chapters for your advice!*

### Time of year

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- Responses are inconclusive; chapters have held successful bonspiels at the end of January and at various times in February, March, April and November (the curling season is usually from September to the end of April).

### Duration and schedule

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- The shortest amount of ice time booked by respondents was two hours, which the chapter cautions as being risky since the best team may not be the true winners of the day. The other two chapters rent the venue for at least five hours.

**Below is a sample of the duration and schedule of each participating chapter's bonspiel.**

#### Grand River:

- If you have 2 draws, playing 6 end games, each game takes roughly 1.5 hours – so scheduling a start time every 2 hours gives lots of time for warmups, cleaning and ice prep between games. If you have only 1 draw, you don't need the full 2 hours between. Lunch is served between games.
  - Start times: 9:00am (Draw 1, Game 1) / 11:00am (Draw 2, Game 1) / 1:00pm (Draw 1, Game 2) / 3:00pm (Draw 2, Game 2)
  - End: by 5:00pm

#### North Bay:

- Schedule:

2:00pm – 2:30pm	Registration
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Warm up / demo
3:00pm – 4:00pm	Game 1
4:00pm – 5:00pm	Game 2
5:00pm – 5:45pm	Supper
5:45pm – 6:45pm	Game 3
6:45pm – 7:15pm	Wrap up and prizes

- Rules of Play:
  1. Each game will have 4 ends only.

2. Scoring will be based on the number of ends won per game (1 point per end won).
3. Draw to the button:
  - a. Each player on your team gets a shot to draw to the button.
  - b. Rock will be cleared after each shot.
  - c. Sweeping is allowed.
  - d. If on a team of 3 one person will shoot twice.
  - e. Scoring is as follows:
    - 5 points – Button
    - 4 points – 4 foot
    - 3 points – 8 foot
    - 2 points – 12 foot
    - 1 point – anywhere else in play
  - f. Total score for all 4 shots will be added and divided by 2. If the number is an odd number then round the final number up (i.e.  $7/2 = 3.5$  round to 4)
4. In the event of a tie the score will be based on the final score from the 3 games. If a tie still remains between the teams then the winning team will be drawn from a hat.

#### Windsor-Essex:

- We book the ice for 2 hours including tutorial time so we get about 1.5 hours of play time. We aim to fit in 3 games for each team. After the curling we do a buffet brunch.
- Starting game: teams are randomly matched for the first round to fill all the sheets. They throw the rocks from one end to the next and then return back to the starting end. Once they are done that the game is done (rather than playing full games or continuing to a certain score). Once the game finishes (they are back to where they started) their scores are recorded.
- Rules of play: The winning team gets 5 points plus the total number of points they scored during that game. If it is a tie, both teams get 3 points plus the total number of points that team scored during that game. If they lose they get one point plus the total number of points that team scored during that game. For example, if a team wins 5-3, the winning team gets 10 points (5+5), and the losing team gets 4 points (1+3). Then those two teams are matched against a new team. If two sheets are done at the same time, the winning team stays on their sheet and the losing team from the other sheet plays them. Sometimes you have to wait a few minutes for another sheet to finish but it's usually not long and people like a quick break anyways. No one plays the same team twice.

## Event revenues & expenses

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- Bonspiels are typically not used as fundraising events and are budgeted to break-even.
- The two biggest fees you will incur are the club rental and food. This may differ throughout clubs and locations. Variables also include the duration of the rental, the type and amount of food provided and whether the club prohibits outside food or offsite caterers.
- Depending, your chapter may wish to subsidize the event (and have planned accordingly in its Chapter Business Plan) or may rely entirely on ticket sales and sponsorships.
- All three responding chapters typically approach organizations for prize donations (see section below on Prizes).
- Below are two examples of recent chapter bonspiel entry fees and expenses:
  - We've been charging \$40 / head, \$160 / team. The only real expenses are the club rental and the food (1 meal and snacks throughout the day). Chapter does not subsidize (aims for ticket sales and sponsorships to cover costs).
  - In past years we charged \$25/person but we also used \$200 of chapter money to subsidize the rest. This year we charged \$30/person because we had nothing planned in our chapter business plan for a budget but ran a deficit of a bit less than \$100. Overall though this price point doesn't scare off our participants.

## Registration

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- Be clear when promoting your event to state whether the bonspiel will be a relaxed/fun event, or if it will focus on competition/skill. Emphasize this in the registration form so participants will know what to expect from the day and won't be disappointed.
- A sample registration form from North Bay Chapter is attached. Registrants are able to submit anywhere from 1-4 people. As more people register, they are added to existing teams in order to make complete teams.

### **Expect to have last minute cancellations and no-shows:**

- All 3 chapters have stated that people will not show up; be prepared and flexible to rearrange teams on the spot. The following methods were suggested:

- Re-organize the number of teams and the number of players per team: ex. three teams of four get re-organized into four teams of three (and everyone makes new friends).
- Essentially overbook: take on an extra team or some extra individuals to fill spots for no shows. The Chapter was hesitant to do this, but if not, would lose money on this event and it has worked out so far. On the occasion that the Chapter did end up with an extra team, they were able to find a team that was ok to take a break every round.

## Prizes

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- All three chapters agreed - everyone who competes needs to get a prize. These have usually been gift cards ranging in value from \$5 to \$50. Some chapters give the higher value cards to the winners, another chapter likes to do this as a random draw (so anyone can get the \$50 card). Approaching restaurants for gift cards has worked well as has budgeting the entry fees to contribute to purchasing prizes.

## Live demo

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- All three chapters strongly recommend approaching the club to provide a 20 to 30-minute demonstration for those who are new to curling (your event is likely to have novices). Some clubs will provide this service for free.

## Food

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- Have food for snacking on between games. In addition, do have a proper lunch/dinner at some point, buffet works well.
- Generally, try to serve the meal at the hallway point if you're playing for more than 2 hours. Refer to the *Duration and schedule* section for more info.

## Other

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- Let those new to curling know what sort of clothing is appropriate to bring (especially footwear).

### North Bay Sample Scoring Sheet

Teams	Name	3:00 pm draw	Ice	Ends Won	4:00 pm draw	Ice	Ends Won	6:00 pm draw	Ice	Ends Won	Draw to Button Team Score	TOTAL ENDS WON+DTB SCORE
1	The Outsiders	Team 3	1		Team 7	6		Team 6	5			
2	The Rolling Stones	Team 9	2		Team 8	2		Team 5	4			
3	MU Surveying	Team 1	1		Team 4	4		Team 7	1			
4	Hoopaipe	Team 8	4		Team 3	4		Team 10	3			
5	Lucky Locketts	Team 7	5		Team 6	3		Team 2	4			
6	Curling Connection	Team 10	3		Team 5	3		Team 1	5			
7	Trail Blazers	Team 5	5		Team 1	6		Team 3	1			
8	Game of Stones	Team 4	4		Team 2	2		Team 9	2			
9	Heather's Angels	Team 2	2		Team 10	5		Team 8	2			
10	Rock Breakers	Team 6	3		Team 9	5		Team 4	3			

\* Complete your draw to the button challenge after the 6pm game. All 4 players shoot.

- Button 5 Points
- Four Foot 4 Points
- Eight Foot 3 Points
- Twelve Foot 2 Points
- Free Guard Zone 1 Points

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 1	Curl Jam	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 6	Shot Rocks	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 2	The Rolling Stones	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 7	Trail Blazers	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 3	MU Surveying	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 8	Game of Brooms	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 4	Hoopaipe	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 9	Mason's Angels	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 5	Curling Connection	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	

	NAME	SCORE
TEAM 10	The Outsiders	
PLAYER 1		
PLAYER 2		
PLAYER 3		
PLAYER 4		
	TOTAL	