

2011 GNCC Annual Meeting

Saturday Morning

Instruction and Coaching :: Sandra McMakin

Most of Sandra's presentation was geared toward clubs with dedicated ice. The predominate feeling is that USA Curling itself is not focused on growing the sport, that they have conflicting goals.

Level I Instructor

No prerequisites or experience is required. The objective is to run open houses, to be organized and introduce curling in a fun and safe way, and to teach a simple and novice delivery. LTC events are fantastic for getting new people out onto the ice, but follow-up is needed to ensure these new curlers are getting the additional help and instruction they need to progress and develop as curlers. Clinics offered for the membership every year are most helpful follow-up to help curlers refresh and develop their skill.

Level II Instructor

Prerequisite: Level I certification. A more technical coach who evaluates the mechanics of more advance delivery techniques; may include video analysis.

Level I and II Instructor Courses help build clubs and also help to grow the sport

Level I & II Coaching

Level I & II Instructor certifications are required in addition to other course work. Coaching levels are based on experience. Sandra is a Level III Coach because she's coached at Nationals three times.

USCA is developing programs for coaching, some of which will be online soon, however they seem to be more focused on the High Performance Program (developing world-class athletes) at the moment (Sandra's opinion). On National level, focus is on developing high performance coaching pool. On regional level, the aim should be to position instructors and coaches to become part of the coaching program.

USCA Technical Drills Manual exists, though is not easily immediately accessible. Email Sandra for the manual. Is there a way to make this sort of material available online for clubs to download and utilize within their own clubs?

Grassroots Curling (Arena Clubs) :: Geoff Broadhurst (I joined this session midway through)

The focus of Geoff's presentation was to outline the GNCC's ongoing and expanding objective to grow the sport of curling through intensive focus on building and maintaining arena clubs. Not only will the GNCC help new clubs get started, rent rocks to these new clubs, but will also help

clubs focus on being as organized and efficient as possible and help the club target marketing campaigns to drive membership.

For brand new clubs without arena ice, Learn to Curl Kits would be set up as a curling exposition and will travel from one facility to another. The current GNCC insurance policy, however is problematic, as it cannot follow an exposition-like event around. Arenas themselves are reluctant to extend their coverage to GNCC Club affiliated arena clubs.

It's a good idea for arena clubs to convince the ice manager/management team to try curling at least one time or perhaps for a season. This builds a friendly relationship and gives the ice manager an idea of how important the best possible curling ice is to the game.

Support Development of Organized Clubs

GNCC experienced a 25% growth this last year. Previous Olympic bump was 15%. Before that it was 10%. It is becoming even more important that the GNCC supports these new clubs to keep them vital.

GNCC will offer Seminars on club management practices, i.e. finances, membership, arena relations, etc. and will provide GNCC curling ice making clinics, run GNCC annual arena club championships, direct clubs to informative online resources ::

http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/arena_curling/ -and-
www.usacurl.org/goodcurling/index.php?option=com_content&task=section&id=13&Itemid=47

With Sandra McMakin, run 2 weekend USCA Arena Club/Dedicated Club Mini Curling Conference/Skills Camp for GNCC North & South (currently attempting to set this up at Palmetto this summer). These will be based on the ideas the USCA uses for their mini-membership conferences.

Established clubs/Dedicated clubs should partner with nearby arena clubs to create and establish Friendlies (Geoff, "Great idea. This is the first time I've heard this idea." (Since clubs like PCC already do this on their own, making this a GNCC sanctioned activity/concept would be a big step toward supporting arena clubs and growing the sport.)

GNCC should assign mentors from more established clubs to support newer clubs. A number of the 18 GNCC Arena Clubs are on life support and could use the help.

USCA is considering copying the GNCC's concept of the Annual Arena Club Team Championship, due to Geoff's success with GNCC's version.

Support a Club to Build a Dedicated Curling Facility

Elected to the USCA BOD in 1998 and became USCA VP of Member Services from 2000 and 2003, Geoff is a major and valuable resource of information for financing and building dedicated rinks. He has a large bank of data on the financing and building dedicate facilities in the US and Europe. He secured \$200,000 WCF/USCA no interest building loan for Potomac and lobbied WCF to reinstate this building loan program. He has many contacts to help curling clubs get started/get moving on building their own facilities.

- Email Russ Lemcke to request the entire package Geoff presented. 20 pages total, full of great info. Might be worth having for our club.

One of the risks of renting space from a warehouse is that once the economy kicks back up, owners of the warehouses can decide to kick the clubs out for more economic tenants.

Triangle Curling has an interesting idea about Green Curling to obtain a federal grant to implement building the facility. A curling club has the same problems and applications as cold storage facilities. If Triangle can convince the government of these similarities, they may be able to secure research funding to supplement their building fund. Can the PCC possibly partner with CMU or Pitt to entertain this kind of idea? Or perhaps we could offer architectural students a prize for curling facility designs. May get some compelling ideas back.

Saturday Afternoon

Ice Preparation :: Jim Gleason

- Jet Ice is the best ice painting company.
- Spraying the white: Spray up into the air and let the paint settle to reduce streaking
- Paint does not dry. It freezes.
- All hoses must be kept moving or they will freeze into the ice.
- Cut the house circles with a router and then fill the circles with paint. Fill the grooves with paint loaded into a ketchup bottle.
- Paint is in a back pack that feeds into a hair broom. The painter then goes around the circle four times and is done. The bristles work well for holding paint and feathering it out.
- Keep the floor temp around 16° during the entire painting process.
- New fabric for ice logos. Machine washable and very long lasting. Not practical for repeated hockey arena use because the Zamboni will chew it up. Does not damage the Zamboni.
- An angled flood hose reduces splash and air bubbles.
- Foam between the sheets goes in after the splash flood. Foam is then frozen in. Not screwed in. "Even Kevin Martin's take-out can't take it out." Once the foam is frozen in, each sheet is then individually flooded up to another half inch. 3" foam is used.
- Best scraper blades are Flex Beam blades: the blades themselves cost \$1800 each. It's best to keep your ice blades on the ice overnight or as long as possible to maintain constant ice temperature of the blade. If you don't let the blade cool down enough, snow will stick and you risk scratching the ice. Half hour AT LEAST is recommended.
- Where should blades be sharpened? Fred Veale has the best and most precise equipment for ensuring the best blade sharpening. Zamboni blade sharpeners don't work in 1000ths of an inch and you risk getting a bad blade back.

- Top Flooding should happen at a rate of about 10 gallons a minute. Reduces air bubbles but also maintains an adequate flow together.
- Curling ice should be warmer than 16° or 17° once play starts.
- When you are maintaining the ice temperature, you are removing the heat out of the room through the floor, not just refrigerating the ice. The more you keep lowering the floor temperature, the more frost you collect, as a result.
- A nice snow roll in front of the blade is indicative of the ice being at the right temperature.
- Nipper is the best investment a growing club can make. Not as heavy as a scraper. Also doesn't crush as much pebble as a scraper. Rumors of nippers causing runs are unfounded. Jim Gleason says he has never touched the adjustment knobs on the nipper he uses. Can use the nipper as a mini scraper. Good for arena clubs.
- When it's time to send the nipper blade back to get sharpened, it is IMPORTANT to send the blade still mounted to the bracket, otherwise, you misalign the wafers that keep the blade precisely placed.
- Always keep the blade angled unless you're doing the scum scrape off.
- Pebble heads and water temperature are the 2 most important factors in determining the curl of the ice.
- Propane burners for arenas? They are used for similar applications as a controlled melt but flow together is not as good. Not particularly good for arenas because the ice needs too much time to refreeze.
- As the water is freezing after a flood, go out and circle the high spots with a nail on a stick. At the next flood, flood only the spots not marked.
- Ideal humidity, pebble size, ice temperature are all dependent on the facility.
- 130 strokes in one pass when pebbling is ideal, back line to back line. Pebbling: different size holes for different conditions. #64 pebble head is best for arena clubs in which the membership volunteers to do the pebbling.
- Running surface of the rocks should be between 5.5 and 6 millimeters. Jim reconditions rather than sands the rocks. Helps them last longer. When he reconditions them, he makes them all the same size and effectively matches them. Does this apply to ceramic inserts?

Team Building :: Randy Ferbey

Randy Ferbey is a Canadian curler from Sherwood Park, Alberta. Ferbey is a six time Canadian champion and a four time World Champion. Ferbey notably popularized the system of having the skip throw third rocks, when he skipped the team nicknamed "the Ferbey Four", a team he won four Briers with in the early 2000s. The Ferbey Four also popularized the "numbered zones", when calling out the weight of various draw shots.

All together, he has played in eight Briers, six World Championships, four Continental Cups, skipped in two Canadian Mixed Curling Championships, won three Canada Cups, and two TSN Skins Games.

- Most important are the team dynamic and upfront communication amongst all the team members.
- Great teams work well together on the ice just as much they do off the ice : rooming, eating, drinking, traveling together.
- Is the Skip normally the leader of the team? Yes, generally. Hec Gervais had one rule, "Don't piss off the Skip."
- Teams are made up of four people who each have a 25% role in the success of the team.
- Any ice reading tips? Reading the ice isn't that difficult. Reading the release of the players is much more difficult and much more important.
- How do you encourage a floundering teammate without making things worse? Encouragement happens before or after the game, but not during. Get to know your teammates on a personal level. Interaction off the ice is great. When practice time is available, make it fun! Practice is critical not just for improving curling skills but also for team building.
- It's the whole team's job to read the ice.
- How do you match rocks? Matching rocks is an art. Every good curling team keeps a rock book, a history of the rocks. But it takes practice and knowing your own and your teammates' ability for consistency. If the Skip is convinced of a bad rock, remove the rock.
- Does not recommend ever throwing a "spinner". Not a good idea to mess with changing the release in the middle of a game.
- How do we inspire brand new curlers? Does not understand why we charge them money? Why do we introduce them to the sport of curling on poor ice? These are problems worldwide. The best we can do is to make the game and experience as fun as possible and hope the new curlers stick around. This applies to skips and clubs alike.
- Visualise the shot.
- How do you get out of having a bad game, mentally? It takes a team effort to pick up members who are having a bad game.
- How do you speed up the game, maximize time on the ice? Encourage all front end players to get in the hack right away. Make a speed curling competition. Who can play 8 ends the fastest?
- How do you feel about timing rocks? Timing the rocks is useful, but more important is knowing the rocks instinctually. Watch the rocks. Get to know how they perform. "Use the zones. If you are not playing to that system, you are not playing to the best of your ability."
- "A synthetic broom that is at all wet or dirty, it does nothing at all to the ice. It is useless." It is important to keep switching the pads.

- Good sweeping is a cardio workout. There is no such thing as one good sweeper. The two have to communicate with each other and work together.
- Getting more weight and arm extension. "The way we teach juniors is a pet peeve. Do whatever works with teaching junior curlers how to deliver the rock. There is no right way or wrong way."
- "It takes time to learn your team."
- Do you spend a lot of time with video tape, whether you watch your own performance or that of other teams? "No. Never. There is nothing like just actually playing the game."
- What is the real value of collecting stats and using that data? "Much of stats are just a conversation point. At the end of the day, it just doesn't matter. Just go out and play the game." Once you step out on the ice, you play to what is necessary for the game, not to the stats.
- How important are coaches? At the pro level, they are important for feedback on how the players are behaving/interacting on the ice.
- A great fifth player is someone who can fill in on any position.
- Ferbey does not recommend that the Skips throw third rocks, on the whole. "Ultimately, the best thing is for the Skip to hold the broom him/herself."

Sunday — Annual Meeting

- GNCC will be moving to Citizens Bank. As a 501(c)3, they will wave all bank fees and offer better than a .0001% interest rate currently offered by HSBC.
- GNCC has similar accounting department issues as PCC.
- 3873 individual members
- GNCC has not had an audit in 15 years and that is changing per non-profit regulations. GNCC is also currently moving from paper ledgers to electronic ledgers (Quick Books). Mistakenly bought personal version of the software instead of business, thus making departmental breakouts more difficult.
- Olympic Bumps in membership :: Last 2 have been exponentially growing. 19% after the 2006 and 25% after the 2010. Last bump amount was unexpected, thus leaving GNCC with a surplus.
- 35 teams played down in the 2010-2011 season. All play down sites for next season have been secured.
- Juniors Camp will be held at Bucks County Curling Club August 11-13, ages 10-14; Junior Play Downs at Broomstones; Youth Olympics, ages 16-18. Mixed and mixed doubles. Junior Girls are desperately needed.
- Arena Club Championships :: Triangle Curling; 22 teams registered. Also hosting arena ice clinic a few days prior to the bonspiel. This would be a great clinic for PCC members

to attend. Only 10 people are currently registered. Hosted by Jim Gleason and Jim Riddenhour.

- Can 5-and-Under events be posted online as far as in advance as possible so the membership can plan for these? Posted with the rules on the website. Dorothy Roach proposed that the weekends for the Dikes and Kayer are switched so women can go to both Kayser and Childs.
- More info about GNCC events should be posted, talked up, etc., by GNCC rep with club membership to drive attendance.
- Stone Rental :: GNCC owns 17 sets of rocks; all are rented out. \$400/set/year. Each year rental cost increases by 10% to encourage clubs to eventually buy their own sets and return rocks to the GNCC for distribution to other new clubs.
- Wheelchair Curling :: GNCC is not very involved.
- GNCC is Planning for Project 2014 :: projecting for 2014 Olympics
- GNCC has 18 Arena Clubs (20 after this meeting); committee is now "Grass Roots Curling"; 4 regional mentors to help grow arena clubs; Arena Club Championship t-shirts will have map of all 20 on the back; Anthracite is a success story in Phase 2; Pittsburgh is a success story for moving into Phase 3.
- Communications :: New this year, every member will have a unique membership number that will last forever; website is most used for calendars and bonspiel results and now includes 13 years of historical bonspiel data. This data will eventually become keyword searchable. There are some fun statistics included on the website. There are a number of areas of the site still need significant help from member clubs (see handouts). What can Pittsburgh provide? GNCC site can link right to our blog/calendar, etc.
- USCA Reorganization :: Reasons for Change: expanded scope of the USCA; authority of the CEO is convoluted and unclear; lack of focused and effective fundraising; planning and operational nature of the board; disconnect between curler/club and USCA; etc. Expectations are to operate more as a business but to keep volunteerism, an essential element of the USCA, and increase revenues from fundraising. USCA changed to representational voting a few years ago.
- Insurance :: Anything we do as a club and member of GNCC is sanctioned and covered by our insurance, as long as we are not bungee-jumping or building cheerleading pyramids. Otherwise, call Steve Gutro if we have any questions.
- The waivers are not mandatory, but the repercussion is that the club is responsible for \$2500 deductible per claim. Keep waivers for not less than 3 years and not more than 5 years. Send amended waiver draft to Steve Gutro FIRST. He will then kick it around with the underwriters. We do not have a copy of the policy because we are not named insureds. It is not common practice to distribute copies to additional insureds, but a copy can be obtained from Steve Gutro.
- USCA Reps Reports :: Olympic Trials will be held in December 2013. Dates and sites for playdowns are not yet set, but members express concerns that playdowns finish up too soon before championships.

- Ross Tarlton/Gordon International :: GNCC did very well, winning the Gordon for the first time in 29 years. Offers to attend these events were given to some new clubs and were turned down. Reason why is unclear. Likely, the point of contact did not understand what the events are. Gordon has been held every year since 1891 in Montreal. It is a Friendly event. Points spiel type of structure. These events should be better advertised.

BY-LAWS

Issue of By-Laws came up innocently when Carl looked up something and realized the by-laws hadn't been changed in a very long time. He was appalled at how many were so far out of date that the GNCC was in violation of 501(c)3 requirements, and many had never even been incorporated.

Club Member Voting

Representational voting is proposed (one vote per member per club). Will operate like a stockholders meeting. Largest club is about 300 members. To dominate a vote, something like the top 9 biggest clubs would have to band together to get to 1937 votes. Total membership is 3873. What precipitated the change? Fairness of voting: For clubs who pay \$5000 in dues, should they have the same amount of voting power as clubs who pay \$250? One vote per club was enacted in the past when clubs were more similarly sized. Dick McCartney was against this change. Thought is should be more of a hybrid system. The proposed by-law changes are presented as a single amendment, making it an all-or-nothing vote. Many reps here are upset that this issue, as a major cultural change, is tied to by-law changes. Motion was made to dispense with reading of by-laws and proceed directly to voting in light of the all-or-nothing nature of the vote. PCC hands are tied. Vote is 30 yes and 10 no. 75% approval. By-laws are effective now and cannot be amended again until the next annual meeting.

Curling Club of VA is petitioning to join the GNCC. 23 members currently. Started with 12. They have been accepted. Mt Washington Valley Curling Club is petitioning to join the GNCC. They are accepted.

Proposal made to award Ann Harmon, wife of Bunkie, honorary lifetime member. Accepted. Bunkie Harmon is awarded an Honorary Lifetime Membership for 23 years of service.

Nominations of Officers :: 2nd Vice President majority of Ardsley Curling Club was contacted for their opinions of the nomination

Sam Williams of Broomstones is nominated for USCA Rep

Director at Large :: George Shirk

Treasurer :: Bunkie Harmon

Secretary :: Mary Colaccio (sp?)

2nd Vice President :: Sam Williams

1st Vice President :: Sally McKenzie

President :: Dick McCartney

Immediate Past President :: Carl Thomas