

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ORILLIA CURLING CLUB

HURRY HARD



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



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**Orillia Curling Club
Connor Earl**

in this EDITION

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Orillia Curling Club
Est. 1873

500 Atherley Rd, Orillia, ON L3V 7Y1
Website: orillacurlingclub.ca



Don's Monthly Message



Hi everyone.

I hope all has been well and you are looking forward to some holidays!

A few things to note for this month:

Clothing - We are excited to announce the launch of our clothing program! If you head on over to our website, you can order products online, and should you like to see and try before you buy, visit 2nd Century Source for Sports located at 425 West Street North, Orillia to check them out in person. Once you have your size, head on over to our website to place your order. Many of the products will have our 150th celebration logo embroidered on them!

Santa Spiel - We were full for the Santa spiel on the 16th. It was a fun holiday event with the highlight being the most festive clothing contest.

Club Closing for the Holidays - Please note the club will be closed for curling starting Tuesday, December 19th and will re-open Tuesday, January 2nd.

Winter Session Memberships - The website is accepting Winter Half Season Memberships. Either log into your account and under Members Home, select Membership Signup, or email the club to get started. Orilliacurlingclub@gmail.com

Players Card - for those thinking of heading down south for some holidays, remember that a Players Card can be used before you leave and when you get back for 11 games in a Tag or as a spare. A good way to keep curling without committing to a Half Season membership!

The Breakfast Club - Our Sunday morning Breakfast Club is up and running well thanks to Ted Fleming! There are spots available if you want to join that league. Simply email the club to find out more information and to get set up.

Ontario Senior Winter Games - Orillia will be hosting these Winter Games February 6th-8th. Should you wish to enter a team, please email the club. Orilliacurlingclub@gmail.com. There are very limited spots available and teams are chosen by a lottery system. Rules can be found on our website.

Don's Monthly Message



The Curling events are:

Mixed 55+ (2 Men/Two Women) (6 Teams Only-24 participants)

Men's 65+ (6 Teams Only-24 participants)

Women's 65+ (6 Teams Only-24 participants)

Stick Curling- Open 55+ (12 Teams Only-24 participants)

Happy Holidays to everyone!

Thanks
Don



OCC 150th Anniversary Story #1

In recognition of our 150th year as a curling club, we will include historical information in this season's newsletter to provide an idea of what curling would have been like in the past and that might be of interest to our readers.

For the first article we look to the Ontario Curling Association's 1968 Annual Report where the following article was found: "Ancient and Modern Stones"

The origin of the game of Curling is little known to Ontario curlers, but records show that the game was played in Scotland as far back as the year 1500 A.D.

At that time a stone weighed about 25lbs, and for 150 years a flat bottom stone with a hole for four fingers in the bottom and one for the thumb on top, were chiseled out by Scottish stone cutters and used throughout the north of Scotland. The game was not known by the name "Curling" then, but Kuting, or Coiting, which would indicate the game was first played by throwing the stone for several feet before it hit the ice.

It was not until the year 1650 that handles were used, not in the centre of the stone, but close to the outer edge. Players discovered then that much heavier stones could be handled with very little exertion, and 100 lb stones became quite common during the early part of the 19th century, even in Quebec.

It was not until about 1830 when emigration to Ontario reached its peak, due to the political unrest that prevailed in Great Britain previous to the passing of the Reform Bill in 1832, that the game of Curling became the popular winter sport. Numerous settlers brought with them their curling stones, with handle in centre of the stone, but flat bottomed, a truly modern invention at the time, but somewhat crude to gaze upon today.

So popular had the game become that many early settlers provided substitutes by sawing off sections from small logs of Birch or Maple. Many Scottish Stonecutters fashioned field stones for the purpose, and friendly games wherever Scotsmen most did congregate became quite frequent.

It was not until 1870 that the concave bottom stone, such as are in use today was invented by Mr. D. S. Keith, a member of the Toronto Curling Club.

The first pair were made by Mr. Thos. Thorburn of Beith, Scotland, and used by Mr. Keith for the first time when Toronto Curlers played on open ice at their rink on the west side of Yonge St. north of Clover Hill Lane (then between the present Irwin Ave. and St. Joseph St.)

It is said that irons for Curling originated in Quebec by General Wolfe's Highlanders, about 1761. Having no stones but plenty of scrap iron in the form of old French cannon, they melted some down in a shape halfway between a granite stone and a tea kettle.



Curling Rock | circa 1885, possibly made with granite, with a curved metal handle.

OCC Pay to Play

Pay to Play Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00pm.

Over the first 4 Sundays of the season, we have had a total of 45 participants with 26 of them being introduced to curling.

November 5th proved to be our busiest day with 23 attending the session. Some were from the City's Parks and Recreation Learn to Curl Program along with those who registered directly with the club's Pay to Play.

The youngest participant was Jett who recently turned 4 and was accompanied by his grandma and grandpa, John and Ann Willemse. By the looks of the picture, Jett had great draw weight getting the little rocks into the house.



If members want extra help, then the weekly Pay to Play is an opportunity for that. Just make sure you login and then register for a "Pay to Play - < date >" and not a Pay to Play - Practice session. These practice sessions have been set up for non-members.

I would like to thank Brian Peterson for always arranging to have instructors and assistants to help in the Pay to Play sessions.

Charlene Ley



OCC Newbie Bonspiel

The Newbie Bonspiel held on November 11th and sponsored by Wes Brennan Construction was a wonderful opportunity to introduce Bonspiels to new curlers.

After checking in and enjoying morning snacks from 8:30 to 9:45, 45 enthusiastic curlers took to the ice to either brush up on curling skills or help newbies who are new to the sport.

The first 6-End game started promptly at 10am when action got underway.

Shortly before 11, a school bell was rung to signal the curlers to line up on either hog line and face the Canadian Flag to observe 2 minutes of silence in honour of those who gave their lives to defend the rights, privileges and freedoms that we are fortunate to have in Canada today.

After a tasty lunch everyone returned to the ice to play their second 6-end game.

Vic Rauter and his lovely wife came out to watch some of the action but we couldn't entice him to do some of his famous TSN commentary. Maybe next year.

Participants enjoyed Snacks, Drinks, while prizes were issued and the 50/50 draw made.

For the most hogged rocks, Abigail Keown, Michael Bolt, Terri Trew and Paul Pitblado were awarded a pound of bacon each.

1st Place of \$30 each was awarded to Jim Quigley, Ken Schamehorn, Andrew Quigley and Rebecca Johnston.

2nd Place of \$20 each went to Murray Kelly, Dan, Tammy, and James Aube

With a tie at 3rd place, the skips of the two teams had a draw to the button, but with a bit of a twist. With the crowd looking on, Steve Donald and Tim Kent threw their rock to the immediate house. It was close one with Steve getting that much closer resulting in his team winning 3rd place with \$10 going to Steve, Mireille Robert, Lee and Linda Brassard.

Every curling bonspiel has a team who made the most friends and the team of Paul and Pauline Stewart, Renate Booth and Christine Bennett were awarded an Orillia Curling Club tumbler with a non-alcoholic Gatorade to help replenishing the electrolytes they may have depleted with all the sweeping.

OCC Newbie Bonspiel

During the wrap up, Charlene thanked the ice staff who take a lot of pride in making sure the ice is in great shape. Elie and his staff always take such good care of us with the tasty food and drinks.

Brian Peterson, the head coach came out to provide early morning training with lots of assistance from the other mentors on the ice.

Don Kinzinger although he couldn't attend was instrumental at setting up the online registration event on the website. Liz Ross for arranging the permit for the 50/50 ticket sales, Kevin Bennet for helping with the Remembrance Day 2 minutes of silence. Sue Pitplado for jumping right in and helping with the check-in process. Connor Earl for dropping in to take photos of the winners. Tim Kent for purchasing snacks and bacon and rallying players to sign up and Sandy Furzeczott for helping with registration, 50/50 sales, and scoring etc.

A huge shout out was given to Wes Brennan Construction for sponsoring yet another event at our club. We can't thank you enough.

And last but not least, gratitude was given to all of the participants who came out to join in on the day. From the feedback I received, everyone had a great time and that was the intended goal.



OCC Newbie Bonspiel



Big Brothers Big Sisters Curling Spiel

On Sunday, the Orillia Curling Club held the 37th annual 'Curl for Kids' Sake', all in support of Big Brothers Big Sisters!

Curl for Kids' Sake is one of the longest-running Big Brothers Big Sisters events and is essential in supporting the agency.

The wonderful team at Big Brothers Big Sisters Orillia reached out to the Orillia Curling Club with an overwhelming excitement to bring back this bonspiel for such a great cause.

A whopping ten teams showed up for the event and for a lot of the participants, this was their first time Curling. Regardless, everyone came out eager to play.

The solo day event raised over \$10,000 all for Big Brothers Big Sisters.

A big thanks to all of the club members who came out to help, your contribution helped make this event a success.



Family of Bill Stephenson Donate Items

Molly Billings had contacted the Orillia Curling Club to see if we would be interested in a donation of her father's trophies and other memorabilia. This was perfect timing as the club celebrates 150 years.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Molly and Shannon Stephenson on November 9th, 2023 to go through all the items and to learn more about their father Bill Stephenson.

Bill started curling as early as 1949 and won a number of Club Championships at the Orillia Curling Club in 1957 and again in 1961. Bill was known for his takeout game as the 5-rock rule had not yet come into play.

If you check the last picture right across from the men's washroom you will see the picture of Bill and his team of Ross Sanderson, Jerry Bradd and Don Paul along with Tom Caldwell's team of Ross Coward, Tre Behan, and Frank Milligan. The two teams were the winners of the Governor General Trophy from 1959.

With winning the championship titles, each member of the team took home beautiful silver trophies which the family has generously donated to the club for our historical trophy collection. You will see in the picture that each team member of the Governor Generals was presented with a green jacket, much like the Masters, however of significant note is that each button on each of the jackets was engraved with the initials of the player. Now that is something. Bill's jacket has been donated to the club as well.

Other winnings include the Silver Tankard in 1966 and 1969. Bill would have curled at the Andrew Street site and then later at the West Street site. Not only did Bill curl but he also joined in the regular bridge games that were held in the upstairs back room at the West Street site. Oh, the memories.

Bill was married to Mary, and along with their children, Baxter, Shannon and Molly they all curled at the Orillia Curling Club for many years. Both Baxter and Molly curled on the high school team at O.D.C.V.I.

When we were going through the items, Molly and Shannon enquired about a Founder's pin. They recalled their father going to a special event at the curling club in 2000. I was able to provide them with the history of the work that was done to re-establish curling in Orillia after the 11-year hiatus. Each major step along that journey the then shareholders were given the opportunity to redeem their shares or to leave them to help us to meet the goal. All the shareholders who left their money in the corporation were honoured at the ceremony in 2000 and issued a Founder's pin.

Family of Bill Stephenson Donate Items

The names of all those shareholders are on the wooden plaque to the right of the stairs as you enter the restaurant.

Molly and Shannon also left a scrapbook with me, and I will include some interesting information from that in a future newsletter. Stay tuned.

Charlene Ley



Getting to know the Ice Techs!

A lot of the members have met the ice Technicians over the years, but those of you who haven't, I thought this is a good time to get to know them a little. I asked each of them to provide a bit of information about themselves.

Chris Fitz - I have been here since we opened back in 1999 and I am the last original full-time staff left. I have up to Curling Tech Level 3, but since I got mine, they have changed their course level and only offer Curling Tech Level 1 and 2 (used to be 5 levels, 1-3 tech and 4-5 invitational to become trainers). I used to work year-round here at BPRC but schedule opportunities have recently allowed me to go the Parks department and work with the arborist for the summer months.



Tammy Stocks – A little back history of me is I started out in working for the Town of Whitby part time for approximately 10 years in the arenas. I then got a full-time position with the City of Orillia in the fall of 2014 in the hockey arena. I worked there until I felt I needed to learn something new and within a couple of years I got a position at BPRC. As far as certificates I have several in hockey ice maintenance and curling ice that I have acquired over the years. I have enjoyed working out of BPRC.



Lucas Wilson - This is my second winter season at BPRC and my 9th year with City Facilities. Most of my training was done all in house along with a Trained Assistant Curling Ice Technician Course.



The ice staff take a lot of pride in the condition of the ice but due to circumstances that were beyond their control, the look of the ice wasn't as good as they would have liked. That being said, it is still playing great.

They very much appreciate everyone's diligence in using the sticky mats and boot cleaners. They do ask that we not take any open cups out on the ice even if they only contain water as there have been spills which requires attention and could affect the condition of the ice.

Please only bring resealable containers out to the rink area that only contain water (no coffee or other hot drink). Also, please check the condition of your equipment (grippers, sliders and brooms) and replace if needed.

Elementary School Curling at the OCC

OCC reached out to both the Simcoe County District School Board and the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board to offer the opportunity for grade 7 and 8 students to Learn to Curl.

Each Board has their own process, so after completing an application to become a Field Trip Approved Site, I am happy to report that we are on the Simcoe County District School Board's Approved Field Trip site that teachers are provided with. Subsequently I have also submitted a request to share a flyer with school staff to provide another awareness opportunity.

The Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board approved a flyer advertising this opportunity and provided me with the contacts for the schools.

After reaching out to the schools, we have had a good response with 3 schools so far making bookings.

To date we have had one class with 25 students from St. Bernards attend on three Tuesdays in November and are enjoying the experience. With this one class returning, it has given us the opportunity to refine the logistics with the teachers to facilitate a smoother process.

As of today, we will be introducing 117 elementary students ages 12 & 13 to curling. Some of the classes are returning for more than one session so we will see a total of 231 participating curlers for the elementary group so far.

We couldn't do this without the support of coaches and assistants. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Tony Baker, Nancy Bowers, Derek Cox, Jerene Edghill, Rosie Hannan, Gaby Hart, Tom Ormsby, Brian Peterson, and Lesley Rice for helping with these enthusiastic curlers.



Twin Lakes sweep to victory in Elmvale

Twin Lakes victorious in their first games of the season.

The Boys and Girls Twin Lake (TLSS) teams traveled to Elmvale on Thursday November 30th to take part in their first game of the season. Both the teams won.

The girls' team did really well given that it was only their seventh time on curling ice.

Since it was the first game for the two girl's teams, the Coaches for both the TLSS girls' team and the Elmvale team were on the ice during the 1st 3 ends to help with strategy, time management etc. then they played the next 2 ends on their own.

Both of these teams who are new to curling were very excited about the game and Coach Elaine Armstrong commented that her favourite part was when they asked "who won" after they were done. They had been keeping score but weren't thinking about it. They did win 7 - 3, 3 ends to 2.

On the drive home the ladies skip commented on how much fun it was for her and both of the ladies teams. The team members were excited and in true team style, they started to decide what treats they would make for the next game, and setting up a group chat for their team members.

Good luck girls on December 6th when you play your next game against Barrie.

The boys' team had a very good team win with all curlers making their shots. TLSS took 3 in the 1st stole 3 in the 2nd and then cruised to a 7 to 3 win. The Elmvale men's team is also made up of some fine young curlers and all had fun.

Elaine Armstrong & Tom Ormsby



Uptergrove Gr. 8's try Curling

I would like to thank Tracy Wolfe a teacher from Uptergrove Public School for arranging a Field Trip for her 28 Grade 8 students to come and learn how to curl on November 30th from 11:30-1:30. Under the guidance of instructors and assistants the class was issued grippers, sliders and brooms and split up into groups. After reviewing some safety tips, the instructors proceeded to teach all the basics of curling.

The students caught on quite quickly and I understand that the class did some preparatory work, prior to attending. It certainly showed in the student's level of interest. They were encouraged to try something new, to learn by getting outside of their comfort zone. They watched the 2 minute video that we have on our website and the teacher explained that curling uses different muscles than a lot of them are not used to using.

Since there seemed to be a lot of keen curlers, I shared information about the youth league with Tracy who will pass it along and post it on their google classroom for parents to access as well.

Tracy also commented: "When I surveyed the class, 100 percent said they had fun and really liked curling. Even the girls who didn't participate said it looked like a lot of fun and they were glad they went."

I can't thank you and your volunteers enough for taking the time to teach us about curling. It was such a positive experience for everyone."

We continue to get bookings with schools and I want to say that the instructor group couldn't do this without the help of other club members. For this session I would like to acknowledge Gaby Hart, Randy Ley, Tom Ormsby, Brian Peterson, and Paul Stewart for helping out with this group of keen students.

Charlene Ley



Historical Information Search!

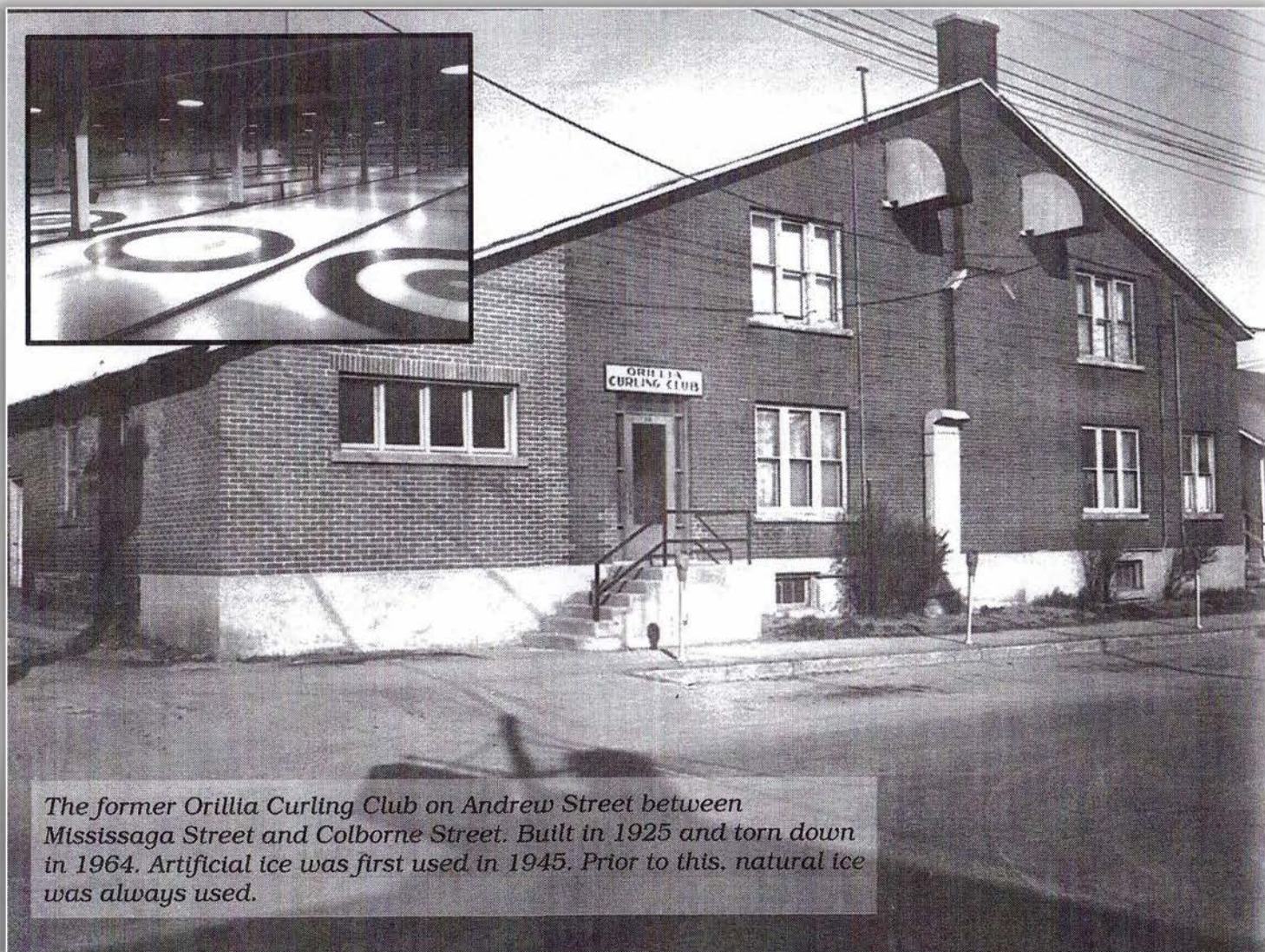
Attention Curling Club Members and Families.

As you know, this year, the Orillia Curling Club is celebrating its 150th year rocking in the heart of the City of Orillia.

To help celebrate this anniversary, the club is looking to add to its collection of historical information, historical photographs, and anything historical that is related to the club. If you have or know anyone who has any historical information about Curling in Orillia, could you bring that to the attention of Charlene Ley?

We recently received a donation from a family which included a scrapbook of their fathers, winnings, etc. that's what got us thinking that there might be other people in the club who have information that would help us provide a picture of what it was like to curl in Orillia over the last 150 years.

Thank You!



The former Orillia Curling Club on Andrew Street between Mississaga Street and Colborne Street. Built in 1925 and torn down in 1964. Artificial ice was first used in 1945. Prior to this, natural ice was always used.

Registrar's Update

Well, it's hard to believe, but the end of the first half of the season is nearly upon us!

Our membership currently sits at 318, down about 40 from our pre-COVID days. So ... when you're out and about over the holiday season ... please let your friends and family know what a great sport Curling is and how much fun we have at the Club!

Pay-to-Play Sundays are a great way to introduce friends and family to the game. \$20 for them and no charge for you as a member! Could be a great stocking stuffer!! If you know of any youth (aged 7-14) who might be interested in giving it a try, membership to the Sunday Youth League will be pro-rated accordingly for the second half of the season.

January 2nd is the first day of curling for the 2024 half of this season. If you only registered for the first half, but want to continue, here's how to register for the second half:

1. Log in to your account and go through the Membership Signup module, as you did for the first half
2. When you get to the Membership Type, select Half-Season (January-March) and whichever number of draws you want to play
3. Select the leagues of your choice on the next page then follow the steps through to the end. Be sure to click the "confirm my entry" button to save your changes. The system will then calculate the new balance owing for those of you who signed up for the first half just to give it a try ... we will gladly honour the new member discount for the second half of the season as well (as applicable).

Regular Half-Season Membership fees are as follows:

- Unlimited - \$308
- Two draws/week - \$261
- One draw/week - \$195

And, for the snowbirds or the still undecided out there - don't forget the new Player's Card option.

Until then, please approach any of your board members or email the Club if you have any questions about your membership options.

Good curling and HAPPY HOLIDAYS ONE AND ALL!!!

Team Nicholls

Kole O'Connor is one of our club's newer members having curled for the first time three years ago. Kole started curling in the hope of finally finding a sport he loves. Kole has played many sports ranging from soccer, baseball, flag football, tennis, etc., but Kole says that none of these sports ever had the kind of impact to his life that Curling does. Kole decided he wanted to take the sport as far as he could by putting together a competitive team for provincials this year. After 2 months of searching, Kole was able to find 3 likeminded boys scattered across Ontario that were willing to go through with the idea. But with provincial qualifiers only a month away, the boys had to act fast. Kole arranged some practice ice with our Orillia Club and had their teams first and only practice before the qualifiers. Then on December 1st, Kole and his team went down to Ottawa for the Provincial Qualifiers at the Ottawa Hunt and Golf Club. With only one practice under their belts, Kole and his team went undefeated at securing a top place finish and an immediate entry into provincials. Kole and his team are now looking for team sponsors to accommodate expenses. If you or someone you know is willing to sponsor Team Nicholls, please contact Kole via email at: kole3850.oumc@gmail.com





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3/32" Speed 5
teflon slider



WIDE STYLE GRIPPER



Upcoming Important Dates / Club Notes

December

December 18, 2023 - January 2, 2024

Orillia Curling Club Closed for the Holiday Season

January

January 27, 2024

Nuts and Bolts Bonspiel

Barnfield Point Recreation Center | 9:00am - 5:00pm

Check the website under events for further information and to register.

NOTES

- Please note that here is a change to the Day of Champions date. The new date is March 23, 2024 and not March 16, 2024.

Christmas chuckle...

Why do Dasher and Dancer take so many coffee breaks?

They are Santa's Star Bucks!



Have A
HOLLY Jolly
Christmas!



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Happy Holidays



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