

# EXTRA END

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEASON OF CHAMPIONS



HEADS-UP:  
NEW KIDS ON  
THE BLOCK  
SERVE NOTICE

BERNARD,  
MARTIN SHARE  
2010 OLYMPIC  
MEMORIES

TAKING THE  
LONG WAY  
BACK TO  
THE PODIUM

# The Official Coffee of Curling Canada



**CURLING  
CANADA**

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# EXTRA END

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SEASON OF CHAMPIONS

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# MESSAGE

## FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**Katherine Henderson**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Curling Canada

**As we begin a new curling season, many are** stepping onto the ice for the first time during a global pandemic that has sculpted the shape of our world. As expected, you may be unsure about the status of curling for the 2020-21 season.

Transparency and communication are essential to what Curling Canada stands for, and I want to take the time to personally update you about our organization, how our curling system works, its handling of COVID-19, and how it impacts you directly.

As Chief Executive Officer of Curling Canada, I've had the privilege of working directly with an array of Curling Canada boards with an undeniable vision for curling's future. Curling Canada has recently seen a series of changes, including a new board elected by your provincial and territorial Member Associations (MAs), one whose core lies in real-world skill and experience and reflects the vision of boards prior.

For context: Our MAs now deliver three essential tasks — electing board members, creating and maintaining bylaws, and appointing an auditor for Curling Canada. At our most recent annual meeting, the MAs researched issues in our sport and elected a board they felt was ready to take on the challenges and risks of governing a complex organization, especially amid COVID-19.

Our response to COVID-19 has shown that these changes to our programs and services cannot happen without a forward-thinking board and MAs. Thanks to our community's future-forward orientation, we now find ourselves in a position of being able to act collaboratively and immediately in response to a crisis in our sport.

Similarly, COVID-19 has also been the litmus test for our new governance structure, and it performed as planned. Our ability to mobilize quickly and respond to the community's needs exemplifies the delivery of our Return to Play policy, our assistance in accessing funding for clubs, government lobbying, and marketing support.

As we find ourselves in the middle of a pandemic, things could look a lot worse. We stand on the shoulders of those who planned and afforded us these opportunities. For this, we are grateful.

We continue to accomplish advocacy work on behalf of curling with the federal government. We

are perceived as a sports leader in Canada based on many of the decisions we have made. Our MAs do this at the provincial level on your behalf.

Curling Canada meets with MAs regularly. Additionally, we also scheduled bi-weekly video calls to discuss the ramifications of COVID-19 in curling. Topics range from national championship hosting to rolling out emergency programming for clubs, including guidance in access to funding, marketing support, Return to Play guidelines, local advocacy for your club and more.

Excellent governance is an evolving process and there is always more work to be done.

Sport evolves, society changes, the environment shifts and we must always look for the best way to organize ourselves to imagine, plan for and deliver curling to anyone who wants to play. Our sport's development involves partnership, trust, responsible data collection/analysis, and an entire system designed around a collective commitment for the best interests of you — our curlers and fans.

For example, at Curling Canada, we are committed to being a national leader in the area of Safe Sport. We've introduced concussion education, policies and protocols, advocated for helmet use with vulnerable people, endorsed and delivered on the responsible coaching movement, and adopted the Universal Code of Conduct for the Maltreatment in Sport in all our policies. Our staff and board have taken Safe Sport training and will continue to do so regularly. We now need to work together in our system to ensure that everyone involved with curling at the local and regional level has access to, and adopts, these critical practices.

Myself and our board chair, Mitch Minken, are committed to working with our MA partners, government stakeholders, marketing and broadcast partners, the World Curling Federation, National Olympic and Paralympic Committees and Own the Podium to ensure the priority needs — from local club experiences to the highest podium — are taken care of and delivered safely and responsibly.

Curling will flourish anew and no facet of curling will be left behind. We will emerge strong and healthy.

As always, be safe and wash your hands. See you at the rink.

**Thanks to our community's future-forward orientation, we now find ourselves in a position of being able to act collaboratively and immediately in response to a crisis in our sport.**

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Curling Canada extends its sincere appreciation to its partners and its 14 member associations and 11 affiliate organizations.

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# CURLING CANADA 2019-20 BOARD OF GOVERNORS



**MITCH MINKEN**  
*Chair*

**MITCH MINKEN OF SWIFT** Current, Sask., was elected Chair of the Curling Canada Board of Governors during the 2020 Annual General Meeting, which was held virtually on Sept. 26 via a Zoom session with representatives of Curling Canada’s 14 Member Associations.

Minken was elected to the Board in 2019 after many years of dedicated service to the sport in his home province of Saskatchewan. As a volunteer, he has served on the Board of the Swift Current Curling Club as well as CURLSASK, including two years as president

before joining the Curling Canada board.

Additionally, he has volunteered for more than a decade with the Children’s Wish Foundation of Canada.

Minken also has worked as a volunteer at numerous Saskatchewan championship events, including the 2010 (Team Transportation) and 2016 (Director, Rocks and Ice) Women’s World Curling Championships in Swift Current, the 2018 Tim Hortons Brier in Regina (Rocks and Ice) and the 2018 Home Hardware Canada Cup in Estevan (Rocks and Ice).



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Canada's 2020 world junior gold medalists: (front row, from left) Rachel Erickson, Lauren Lenentine, Emily Zacharias, Karlee Burgess and Mackenzie Zacharias; (back row) Thomas Dunlop, Zachary Bilawka, Brayden Payette, Jordan Peters and Jacques Gauthier.

PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/E. RUSSKIN

# NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK TAKE AIM AT CANADA'S CURLING ESTABLISHMENT

BY DAVE KOMOSKY

**CANADA'S CURLING ESTABLISHMENT HAS BEEN** served notice: The next generation is making its mark and is out to get them.

All sports have a refresh button. The new kids on the block are always trying to secure a place among the elite in their sport, and then eventually finding a way to beat them.

It's clear the next big wave in Canadian curling has arrived, en masse, and it's talented, hungry and has its eyes on some delicious prizes.

Here they come, one after the other — Matthew Hall, JT Ryan, Tanner Horgan, Selena Sturmey, Tyler Tardi, Sterling Middleton and Kristen Streifel.

Also ready to move into the upper echelon are Manitoba teams skipped by Mackenzie Zacharias and Jacques Gauthier, both 21, who are graduating from junior curling to play at the next level, which is the big time in Canadian curling. Both bring with them some pretty impressive credentials, if you consider junior world championship gold medals as something to crow about.

It seems the sky's the limit for these newbies. Both are primed

to make some noise this season, although the COVID-19 pandemic will have something to say about that.

Both say their next big goal is the Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings Canadian Curling Trials set for Saskatoon in 2021, when Canada's men's and women's teams for the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing will be declared.

Zacharias makes no bones about it. She's ready for the next step, and isn't prepared to wait the recommended three or four years of maturation to succeed among the top women's teams in the country.

"We're aiming to play in the trials. That's our immediate goal," says Zacharias, who skipped her team from Altona to the world junior women's title in Krasnoyarsk, Russia, last February. "Our goal last year was to go to the worlds and win. We accomplished that and now we have set a new goal, and that's the trials."

That's a pretty lofty goal for one so young, but she has the determination and confidence that drive the young set these days.

Zacharias was one half of a deadly one-two punch for the Canadians in Russia. Gauthier won the junior men's title,

skipping his team from the Assiniboine Memorial Curling Club in Winnipeg to gold.

It marked the first time since 2018 that both the men's and women's representatives from Canada won gold at a world juniors. British Columbia's Tardi and Nova Scotia's Kaitlyn Jones accomplished the feat in Aberdeen, Scotland.

Gauthier is also ready for the next step, although he knows the road leading to the ultimate goal, the next Olympics, is daunting. But he's ready to take the plunge into the deep end and see if he sinks or swims.

"We all agreed our goal is to get to the pre-trials, where it's going to be a lot more competitive," says Gauthier. "You have to play a lot. We've got to try to travel as much as we can, or as much as the external environment will allow us. We hope to get to the trials, make some noise and — who knows?"

Both Zacharias and Gauthier, despite their youth, have the talent to do well at the next level. Zacharias will bring back her gold-medal team intact, while Gauthier will have one new member.

Gauthier, who previously had been the steady anchor at third on JT Ryan's three-time Manitoba junior championship team, was supported in Russia by third Jordan Peters, second Brayden Payette, lead Zachary Bilawka, alternate Thomas Dunlop, and coach John Lund. Bilawka still has a year of junior eligibility left, so Gauthier has added Cole Chandler, who played previously with him, at lead.

Curling has always been something of a family affair, but Zacharias put an exclamation point on that fact with her win in Russia. She was coached by her dad, Sheldon, and had her sister Emily playing second. Karlee Burgess at third and lead/



Before the world juniors got underway, Russia's host committee organized a bus tour of Krasnoyarsk and the surrounding area for all of the teams. Team Canada strikes a pose in beautiful Pokrovskiy Park.



The Zacharias family — Sheldon, Mackenzie, Emily and Andrea — are all smiles after dad coached his daughters to a gold medal at the 2020 Canadian juniors in Langley, B.C.



"Our goal last year was to go to the worlds and win," says Mackenzie Zacharias. "We accomplished that and now we have set a new goal, and that's the trials."



Maritimer Karlee Burgess, left, moved to Winnipeg in the off-season to play for a new team skipped by Mackenzie Zacharias, who built her team to win.

PHOTO: WCF/RICHARD GRAY

PHOTO: WCF/RICHARD GRAY



PHOTO: WCF/RICHARD GRAY

Above left: Canadian skip Jacques Gauthier releases his rock to sweepers Zachary Bilawka, left, and Brayden Payette in gold-medal game action. The Canucks needed just nine ends to defeat Switzerland's Marco Hösli 7-2.

Above right: Now a graduate of junior curling, Jacques Gauthier knows the road leading to the next Olympics is daunting but he's ready to take the plunge and see if he sinks or swims.

World junior champion Jacques Gauthier arrives at the Winnipeg airport to a warm welcome from his sister, Gaetanne, his mom, Cathy, and dad, Ron.



PHOTO: WCF/RICHARD GRAY

vice-skip Lauren Lenentine, along with alternate Rachel Erickson, also contributed to the gold-medal run.

Zacharias built her team to win, recruiting players who could get the job done. Burgess of Truro, Nova Scotia, and Lenentine of Cornwall, Prince Edward Island, moved from their homes in the Maritimes to live and play with Zacharias in Winnipeg, where they all go to school.

Zacharias says it was particularly thrilling to win with her sister by her side.

"I've been curling with my sister since I was about 10 years old," she says. "It's really special to start out when you're that young and then work your way up to play in the worlds. And then to win it is super, super special."

Gauthier didn't have siblings on his team but his victory was something of a family affair, too. His mom, Cathy, and dad, Ron, have been instrumental in his curling career, guiding him with their support and experience. Cathy is a member of the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame and is now a curling broadcaster for TSN.

"Mom and dad have always been there for me," he says. "Dad actually coached me for the longest time. Any time I was doing anything technically wrong I could give my mom a call and she'd give me her honest opinion."

Gauthier had an extra bonus in Russia. He got to share the spotlight with Burgess, his live-in girlfriend, who made history as the first Canadian to win three world junior women's titles.

Gauthier admits it may take a little time to get to the Promised Land because there are so many talented and experienced men's teams in the country.

"The biggest thing about beating those guys is you have to know how to play them," he says. "A guy like Kevin Koe (two-time world champion from Calgary) sees the game on a completely different level. We're thinking about two, three shots ahead. Koe is thinking three ends ahead. The way those guys think the game strategically is different, and that's what you have to get used to. The only ways to compete with them is to play them."

"The best way to get better is to play those guys, getting your reps in, and taking your lumps early, because over time that's how you beat them. You play those guys enough and I think down the road you can compete."

It seems Charles Dickens was certainly on to something when he wrote about "the best of times, the worst of times."



Introduced to it by their tour guide/translator, Pavel (far left), a local Siberian restaurant that served up such familiar mainstays as pizza, pasta and steak became the Canadian contingent's favourite eatery.



Jacques Gauthier got to share the gold-medal spotlight with Karlee Burgess, his live-in girlfriend, who made history as the first Canadian to win three world junior women's titles.



Reigning world junior champions Lauren Lenentine, Emily Zacharias, Karlee Burgess and Mackenzie Zacharias are graduating from junior curling to play at the next level, which is the big time in Canadian curling.

The world junior championships got in just under the wire before all hell broke loose and the COVID-19 pandemic spread around the world, causing mass cancellations of sporting events, including the world men's and women's curling championships.

"When we were in Russia there weren't many cases, so nobody was overly worried. It was a couple of weeks after we got back that people became really concerned. We were so happy to get home," says Zacharias.

The Manitobans hardly had time to celebrate their huge achievements before donning face masks and isolating at home, venturing out only to hit the stores when they opened. But when they were at home, waiting for the worst to blow over, they were able to look at the hardware they had won and savour being world champions, something only a few athletes get to accomplish.

"It was somewhat surreal," says Zacharias. "It was amazing to go to Russia and compete. To be recognized as one of the best teams in the world is a special experience."

The virus, of course, put a damper on things everywhere, and both Zacharias and Gauthier admit it was difficult having to adopt all of the protocols attached to staying safe.

The worst part was school, says Gauthier, a student at the Asper School of Business at the University of Manitoba. "Learning over Zoom calls is just not the same (as being in class). The work doesn't slow down, because there's a curriculum to complete, and with everything going on in the world it was a lot harder to focus on school.

"Both Karlee and I were over our heads in school work. It was hard to get down to the

nitty-gritty. Being here at home wasn't the greatest learning environment."

There were other disappointments. There was supposed to be an autograph-signing session at the home club, a lunch and dinner with the mayor in Winnipeg and a trip to city hall.

"It was all torpedoed," says Gauthier. "Yeah, it was a bummer."

But he looks on the bright side. He got to compete on the world stage.

"My heart really went out to Team Brad Gushue (Brier champ) and Team Kerri Einarson (Hearts champ), who couldn't compete in the world championships, like we did."

Einarson, who was going to compete in her first world championship, got to the venue in Prince George, British Columbia, and was told to go home. "At least we got to enjoy it and represent Canada on an international stage," says Gauthier. "We got so fortunate with the timing."

Zacharias was also forced to shut things down.

"We got in a little bit of celebrating when we got back, which was kind of nice," she says. "Then it was like everything stopped. We couldn't even go out to practise. We weren't prepared for that. So there was nothing to do but buckle down and focus a little bit more on school."

Zacharias is in her fourth year studying kinesiology at the University of Manitoba.

Thanks to the low number of cases in Manitoba, things opened up nicely in the province. Zacharias moved back home for the summer to Altona, where she got a job at the Oakview Golf and Country Club doing a number of jobs. Gauthier wasn't so lucky. The summer job in business he had last year was wiped out by the virus.

"Everything to do with investing is not in good shape right now," he says. "But beggars can't be choosers. I won a world championship. What can be better than that?"

*Dave Komosky is Curling Canada's daily event publications editor*



The new face on Team Gauthier's men's squad is Cole Chandler. A former junior teammate, Chandler takes over the lead position from Zachary Bilawka, who still has another year of junior eligibility.



# TEAM EINARSON EMBRACES FIRST CANADIAN CHAMPIONSHIP VICTORY

BY PAUL WIECEK

**We've all had a year to remember in 2020.**

But few have had a year quite like Kerri Einarson's.

From the elation of winning her first Scotties Tournament of Hearts last February, to the crushing disappointment of being denied a chance to represent her country at the world championship a month later, to the terror that she might have contracted the COVID-19 virus that had turned her world — and everyone else's — upside down, Einarson has been on a stomach-churning roller-coaster ride that she'll never forget.

"It's been absolutely crazy," says the 32-year-old skip from Gimli, Manitoba, a quaint fishing village located about an hour's drive north of Winnipeg.

"From winning the Scotties and heading to the

worlds, to suddenly everything just changing in a blink of an eye. It was hard. And then on top of that, it has been a really, really scary time at work."

Canadian curling fans know Einarson best as the leader of a dominating Manitoba-based foursome that includes three former skips — two-time national Hearts runner-up Val Sweeting at third; two-time Canadian junior silver medallist and 2018 Canadian champ (as third for Jennifer Jones) Shannon Birchard at second; and two-time Manitoba junior champ Briane Meilleur at lead.

The second-year team won its first Canadian women's title in February, defeating Ontario's Rachel Homan 8-7 in an extra end in the final in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.



In only their second year together, Manitoba skip Kerri Einarson, third Val Sweeting, second Shannon Birchard and lead Briane Meilleur won their first Canadian women's title last February, defeating Ontario's Rachel Homan 8-7 in an extra-end final.

PHOTOS: ANDREW KLAVER © KRUGER PRODUCTS

That win earned the foursome the right to represent Canada at the women's worlds in Prince George, British Columbia, the following month.

And that's when things got interesting. Einarson and her team were already in Prince George getting ready to play when organizers had to abruptly postpone — and ultimately cancel — the event before a single rock was thrown, as the COVID crisis took hold and brought the world to a grinding halt in mid-March, just as the event was about to get underway.

And so Einarson and her squad might be best remembered not for their heart-stopping win over Homan in the 2020 Hearts final but as the first women's curling team in the modern era to win a Canadian championship but not go on to represent Canada internationally.

"It's really disappointing and it's a tough one to overcome because we were so excited to wear that Maple Leaf," says Einarson. "It's such an honour to wear that and we worked so hard to get there that to suddenly have it all taken away from you was pretty crazy."

But Einarson didn't have much time to lament her bad luck before she suddenly found herself with much bigger and more important things to worry about.

While Canadian curling fans know Einarson best as a skip, her day job is taking care of the residents of the Betel Personal Care Home in Gimli. And in April, everyone's worst fears were realized when a Betel resident tested positive for COVID-19.

With seven other Betel residents also showing symptoms, it was feared that the virus might ravage Betel the way it had so many other personal care homes, particularly in Ontario and Quebec.

And no sooner did Einarson contemplate what that might mean to the men and women she cared for did she too come down with COVID symptoms and was ordered to quarantine herself.

And so with that, a woman whose biggest problem a few days earlier had been the Maple Leaf jacket hanging in her closet that she wasn't going to get to wear internationally, suddenly found herself separated from her husband and six-year-old twin daughters at a time they all needed each other most.

"When I got home from being tested, I had to just lock myself in my room," Einarson recalls. "And it was hard because the girls, they kind of understood, but not really. So they wanted to come in and see me or just give me a hug and I had to say, 'No, sorry.'

"That was really hard. I even wore a mask in my room just to be safe, and my husband had to sleep on the couch for a few days.

Kerri Einarson and her teammates suffered a crushing disappointment when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the World Women's Curling Championship to be cancelled, denying them the opportunity to wear the Maple Leaf.



Team Einarson recruited two-time Hearts champion Heather Nedohin as the team's coach with the hope that she can help them get to the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing.

"He'd ask me what I wanted to eat, make it for me and then just open the door a little bit and leave it on the counter."

In the end, Einarson tested negative for the virus, as did everyone else at Betel, including the original patient zero who had initially tested positive.

But the scare provided Einarson with a new perspective on the roller-coaster of events in her life that had led up to it. "It was unfortunate what happened with the worlds and we were hoping for a while that maybe (the worlds) would be rescheduled, which obviously wouldn't happen.

"But that's the way it goes and we decided as a team to just learn what we could from the experience."

Sweeting, who'd lost back-to-back Canadian finals skipping her own Alberta-based team in 2014 and '15, says the disappointment of finally winning a Canadian title only to be denied the chance to represent Canada at the worlds was tempered by the fact that her team will at least be able to wear the Maple Leaf as Team Canada at the 2021 Hearts.

"We're still Team Canada and the Scotties will be in Calgary in February and we're just hoping to get back there, win it again and get another chance at the worlds," says Sweeting.

"It won't be the international competition we were hoping for but getting the chance to be Team Canada at the Scotties will be a big honour."

Sweeting says she tries to focus on the big picture when she reflects on the series of events that her team got caught up in this year.

"It was pretty heartbreaking not to be able to play at the worlds," she says. "But we understand the decision and there are bigger things. A lot of athletes are going through tough things and disappointments right now — just look at the (postponed 2020) Summer Olympics and all of the athletes affected by that.

"I'm trying to turn it into motivation to get back there and get another chance to represent Canada. All we can do is spin it into a positive and do what we can."

Like most competitive curling teams, the Einarson squad struggled over the summer to put together a cashspiel schedule and line up sponsors for the coming curling season with so much uncertainty still surrounding their sport.

But they did make one concrete move, recruiting two-time Hearts champion Heather Nedohin to take over from Patti Wuthrich as the team's coach.

With a spot in the 2021 Olympic trials secured with their win in Moose Jaw, Einarson says the team is hoping Nedohin can help them get to the biggest international event of them all — the Olympic Winter Games, scheduled for Beijing in 2022.

"Heather has been an amazing curler for so many years and we just know she has so much energy and we could use that on our team. She'll keep us all accountable and make sure we're all on the same page. We're really looking forward to having her on our team," says Einarson.

In the meantime, Einarson says she cannot wait for February and the chance to finally wear that Maple Leaf.

"It will be an absolutely amazing feeling. Every time I even look at my jacket hanging in my closet at home it gives me goose bumps," she says.

"It's something I've dreamed about as a little girl, wearing the red and white and having the Maple Leaf on my back. I'm really looking forward to finally putting it on."

---

*Paul Wiecek is a curling writer based in Gimli, Manitoba*



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# BERNARD, MARTIN SHARE MEMORIES OF VANCOUVER 2010



PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/MICHAEL BURNS

After receiving their gold medals, Canada's Olympic champions, from left, Adam Enright, Ben Hebert, Marc Kennedy, John Morris and Kevin Martin, acknowledge the largely pro-Canadian capacity crowd in Vancouver.

## THE 2010 OLYMPIC WINTER

Games in Vancouver hold very special memories for a pair of highly respected, Alberta-based curlers and their teammates.

It was 10 years ago that skips Kevin Martin of Edmonton and Calgary's Cheryl Bernard led their teams to medals — gold for Martin, silver for Bernard.

Bernard says walking into the opening ceremony is forever etched in her mind.

"I'm not even sure that our team realized we were Olympians until then," says Bernard, who shared the experience with teammates Susan O'Connor at vice-skip, Carolyn Darbyshire at second, lead Cori Bartel, alternate Kristie Moore and coach Dennis Balderston, all out of the Calgary Curling Club.

"To be the last country to walk into a stadium of 70,000 people after sitting under the belly of the stadium waiting to go out and hear the roar was amazing. It still, to this day, 10 years later, gives me goose bumps because I think that was the moment we all realized we were representing this country and we had all these amazing fans and we were the home team."

It was the same for Martin, of Edmonton's Saville Centre, who was joined by vice-skip John Morris, second Marc Kennedy, lead Ben Hebert, alternate Adam Enright and coach Jules Owchar.

He has great memories of the Olympics, "and I don't even know which ones are the best ones, there were so many," says

Martin. "Obviously, being on the right spot on the podium, the highest spot, rather than in 2002," when his team won silver in Salt Lake City, Utah.

"The Saturday night in Vancouver, I believe our gold was the third gold of the day and I believe that tied the most golds (at the event) with Russia. But we still had the next day, being the men's hockey final. Yes, it was exciting winning our gold and being on the podium, but then the next day when Sid (Crosby) scored that golden goal...."

"They were all big deals and so were the opening ceremonies.

"Being one of the older guys competing, I was in the front row with the older athletes walking in and we were the first ones out of the gate, which was pretty cool because the crowd went absolutely crazy."

It was also a fantastic stretch of curling for the men's and women's teams — as it was for Jim Armstrong's gold medal-winning Paralympic team, which included vice-skip Darryl Neighbour, second Ina Forrest, lead Sonja Gaudet, alternate Bruno Yizek and coach Joe Rea.

Being on home soil for the wins was the icing on the cake for Bernard and Martin.

"I know when we won the Olympic trials we thought, 'Ah, we don't get to go anywhere cool. It would be great to go to Italy or something.' But we had no idea what it was like to play in the home country with everyone cheering for you," says Bernard. "It was pretty special.

"It's definitely something you won't forget. You talk to people and if they weren't in Vancouver, there were really no words to describe it, and if they were in Vancouver, there's really no need to describe it."



Canada's 2010 women's Olympic silver medallists: from left, alternate Kristie Moore, lead Cori Bartel, second Carolyn Darbyshire, third Susan O'Connor and skip Cheryl Bernard. "I've never seen a country unite the way it did," says Bernard a decade after her Olympic experience. "It's a special thing you get to see in your home country."

Bernard went through the 10-team competition with an 8-1 record, her only round-robin loss to China's Bingyu Wang. Canada then defeated Switzerland's Mirjam Ott 6-5 in one semifinal before losing the gold-medal game 7-6 in an extra end to Sweden's Anette Norberg.

Bernard's team believes it truly did earn the silver and not lose the gold, although that realization took some time, she says.

"That doesn't come right away. It stings when you have a chance to win a gold medal and it doesn't come through. It's a tough game to play. The game we were elated to play was the game before it, to get into the final," says Bernard. "You lose that game and you're playing for a bronze or nothing. Which I can only imagine would be hell.

"Knowing you're going into a game where you are going to take one of two medals is pretty cool, but to lose a game that you had within your grasp is a tough pill to swallow for a while."

Norberg stole the win when Bernard's last-rock, double takeout attempt narrowly missed, overcurling and just nudging the second rock, after eliminating the first.

"I think it took me a long time because I missed the last shot to win and it took me a long, long time to get over that," says Bernard. "But I have been able to look at the fact that we won a silver medal and made our country proud. I don't look at it anymore that we lost a gold, although I did for some time."

Martin, meanwhile, went through the competition undefeated, escaping two tight 7-6 results over Great Britain's David Murdoch and Norway's Thomas Ulsrud. Martin drew the side of the four-foot for that extra-end 7-6 win over Ulsrud. "It was

pivotal. If that draw isn't made, it could have been a different week."

In one semifinal, Canada doubled Sweden's Niklas Edin 6-3 and won the final 6-3 in a second meeting with Ulsrud.

"I don't think there's ever been a team like that, before or since," says Martin. "It was such a strong team, including (coach) Jules. I thought we had the best team of players, but we also had the best coach in history."

Martin says John Morris was the key to the gold-medal win. "Johnny Mo took over that game," he says. "John played unbelievable in that final and that's why we were three-up, coming home. Everybody played so well, but John was terrific. There were a lot of highlight shots."

It was a relief as Martin slid out of the hack with the final shot, needing just a takeout to earn gold.

"An open hit with a cushion — it was a nice one to have," says Martin. "To have that rock leave the house was exciting, but I can also honestly say, it was a relief. It was the third Olympics for me (he finished fourth in Albertville, France, in 1992, when curling was a demonstration sport) and to get on top of that podium meant a great deal.

"Excitement? Yes. Relief? Yes. More relief than excitement? Maybe. It was a crazy time and a big deal, not just for me, but for curling in Canada."

The same can be said of the entire Winter Games, agree both Martin and Bernard.

Even more thrilling and memorable was the reception the athletes experienced in Vancouver.

"I remember the weirdest things," says Bernard with a laugh. "I remember not being able to walk down the streets without

a security guard with us. For one moment in your life you were actually a rock star, which was really cool. Although I did say afterwards that I would never want that life. I can't actually imagine being somebody famous."

She also remembers having dinner at Canada House with her husband, Terry Meek, taking a much-needed break.

"This big, huge, burly man came up to us and said, 'Wayne and Janet Gretzky are in the back having dinner and they would like you to join them.'

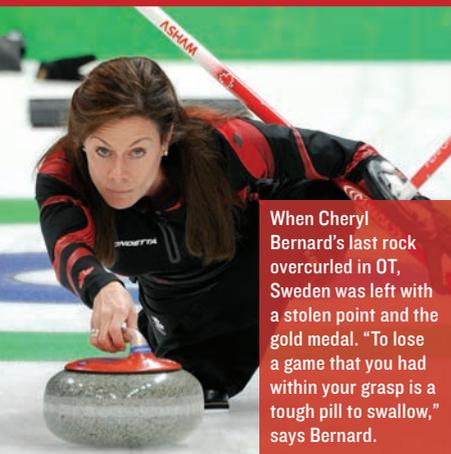
"Oh, you're kidding. Real funny,'" says Bernard. "The guy was like, 'No, no. I'm serious.' So we get up and we have dinner with Wayne and Janet and his kids. Those are the weird things that you remember, or seeing (then Canadian Prime Minister) Stephen Harper in the stands at all the curling games. You would look up and you would see all these incredible, famous iconic Canadians in the stands and that was neat."

It was the same for Martin, who, like Bernard, began the event living in the Olympic Village before moving to more private housing.

"The village was awesome, but it's the highest energy place in the world and it can bury you," says Martin. "It was too much electricity."

Martin spent a lot of his off time at the Shaw Tower on the harbour, near Canada Place, where the Olympic flame burned bright. The building was owned by J.R. Shaw, the telecommunications industry pioneer, who passed away early in 2020. Shaw opened his facility to athletes and family members who wanted to get away.

"It was hard to be in public and I got to know him real well, which was a real



When Cheryl Bernard's last rock overcurled in OT, Sweden was left with a stolen point and the gold medal. "To lose a game that you had within your grasp is a tough pill to swallow," says Bernard.



Cheryl Bernard says the game her team was elated to play was the semifinal against Switzerland's Mirjam Ott to get into the final. "You lose that game and you're playing for a bronze or nothing."



John Morris was the key to the gold-medal win, says skip Kevin Martin. "John played unbelievable in that final and that's why we were three-up, coming home."

Canada's Kevin Martin controlled the final against Norway's Thomas Ulsrud from start to finish and had an open hit for the victory in the 10th end.



Rebounding from a gold-medal loss in 2002, Canada's Kevin Martin made history in 2010 when his became the first Olympic curling team ever to go undefeated.

PHOTOS: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/MICHAEL BURNS

treat," says Martin. "It's funny, we were having a glass of wine and he said, 'Kevin, if I were to come to your final game, what would be the best seat in the building?'"

Martin offered his opinion and in the final he looked up behind him in the home end and who's sitting right on the centre line about 13 or 14 rows up, but J.R. Shaw.

"The weather was so nice, too, and the atmosphere in Vancouver — it was nothing like I had ever seen. People outside watching sporting events on TV and celebrating," says Martin.

The event was eloquently summed up by Bernard, who also gave tremendous credit to Dr. Penny Werthner, the dean of kinesiology at the University of Calgary who is a sports psychologist and former Olympic track and field athlete.

"I've never seen a country unite the way it did. It's a special thing you get to see in your home country. You talk about the value of sport and how it can unite people, like cheering on the Toronto Raptors last year. It was fascinating to watch," says Bernard, who jumped into a cab to meet her husband for dinner one night in Vancouver and met a driver who was from New Delhi.

"I get into the cab and it's covered in Canadian flags and memorabilia. I chuckled and said, 'Are you a Team Canada fan?' And he said, 'Oh my gosh, I am. I've been cheering Team Canada on and I've only been in this country seven years.'

"He asked me if I was here to cheer on Team Canada and I said, 'I am actually an athlete.' Well then he never stopped talking and asking questions. He was so excited. He had a Team Canada toque on and we got to the restaurant and I said, 'Thanks for cheering Team Canada on.'

"He turns around, and I will never forget it: He had tears in his eyes and he said, 'Thank you. I've only been in this country for seven years and this is the first time in those seven years that I felt part of it.' He said, 'I stood with a bunch of people I didn't know in downtown Vancouver the other day and we all put our arms around each other and celebrated Alexandre Bilodeau winning gold (in men's moguls).'

"He said he'd never been a part of something like that and didn't really value sport until this. 'Now I feel Canadian and that's pretty cool for me,' and I thought, 'Wow.' It was a pretty amazing story and there were so many of them," says a proud Bernard.

*Mario Annicchiarico is a freelance writer based in Victoria*



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# HOME HARDWARE CANADA CUP

PRESENTED BY PIONEER

Sobeys Arena, Leduc Recreation Centre › Leduc, Alberta › November 27 to December 1, 2019



PHOTOS: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Canada Cup champions: from left, skip Rachel Homan, third Emma Miskew, second Joanne Courtney and lead Lisa Weagle. In addition to a \$40,000 paycheck, the team took the first step to a return trip to the Olympic Winter Games with a 9-4 victory over Tracy Fleury.

**The 2019 Home Hardware Canada Cup, presented by Pioneer,** offered the first opportunity for Canadian curling teams to pursue gold at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games as Team Canada.

The first set of berths to the 2021 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings were on the line, as were some massive paydays, with the total purse of the men's and women's events boosted 185 per cent over last season.

Rachel Homan's team from Ottawa began its pursuit of winning a second consecutive trials title with a Canada Cup victory in the Sobeys Arena in Alberta's Leduc Recreation Centre. In contrast, Toronto's John Epping and his team continued to establish itself as a significant Canadian contender with a victory on the men's side. Both teams earned \$40,000 for their wins.

"It's been a great week and my team's played so well," said Homan. "We tried really hard to be where we wanted to be at the Canada Cup and it paid off. We're so excited to get the first trials berth. It's nice to have."

Homan, vice-skip Emma Miskew, second Joanne Courtney and lead Lisa Weagle won their second Canada Cup title as a unit with a convincing 9-4 victory over Team Tracy Fleury of East St. Paul, Manitoba.

Homan capitalized on a masterfully played third end, needing to draw anywhere in the eight-foot to score a four-ender and take control of the game.

"That was a big turning point, that one shot," said Homan.

"The rest of the game was really well played, with some big shots from my team. It was a really hard-fought battle and the scoreboard was a bit more lopsided than it actually was."

Homan and Fleury finished atop the standings with 5-1 records, with Homan gaining direct entry to the final thanks to her round-robin win over Fleury. Chelsea Carey's team from Calgary finished with a 4-2 record for third place overall. That gave her a spot against Fleury in the semifinal, which Fleury won with a 9-4 victory.

Team Fleury earned \$25,000 as runner-up, while third-place Team Carey pocketed \$15,000.

On the men's side, Epping, vice-skip Ryan Fry, second Mat Camm and lead Brent Laing won the men's title with a 7-4 victory over Calgary's Team Kevin Koe. A three-pointer in the fourth end aided Epping to victory in a back-and-forth affair. It was the first title for Epping, Fry and Camm, while Laing picked up his third win at the event, having won with skips Glenn Howard and Kevin Koe.

"Among the top teams, people realize we're good. It's nice to win something," said Epping. "This is our third (event) win this year. We've continued to make the playoffs in every event we've played in and we've played solid. I think we're now on people's radar."

Epping's 4-2 round-robin record was good for third place overall, while the teams he lost to, Koe and Edmonton's Team Brendan Bottcher, finished at 5-1.



Tracy Fleury defeated Chelsea Carey 9-4 in the semi to earn a spot in the final against Rachel Homan. Fleury gave up a four-spot in the third end to all but put the Canada Cup title out of reach. "Giving up that early lead is just so hard against a team of that calibre," said Fleury.



Toronto's John Epping, Ryan Fry, Mat Camm and Brent Laing are headed to the 2021 Canadian Curling Trials after a 7-4 victory over Calgary's Kevin Koe in the Canada Cup final. A three-pointer in the fourth end aided Epping to victory in a back-and-forth affair.

In the semifinal, Epping capitalized on a four-ender, followed by a steal of four, to defeat Bottcher 12-4.

Team Koe collected \$25,000 for finishing second and in third place, Team Bottcher took home \$15,000.

In addition, all teams that competed in Leduc received a \$7,500 travel subsidy.

The results also spelled a couple of firsts for Epping and Fleury. With the Home Hardware Canada Cup victory, Team Epping qualified for the final men's spot on Team Canada at the 2020 OK Tire & BKT Tires Continental Cup. Since Team Homan qualified for the event last season by leading the CTRS points race, Team Fleury received the final women's spot at the Ryder Cup-style event as the CTRS leader at that point of the 2019-20 season.



Kevin Koe's wins over semifinalists Brendan Bottcher and John Epping in round-robin play earned his squad a bye to the Canada Cup final, but Epping turned the tables, handing Koe a 7-4 loss. "We missed too many early and a couple of little ones later," said Koe.

**WOMEN'S FINAL**

Rachel Homan	*104 020 101 X 9
Tracy Fleury	010 101 010 X 4

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

<b>Team Homan</b>		<b>Team Fleury</b>	
Rachel Homan	90%	Tracy Fleury	71%
Emma Miskew	88%	Selena Njegovan	68%
Joanne Courtney	82%	Liz Fyfe	89%
Lisa Weagle	88%	Kristin MacCuish	93%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>87%</b>		<b>80%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

Chelsea Carey	010 001 020 X 4
Tracy Fleury	*301 110 102 X 9

**FINAL STANDINGS**

<b>Playoffs</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Rachel Homan	1	0
Tracy Fleury	1	1
Chelsea Carey	0	1
<b>Round robin</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Rachel Homan	5	1
Tracy Fleury	5	1
Chelsea Carey	4	2
Cheryl Bernard (replaces Casey Scheidegger)	2	4
Kerri Einarson	2	4
Jennifer Jones	2	4
Robyn Silvernagle	1	5

**MEN'S FINAL**

Kevin Koe	*002 010 010 X 4
John Epping	000 301 102 X 7

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

<b>Team Koe</b>		<b>Team Epping</b>	
Kevin Koe	74%	John Epping	83%
B.J. Neufeld	90%	Ryan Fry	78%
Colton Flasch	76%	Mat Camm	91%
Ben Hebert	95%	Brent Laing	100%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>84%</b>		<b>88%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

John Epping	004 401 003 X 12
Brendan Bottcher	*100 010 110 X 4

**FINAL STANDINGS**

<b>Playoffs</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
John Epping	2	0
Kevin Koe	0	1
Brendan Bottcher	0	1
<b>Round robin</b>	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Kevin Koe	5	1
Brendan Bottcher	5	1
John Epping	4	2
Brad Gushue	3	3
Brad Jacobs	2	4
Glenn Howard	2	4
Matt Dunstone	0	6

# OK TIRE & BKT TIRES CONTINENTAL CUP

PRESENTED BY SERVICE EXPERTS

The Sports Centre at Western Fair District › London, Ontario › January 9 to 12, 2020



PHOTOS: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

**It's no secret in the world of curling that the best international teams are at the top of their game and continue to be formidable opponents on the world stage.**

That was proved once again at the 2020 OK Tire & BKT Tires Continental Cup, presented by Service Experts Heating, Air Conditioning and Plumbing, in London, Ontario. Team Europe's convincing 37.5 to 22.5 points victory over Team Canada in the Sports Centre at Western Fair District marked the first time international teams have won back-to-back titles.

Team Europe needed four of an available 18 points during the final skins draw of the event to secure its victory. It got them in the fourth end when Oskar Eriksson — who plays third for Sweden's Niklas Edin but was skipping a mixed team during the draw — played an out-turn raise to score the skin.

"Amazing," Eriksson said of the victory. "We're the same six teams as last year. We absolutely outplayed them all week and we deserved this."

Team Europe celebrates defending its Continental Cup title with a convincing 37.5 to 22.5 victory over Team Canada, proving that the best international teams are at the top of their game and continue to be formidable opponents on the world stage.

The wire-to-wire winners took home a prize of \$135,000, divided evenly among players from teams skipped by Sweden's Anna Hasselborg and Edin, Scotland's Eve Muirhead and Bruce Mouat, Silvana Tirinzoni and Peter de Cruz, both of Switzerland, and coach David Murdoch of Scotland, assistant coach Christoffer Svae of Norway and captain Fredrik Lindberg of Sweden.

Team Canada split its runner-up cheque of \$67,500 among teams led by Calgary's Chelsea Carey and Kevin Koe, Ottawa's Rachel Homan, Tracy Fleury of East St. Paul, Manitoba, Edmonton's Brendan Bottcher and Toronto's John Epping, and coach Jeff Stoughton of Winnipeg, assistant coach Heather Nedohin and captain David Nedohin, both of Sherwood Park, Alberta.

Team Homan claimed Canada's first point during the opening draw of men's and women's team-play games and the duo of Sarah

Wilkes and Brad Thiessen — who won the 2016 Canadian mixed title as third and second, respectively — added a point during the mixed doubles portion of the day. Team Europe, however, swept the remaining men's and women's games in the evening for a 7-2 lead after Day One of competition.

Team Europe's five-point edge ballooned into an eight-point lead by the end of Day Two. In the morning, the women's scrambled teams split the three available points with one point scored by Homan, Wilkes, Joanne Courtney and Rachel Brown and a half-point secured by Fleury, Emma Miskew, Liz Fyfe and Lisa Weagle.

Dana Ferguson and Bottcher scored Canada's only mixed doubles point in the

afternoon, allowing Team Europe to take a 13-5 lead after the scrambled team of Koe, Darren Moulding, Colton Flasch and Brent Laing took a half-point in the evening.

Canada came up dry on Day Three with only one and a half points scored collectively by scrambled teams of Epping, Selena Njegovan, Mat Camm and Kristin MacCuish, and Koe, Miskew, Flasch and Weagle, and the mixed doubles duo Njegovan and B.J. Neufeld.



Facing a pair of Silvana Tirinzoni rocks, Rachel Homan drew the four-foot to seal the win in a hard-fought women's team match to claim Canada's first point in the opening draw.



Peter de Cruz edged Canada's Kevin Koe 7-6 to give Europe a three-game sweep in the opening day of men's team play, and a 7-2 overall lead against the home team.



In mixed doubles action, Sarah Wilkes and Brad Thiessen prevailed 10-4 over Team Europe's Vicky Wright and Grant Hardie to give Team Canada a much-needed point.

## TEAM EUROPE

**Team de Cruz, Switzerland**  
Peter de Cruz, Benoît Schwarz, Sven Michel, Valentin Tanner

**Team Edin, Sweden**  
Niklas Edin, Oskar Eriksson, Rasmus Wranå, Christoffer Sundgren

**Team Hasselborg, Sweden**  
Anna Hasselborg, Sara McManus, Agnes Knochenhauer, Sofia Mabergs

**Team Mouat, Scotland**  
Bruce Mouat, Grant Hardie, Bobby Lammie, Hammy McMillan

**Team Muirhead, Scotland**  
Eve Muirhead, Lauren Gray, Jennifer Dodds, Vicky Wright

**Team Tirinzoni, Switzerland**  
Silvana Tirinzoni, Alina Pätz, Esther Neuwand, Melanie Barbezat

**Captain:** Fredrik Lindberg, Sweden

**Coach:** David Murdoch, Scotland

**Assistant coach:** Christoffer Svae, Norway

## TEAM CANADA

**Team Bottcher**  
Brendan Bottcher, Darren Moulding, Brad Thiessen, Karrick Martin

**Team Carey**  
Chelsea Carey, Sarah Wilkes, Dana Ferguson, Rachel Brown

**Team Epping**  
John Epping, Ryan Fry, Mat Camm, Brent Laing

**Team Fleury**  
Tracy Fleury, Selena Njegovan, Liz Fyfe, Kristin MacCuish

**Team Homan**  
Rachel Homan, Emma Miskew, Joanne Courtney, Lisa Weagle

**Team Koe**  
Kevin Koe, B.J. Neufeld, Colton Flasch, Ben Hebert

**Captain:** David Nedohin

**Coach:** Jeff Stoughton

**Assistant coach:** Heather Nedohin



A wild celebration erupts and the bench begins to empty when Team Europe wins the race to 30.5 points. Needing just four of 18 available points heading into the final draw of the Continental Cup, Sweden's Oskar Eriksson — skipping a mixed squad against Team Canada's Kevin Koe — delivered the winning blow with a two-skin payoff in the fourth end.

At the end of the day, Team Europe's 20.5 to 6.5 lead was looking insurmountable in the race to 30.5 points.

But Team Epping led the charge at the start of the final day of skins competition. It took advantage of three carryovers throughout the game to score four and a half of a possible five points in a game against Mouat.

But Team Europe was just four points away from victory going into the final draw and was sure to take advantage of the lead, clinching the win by the fourth end and trouncing any hopes of a Canadian comeback.

"They made all the right shots and hats off to them. They've had a wonderful four days," said coach Stoughton. It left some questions going forward of how Canada will contend with Europe in the future.

"I'm sure we'll put our thinking caps on and see if we can come up with something better," said Stoughton. "This European team has really started to gel and they're going to be tough to beat."

## OK Tire & BKT Tires Continental Cup Results

### MIXED DOUBLES COMPETITION

#### Round 1

Europe	Michel/Pätz	*101	032	3X	10
Canada	Moulding/MacCuish	030	100	0X	4
Europe	Edin/Mabergs	110	201	05	10
Canada	Miskew/Flasch	*002	010	30	6
Europe	Hardie/Wright	001	102	0X	4
Canada	Thiessen/Wilkes	*230	020	3X	10

#### Round 2

Europe	Schwarz/Tirinzi	010	200	00	3
Canada	Bottcher/Ferguson	*101	001	11	5
Europe	Eriksson/Hasselborg	*400	210	2X	9
Canada	Laing/Fleury	011	002	0X	4
Europe	Mouat/Dodds	*304	010	2X	10
Canada	Carey/Camm	010	102	0X	4

#### Round 3

Europe	de Cruz/Barbezat	003	022	1X	8
Canada	Epping/Weagle	*110	200	0X	4
Europe	Wranå/Knochenhauer	*001	102	03	7
Canada	Njegovan/Neufeld	410	010	10	7
Europe	Lammie/Muirhead	*430	201	XX	10
Canada	Homan/Hebert	001	010	XX	2

#### Mixed doubles competition totals:

Team Europe	6.5 points
Team Canada	2.5 points

### TEAM COMPETITION

#### Women

Canada	Rachel Homan	020	201	01	6
Europe	Silvana Tirinzoni	*101	020	10	5
Canada	Tracy Fleury	010	030	XX	4
Europe	Eve Muirhead	*103	403	XX	11
Canada	Chelsea Carey	010	100	1X	3
Europe	Anna Hasselborg	*004	011	0X	6

#### Men

Canada	Brendan Bottcher	020	201	0X	5
Europe	Niklas Edin	*102	020	2X	7
Canada	John Epping	010	103	0X	5
Europe	Bruce Mouat	*301	020	3X	9
Canada	Kevin Koe	010	020	21	6
Europe	Peter de Cruz	*202	201	00	7

#### Team competition totals:

Team Canada	1 point
Team Europe	5 points

### TEAM SCRAMBLE

#### Women

Canada	003	020	10	6
Europe	*100	301	01	6

TEAM CAN.: Tracy Fleury, Emma Miskew, Liz Fyfe, Lisa Weagle

TEAM EUR.: Silvana Tirinzoni, Sara McManus, Esther Neuwand, Sofia Mabergs

Canada	020 102 01	6
Europe	*102 010 10	5
TEAM CAN.: Rachel Homan, Sarah Wilkes, Joanne Courtney, Rachel Brown		
TEAM EUR.: Eve Muirhead, Alina Pätz, Jennifer Dodds, Melanie Barbezat		

Canada	*000 100 XX	1
Europe	112 021 XX	7
TEAM CAN.: Chelsea Carey, Selena Njegovan, Dana Ferguson, Kristin MacCuish		
TEAM EUR.: Anna Hasselborg, Lauren Gray, Agnes Knochenhauer, Vicky Wright		

**Men:**

Canada	*000 102 0X	3
Europe	121 020 1X	7
TEAM CAN.: Brendan Bottcher, Ryan Fry, Brad Thiessen, Ben Hebert		
TEAM EUR.: Niklas Edin, Grant Hardie, Rasmus Wranå, Hammy McMillan		

Canada	*000 011 10	3
Europe	110 000 01	3
TEAM CAN.: Kevin Koe, Darren Moulding, Colton Flasch, Brent Laing		
TEAM EUR.: Benoît Schwarz, Oskar Eriksson, Peter de Cruz, Christoffer Sundgren		

Canada	*020 100 00	3
Europe	001 001 11	4
TEAM CAN.: John Epping, B.J. Neufeld, Mat Camm, Karrick Martin		
TEAM EUR.: Bruce Mouat, Sven Michel, Bobby Lammie, Valentin Tanner		

**Mixed**

Canada	*100 020 30	6
Europe	001 003 02	6
TEAM CAN.: John Epping, Selena Njegovan, Mat Camm, Kristin MacCuish		
TEAM EUR.: Benoît Schwarz, Silvana Tirinzoni, Peter de Cruz, Melanie Barbezat		

Canada	*002 010 10	4
Europe	010 100 02	4
TEAM CAN.: Kevin Koe, Emma Miskew, Colton Flasch, Lisa Weagle		
TEAM EUR.: Niklas Edin, Sara McManus, Rasmus Wranå, Sofia Mabergs		

Canada	010 000 0X	1
Europe	*100 112 2X	7
TEAM CAN.: Brendan Bottcher, Sarah Wilkes, Brad Thiessen, Rachel Brown		
TEAM EUR.: Bruce Mouat, Lauren Gray, Bobby Lammie, Vicky Wright		

Canada	010 110 00	3
Europe	*200 003 11	7
TEAM CAN.: Tracy Fleury, Darren Moulding, Liz Fyfe, Brent Laing		
TEAM EUR.: Alina Pätz, Sven Michel, Esther Neuwand, Valentin Tanner		

Canada	102 010 0X	4
Europe	*020 302 2X	9
TEAM CAN.: Rachel Homan, B.J. Neufeld, Joanne Courtney, Ben Hebert		
TEAM EUR.: Anna Hasselborg, Oskar Eriksson, Agnes Knochenhauer, Christoffer Sundgren		

Canada	*210 020 0X	5
Europe	003 402 2X	11
TEAM CAN.: Chelsea Carey, Ryan Fry, Dana Ferguson, Karrick Martin		
TEAM EUR.: Eve Muirhead, Grant Hardie, Jennifer Dodds, Hammy McMillan		

**Team scramble competition totals:**

Team Canada	3 points
Team Europe	9 points

**SKINS COMPETITION****Mixed: Round 1**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 .5 .5	1 1 5
Europe	*.5 .5 0	0 0 .5	0 0 1.5
Canada	0 0 0	0 1.5 0	0 2 3.5

TEAM CAN.: B.J. Neufeld, Selena Njegovan, Ben Hebert, Liz Fyfe			
TEAM EUR.: Niklas Edin, Sara McManus, Rasmus Wranå, Agnes Knochenhauer			

**Mixed: Round 2**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 1 1	1 1 6
Europe	0 1 0	1 0 2	†1 0 5
Canada	*0 0 0	0 0 0	0 †1 1

TEAM CAN.: Kevin Koe, Tracy Fleury, Colton Flasch, Kristin MacCuish			
TEAM EUR.: Oskar Eriksson, Anna Hasselborg, Christoffer Sundgren, Sofia Mabergs			

**Women: Round 1**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 .5 .5	1 1 5
Europe Silvana Tirinzoni	*.5 0 0	.5 0 0	0 3 4
Canada Chelsea Carey	0 0 1	0 0 0	0 0 1

**Women: Round 2**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 1 1	1 1 6
Europe Eve Muirhead	*.5 0 0	.5 0 0	†1 0 2
Canada Rachel Homan	0 .5 .5	0 0 2	0 †1 4

**Men: Round 1**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 .5 .5	1 1 5
Europe Bruce Mouat	.5 0 0	0 0 0	0 0 .5
Canada John Epping	*0 .5 .5	0 0 1.5	0 2 4.5

**Men: Round 2**

Points available	.5 .5 .5	.5 1 1	1 1 6
Europe Peter de Cruz	*0 1 0	1 0 1	0 †1 4
Canada Brendan Bottcher	0 0 0	0 1 0	†1 0 2

**Skins competition totals:**

Team Europe	17 points
Team Canada	16 points

† All skins games played in Round 2 concluded after six ends and the remaining six points were divided evenly between teams.

# NEW HOLLAND CANADIAN JUNIORS

George Preston Recreation Centre » Langley, British Columbia » January 18 to 26, 2020

## Karlee Burgess was set to make history

when the 2020 New Holland Canadian Junior Men's and Women's Curling Championships took over the George Preston Recreation Centre in the Township of Langley, British Columbia.

Burgess had already put together an awe-inspiring junior women's curling career — a two-time Canadian and world junior women's champ playing out of Nova Scotia with skips Mary Fay in 2016 and Kaitlyn Jones in 2018, to go along with a Youth Olympic Games gold medal she'd won in 2016 with Fay, Tyler Tardi and Sterling Middleton.

But Burgess wasn't satisfied with two Canadian titles. She'd moved to Manitoba in the off-season to join a new team helmed by Mackenzie Zacharias — with the added bonus that her longtime boyfriend, Jacques Gauthier, just happened to live in Winnipeg.

That move paid off as Burgess, throwing third stones, combined with Zacharias; Mackenzie's sister Emily Zacharias at second; lead/vice-skip Lauren Lenentine, who'd accompanied Burgess as an alternate on the 2018 Canadian/world championship team and joined her in the move to Manitoba, and coach Sheldon Zacharias, Mackenzie's and Emily's dad, to win the 2020 Canadian junior women's title.



Skip Mackenzie Zacharias, third Karlee Burgess, second Emily Zacharias and lead Lauren Lenentine were unstoppable in their quest for the Canadian junior women's crown. A precise angle takeout by Mackenzie Zacharias to drive an Alberta stone through a hole and score four in the eighth end put Manitoba into an insurmountable 8-3 lead.

The Manitoba reps from Altona rolled to a 10-3 win over Alberta's Abby Marks in the gold-medal game, capping a perfect 11-0 run.

"This could be one of the best Canadians I've won, too," said Burgess after the gold-medal game. "It's pretty special; I moved halfway across Canada to play with these girls and coming out with a win here is pretty exciting. I can't believe it, actually.

"I've been super lucky to have teammates who put in the work and want to win," she added. "I've just been really fortunate to have girls beside me who have the same work ethic as I do. To be right here, right now, I can't say thank you enough to the girls I've curled with this year."

The Manitobans were the class of the field and really were pushed on only a couple of occasions.

The first was a highly anticipated round-robin encounter against Nova Scotia, for obvious reasons; Manitoba prevailed 7-6 with a 10th-end deuce.

The second time was the round-robin finale against Alberta — again decided by a 10th-end score, this time a single for an 8-7 win.

But in the final, it was a late Manitoba explosion that decided things — a precise angle takeout by Mackenzie Zacharias to drive an Alberta stone through a hole and score four to put Manitoba into an insurmountable 8-3 lead.

"There are so many amazing curlers in Manitoba, and to be able to win this Canadian championship and prove that we're also some of the best in Manitoba as well, is just really amazing," said Zacharias,



Mackenzie Zacharias and her Manitoba reps rolled to a 10-3 win over Alberta in the gold-medal game, capping a perfect 11-0 run. It was the province's 10th junior women's title.

Alberta's Abby Marks survived two tiebreakers to reach the semi, where she defeated Nova Scotia in an extra end to earn a berth in the final against heavily favoured Manitoba.



First-team junior women's all-star honours went to Mackenzie Zacharias and Karlee Burgess, both of Manitoba, Northern Ontario's Calissa Daly and Lauren Lenentine of Manitoba.

whose team earned a 10th Canadian junior women's gold medal.

As if the day couldn't get any better, Gauthier added the icing on the cake, skipping Manitoba 2 to the men's gold medal with an 8-6 win over Newfoundland/Labrador's Daniel Bruce.

Gauthier, backed by vice-skip Jordan Peters, second Brayden Payette, lead Zack Bilawka and coach John Lund, had to take the back door into the national

championship. His team had lost the Manitoba final to Team Brett Walter a few weeks earlier, but earned a trip to Langley after Nunavut and the Yukon elected not to send boys' teams.

Manitoba 2 never trailed in the gold-medal game, taking one in the second end, stealing two in the third and one more in the fourth.

Gauthier had lost the 2019 final to his cousin Tyler Tardi in Prince Albert,

Saskatchewan, and had been the alternate for Tardi's 2018 Canadian team that won the world junior championship.

"When we won the worlds in Scotland, I didn't touch the trophy," said Gauthier. "I was very proud of the accomplishment by the boys, and I felt like I played a role in it. But it still wasn't mine; you know what I mean? So coming back here, and winning this, and having a chance to pick up that (world championship trophy), that's what means the world to me."

It was a 13th Canadian junior men's gold medal for Manitoba, behind only Alberta with 16 and Saskatchewan with 15, and the province's first since Matt Dunstone prevailed in 2016.

The last time one member association swept both the men's and women's titles was in 2012, when Alberta's Brendan Bottcher and Jocelyn Peterman claimed gold.

**JUNIOR WOMEN'S FINAL**

Alberta (Abby Marks)	010 100 100 X 3
Manitoba (Mackenzie Zacharias)	*201 001 042 X 10

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

Alberta		Manitoba	
Abby Marks	69%	Mackenzie Zacharias	89%
Catherine Clifford	75%	Karlee Burgess	88%
Paige Papley	74%	Emily Zacharias	86%
Jamie Scott	86%	Lauren Lenentine	81%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>76%</b>		<b>86%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

Nova Scotia (Taylour Stevens)	*110 020 000 10 5
Alberta (Abby Marks)	003 100 001 01 6

**TIEBREAKERS**

Quebec (Noémie Gauthier)	000 000 XXX X 0
Alberta (Abby Marks)	*111 113 XXX X 8
Alberta (Abby Marks)	020 201 23X X 10
New Brunswick (Melodie Forsythe)	*101 010 00X X 3

**FINAL STANDINGS**

Playoffs	Wins	Losses
Manitoba (Mackenzie Zacharias)	1	0
Alberta (Abby Marks)	3	1
Nova Scotia (Taylour Stevens)	0	1
New Brunswick (Melodie Forsythe)	0	1
Quebec (Noémie Gauthier)	0	1

**Championship round**

	Wins	Losses
Manitoba (Mackenzie Zacharias)	10	0
Nova Scotia (Taylour Stevens)	8	2
New Brunswick (Melodie Forsythe)	6	4

Alberta (Abby Marks)	6	4
Quebec (Noémie Gauthier)	6	4
Ontario (Sierra Sutherland)	5	5
Saskatchewan (Ashley Thevenot)	5	5
Newfoundland/Labrador (Mackenzie Mitchell)	4	6

**Seeding round** **Wins** **Losses**

Northern Ontario (Kira Brunton)	5	4
British Columbia (Kaila Buchy)	5	4
Prince Edward Island (Lauren Ferguson)	3	6
Northwest Territories (Tyanna Bain)	2	7
Nunavut (Sadie Pinksen)	2	7
Yukon (Bayly Scoffin)	0	9

**Round robin\***

**Pool A** **Wins** **Losses**

Alberta (Abby Marks)	5	1
Ontario (Sierra Sutherland)	4	2
Newfoundland/Labrador (Mackenzie Mitchell)	4	2
Saskatchewan (Ashley Thevenot)	4	2
British Columbia (Kaila Buchy)	3	3
Northwest Territories (Tyanna Bain)	1	5
Yukon (Bayly Scoffin)	0	6

**Pool B** **Wins** **Losses**

Manitoba (Mackenzie Zacharias)	6	0
Nova Scotia (Taylour Stevens)	5	1
New Brunswick (Melodie Forsythe)	3	3
Quebec (Noémie Gauthier)	3	3
Northern Ontario (Kira Brunton)	2	4
Prince Edward Island (Lauren Ferguson)	1	5
Nunavut (Sadie Pinksen)	1	6

\* Top four teams in each pool advanced to the championship round, remaining teams to the seeding round. All teams carried their full win-loss records forward.

**JUNIOR MEN'S FINAL**

Manitoba 2 (Jacques Gauthier)	*012 102 020 X	8
Newfoundland/Labrador (Daniel Bruce)	000 020 202 X	6

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

Manitoba 2		N.L.	
Jacques Gauthier	88%	Daniel Bruce	72%
Jordan Peters	91%	Ryan McNeil Lamswood	76%
Brayden Payette	91%	Joel Krats	63%
Zack Bilawka	99%	Nathan King	79%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>92%</b>		<b>72%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

Saskatchewan (Rylan Kleiter)	021 000 103 1	8
Newfoundland/Labrador (Daniel Bruce)	*100 012 050 0	9

**FINAL STANDINGS**

Playoffs	Wins	Losses
Manitoba 2 (Jacques Gauthier)	1	0
Newfoundland/Labrador (Daniel Bruce)	1	1
Saskatchewan (Rylan Kleiter)	0	1

Championship round	Wins	Losses
Manitoba 2 (Jacques Gauthier)	9	1
Newfoundland/Labrador (Daniel Bruce)	8	2
Saskatchewan (Rylan Kleiter)	7	3
Alberta (Ryan Jacques)	6	4
Prince Edward Island (Tyler Smith)	6	4
Manitoba 1 (Brett Walter)	5	5
Nova Scotia (Graeme Weagle)	5	5
British Columbia 1 (Hayato Sato)	4	6

Seeding round	Wins	Losses
British Columbia 2 (Johnson Tao)	5	4
Ontario (Owen Purdy)	5	4
Northern Ontario (Jacob Horgan)	3	6
Northwest Territories (Sawer Kaeser)	2	7
Quebec (Greg Cheal)	1	8
New Brunswick (Liam Marin)	1	8

**Round robin\***

Pool A	Wins	Losses
Saskatchewan (Rylan Kleiter)	5	1
Newfoundland/Labrador (Daniel Bruce)	5	1
Alberta (Ryan Jacques)	3	3
British Columbia 1 (Hayato Sato)†	3	3
British Columbia 2 (Johnson Tao)	3	3
Ontario (Owen Purdy)	2	4
Northwest Territories (Sawer Kaeser)	0	6

Pool B	Wins	Losses
Manitoba 2 (Jacques Gauthier)	5	1
Prince Edward Island (Tyler Smith)	5	1
Manitoba 1 (Brett Walter)	4	2
Nova Scotia (Graeme Weagle)	4	2
Northern Ontario (Jacob Horgan)	2	4
Quebec (Greg Cheal)	1	5
New Brunswick (Liam Marin)	0	6

\* Top four teams in each pool advanced to the championship round, remaining teams to the seeding round. All teams carried their full win-loss records forward.

† Defeated British Columbia 2 7-3 in a tiebreaker to advance to the championship round.



The 2020 Canadian junior men's champions: from left, Manitoba 2's Jacques Gauthier, Jordan Peters, Brayden Payette and Zack Bilawka. The foursome never trailed in the title match, taking one in the second end, stealing two in the third and one more in four.



Newfoundland and Labrador's Daniel Bruce made a game of it with a magnificent angle-raise takedown to score two in the seventh end of the gold-medal game and cut the Manitoba 2 lead to 6-4, but Manitoba replied with a deuce of its own in the eighth and never looked back.



Manitoba 2's Jacques Gauthier — whose team lost its provincial final but earned a trip to the national championship when Nunavut and the Yukon elected not to send boys' teams — completed a Canadian junior Manitoba sweep with an 8-6 win over N.L.'s Daniel Bruce.



The 2020 first-team junior men's all-stars: from left, Manitoba 2 skip Jacques Gauthier, third Scott Mitchell of Northern Ontario, second Jeffrey Meagher of Nova Scotia and lead Chase Dusessoy of Northern Ontario. A two-time first-team all-star, Gauthier was also honoured in 2018 as the top third in round-robin play.

**JUNIOR WOMEN'S ALL-STAR TEAMS**

**First-team all-stars**

- Skip Mackenzie Zacharias, Man.
- Third Karlee Burgess, Manitoba
- Second Calissa Daly, N. Ontario
- Lead Lauren Lenentine, Manitoba

**Second-team all-stars**

- Skip Kira Brunton, N. Ontario
- Third Catherine Clifford, Alberta
- Second Kristie Rogers, P.E.I.
- Lead Jessica Leonard, N. Ontario

**JUNIOR MEN'S ALL-STAR TEAMS**

**First-team all-stars**

- Skip Jacques Gauthier, Manitoba 2
- Third Scott Mitchell, N. Ontario
- Second Jeffrey Meagher, Nova Scotia
- Lead Chase Dusessoy, N. Ontario

**Second-team all-stars**

- Skip Rylan Kleiter, Saskatchewan
- Third Ryan McNeil Lamswood, N.L.
- Second Brayden Payette, Manitoba 2
- Lead Nathan King, N.L. (tie)  
Scott Weagle, N.S. (tie)

**KEN WATSON AWARD**

The 2020 winners of the Ken Watson Award are Nova Scotia third Lindsey Burgess and Alberta skip Ryan Jacques. The awards are voted on by the players in the New Holland Canadian Juniors and presented to the curlers who best combine playing ability with sportsmanship.

**ASHAM FAIR PLAY AWARD**

**Junior Men**

- Lead Lawson Yates, Manitoba 1
- Second Joshua Miki, B.C. 1
- Third Joshua Leung, Ontario
- Skip Rylan Kleiter, Saskatchewan
- Coach Anthony Purcell, Nova Scotia

**Junior Women**

- Lead Julie Breton, Ontario
- Second Kate Callaghan, Nova Scotia
- Third Pearl Gillis, N.W.T.
- Skip Mackenzie Zacharias, Man.
- Coach Michel Blais, Quebec

The Fair Play Award winners are selected by the junior men's and women's officials.



Alberta skip Ryan Jacques and Nova Scotia third Lindsey Burgess are the recipients of the 2020 Ken Watson sportsmanship awards. The awards are voted on by the players.

**ASHAM NATIONAL COACHING AWARD**

The 2020 Asham National Coaching Award winners are junior men's coach Vic Shimizu of British Columbia 2 and junior women's coach Mark Noseworthy of Newfoundland and Labrador. The award winners at the New Holland Canadian Juniors are chosen by coaches, who are asked to select an opposing team coach who best exemplifies the attributes of coaching.



The 2020 New Holland Canadian Juniors Asham Fair Play Award winners: (front row, from left) coach Anthony Purcell, skip Rylan Kleiter, third Joshua Leung, second Joshua Miki and lead Lawson Yates; (back row) coach Michel Blais, skip Mackenzie Zacharias, third Pearl Gillis, second Kate Callaghan and lead Julie Breton.

# SCOTTIES TOURNAMENT OF HEARTS

Mosaic Place ▸ Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan ▸ February 14 to 23, 2020



PHOTOS: ANDREW KLAVER © KRUGER PRODUCTS

The 2020 Scotties Tournament of Hearts champions: from left, Kerri Einarson, Val Sweeting, Shannon Birchard and Briane Meilleur. Leading by two in the 10th end, Einarson's draw for the win was heavy, giving up a steal of two and forcing an extra end. Faced with the same shot in overtime, Einarson nailed it with a perfectly played draw to the button.

**It wasn't that 2020 Scotties Tournament** of Hearts champion Team Kerri Einarson of Manitoba gave up a seven-ender against New Brunswick during round-robin play. It's about how they responded.

Giving up the highest single-end score in Hearts history (dating back to 1982) would be enough to take the wind out of most team's sails. But Manitoba surged forward and clinched a spot in the 1-2 Page playoff game.

Afterwards, Einarson was asked by members of the media whether that seven-spot earlier in the week had provided any fuel going forward.

Without missing a beat, she responded: "What seven?"

The ability to forget and focus on what lies ahead paid dividends for the team in the long run; recovering from a round-robin game loss paled in comparison to what was ahead during the Hearts final at Mosaic Place in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.

Leading by two in the 10th end, Einarson had an open draw to the four-foot to win her first Scotties Tournament of Hearts title. She threw the rock too heavy and slid into the back eight, providing Einarson's opponent — Ontario's Rachel Homan — a steal of two and forcing an extra end.

But the team's ability to leave that crushing moment behind and focus on the present led to another opportunity. Facing the same shot, an open draw to the four-foot, Einarson, vice-skip Val Sweeting, second Shannon Birchard and lead Briane Meilleur played it perfectly for a score of one and an 8-7 triumph over Ontario.

"I took a deep breath and just focused on what I needed to do. I wanted to bring my sweepers into play and for it to be more of a team shot rather than just throwing it down there and praying that it stops — like I did on the first one," said Einarson.

It was far from the only highlight-reel



Trailing 7-3 after eight ends, Ontario's Rachel Homan fought back with a deuce in the ninth and a steal of two in 10 — thanks to a miscue by Manitoba — to force an extra end.

shot played during the evening. Einarson, who was precise all week long, threw one of the most exquisite taps in recent memory to score two in the sixth. The Manitoba rock nudged its own third-shot ever-so-slightly into the button to score two for a 6-2 lead.

“This means absolutely the world to me. I really wanted to do this for myself and my teammates, especially Val, who lost two big finals.

“We really put it together. I’m so proud of everyone.”

Manitoba stormed through Pool A with a 6-1 record. Its only hiccup was in that seven-spot game against New Brunswick. The team’s strong effort in the Championship Pool led Manitoba — along with Ontario and Team Wild Card’s Jennifer Jones — to 9-2 records. With the teams tied and sporting one win and one loss against each other, LSD — last stone draw — distances were used to determine placement with Manitoba taking first, Wild Card second and Ontario third.

Northern Ontario’s Krista McCarville secured the fourth Page playoff spot with an 8-3 record.

Einarson took advantage of the Page 1-2 game with a 6-4 victory over Wild Card and booked direct entry into the final. Meanwhile, Ontario defeated Northern Ontario 9-5 in the 3-4 Page playoff game, followed by an 8-3 victory over Wild Card in the semifinal. It’s the second year in a row that Homan qualified for the final as the No. 3 seed in the playoffs.

“We’re right there. That’s curling. It’s a game of inches. A shot here or there we can be the next ones to wear the Maple Leaf on our back,” said Homan. “So happy with our performance this week.



It was a lucrative week for Kerri Einarson and her Hearts champions, including \$105,000 for the win, a spot as Team Canada at the 2021 Hearts and a berth in the Canadian Curling Trials.

**FINAL**

Ontario (Rachel Homan)	001 010 102 2 0 7
Manitoba (Kerri Einarson)	*110 202 010 0 1 8

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

**Ontario**

Rachel Homan	84%
Emma Miskew	91%
Joanne Courtney	84%
Lisa Weagle	90%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>87%</b>

**Manitoba**

Kerri Einarson	82%
Val Sweeting	83%
Shannon Birchard	93%
Briane Meilleur	93%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>88%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

Wild Card (Jennifer Jones)	*000 101 010 X 3
Ontario (Rachel Homan)	030 020 102 X 8

**PAGE SYSTEM 3-4 PLAYOFF**

Ontario (Rachel Homan)	*010 010 203 2 9
Northern Ontario (Krista McCarville)	001 102 010 0 5

**PAGE SYSTEM 1-2 PLAYOFF**

Wild Card (Jennifer Jones)	*010 010 101 0 4
Manitoba (Kerri Einarson)	000 102 020 1 6

**FINAL STANDINGS**

**Playoffs**

	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Manitoba (Kerri Einarson)	2	0
Ontario (Rachel Homan)	2	1
Wild Card (Jennifer Jones)	0	2
Northern Ontario (Krista McCarville)	0	1

**Championship round**

	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Manitoba (Kerri Einarson)	9	2
Wild Card (Jennifer Jones)	9	2
Ontario (Rachel Homan)	9	2
Northern Ontario (Krista McCarville)	8	3
Saskatchewan (Robyn Silvernagle)	6	5
British Columbia (Corryn Brown)	5	6
Team Canada (Chelsea Carey)	5	6
Prince Edward Island (Suzanne Birt)	5	6

**Round robin\***

**Pool A**

	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Manitoba (Kerri Einarson)	6	1
Northern Ontario (Krista McCarville)	5	2
Team Canada (Chelsea Carey)	4	3
New Brunswick (Andrea Crawford)	4	3
Saskatchewan (Robyn Silvernagle)†	4	3
Alberta (Laura Walker)	3	4
Nunavut (Lori Eddy)	2	5
Quebec (Noémie Verreault)	0	7

**Pool B**

	<b>Wins</b>	<b>Losses</b>
Ontario (Rachel Homan)	6	1
Wild Card (Jennifer Jones)**	6	1
Prince Edward Island (Suzanne Birt)	5	2
Nova Scotia (Mary-Anne Arseneault)	4	3
British Columbia (Corryn Brown)††	4	3
Northwest Territories (Kerry Galusha)	2	5
Newfoundland/Labrador (Erica Curtis)	1	6
Yukon (Hailey Birnie)	0	7

\*\* Team Jennifer Jones defeated Team Tracy Fleury 8-7 in the wild-card game to advance to the round robin.

\* Top four teams in each pool advanced to the championship round carrying their full win-loss records forward.

† Defeated New Brunswick 9-7 in a tiebreaker to advance to the championship round.

†† Defeated Nova Scotia 5-4 in a tiebreaker to advance to the championship round.

There's a lot of teams that wanted to be in that final."

Homan, vice-skip Emma Miskew, second Joanne Courtney and lead Lisa Weagle from the Ottawa Curling Club earned \$65,000 for their silver-medal finish.

Team Einarson, of the Gimli Curling Club, won \$105,000 for the victory along with the coveted spot as Team Canada at the 2021 Scotties Tournament of Hearts. The team also received an invitation to the 2021 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings in Saskatoon, where Canada's men's and women's four-player entries at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing will be determined.

The opportunity to represent Canada at the 2020 World Women's Curling Championship in Prince George, British Columbia, didn't come to fruition. The COVID-19 pandemic caused the event to be cancelled, but Einarson's first national women's championship victory will be one to remember for a long time.

**ALL-STAR TEAMS**

**First-team all-stars**

- Skip Rachel Homan, Ontario
- Third Val Sweeting, Manitoba
- Second Shannon Birchard, Manitoba
- Lead Lisa Weagle, Ontario

**Second-team all-stars**

- Skip Kerri Einarson, Manitoba
- Third Emma Miskew, Ontario
- Second Joanne Courtney, Ontario
- Lead Rachel Brown, Team Canada



Susan Irving of Kruger Products presents the Sandra Schmirler Award to Manitoba skip Kerri Einarson as the most valuable player in the Hearts playoffs.



The 2020 first-team Scotties Tournament of Hearts all-stars: from left, Ontario lead Lisa Weagle, second Shannon Birchard and third Val Sweeting, both of Manitoba, and skip Rachel Homan of Ontario. It was the fourth time that Homan was named a first-team all-star and the first for Weagle, Birchard and Sweeting.

**MARJ MITCHELL AWARD**

Team Canada lead Rachel Brown won the Marj Mitchell Award for best embodying the spirit of curling at the 2020 Scotties Tournament of Hearts. The award is named in memory of Marj Mitchell, who skipped Canada to its first world title in 1980. In 1983, shortly after the second Hearts, Mitchell died of cancer at the age of 35. The winner is selected each year in a vote by all players at the tournament.



Kruger Product's Oliver Bukvic presents Team Canada lead Rachel Brown with the Marj Mitchell Award for best embodying the spirit of curling.

**JOAN MEAD BUILDER AWARD**

Presented in the name of the late CBC-TV producer Joan Mead, the 2020 Builder Award was awarded posthumously to Deanna Rindal of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. A lifelong lover of the sport, Rindal was recognized for her significant contributions to curling as an umpire at numerous national and international events, and to the growth and development of curling in her province.



On behalf of the late Deanna Rindal, Curling Canada's Mitch Minken, far right, presents her family — Preston, Peyton and Bryan Rindal — with the 2020 Joan Mead Award in recognition of her contributions to curling.

**SANDRA SCHMIRLER AWARD**

Presented in the name of the late Sandra Schmirler, the Most Valuable Player Award was presented to Manitoba skip Kerri Einarson after she was chosen the most outstanding player in the 2020 Scotties Tournament of Hearts playoffs.

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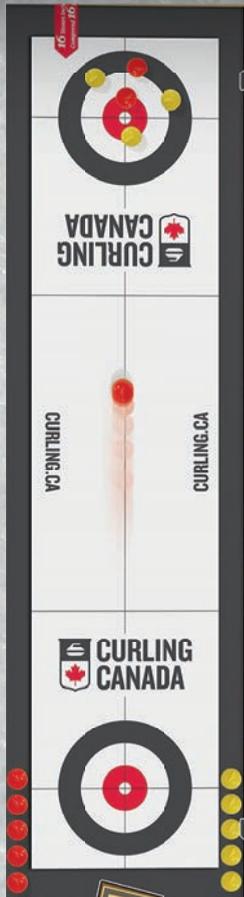
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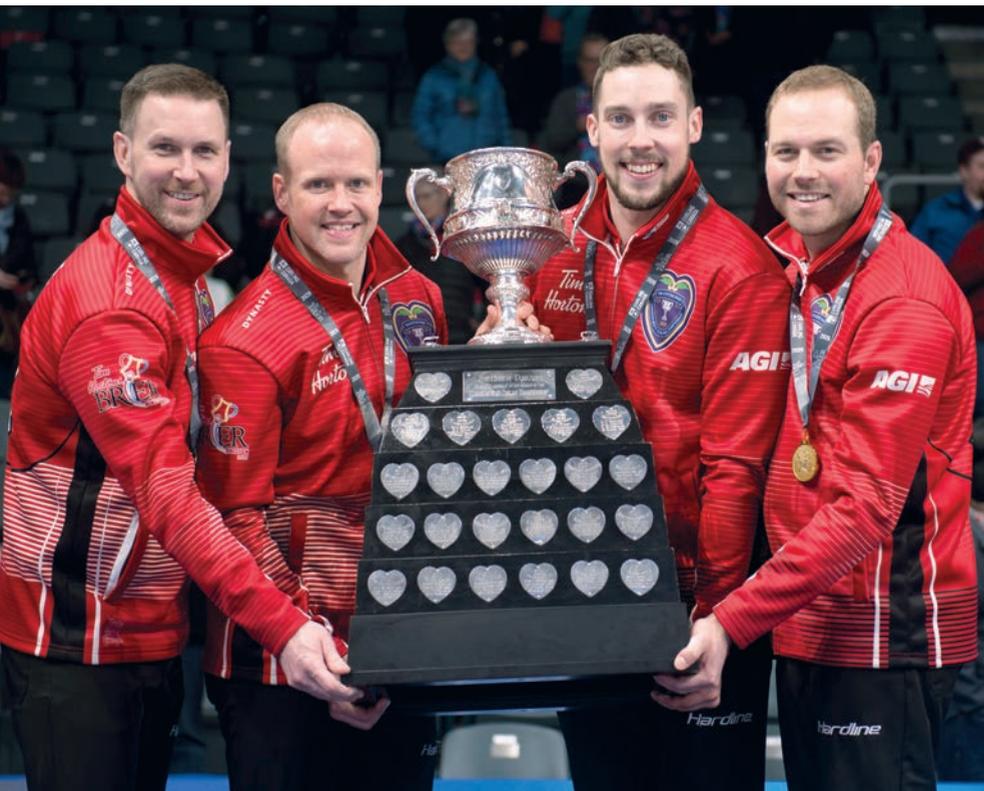
SCAN TO SHOP



SCANNEZ

# TIM HORTONS BRIER PRESENTED BY AGI

Leon's Centre › Kingston, Ontario › February 28 to March 8, 2020



PHOTOS: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Newfoundland and Labrador's Brad Gushue, Mark Nichols, Brett Gallant and Geoff Walker established a curling dynasty with their third Brier win in four years. Up against round-robin leader Team Alberta, Gushue stole one in the first end, forced one in the second and scored three in the third to take an early lead he never relinquished.

**It was easy to get lost in glitzy and glamorous game-winning shots at the 2020 Tim Hortons Brier.**

Manitoba's Jason Gunnlaugson's double runback double to score three against Prince Edward Island? Mesmerizing.

Kevin Koe's whisker-thin triple for two that led Team Canada to victory against Wild Card? Bold.

A Saskatchewan runback triple for four by skip Matt Dunstone that resulted in a second straight come-from-behind victory? Tenacious.

The 2020 Tim Hortons Brier, presented by AGI, at Leon's Centre in Kingston, Ontario, will go down as one of the most memorable championships in recent history. But not only because of those shots, which were just the shiny wrapping paper on the gift that this Brier delivered. At its core, the Brier champion, Team Brad

Gushue of Newfoundland and Labrador, delivered an impressive performance that cemented its legacy on the Roaring Game.

Gushue, vice-skip Mark Nichols, second Brett Gallant and lead Geoff Walker have established a curling dynasty with their third Brier win in four years. No team has reached that level of consistency since Alberta's Randy Ferbey won four of five titles from 2001 to 2005.

"To be honest, we came in here with a little bit of a chip on our shoulder. We didn't get any credit to be one of the favourites," said Gushue. "There was a lot of talk about other teams and we were kind of left aside a little bit. We should have been in there (by virtue of) winning two of the last three (Briers). I think we were highly motivated this week, more so than we have been in the last two years."

Newfoundland and Labrador defeated

Alberta's Brendan Bottcher 7-3 in the final. Gushue stole a point in the first end, forced one in the second and scored three in the third to take an early lead he never relinquished. It's the second time that Gushue had defeated Bottcher in a Brier final, the first coming in 2018.

On the flip side of the coin, Team Bottcher was stung by the defeat — its third straight Brier final loss. Alberta finished the round robin with the top Page playoff position thanks to a 10-1 record. There was also the added benefit of its opponents' fatigue. Four teams played tiebreakers for the final spot in the playoffs, plus Newfoundland and Labrador needed to win a pair of games en route to the final — a 7-4 win over Northern Ontario's Brad Jacobs in the 3-4 game and a 7-6 win against Saskatchewan's Dunstone in the semifinal.

All signs pointed to it being the year for Bottcher, vice-skip Darren Moulding, second Brad Thiessen and lead Karrick Martin.

"I just wished it turned out a lot different. We did our best," said Moulding.



Alberta's Brendan Bottcher had rolled through to the Brier final with an 11-1 record, only to suffer his third straight gold-medal loss, this time at the hand of Brad Gushue.

“I feel like we can do it (make the Brier final) again. It’s really hard to do it. I know we’re capable of winning this event.”

Gushue earned \$105,000 for the victory, along with spots at the 2021 Tim Hortons Brier as Team Canada and 2021 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings, the event that will decide Canada’s men’s and women’s four-player teams at the 2022 Olympic Winter Games in Beijing.

Unfortunately for Gushue, the opportunity to win a second world title was halted after the 2020 World Men’s Curling Championship in Glasgow, Scotland, was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Bottcher’s team received a \$65,000 payday, while Dunstone’s team earned \$45,000 with its third-place effort.

Skip Brad Gushue put on a curling clinic, shooting a near-perfect 97 per cent in a 7-3 win over Alberta’s Brendan Bottcher in the Brier final. “Friggin’ awesome,” said Gushue when asked how the win felt. “It feels absolutely incredible.”



**FINAL**

N.L. (Brad Gushue)	103 001 010 1 7
Alberta (Brendan Bottcher)	*010 100 001 0 3

\* Last-rock advantage

**PERCENTAGES**

N.L.		Alberta	
Brad Gushue	97%	Brendan Bottcher	71%
Mark Nichols	89%	Darren Moulding	80%
Brett Gallant	80%	Brad Thiessen	85%
Geoff Walker	78%	Karrick Martin	84%
<b>Team totals</b>	<b>86%</b>		<b>80%</b>

**SEMIFINAL**

Saskatchewan (Matt Dunstone)	*102 001 002 0 6
N.L. (Brad Gushue)	030 200 010 1 7

**PAGE SYSTEM 3-4 PLAYOFF**

Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	010 102 000 0 4
N.L. (Brad Gushue)	*101 020 011 1 7

**PAGE SYSTEM 1-2 PLAYOFF**

Saskatchewan (Matt Dunstone)	000 100 102 0 4
Alberta (Brendan Bottcher)	*011 011 010 4 9

**TIEBREAKERS**

Ontario (John Epping)	*102 002 002 0 7
Wild Card (Mike McEwen)	010 200 020 1 6
Team Canada (Kevin Koe)	002 001 00X X 3
Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	*020 100 23X X 8
Ontario (John Epping)	*001 010 110 X 4
Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	010 302 002 X 8

**FINAL STANDINGS**

Playoffs	Wins	Losses
N.L. (Brad Gushue)	3	0
Alberta (Brendan Bottcher)	1	1
Saskatchewan (Matt Dunstone)	0	2
Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	2	1
Ontario (John Epping)	1	1
Team Canada (Kevin Koe)	0	1
Wild Card (Mike McEwen)	0	1

**Championship round**

	Wins	Losses
Alberta (Brendan Bottcher)	10	1
Saskatchewan (Matt Dunstone)	8	3
Newfoundland/Labrador (Brad Gushue)	8	3
Ontario (John Epping)	7	4
Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	7	4
Team Canada (Kevin Koe)	7	4
Wild Card (Mike McEwen)	7	4
Manitoba (Jason Gunnlaugson)	5	6

**Round robin\***

**Pool A**

	Wins	Losses
Wild Card (Mike McEwen)**	6	1
Saskatchewan (Matt Dunstone)	6	1
Team Canada (Kevin Koe)	5	2
Ontario (John Epping)	4	3
New Brunswick (James Grattan)	3	4
British Columbia (Steve Laycock)	2	5
Northwest Territories (Jamie Koe)	2	5
Yukon (Thomas Scoffin)	0	7

**Pool B**

	Wins	Losses
Alberta (Brendan Bottcher)	7	0
Newfoundland/Labrador (Brad Gushue)	6	1
Manitoba (Jason Gunnlaugson)	5	2
Northern Ontario (Brad Jacobs)	4	3
Nova Scotia (Jamie Murphy)	3	4
Prince Edward Island (Bryan Cochrane)	2	5
Quebec (Alek Bédard)	1	6
Nunavut (Jake Higgs)	0	7

\*\* Team Mike McEwen defeated Team Glenn Howard 5-4 in the wild-card game to advance to the round robin.

\* Top four teams in each pool advanced to the championship round carrying their full win-loss records forward.

“It’s tough, to come so close,” said 24-year-old Dunstone following his semifinal loss. “Woke up this morning thinking we were going to be Brier champions.”

Dunstone’s 8-3 record was nothing to shrug at. While Saskatchewan tied Newfoundland and Labrador’s round-robin record, the Prairie province earned the spot in the 1-2 Page playoff game thanks to its head-to-head record. Bottcher bested Dunstone in that game 9-4.

The remainder of the playoff picture? Not so clear. Ontario’s John Epping, Jacobs

of Northern Ontario, Team Canada’s Koe and Winnipeg’s Mike McEwen, wearing Wild Card colours, all finished with 7-4 records and needed a two-game tiebreaker playoff to determine the final Page playoff contender.

Ontario defeated Wild Card 7-6 to advance, while Northern Ontario bested Team Canada 8-3. Jacobs toppled Epping in the battle of Ontario with an 8-4 win to secure the final playoff spot. However, there wasn’t quite enough gas in the tank for Northern Ontario’s third game of the day, resulting in a Page 3-4 loss to Gushue.

**ALL-STAR TEAMS**

**First-team all-stars**

Skip Brendan Bottcher, Alberta  
 Third Reid Carruthers, Wild Card  
 Second E.J. Harnden, N. Ontario  
 Lead Colin Hodgson, Wild Card

**Second-team all-stars**

Skip Mike McEwen, Wild Card  
 Third Marc Kennedy, N. Ontario  
 Second Derek Samagalski, Wild Card  
 Lead Ben Hebert, Team Canada

**HEC GERVAIS AWARD**

Presented to the most valuable player in the Tim Hortons Brier playoffs, the 2020 Hec Gervais Award was won by Newfoundland and Labrador skip Brad Gushue.



First-team Brier all-star honours went to: from left, skip Brendan Bottcher of Alberta, Wild Card third Reid Carruthers, second E.J. Harnden of Northern Ontario and Wild Card lead Colin Hodgson. It was the third time that Harnden had been honoured and second for Hodgson. First and second-team all-stars have been selected at the Brier since 1965.



Newfoundland and Labrador skip Brad Gushue accepts the Hec Gervais Award as the playoff MVP from Curling Canada’s George Cooke. Gushue also won the award in 2017 and ‘18.



Wild Card skip Mike McEwen, second Marc Kennedy of Northern Ontario, Wild Card third Derek Samagalski and Team Canada lead Ben Hebert were named to the 2020 Brier second all-star team. McEwen shot 89 per cent, Kennedy 91, Samagalski 88 and Hebert 93. All-star selections are determined by overall shooting percentages during round-robin play.



Curling Canada governor George Cooke presents the 2020 Ross Harstone sportsmanship award to Team Wild Card lead Colin Hodgson. The winner is chosen by the curlers.

**ROSS HARSTONE AWARD**

Team Wild Card lead Colin Hodgson is the winner of the 2020 Ross Harstone Award, whose recipient is selected by the players in the Tim Hortons Brier. The award is presented to the player who best combines playing ability and sportsmanship.



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*A Salute to*  
**2020**

**CANADIAN CURLING CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS**



PHOTO: CAMERON CHISHOLM

From left: lead Avice DeKolver, second Kendra Nakagama, third Samantha Davies and skip Nanette Dupont of Alberta's Lethbridge Curling Club, and skip Paul Moffatt, third Ben Shane, second John Gabel and lead Kyle Forster of Ontario's KW Granite Club

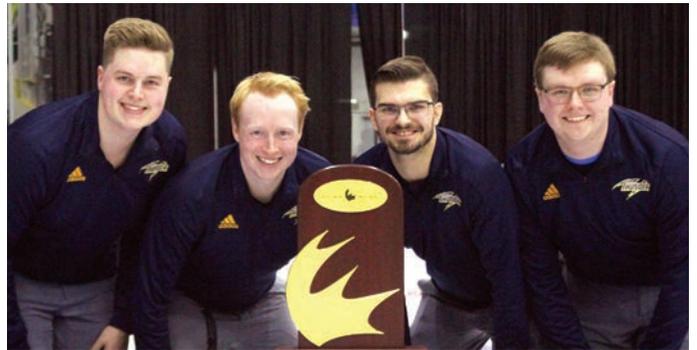
# CHAMPIONS

**CCA-CURLING CANADA CHAMPIONSHIPS**



PHOTOS: CURLING CANADA/CZARINA CASTELLANO

From left: skip Kayla MacMillan, third Sarah Loken, second Patty Wallingham and lead Kylie Karoway of the Douglas Royals



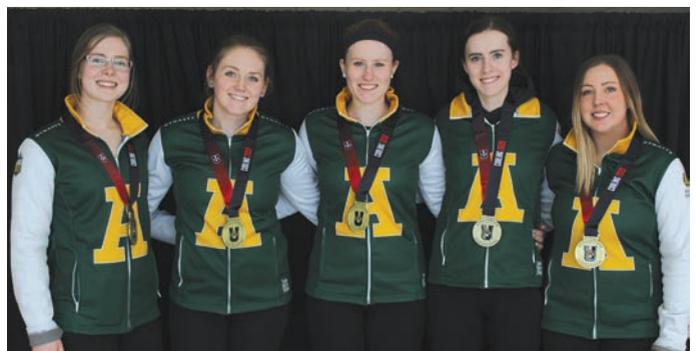
From left: skip Evan Van Amsterdam, third Tyler Van Amsterdam, second Braden Pelech and lead Cody Holowaychuk of the Concordia Thunder

**U SPORTS-CURLING CANADA UNIVERSITY CHAMPIONSHIPS**



PHOTOS: CURLING CANADA/CZARINA CASTELLANO

From left: skip Matthew Hall, third John Willsey, second Jordie Lyon-Hatcher and lead Graham Singer of the Laurier Golden Hawks



From left: alternate Catherine Clifford, lead Paige Papley, second Kate Goodhelpsen, third Abby Marks and skip Selena Sturmey of the Alberta Pandas

## WORLD WHEELCHAIR

PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/ALINA PAVLYUCHIK



From left: skip Konstantin Kurokhtin, third Andrei Meshcheriakov, second Vitaly Danilov, lead Daria Shchukina, alternate Anna Karpushina and coach Anton Batugin of Russia

## WORLD JUNIORS

PHOTOS: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/RICHARD GRAY



From left: alternate Rachel Erickson, lead Lauren Lenentine, second Emily Zacharias, third Karlee Burgess and skip Mackenzie Zacharias of Canada



From left: alternate Thomas Dunlop, lead Zachary Bilawka, second Brayden Payette, third Jordan Peters and skip Jacques Gauthier of Canada

## CANADIAN MIXED

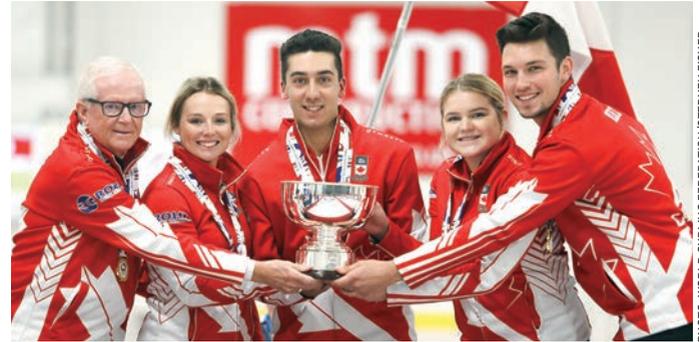
PHOTO: CURLING CANADA/VALÉRIE SIMARD



From left: skip Jean-Sébastien Roy, third Amélie Blais, second Dan deWaard and lead Brenda Nicholls of Quebec

## WORLD MIXED

PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/STEPHEN FISHER



From left: coach Jim Waite, lead Sara Oliver, second Brendan Bilawka, third Meghan Walter and skip Colin Kurz of Canada

## YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES MIXED TEAM

PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/ALINA PAVLYUCHIK



From left: lead Ingeborg Forbregd, second Nora Østgård, fourth Grunde Buraas and skip Lukas Høstmælingen of Norway

## YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES MIXED DOUBLES

PHOTO: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/ALINA PAVLYUCHIK



Hungary's Laura Nagy and Nathan Young of Canada



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*- Mark Duffey, CEO Everest*



- 2019 Canadian Curling Club Championships participants

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BY GEORGE JOHNSON

Canada's 2020 Tim Hortons Brier champions: from left, skip Brad Gushue, third Mark Nichols, second Brett Gallant, lead Geoff Walker, alternate Jeff Thomas and coach Jules Owchar.



Newfoundland & Labrador

# TEAM GUSHUE AIMS FOR ANOTHER SHOT TO WEAR THE MAPLE LEAF

PHOTOS: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

**A DECISION HAD BEEN ANNOUNCED,** the coming-to-terms process already begun.

And then, out of the blue, in the mail....

"The day we received our uniforms, I'll admit, was tough," Brad Gushue confesses from his home in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador.

"We had them but we weren't going to be able to wear 'em. I mean, you can put them on. But you can't wear them. Not in competition.

"Don't get me wrong, it's still great. There's

still a very real sense of achievement. You see your name on the back. You see that Maple Leaf and it's always a thrill.

"But... a disappointing day.

"Because as nice as they are, as proud as you are, there's still that something missing."

The bordering-on-dynastic Gushue foursome had, of course, only recently dispatched Brendan Bottcher's in-mint-form Alberta gang in a one-sided final 7-3 in Kingston, Ontario. With third Mark Nichols, second Brett Gallant and lead Geoff Walker,





Gushue had collected a third Tim Hortons Brier title in only four years.

The 5,000-seat Emirates Arena in Glasgow, Scotland, and prospects of a second stint of world men’s curling domination beckoned.

Only days later, though, amidst the confusion and concern of the COVID-19 pandemic that shut down virtually the entire sporting spectrum, World Curling Federation president Kate Caithness announced that the LGT World Men’s Curling Championship, set for March 28 to April 5, had been officially cancelled.

“There’ve been harder things we’ve had to go through,” Gushue says now. “I mean, everyone has faced hardships through this situation, whether they’re financial, business or health.

“So the fact that we missed a world championship is far from the biggest thing going — but that doesn’t mean it wasn’t disappointing for us.”

Considering the quality of their Brier performance, Gushue and Co. seemed ready to sail into the worlds as smooth as a glass of Lagavulin 16-year-old single-malt Scotch whisky.

After having posted a 6-1 record during round-robin play at Leon’s Centre to place second in Pool B in Kingston, they advanced out of the Championship Pool 8-3 before taming Northern Ontario’s Brad Jacobs 7-4 in the 3-4 Page playoff battle of the titans, and Matt Dunstone’s surprise package from Saskatchewan 7-6 via a single in the 10th end of the semifinal.

During the perfunctory dispatching of Bottcher on championship final Sunday, the man at the helm of the winners curled an absolutely mind-bending 97 per cent.

“We certainly felt good about how we were playing,” says Gushue. “As the week went on at the Brier, we just got better and better and, in truth, had been playing pretty well all season.

“So going into the worlds, we were, I’d have to say, as confident as we’d been in a couple of years.

“Not many people realize we never really even had a chance to celebrate the Brier win. Geoff and Brett headed west, with Geoff’s wife and Brett’s girlfriend, for a couple of days before we were set to start preparations for Glasgow.

“Then they got stuck out there once all the shutdown and quarantines started happening.

“In those 10 days I mentioned, there was always hope that things would settle down or maybe we had been blowing things out of proportion. But as the days progressed and you started to see more and more cases, more and more shutdowns, more and more concern, it became pretty evident the worlds were going to be cancelled.

“So when we did hear officially, there was a little bit of relief, from a health standpoint and a knowing standpoint, but still... disappointing not to get the chance.”

Compounding Gushue’s frustration was the enticing venue for the 2020 showcase. He was looking forward to reconnecting with Glaswegians and testing his global title mettle far away from home.

“You know, I’ve been fortunate enough to play in four worlds but none of them have been outside of North America,” says Gushue. “We played the Olympics in Italy, in Turin, but the chance to go to Scotland, a country I’ve loved visiting and have enjoyed my time in, to play for a world title would’ve been absolutely wonderful.



With a trip to the world championship in Glasgow, Scotland, on the line, Newfoundland and Labrador's Team Gushue dispatched Alberta's Brendan Bottcher gang in a one-sided 7-3 Brier final. Soon after that dynastic win, the team was denied the opportunity to go for a second world crown when the event was cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



"A good portion of my family was going over to support us and that would've been a great experience for all of us.

"But that wasn't to be."

The earlier-than-usual off-season caused by COVID-19 has, naturally, produced a unique level of uncertainty heading into the 2020-21 curling campaign.

"We typically do our season planning around the end of May, early June," says Gushue. "We scheduled our call and had our call, even though there's really not much we can plan for. We don't know what the season's going to look like, which events are gonna go and which won't. They're talking about hub cities to hold multiple events.

"There's so much uncertainty that we can't plan at this point. We've pushed that off until we do.

"Certainly things are looking more positive across the country, things are opening up.

"People talk about the 'new' normal. I'm hoping it's going to be closer to the 'old' normal. But we'll have to wait and see, obviously.

"Certainly, preparation may be impacted. I've heard of six-sheet clubs looking at putting in four sheets of ice to allow for distance between. If that becomes a trend across the country, that's going to have an impact on the amount of practice time that you're going to be able to get.

"The biggest concern, for me, is the number of events we're going to get to play, whether we're going to play the typical schedule that we'd want, that we're used to."

What the Gushue team has that many others don't, besides

pedigree, is a degree of familiarity that's certain to hold them in good stead.

"For a team like ours, that has more experience than most, it's the games, the competition, that really help us hone our game," he says.

"Now, having said that, practice is very important preparation for anyone. But you want to get in those games, those tight situations, to get the juices flowing, the blood pumping.

"We'd want to make sure we had plenty of those.

"For our team, if we had four to six weeks of ice time and were able to play an event or two, I think we could get to a pretty high level. For some of the new teams, you need time to develop. If there's some delayed openings or events cancelled, some of those new teams are going to have to learn on the fly, which is not an easy thing to do when you get into those high-pressure games of the Canada Cup or the Brier."

Gushue, who turned 40 on June 16, feels there's so much more out there on his horizon.

"I don't know what it's going to look like," he acknowledges. "But I am looking forward to the challenge."

To a chance at defending a national title. To then, fingers crossed, sometime early next spring, receiving a brand new 2021 edition of the Canadian team uniform in the mail.

And this time, getting the chance to not just put it on, but to wear it. In competition.

---

*George Johnson has spent the last 40 years covering sports, including seven Olympic Winter Games and four men's World Cups*



# TAKING THE LONG WAY BACK TO THE PODIUM

**TO UNDERSTAND THE SUCCESS OF THE** Canadian national wheelchair team's 2019-20 season, it's helpful to review how last year ended.

At the 2019 World Wheelchair Curling Championship in Stirling, Scotland, Canada held a .500 record heading into the last draw against the hometown Scots.

"Our fate was in our own hands," says Canadian skip Mark Ideson. "A win would take us into the playoffs and a loss would leave us back in the middle of the pack."

They lost and fell into a four-way tie for seventh place — just shy of the top-six spots needed to reach the playoffs. But it got worse.

"There was a perfect storm of bad luck. Based on who beat who, and all the tiebreaker formulas, we actually ended up 10th," says Ideson.

The bottom three teams — in this case Canada, the United States and Germany — were relegated to B Group at the 2020 world championship; a position Canada's wheelchair program had never been in before.

"We were one shot away from being in the playoffs," recalls head coach Wayne Kiel. "You

miss that shot and all of a sudden we're in the relegation round. We were surprised to end up there, but that's how the chips fell. The process then became to prepare ourselves to do what we had to do at the Bs, which was a new experience for us."

"The goal of this season was simply to get back to A Group," says Wendy Morgan, head of Curling Canada's national wheelchair team program. "That meant we had to compete at the World B Curling Championship in Finland and end up in the top three."

Ideson says, "I certainly feel like it motivated us to regroup and approach the following season a bit differently."

This presented a number of challenges for the team, mainly that the World B Curling Championship vastly accelerated the season's competitive schedule. The A Group event is in late February; the B Group's take place in late November.

"We normally have some competitions in the early season in B.C. and Ottawa," says Ideson. "They're usually international competitions, but

With a 6-1 victory over Sweden in the final, Wayne Kiel, Marie Wright, Mark Ideson, Dennis Thiessen, Ina Forrest and Jon Thurston earned Canada its first World B Wheelchair Curling Championship gold medal in the program's history.

a world championship where the result mattered really raised the intensity level much faster.”

“It moved our season up,” says Jon Thurston, who’s now entering his second year on the national team. “Typically, our world championship is late February into March, and now we were working for something at the end of November.... Normally we wouldn’t really get that heavy until January or February. We did really well to ramp up, with some off-ice adjustments and then get everything working with some new on-ice stuff – ways to practise and experience some competition sooner than normal.”

One of those adjustments involved a lineup change that had been discussed during the summer. Ideson had been skipping and throwing fourth for the past two years – including at the 2018 Paralympics in South Korea – but this season, rising star Thurston took over the last two stones.

“In Mark, we have probably the best lead in the world sitting on our team,” says Kiel. “For him, it was a move back to a position where he’s been very successful, and it also took away a bit of that pressure that might have come with throwing the last two. We looked at Jon and his shooting percentages and his confidence and thought it was the right thing to do.”

Ideson says he feels “super comfortable throwing lead. My skill set is such that the lead position suits the way I throw it. Jon is such an excellent hitter and technically probably one of the best throwers in the game right now. So it made sense for him to throw last. I’m really comfortable calling the game and continuing to learn and grow at that position. It just made sense for me to set up the ends and for Jon to finish them off.”

Thurston says “it was a big change, but with Mark still skipping it made the transition easier. We had to wait until September before we could put it into practice. I had the mindset to do my best and earn the trust of my teammates.”

With a new five-player lineup in place and a few practice events under their belts, the team headed to Lohja, Finland, for the World B Wheelchair Curling Championship, which ran from November 27 to December 2, 2019. Paralympic veterans Marie Wright, Ina Forrest and Dennis Thiessen completed the team.

Canada lost only once in the six-game round robin, which earned the team a spot in a semifinal against the Czech Republic. After a decisive 10-4 victory, the Canadians faced Sweden in the final, knowing that they’d already qualified for one of the top three spots and would advance to the A Group world championship.

“I’m pretty sure we were all confident we would make it through the Bs, but you’re always a bit hesitant, maybe superstitious, about planning too far ahead,” says Ideson. “Nobody wanted to jinx it.”

With a 6-1 victory over Sweden in the final, Canada earned its first B Group gold medal in the program’s history.

“We felt a lot of validation for all the work we’d put in,” says Thurston. “It was the first real true test of me throwing at that position at that level of competition. We worked really well and it gave us some confidence that what we were doing was working. It was actually a really good experience.... But never again! We don’t want to have to do the B Group again!”

A world wheelchair medal drought that had been ongoing since 2013 came to an end thanks to a silver-medal performance by Canadian skip Mark Ideson, fourth Jon Thurston, third Ina Forrest, second Dennis Thiessen, alternate Collinda Joseph and coach Wayne Kiel.



PHOTOS: WORLD CURLING FEDERATION/ALINA PAWLYUCHIK

Taking a 7-4 round-robin record into the playoffs, Team Canada defeated South Korea in its quarterfinal matchup and Sweden in a semifinal to secure a spot in the gold-medal game against Russia. All even after seven ends, the Russians stole their way to victory when Canada's Jon Thurston — looking to remove Russia's shot rock — wrecked on a front guard.



The championship in Finland was more than just a qualifier for the A Group World Championships in Switzerland. It was also a dress rehearsal of sorts.

“Just to have that opportunity — to have two world championships in one season — it helped with everything,” says Thurston. “Our routines, schedules, meetings, travel and just to be in that environment. Also, we had a lot of information from Finland about what needed improvement, it was so beneficial to have that.”

The team’s assistant coach, Mick Lizmore, says the World Bs “helped us identify some short-term gaps. We made some little adjustments to schedules and routines. We tried to build on some lessons learned, that we could adjust to, trying to move the yardstick even a little bit.”

Ideson says that even though they’d lost only one game, they “looked at all the film and constructively criticized the game-calling, so we could learn from it and build and grow moving on to the A championship.”

After a small break over the holidays, the team regrouped and focused on its next task — the 2020 World Wheelchair Curling Championship in Wetzikon, Switzerland. The competition, which began on February 29, featured a 12-team round robin, leading to a six-team playoff. This time, Collinda Joseph made the trip instead of Wright, who was kept at home by some medical issues.

Far from a typical event, the championship was feeling the worldwide effects of COVID-19, which were just beginning to become known. With the outbreak spreading beyond China, many European countries were beginning to see their first cases.

“We felt lucky to get our world championship in,” says Ideson. “They handled it really well. They were disinfecting everything and there were hand-washing stations all over. Obviously, people were nervous as the weeks went on, and cases were showing up in Zurich.”

Morgan says the championship organizers “were on top of it, as much as they could be. I think we were very lucky that we didn’t contract something, knowing what we know now. I don’t think we realized how fast-moving it was.”

Despite the concerns, the championship went on. All subsequent world championships were cancelled.

With a 7-4 record, Canada qualified for a quarterfinal matchup with South Korea. After a win, they faced the same Swedish team they’d defeated for the B Group gold medal in Finland. With a spot in the final against Russia assured, it marked the first time since 2013 that a Canadian team had earned a medal at this competition.

“Any Canadian team at a world championship is going to want to be on top of the podium; nobody will be shy to tell you that,” says Lizmore. “But we were more focused on taking care of what was in front of us at any moment. You’re trying to focus on the process, but there are obviously benchmarks along the way. Make the playoffs, get in a position to earn a medal and, hopefully, you get to that position, and focus on that game.”

Tied, playing the last end with hammer, Thurston had a difficult come-around tap to move a Russian stone off the button. The weight was perfect, but the stone over-curlled and ticked the guard, giving Russia the win.

“We were a half-inch away from winning it!” says Morgan.

“Sure, we would have loved a gold medal,” says Ideson. “But we made it to the final and anything can happen in one game. But it was a huge success and everybody in the program had some involvement in that.”

“Just to medal was big,” says Thurston. “It was the first time since 2013 that Canada had won a medal. Obviously, we wanted that to improve our world ranking, but it also brought a lot of confidence to the group.... And we left a bit of room for improvement next year.”

With a B Group gold medal and a world championship silver, Canada has officially earned a spot in the 2022 Paralympics in Beijing. And as that event approaches, Canada’s wheelchair program has a new head coach leading the way. Lizmore, who was an assistant coach this season, has traded roles with Kiel, who has stepped into an assistant-mentor role. Together, along with team leader Morgan, they’ll guide the program to the 2022 Games.

“No sooner had that rock stopped, we were already thinking about what adjustments to make moving forward, what we could learn, moving into the off-season and into next year,” says Lizmore. “Qualifying for Beijing is a nice thought to have in your mind but it doesn’t mean we don’t have to try hard anymore. If we’re not competing between now and 2022, just being there won’t matter very much. It’s good to hear that we’ve qualified, but we’ve got to use that time to keep pushing and striving to get better, and the rest will take care of itself if we fulfil our roles like we plan on doing.”

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*Brian Chick, author of Written in Stone: A Modern History of Curling, is a curling professional in Toronto and a frequent contributor to Curling Canada projects*



“The goal of this season,” says Wendy Morgan, head of Curling Canada’s wheelchair team program, “was simply to get back to A Group,” and that meant a top-three finish at the World Bs.



Mick Lizmore has taken over head-coaching duties for Canada’s wheelchair program this season and, together with Wendy Morgan, will guide the program to the 2022 Paralympics.

As Curling Canada's high performance director, Gerry Peckham has been front and centre in the development of the nation's championship curling culture, steering programs and athletes through three decades of change and innovation.

# FROM PRINCE GEORGE TO OWNING THE PODIUM: GERRY PECKHAM STAYS TRUE TO HIS HOMETOWN ROOTS

BY DON LANDRY



"There's nobody that loves curling more," says retired wheelchair curling national coach Joe Rea, reflecting on Gerry Peckham's passion for the game.

**W**HEN THE DECISION WAS MADE TO cancel the 2020 World Women's Curling Championship because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Gerry Peckham took it hard.

That's because the championship was to be contested in Prince George, British Columbia. To be certain, Peckham would have been dismayed by the cancellation no matter where the championship was to be held, but Prince George is his hometown. "That amplified it," he says, sadly.

The sting of disappointment was personal for him, but also communal.

"I know how emotional that was for so many different people — all of the volunteers and the host committee, all of the staff that were at the ready," Peckham continues, sympathetically.

It was emotional for Peckham too. Curling Canada's long-serving and much-respected director of high performance was looking forward to his homecoming, eager to renew acquaintances with the people and place of his happy youth.

"My dance card was full and I was full of anticipation in just how meaningful and fulfilling that was gonna be," says Peckham, recalling the disappointment he felt last April when the event was called off.

"I had so many plans in place with so many friends and so many relatives, so many curling colleagues," he adds, wistfully.

Peckham had been looking forward to seeing Prince George show itself off on the global stage because it continues to mean so much to him. Prince George — and the people who live there — were essential to him in his formative years, placing him firmly on the path that has taken him to where he is today, as a leader on both the Canadian and world curling scenes.

"It's a vibrant community, it's a great place to call home," says Peckham fondly, "a great place to raise a young family. I mean, it's got whatever you want, really, especially if you have any attraction to the great outdoors."

It's true that Peckham has been living outside of British Columbia for quite some time because of his full-time responsibilities with Curling Canada, which he began in 1990. But emotional tethers to his hometown are still very strong, still very much a part of who he is.

"He's the only person I know that is still completely connected to his high-school friends, even though he's lived in Ottawa for 30 years," says Elaine Dagg-Jackson, Curling Canada's national coach and program manager. "We all know his high-school friends because he finds a way to include them."

From his strong roots in Prince George, Peckham has risen to become a giant in the world of curling,

a lifelong coach and manager with a reputation for innovation and organizational team-building.

As director of high performance, Peckham has been front and centre in the development of the nation's championship curling culture, steering programs and athletes through three decades of change and innovation, from in-game strategy shifts to technical advancements and improvements in training methods, to name just a few.

During his time with Curling Canada, Peckham has had a hand in more than 40 gold medals for his country, in Olympic, Paralympic and world championship curling. Peckham was awarded a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2013 for his contributions to the National Coaching Certification Program.

"It's not often you encounter a leader like Gerry. He is almost without equal in the Canadian sporting world," says TSN analyst and 2010 Olympic silver medallist Cheryl Bernard, who adds the words inspiration, motivation, collaboration and mentorship when asked to describe Peckham's contributions.

"He will have a lasting legacy on our sport and impact on all of us who have been so fortunate to work with him," she says.

As a player, Peckham appeared in a national junior championship as well as the 1973 and '74 Briers for British Columbia, and while he enjoyed the competition, he found that coaching was his true calling.



Those Brier appearances helped lead him to his eventual full-time job with Curling Canada. Crossing paths with Warren Hansen, the 1974 Brier champ and Hall-of-Fame builder with his own glittering resumé in developing the sport both in Canada and globally, Peckham found a guiding light.

"He got into developing the whole National Coaching Certification Program on behalf of curling and I got involved in that," says Peckham, citing the importance of his association with Hansen.

"It was an opportunity for me to follow a passionate pathway, which I've never stepped off."

Dagg-Jackson has known Peckham since she was 15 years old, a teenage curler who found a fast friend and mentor in the young man who was a little older than she, a university curler who was already making his way as a coach even as he pursued his own on-ice dreams as a player.

"It was super evident that he wanted to reach out and help new people learn about what they were doing," says Dagg-Jackson.

"I think that really came from his roots, from his parents, and from his upbringing in Prince George," she says. Peckham agrees.

He recalls a city that was sports and activity-focused, with 18 very busy curling sheets at the Prince George Golf and Curling Club. It was a city, Peckham recalls, that greatly valued its sense of community. And there was the influence of his parents, Mae and Wilf, who encouraged an active



When asked to describe Gerry Peckham's contributions, TSN analyst Cheryl Bernard says: "It's not often you encounter a leader like Gerry. He is almost without equal in the Canadian sporting world."



"His core values guide everything he does," says Curling Canada's Elaine Dagg-Jackson, who has known Gerry Peckham since she was 15 years old.





The 1966 British Columbia schoolboys' champions — skip Doug Engstrom, third Gerry Peckham, coach Wilf Peckham, second Gary Augustine and lead Gordon Nash — finished in the middle of the pack at the Canadian championship.

Lead Gerry Peckham, second Jim Armstrong, third Bernie Sparkes and skip Jack Tucker of the Richmond Winter Club represented British Columbia at the 1973 Brier in Edmonton. The foursome finished with a 5-5 record.



lifestyle as well as a curious nature, through both words and actions.

“The effect was profound,” Peckham says of his Prince George upbringing, adding that his father — himself such a beloved person in local curling circles that a trophy was named after him — instilled the coaching gene in his son, through countless conversations about countless sports, always from the angle of technique and decision-making.

“We watched through a manager’s or coach’s eyes,” says Peckham.

Peckham says he loved it all, but found a particularly strong pull toward the sport of sticks and stones.

“I’m not even sure I had a choice, really, when I look back, because I was involved and active in many other sports but I was truly really only drawn hook, line and sinker to the sport of curling,” he says. “And it was a constant in my household.

“I grew up with curling in my DNA.”

Joe Rea can attest to that. Another B.C. boy — he came to Prince George with his parents when he was 14 — the retired wheelchair curling national coach and member of the Canadian Paralympic Hall of Fame has known Peckham for more than 35 years.

“There’s nobody that loves curling more,” he says, reflecting on Peckham’s passion for the game, and on his skill when it comes to crafting the lessons he’s giving.

“He’s got this way of discussing things and when he starts to talk you have to listen to him,” says Rea. “You know something’s going to come out that’s worthwhile.”

Dagg-Jackson agrees. “He’s a unique guy,” she says, adding that she always has a pen and paper at the ready when she gets a call from Peckham, certain that he will provide something substantial every time. “I don’t know anybody else like him.

“His core values guide everything he does,” says Dagg-Jackson. “And his values of people, of kindness and loyalty and making a contribution, combined with his passion for curling make him one of a kind on this planet.”

Although he has turned 70, Peckham says he still has lots to give, and is nowhere near running out of gas for his job, his sport and the people with whom he associates in the great game.

“I love surrounding myself with quality, capable people, and there’s a bountiful supply in the sport of curling,” he says.

Asked about his greatest accomplishments, Peckham doesn’t identify any one with specificity; no particular gold medal, no singular victory, no remarkable program or breakthrough.

“I would say that what I am most proud of is the assembling of that team of experts and passionate, dedicated people with competitive IQ and curling wisdom to make a contribution to all aspects of curling in Canada.

“That’s the legacy that I’m focused on and continue to invest in.”

It’s a legacy that owes a lot to Gerry Peckham, and by extension to the people in the community that will always be home — Prince George, British Columbia.

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*Don Landry is a freelance writer based in Stratford, Ontario*



# ON THE ROCKS

BY AL CAMERON

**IT MAY HAVE BEEN LOST IN THE SHUFFLE AS THE** curling world grappled with the COVID-19 pandemic and, while understandable, that would be a shame.

Because for too long, the issue of gender equity in sports has been one that isn't fully appreciated; the levels of nuance tend to go over the heads of too many sports fans.

Curling Canada, in fact, is a leader in Canadian sports (all sports, for that matter) when it comes to compensating athletes on an equal basis.

Going back to the first editions of the Continental Cup, in 2002, and the Canada Cup, in 2003 (events in which both genders competed under the same roof), prize money was, and continues to be, equal for men and women.

And this past season, thanks to many years of hard work behind the scenes with Curling Canada's many stakeholders, prize money was equal at both the Tim Hortons Brier and Scotties Tournament of Hearts.

Prize money, of course, is only one aspect of gender equity in sport. Another is exposure, and in that area Curling Canada, again, has been a longtime leader. With the support of longtime broadcast partner TSN/RDS, as many female as male games from Season of Champions events are broadcast to fans across the country.

All well and good, but there's one aspect of gender equity that's an issue— one that dates back to my days as a curling journalist and continues to be bothersome in my current role with Curling Canada.

And that is the issue of how male and female curlers are perceived by fans.

It's an issue we brought to light in the fall through a collaborative campaign with our friends at Canadian Women and Sport ([www.womenandsport.ca](http://www.womenandsport.ca)).



It is outrageous that elite female curlers such as Chelsea Carey get criticized by fans for their competitive nature, or showing emotion on the ice. Male players, on the other hand, are praised for their competitiveness and desire to win.

You may have seen the social media posts featuring two-time Scotties Tournament of Hearts champion Chelsea Carey, as well as Kerry Galusha of the Northwest Territories.

The words were powerful in the campaign:

“She’s got it all: leadership skills, tenacity, and the challenge of not showing both when she competes. High-level curling demands strategizing, taking charge, and bringing intense focus to the game. Men with these skills are admired, but women are perceived as too serious — or even angry. Women should be judged on their athletic abilities, not how pleasantly they smile as they play.”

Isn't that the truth?

Many of you probably wonder why this is an issue. Well, if you were to read some of the vicious responses and comments we receive on our social media channels from “fans” (and I use that term loosely for these people) aimed at our female athletes, you wouldn't wonder why. It is an issue, and I say that unreservedly.

I give credit to our amazing social media manager Danielle Inglis — herself a high-performance female curler and winner of Canadian university and mixed championships, as well as a world mixed title — for her ability to both hide these poisonous comments before a large number of people see them, and for her positivity despite being exposed to this behaviour.

It truly is outrageous that elite players such as Carey, Galusha, Jennifer Jones, Rachel Homan and Amy Nixon get *criticized* by fans for their competitive nature, or showing emotion on the ice. And when a male player — pick a name, any name — does the EXACT same thing on the ice, they are praised for their competitiveness and desire to win.

The double-standard, to be frank, is sickening. And it has to stop. Our athletes, male and female, deserve better.

Understand, competing at a high performance level is a challenge, regardless of gender. There are sacrifices being made — to family, to employers, to friends — in order for these athletes to succeed.

And yes, it's a given that fans absolutely have the right to second-guess and criticize in the same way they have the right to cheer.

But before a fan goes down the road of criticizing a curler, that fan better ask: Does gender have ANYTHING to do with my criticism? In other words, if I'm criticizing a female curler, would I criticize a male curler for doing the exact same thing?

Ultimately, if fans get to a place where they say “yes” with clean conscience, we'll be in a better place.

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*Al Cameron is Curling Canada's director of communication and media relations*

# IN THE NEWS



Curling Canada's George Cooke presents George Karrys with the Award of Achievement in honour of his many and varied contributions to curling.

PHOTO: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

## AWARD OF ACHIEVEMENT

Toronto's George Karrys has won the 2020 Curling Canada Award of Achievement.

Presented annually, Curling Canada's Award of Achievement recognizes an individual who has contributed significantly to curling in one of four areas — builder, technical development (instructor, coach, official, ice technician), marketing and media.

Karrys has been involved with curling in just about every way imaginable.

As an athlete, he was a member of Canada's Olympic curling team that won silver at the 1998 Olympic Winter Games in Nagano, Japan, throwing lead rocks for Mike Harris.

As a journalist, Karrys wrote, edited and eventually owned *The Curling News* — the longest-running publication devoted to the Roaring Game. He also wrote for the *Ontario Curling Report*, *Sun Media* and *Postmedia*, and contributed as an analyst to the *FAN 590* in Toronto, *CBC* and *Sportsnet*.

As a volunteer, he's done charity work that raised money for various causes over the years.

Karrys has even been an actor, appearing in the 2002 movie *Men With Brooms*, for which he also served as a technical consultant.

Karrys continues to promote the sport of curling through his activity with *The Curling News*, social media and through his involvement with the Men/Women of Curling annual calendars, which raise funds in part for Curling Canada's For the Love of Curling scholarship program.

Three new members have been inducted into the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame — curlers Julie Skinner and Wayne Middaugh and builder Terry Begin.



### JULIE SKINNER

#### Curler

Victoria's Julie Skinner made her first impact on the national stage in 1987 when she skipped her British Columbia squad to a gold medal at the Canadian

juniors in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, an event in which fellow Hall of Fame inductee Wayne Middaugh was skipping Team Ontario. A year later, in 1988 in Chamonix, France, Skinner skipped her Canadian championship team — third Judy Wood, second Susan Auty and lead Marla Geiger — to the first ever world junior women's title.

That success was just the beginning of Skinner's brilliant career, which saw her win two Scotties Tournament of Hearts — as a skip in 1991 with her B.C. team of twin sister Jodi Sutton at third, second Melissa Soligo and lead Karri Willms; and as third in 2000 with skip Kelley Law, second Georgina Wheatcroft and lead Diane Nelson — and a world championship silver medal in 1991 and gold in 2000. She also played in two Olympic Winter Games.

At the 1992 Winter Olympics in Albertville, France, where curling was a demonstration sport, Skinner skipped her 1991 Hearts champs to a bronze medal. Ten years later, in Salt Lake City, Utah, with curling having ascended to full-medal status four years earlier, Skinner won another bronze with her 2000 world championship squad.

Skinner played in six Scotties Tournament of Hearts — representing British Columbia four times and as Team Canada twice — and finished her career with two gold medals and two silvers.



### WAYNE MIDDAUGH

#### Curler

Considered among the most gifted curlers ever to play the game, Wayne Middaugh of Victoria Harbour, Ontario, was an impact player on every team for which

he played. He is the only curler ever to win three Briers and world championships at three different positions.

As a young front-ender coming out of juniors, he was part of the Russ Howard-skipped juggernaut that steamrolled to Brier and world titles in 1993 — a team that featured Middaugh at second, Peter Corner at lead and Glenn Howard at third.

After the 1994 season, Middaugh left Howard to skip his own team of third Graeme McCarrel, second Ian Tetley and lead Scott Bailey. It took

a few years for the team to gel but in 1998 the foursome put it all together to win Brier and world championship gold.

Middaugh completed his collection of Brier and world championship gold medals in 2012, this time playing third for Glenn Howard, with Brent Laing at second and Craig Savill at lead.

Forced to retire after a skiing accident in January of 2016, Middaugh represented Ontario at nine Briers, finishing on the podium seven times, with three gold, two silver and two bronze medals. He has also won 11 Grand Slams in a storied career.



### TERRY BEGIN

#### Builder

Ottawa's Terry Begin has been a tireless volunteer for curling in the nation's capital and a pioneer of today's statistical scoring system.

While Begin volunteered at a series of major Curling Canada championships in his hometown, it was his behind-the-scenes work on compiling curling statistics that continues to have an impact on how curling is viewed by media and the public.

Begin got his first taste of curling in 1952 in Olds, Alberta, where he joined a high-school curling league. He played at a high level in the Ottawa area and also worked as an instructor with the likes of fellow Canadian Curling Hall of Famer Warren Hansen.

He volunteered at numerous major events, including the 1967, '77, '79, '93 and 2001 Briers, the 1990 Scott Tournament of Hearts and the 2017 Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings.

From 1977 to 1984, Begin was a member of the Canadian Curling Association's public relations committee, including terms as chair and vice-chair. In 2000, he was inducted into the prestigious Governor General's Curling Club.

Begin began to develop the scoring system for assessing players' shooting percentages in the late 1970s and it made its formal debut at the 1980 Canadian Junior Men's Curling Championship in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. His system assigns point values to each attempted shot based on the outcome of the shot, using a scale of zero to four, with four being the highest. The guidelines he produced then are still largely relied upon by scorers at today's Curling Canada championships.

From 1980 to 1986, Begin served as chief statistician for the Canadian Curling Association and worked closely with fellow Hall of Famer Brian Cassidy, who developed the computer software to make live shooting percentages available during games.



PHOTO: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

### PAUL McLEAN AWARD

TSN associate producer Geoff Kamada and production editor Shayne Dilling are co-winners of the 2020 Paul McLean Award.

The award was created in 2007 by the Canadian Curling Reporters — now the Professional Curling Media Association of Canada — in conjunction with TSN, in memory of McLean, a TSN executive producer, and his dedication to the sport of curling. McLean passed away on December 14, 2005, at his home in Brampton, Ontario, after a two-year battle with cancer. He was 39.

The award is presented annually to a person or persons in the media who have made an outstanding contribution to curling from behind the scenes.

Kamada and Dilling play a vital role in the on-air TSN product. Their gift for storytelling sets the tone for the broadcasts and connects the viewer with the event and the athletes. They work tirelessly and while rarely seen outside of their editing suite, Kamada and Dilling have made a profound impact on what you've seen and will continue to see on TSN broadcasts.

### JANET ARNOTT EXCEPTIONAL COACH AWARD

Lindsay Sparkes of Courtenay, British Columbia, is the inaugural winner of the Janet Arnott Exceptional Coach Award. The award is named after long-time Manitoba coach Janet Arnott, who passed away on June 24, 2019, after a short battle with cancer.

The award — which recognizes exceptional coaching contributions and accomplishments over a significant period of time — is presented only under special circumstances to an individual who has made a difference in the sport of curling as a result of his or her contribution to the development, well-being or sport-for-life aspirations of an athlete, athletes or team.

Sparkes blazed a trail for female curling coaches in Canada. An accomplished athlete, she is a three-time Canadian champion, twice as a skip, and also won a world championship in 1985 playing third for North Vancouver's Linda Moore. She also won gold at the 1988 Olympic Winter Games in Calgary — when curling was a demonstration sport — as third for Moore.

Sparkes then moved to coaching and spent 10 years as Canada's national women's coach and team leader, working with Canadian teams at world championships and the 1998 and 2002 Olympics, and has participated in numerous high-performance camps across Canada.



PHOTO: ANDREW KLAVER © KRUGER PRODUCTS

Curling Canada's national women's coach Elaine Dagg-Jackson, left, presents the inaugural Janet Arnott Exceptional Coach Award to Lindsay Sparkes.



PHOTO: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Winner of the 2018-19 Volunteer of the Year Award, Bill Shorter accepts a commemorative banner from Curling Canada's John Shea, left, and George Cooke, in recognition of his contributions to the Deep River Curling and Squash Club.

### CURLING CANADA VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Bill Shorter of Deep River, Ontario, is the winner of the 2018-19 Volunteer of the Year Award in recognition of his significant contribution to the success of the Deep River Curling and Squash Club.

Few aspects of the club's operation haven't been touched by the influence of Shorter; as club president he is responsible for the entire physical operation of the club.

Shorter works with the club's junior and Learn to Curl programs and was active in making sure that the club complies with the guidelines established by the passing of Rowan's Law regarding concussion safety in youth sport.

Shorter also volunteers as the club's ice and property director, heading the crew of ice technicians, and organizes work parties that produce stellar ice conditions for club members.

His greatest volunteer contribution came when the club was facing significant challenges with its ice plant as the 2017-18 season was winding down. At season's end, Shorter co-ordinated a fundraising effort, as well as volunteer work parties, to upgrade the ice plant and replace all of the floor piping to completely restore the ice surface.

And if that effort wasn't enough, Shorter also worked with the local fire department to produce an Ammonia Safety Protocol as well as a Fire Protection Policy for the Deep River Club.



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*The Curling Canada Foundation is the philanthropic program of Curling Canada under the Charitable Registration No. 10684 5035 RR0001*



**LEGACY**   
— For the Love of Curling —

# YOUTH CURLING

## INVESTING IN YOUR CURLING CENTRE'S FUTURE

### THE SPORT OF CURLING HAS

seen a significant spike in popularity in the last decade alongside increased accessibility to the Roaring Game. Getting Started programs, rookie leagues and instructional rental sessions are all creative ways to bring new faces into your local curling centre.

Curling centres across Canada strive to create lifelong members to secure sustainable, long-term revenue sources as curling maintains the luxury of being a sport that can be engaging and fun well into curlers' golden years. And yet, often overlooked in a curling centre's arsenal are programs that cater specifically to youth curlers.

Thankfully, new programming is emerging that caters to young curlers with all levels of experience.

Among those programs is Triples curling, an exciting new discipline developed by Curling Canada. As its name suggests, curlers compete in teams of

three, but that's where the link to classic curling rules ends.

A Triples game consists of three sets of two-end mini games, with each team playing with the hammer for one end and without for the other. The team with the highest score after two ends wins the set. If the score is tied, the set is split.

Triples is an ideal youth curling format for both individual and community development at your curling centre. The format not only allows youth curlers to re-approach the sport of curling, but it also stimulates newer ways of thinking on the ice in terms of both tactics and camaraderie. It allows youth to be leaders in bridging the program to adult and senior participants, granting your youth members a sense of belonging through positive community contributions. Engaged youth who feel they belong and contribute accordingly become future board members, staffers and leaders at their local curling centre.

The Triples format not only bolsters overall curling ability of participants, who are required to throw a myriad of shots, but it especially develops youth curlers' "soft skills," including problem-solving, adaptation, communication and teamwork.

One of the unique features of Triples is that curlers play each of three positions — lead, middle and skip — for one set. Teams can determine which player starts in each position during Set 1. From that point on, players must be in a fixed rotation. That allows the young curlers to fully immerse themselves in every position, thereby honing the skills required to successfully execute any number of strategies and shots.

Only one sweeper is allowed to sweep until the far hogline, which not only encourages players to take ownership of their shot-making results but also complies with COVID-19 social distancing procedures.

Developing innovative and engaging youth curling programs, like the creation of Triples, is possible only thanks to the generous support of the Canada-wide curling community. Without contributions to Curling Canada's philanthropic program, For the Love of Curling, creating new age- and stage-appropriate programs would not be possible.

Curling centres that wish to engage their members with new programming, including Triples, should contact their member association, which will be able to help institute these new resources.

If you'd like to contribute to the future of curling in Canada, please consider making a donation to support the sport you love at [curling.ca/foundation](https://curling.ca/foundation).



Curling Canada's Triples format not only allows youth curlers to re-approach the sport, but it also stimulates newer ways of thinking on the ice in terms of both tactics and camaraderie.





# CURLING GETS NEW LIFE INSIDE THE BUBBLE

**COVID-19 forces drastic measures across  
the board, including Calgary as hub city**

**BY BOB WEEKS**

**COVID-19 MAY HAVE SLOWED THE** world in 2020, but it couldn't put a stop to a sport that has roared for centuries.

Curlers, whether elite players or those who slides stones once a week in a local club, have adapted and adjusted to play their favourite sport. At times it might not look like the game they'd come to know, with new rules in play, different protocols to follow, and sacrifices to make, ranging from a long stay inside a bubble to forgoing the post-game libation. But it's curling, just the same.

If there was one positive to this uneasy situation thrust upon curling, it may have been the timing. After a sudden end to the 2019-2020 season in March that forced the cancellation of many national and international championships, administrators and officials had time to find a solution. Turns out, they would need every minute of it.

The work began immediately, and it soon became apparent that hosting a Tim Hortons Brier and a Scotties Tournament of Hearts, among other championships,

would require dealing with multiple partners and stakeholders, as well as medical officials at a variety of levels. It would also mean facing the unknowns of the pandemic.

"Right after March 12, when we had to cancel the women's worlds in Prince George, we sat down and had to think what is it we can do and what can we do safely and responsibly," said Katherine Henderson, CEO of Curling Canada. "It's been months of planning. I can tell you the whole team, the whole time, was thinking

It took months of planning by Curling Canada, headed by CEO Katherine Henderson, to put together a plan to get curling back on the ice safely and responsibly.



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF CURLING CANADA



Calgary has been chosen as the hub city for this year's Season of Champions events, and the Markin MacPhail Centre at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park was the perfect fit. Its larger ice surface makes for more distancing between sheets, which is a plus.



how can we deliver as much curling as possible this year, safely and responsibly.”

The result was the creation of a curling bubble.

Similar to the National Basketball Association and National Hockey League with their return to play in hub cities, Curling Canada's ambitious plan is for the 2021 Scotties Tournament of Hearts, the Tim Hortons Brier — presented by AGI — plus the world men's and Canadian mixed doubles championships to be held under one roof: the Markin MacPhail Centre

at WinSport's Canada Olympic Park in Calgary, a modern facility that contains an Olympic-size hockey rink with 3,500 seats.

The seats won't much matter. The events will be played without spectators, although all will be televised by TSN.

Why Calgary? The venue was a big reason. The Markin MacPhail Centre has no major tenant during the winter, such as a junior hockey team, so it was available for an extended period of time. And with its larger ice surface, it makes for more distancing between sheets. Curling

Canada was also afforded exclusive use of a nearby hotel, ensuring the bubble remains intact.

There are still major details to work out. Curling Canada expects every province and territory to be represented at the Scotties and the Brier, but how will those teams be decided — through provincial/territorial playdowns or simply by appointment? The only sure thing at the moment is that the defending Brier and Scotties champions are in.

“Our public health partners have been tremendous,” said Henderson. “Our member associations, our board, our staff, our sponsors, have been tremendous and worked with us.”

Curlers, officials and all other necessary personnel will be tested multiple times before they get into the closed area encompassing the curling facility and hotel, and they'll be subjected to strict regulations and regular testing as events unfold. Everything from dining to practice time to workouts in a gym had to be planned.

For the players, however, the chance to compete is worth any unusual protocols.

“A lot of curlers, including myself, were pretty disappointed with how the season ended last year in a pretty abrupt fashion,” said Brad Gushue, whose Newfoundland and Labrador team won the Brier but didn't get a chance to play in the world championship in Scotland when it was cancelled. “So to hear that they're going to go ahead with the Season of Champions,

I know I'm pretty excited and I think the fans out there will be pretty excited."

"We were just praying that we would be able to play the Scotties again," said Kerri Einarson, skip of the defending Canadian women's champions out of Gimli, Man. "When the news came out it was pretty exciting and we're pretty fortunate to be able to play again."

Curling without fans will create an unusually quiet atmosphere for players accustomed to the din of cheers, cow bells and moose calls. That will be difficult, especially for those veterans comfortable throwing a rock while spectators are in full volume.

"It's going to be a challenge," admitted Gushue. "I think for teams like ourselves, Kevin Koe, any of the teams that have been around and played in a lot of big championships, I think it's going to be even more of a challenge because you draw off that energy from the crowd, and without them there it's going to be different."

The lack of fans is just one hurdle players will face. Isolation for an extended period, being away from families, dining, exercise, practice and more will become tests in the limited area.

"There are going to be a lot of things to overcome," added Brad Jacobs of Sault Ste. Marie, the 2013 Brier champion and 2014 Olympic men's gold-medal winner. "The teams that are mentally strong will do well."

"It's going to be very unusual and with so many things we aren't used to," said Einarson. "There are so many rule changes, and off ice it will be wearing masks and straight back to our rooms. It's going to be very different."

Brier champion Brad Gushue says it's going to be strange playing without fans.



PHOTO: MICHAEL BURNS PHOTOGRAPHY

Changes have also affected club curlers who were welcomed back to the new season with different routines, most of the freshly minted guidelines outlined in a well-prepared Curling Canada Return to Play document detailing how to operate and maintain necessary safety protocols.

"I had a group of 20 club managers from across the country and we had a lot of long discussions on how things could run safely," said Danny Lamoureux, Curling Canada's director of club development and event operations. "We also met with health officials and got their feedback. It took us two months to put it all together, primarily because everything kept changing."

Finally, in July, the 17th version of Return To Play was made available to clubs from coast to coast. It includes in-game changes, such as only one sweeper per stone and no sweeping behind the tee line. Other alterations involve traffic flow during play, decals frozen into the ice

to indicate where players should stand, and starting games on adjoining sheets at opposite ends, all designed to maintain as much distance between players as possible.

"They were well accepted," said Lamoureux. "It didn't take long for people to understand the changes and adjust to them, and also why we were making them."

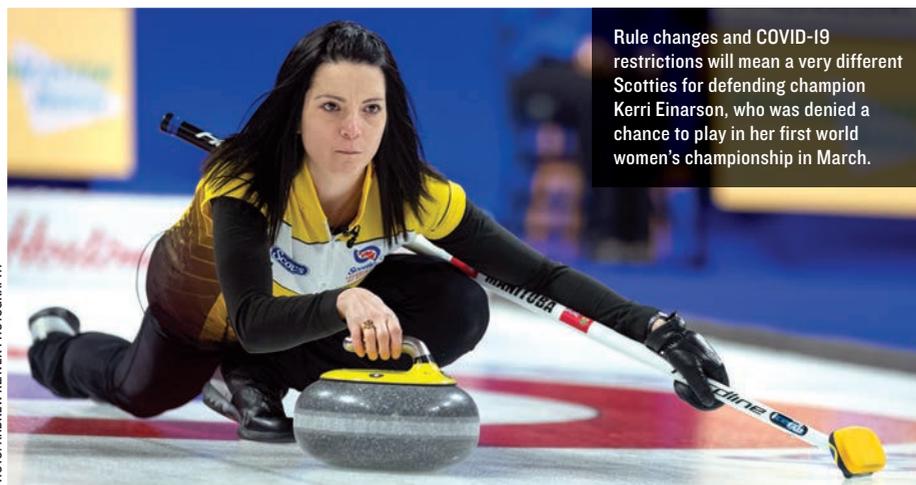
Many facilities added their own rules with some requiring face masks and others opting to leave some sheets empty for proper spacing.

Not every club was able to implement the new rules. Local regulations made it difficult, if not impossible, for some club executives in areas hardest hit by COVID-19 to open their facilities, so they made the difficult decision to cancel the season. But Lamoureux estimated that approximately 70 per cent of Canada's clubs were open for play, with a number enjoying an increase in membership as Canadians looked for ways to stay active in the winter months.

"We heard that a lot of them were snowbirds who weren't able to go south this year," he stated. "They wanted something to do and curling was a good fit."

There's little doubt that 2020 has been a tumultuous year for many. But in some small yet meaningful way, curling has been a beacon for those who love to watch the sport and those who play it.

*Bob Weeks is a reporter and analyst for TSN, covering golf and curling*



Rule changes and COVID-19 restrictions will mean a very different Scotties for defending champion Kerri Einarson, who was denied a chance to play in her first world women's championship in March.

PHOTO: ANDREW KLAVER PHOTOGRAPHY

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# METICULOUS, CREATIVE AND A WRITER'S BEST FRIEND

*Payne made a huge contribution to curling as Extra End editor* | BY DAVE KOMOSKY

## LAURIE PAYNE WAS AN EDITOR.

To many, the word “editor” conjures up an image of a bespectacled person, totally word-obsessed and a stickler for grammar and spelling.

Payne was all of that, for sure (right down to the specs). But she was much, much more as editor of the *Extra End* magazines she loved so dearly in her 25-year career working with the Canadian Curling Association/Curling Canada.

Payne did more than spot spelling errors, fix punctuation and follow in-house style guides. Working at her home computer in Etobicoke, Ont., she was meticulous and creative, polishing the words in submissions from curling writers across the country, making certain that *Extra End* was a publication recognized not only for accuracy but worth reading.

Her talent will be greatly missed by Curling Canada and fans who enjoyed *Extra End* stories that were, in a significant way, a product of her work — some of them in this edition. Payne died suddenly on Sept. 29 at age 67.

Curling Canada said of Payne: “Her attention to detail, fact-checking, perceptive editing and passion for the sport played an immeasurable role in connecting curling fans with the stories and accurate information they desired.”

Payne was diverse. She loved sports and the arts. She worked as an editor on many hockey properties, including the *Canadian Hockey Magazine* and *Hockey Today*. The Toronto Raptors and Vancouver Grizzlies used her skills as an editor and, in the arts, she worked for the National Ballet, National Opera and Mirvish Theatres.

“She could do it all,” said Marylou Morris who, in her role as director, client services, national marketing for Curling Canada, worked closely with Payne for more than three decades. “She loved sports and the arts and it showed in her work.”

While editors are mostly invisible to



the public, they are front and centre to the writers who trust their copy will be handled with care. Payne was a writer's best friend, because she had the capacity to see a writer's vision. More than a few times she salvaged a piece that needed serious massaging.

An editor always runs the risk of cutting the wrong thing or fixating on the wrong details. But not Payne. She was neither aggressive or extreme when it came time for a little ‘wing clipping’. Speed and economy were never prioritized over care and quality. It was not uncommon for a writer to receive an email or phone call from Payne asking for clarification or some additional facts.

Warren Hansen, a Curling Canada Hall of Famer who spent more than two decades running event operations for the national federation, said Payne was the best editor with whom he ever worked.

“I think Laurie and I worked together on *Extra End* for exactly 20 years,” said Hansen. “Her attention to detail was second to none and, because of that, we could get into disagreements. But we always worked it out.”

There was similar praise for Payne's work from Doug Philpott, the former director of special products for the St. Clair Group, which handled marketing for the Canadian Curling Association starting in 1992.

“This talented lady constantly amazed me how she could juggle so many projects all at the same time and still meet tight production schedule deadlines,” said Philpott. “Whether it was live theatre, the ballet, the opera, curling, hockey, basketball or figure skating, Laurie kept them all on an even keel, pointed in the right direction and on budget.

“Whatever it took to get the job done, and more than often it meant working late at night, weekends or holidays, Laurie made it her personal responsibility to get those publications to the presses and then on time to the event venues for the opening curtain or end.”

Al Cameron, director, communications and media relations for Curling Canada, was also hugely impressed by Payne's work.

“Laurie had a rare blend of passion for both the sport of curling and its records,” he said. “Her attention to detail never ceased to amaze me, and it resulted in superbly crafted publications that put our sport in the best possible light.”

It helped that Payne loved curling, and especially liked to watch and talk about the major events. Her love for the game was passed on to her daughter Lyndsey.

“Her daughter was the light of her life,” said Hansen, “and I can remember how excited she was when Lyndsey started curling many years ago.”

Payne is survived by her husband of 38 years, Norm Adam, Lyndsey, and a host of family and friends with whom she loved to share a glass of wine and a laugh.

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*Dave Komosky is Editor, Event Daily Publications, for Curling Canada*



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