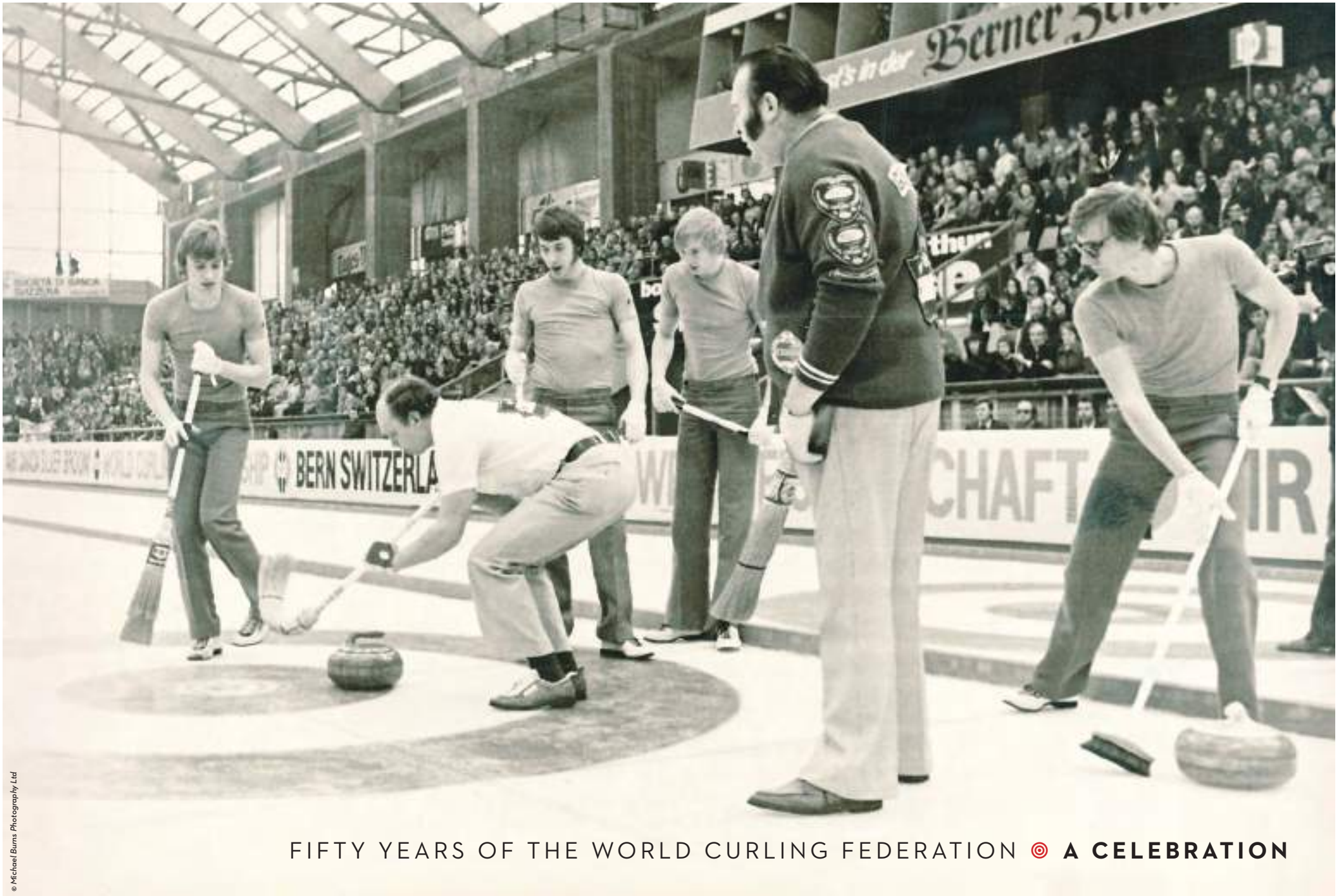




FIFTY YEARS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION © **A CELEBRATION**



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FIFTY YEARS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION 🎯 A CELEBRATION



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PUBLISHED BY THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978 1 5272 0330 3

Printed in the UK by MLG

Bound copies by Cameron Bookbinders

Front cover: The 1978 Silver Broom closing ceremony, Winnipeg

Doug Maxwell Archive

Back cover: "Thanks for the memories"

Doug Maxwell Archive

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A word from WCF President, Kate Caithness OBE

I AM DELIGHTED THAT THIS BOOK - *'Fifty Years of the World Curling Federation - A Celebration'* - HAS COME TO FRUITION IN THIS VERY SPECIAL YEAR FOR THE CURLING FAMILY.

Within its pages our story is told in a way that showcases much that is good about our sport and our Federation – through our history, our events, our stewardship of the sport and most importantly through the people and characters that have made, and continue to make, our sport and fraternity so very special.

When you compare our beginnings in a committee room at the Scotch Cup to the position that we have reached now – a successfully-run organisation which is well-respected throughout the international world of sport – it is clear that we have come a long way in 50 years.

I would like to pay tribute to the team who have produced this first-class book – designer Douglas Colquhoun, photographer Richard Gray and writer Mike Haggerty who, along with the other contributors highlighted in this book, have done such an outstanding job.

Happy reading!



KATE CAITHNESS OBE



INTRODUCTION



Bob Cowan Archive

IT'S NOT JUST PEOPLE WHO HAVE LANDMARK BIRTHDAYS, AND IT'S NOT ONLY PEOPLE WHO LIKE TO CELEBRATE LANDMARK BIRTHDAYS.

Organisations have landmark birthdays too, and this book celebrates a major one for the World Curling Federation (WCF) as it passes the 50 year mark.

The production of this commemorative book during its anniversary year has helped the WCF draw breath for a moment and explore how it has been shaped down the years. It does this by exploring a number of themes that have been key to the sport and the Federation. These include how it has grown, the technical developments that have shaped modern competition, the history of its championships and curling's Olympic journey. The book also gives a nod to the sport's characters and everything else that makes international curling very special.

It is impossible to chart all that has happened in the WCF's 50 year history, but if this book shines a light into unexpected corners, as well as highlighting the more famous events and actions, it will have done another important job as the WCF begins the journey into the next 50 years.



FROM THE BEGINNING



© Alex Cowper

“The need for standardisation of rules and playing methods was readily acknowledged, and from the very start it was - and is, as we shall see in this book - a priority for the WCF.”



The story of the World Curling Federation (WCF) began in the spring of 1966 when representatives from six curling nations - Canada, France, Norway, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland - met at the Scotch Cup competition to form what was originally called the International Council of Curling.

The Canadian federation was then called the Dominion Curling Association and this was changed to the Canadian Curling Association in 1990, and most recently, in 2015, to Curling Canada.

In a little-known circumstance, the record shows that, contrary to popular belief, the United States was not a founder Member Association. Well-known American administrator Elmer Freytag was in attendance at this meeting and other early meetings, but insisted he was there “in a personal capacity” rather than as a formal representative of what was then called the United States Men’s Curling Association.

At this inaugural meeting, the new International Council of Curling was set up as an international committee of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club (RCCC), the Scottish “mother club” of the sport, with Scotland’s Major Allan Cameron becoming the first president. It was this link to the RCCC that caused Freytag to keep the USA involvement at arm’s length. However, as the new international organisation started to develop – quickly changing its name to the International Curling Federation – Freytag and the United States were happily welcomed into full membership in 1967, along with Germany in the same year.

Also in 1967 New Zealand expressed an initial interest in becoming involved, but were content to retain their representation through the RCCC until 1991 when they finally joined in their own right. The initial catalyst for the new international body had been the success of a series of international challenges for the Scotch Cup between Canada and Scotland, which had started in 1959.

Canada dominated the early years of this annual competition and in the years after 1959, the event grew in stature and interest, with the USA joining the competition in 1961, Sweden in 1962, Norway and Switzerland in 1964, France in 1966 and Germany in 1967. It was this internationalisation that sparked the wish for an international curling federation to be set up.

The need for standardisation of rules and playing methods was readily acknowledged, and from the very start it was – and is, as we shall see in this book – a priority for the WCF and its predecessor bodies to seek agreement on the rules that would govern play and maintain the spirit of curling – something that firmly remains today.

It was also agreed at the inaugural meeting that the headquarters of the new Federation would be in Edinburgh, Scotland and although the WCF has subsequently moved from Edinburgh to Perth, the commitment to retaining its headquarters in Scotland has remained.



Left: The famous Richardson brothers from Canada - Arnold, Ernie, Garnet and Wes - having fun for the photographer with some equally famous ancient stones at the Scotch Cup in 1959

Since its beginnings in 1966, the Federation has changed and developed. For example, to avoid confusion with the International Canoe Federation, the name was changed to the World Curling Federation in 1990.

Other developments will be explored further in this book – including the quest for Olympic recognition; the rise of participation by women; the development of new championships, such as the first Women’s World Championship in 1979, and world championships for juniors, wheelchair curlers, mixed teams, mixed doubles, senior teams, and regional championships in Europe and the Pacific-Asia Zone; and technical and rules developments over the years. All these indicate a proactive global federation that is influencing the positive development of curling in a way that brings reward to just about everyone involved in the curling family, in whatever role and at whatever level or age.

It’s been a rollercoaster but rewarding 50 years for the WCF and the visionaries who have taken their turn to influence the international development of the sport, as we shall see.

Interestingly, while the WCF is currently celebrating its 50th year, it could have been all so different much earlier. At the inaugural Olympic Winter Games in 1924 in Chamonix, Colonel Robertson Aikman, captain of the gold medal winning Great Britain curling team suggested that the title of the sport’s mother club should be changed to ‘The Royal Caledonian Curling Club *and International Curling Federation*’. History shows that this suggestion was never taken up.



© Richard Grey

Left: The WCF headquarters in Perth, Scotland
Below: Major Allan Cameron, the first president of the International Curling Federation



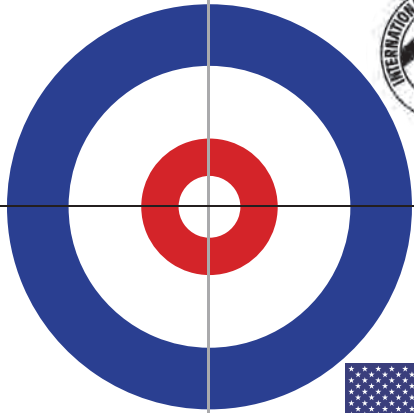
Scottish Curler

🎯 The Spirit of Curling





KEY DATES



1966

The International Curling Federation was formed as a committee of the Royal Caledonian Curling Club, with Canada, France, Norway, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland being the founder members



1968

First Air Canada Silver Broom contested - final televised



1971

First proposal to hold a European Championship - without Scotland taking part



1977

Playing of the first Grand Transatlantic Match in Karlstad, Sweden



1983

Women's World Championship visits North America for the first time, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada



1989

Men's and Women's World Championships staged together for the first time - in Milwaukee, USA



1967

USA and Germany join the ICF



First proposal by Canada for an over-55 championship

1969

Fifth player allowed for the first time - with duties mainly to speak for the team



Curling's movie debut: in James Bond film "On Her Majesty's Secret Service"

1975

First Men's World Juniors - East York, Ontario



First European Championships in Megève, France - for men and women

1979

First World Ladies Championship held in Perth, Scotland



1986

Australia joins to make 18 Member Associations



1988

Curling reintroduced as a demonstration sport at the Calgary Winter Olympics



First Women's World Juniors Chamonix, France



1990

Name changed to World Curling Federation





1991

First Pacific-Asia Championships, in Sagami-hara, Japan



Changes to the rules of curling with the introduction of the Free Guard Zone

1998

First Olympic Curling Championships of the modern era, in Nagano Olympic Winter Games



2005

Men's and Women's World Championships separated - both extended to 12 teams



2007

First World Championship in Asia - Women's in Aomori, Japan



2010

Kate Caithness OBE is elected first female WCF President



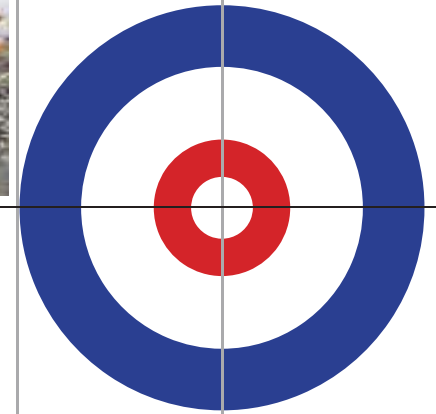
2013

Second expedition to Ailsa Craig, this time extracting 2,500 tons of curling stone granite



2015

Mixed Doubles added to official Olympic Winter Games programme for 2018



1992

Curling added to official Olympic Winter Games programme by the International Olympic Committee



1995

Ford of Canada begins sponsorship of Men's and Women's World Championships



2002

First World Seniors - both men and women, Bismarck, North Dakota

Expedition to Ailsa Craig to extract 1,500 tons of curling stone granite

First World Wheelchair Championship, in Sursee, Switzerland

"Men with Brooms" - curling-themed Hollywood comedy film released



2006

First Paralympic Wheelchair event, at Turin Games



2008

First World Mixed Doubles Championship, held in Vierumäki, Finland



2009

A team from Pacific-Asia wins World Championship event for the first time - China women skipped by Bingyu Wang



2012

First Youth Olympic Games in Innsbruck, Austria



First World Curling Congress in Turnberry, Scotland



2014

First World Men's Championship held in Asia - Beijing, China



2016

WCF 50th Anniversary banquet in Basel, Switzerland with IOC President Dr Thomas Bach as guest of honour



WCF Sweeping Summit paves way for new Spirit of Curling sweeping rules



GOVERNANCE **DEVELOPMENTS**

© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



The WCF started life as the International Council of Curling, but this was quickly changed to the International Curling Federation (ICF).

In the early years, the ICF was operated as an international committee of Scotland's Royal Caledonian Curling Club (RCCC) – the “mother club” of the sport, but eventually, in 1982, the ICF became an independent entity.

In the beginning, it was agreed that the organisation would have its headquarters in Edinburgh, and that all annual general meetings would take place there, or at a Scotch Cup venue. It was also agreed that the ICF would be financially supported by diverting 75% of the annual membership fee paid by national associations to the RCCC. In addition, the administration of ICF business would be carried out by the RCCC secretary on top of his regular duties. This changed in October 1994 when Mike Thomson, who had been carrying out the two roles, became the first Secretary General of the World Curling Federation.

The early minute books of the Federation show that in 1968, the ICF income was just under GBP£750, which, after expenses were taken into consideration, reduced to a net income of GBP£420 – a far cry from the more than US\$7m income declared in the WCF's Annual Review for 2016.



Above: The WCF started to publish Annual Reviews each season in 2013. These are presented to Member Associations at the annual Congress. In a transparent and hopefully entertaining way, these documents record the progress made season-by-season in all WCF competitions; by the WCF Board and its sub-Committees; in development camps and other projects; and in the financial management and governance of the organisation.

For the next decade or so, the ICF's business was carried out by way of a traditional-style committee structure. Not unexpectedly, a wide range of curling and management-related issues were considered in these years. Items discussed included:

- (1969) a proposal that a 'fifth man' be allowed for every team at the World Championship and that this 'fifth man' should be either the national President or President Elect, whose main duty would be to speak for the team at meetings
- (1969) agreement that cash prizes should be discouraged
- (1970) agreement that a minimum of ten ends must be played in every 12-end game
- (1975) a proposal that pre-game practice should be allowed. This was initially rejected, but players were allowed to clean the ice surface before play if they wished
- (1975) Warren Hansen of Canada asked for warm-up and practice to be allowed on grounds of player welfare. After discussion it was agreed that five minutes warm-up time would be allowed but no stones were to be thrown
- (1976) proposal to introduce a ladies championship
- (1977) it was agreed that no stand-alone ladies' associations would be eligible to join the ICF, only full national associations were to be considered
- (1977) a debate took place on allowing advertising on clothing - the minute records one delegate saying "it demeans the game"

All pictures © Richard Gray

- (1978) membership enquiries from Singapore and the Canary Islands
- (1988) 18 nations in membership - Canada had 180,00 and Scotland 30,00 of the total registered curlers number of 244,000
- (1988) the International Olympic Committee offers a team travel subsidy of \$US 30,000 for the Calgary demonstration event

In 1990, in part to help the on-going quest for Olympic recognition, the ICF changed its name to the World Curling Federation.

In the early 90s, it was apparent that the gradual expansion of WCF responsibilities meant that the organisation was outgrowing the way it had traditionally operated. Therefore, a governance review project – ‘Moving Ahead’ was initiated, as a result of which steps were made in modernising the governance structure, with specialist commissions coming to the fore.





The WCF Board in 2016:

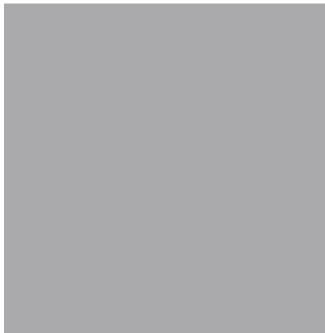
Back left to right: **Hew Chalmers**,
Toyo Ogawa, **Cathrine Lindahl**,
Andy Anderson (Directors)
 Front left to right: **Graham Prouse**
 (Vice President, Americas),
Kate Caithness (President),
Bent Ånund Ramstfjell
 (Vice President, Europe),
Hugh Millikin (Vice President,
 Pacific-Asia)

Currently, the WCF has three Zonal Commissions – covering the Americas, European and Pacific-Asia regions, and a number of specialist groupings covering such areas as technical requirements, athlete engagement, marketing and sponsorship, and the development of the sport generally. All of this is overseen by an Executive Board, whose members are selected in open democratic voting.

Until 2012, all major decisions were made at meetings of national delegates held during major championships, but in that year, the inaugural World Curling Federation Congress was held in Turnberry, Scotland. The now annual Congress, which involves the organisation's Annual General Assembly (AGA), has proven to be a much more productive way to engage all the Member Associations in the Federation's business.



🎯 Moment of Victory





 CHAMPIONSHIP HISTORY



Left: The World Men's Curling Championship trophy in all its glory; Above, left to right: Ron Northcott of Canada; Scotland's Chuck Hay and his team, the last Scotch Cup winners in 1967; the Air Canada Silver broom is unveiled in Karlstad, 1977. Below: Utica 1970 promotional material.



WORLD CURLING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Men

The move to form the International Curling Federation came from the success of the unofficial world championship event, known as The Scotch Cup, which ran from 1959 to 1967.

The final Scotch Cup was won in Perth, Scotland in 1967 by a home team skipped by the legendary Chuck Hay. In the year that followed, the first official World Curling Championship – for men – was staged. It was named the Air Canada Silver Broom because of a welcome sponsorship deal with the Canadian airline. Canada's Ron Northcott came through at the top of the eight men's teams taking part in Pointe Claire, Quebec, Canada, beating Hay's Scotland team in the final.

In the 1973 event, held in Regina, Canada, the field was expanded to ten teams for the first time. Following the inauguration of a women's World Curling Championship in 1979, both championships were brought together in 1989, with Milwaukee in USA acting as host. This dual arrangement stayed in place until 2004 when Gävle in Sweden hosted both genders together for the last time. The split back to separate men's and women's championships after this allowed the field in both to be expanded to 12 teams, which had the effect of offering more opportunities to national teams from the growing Pacific-Asia Zone.

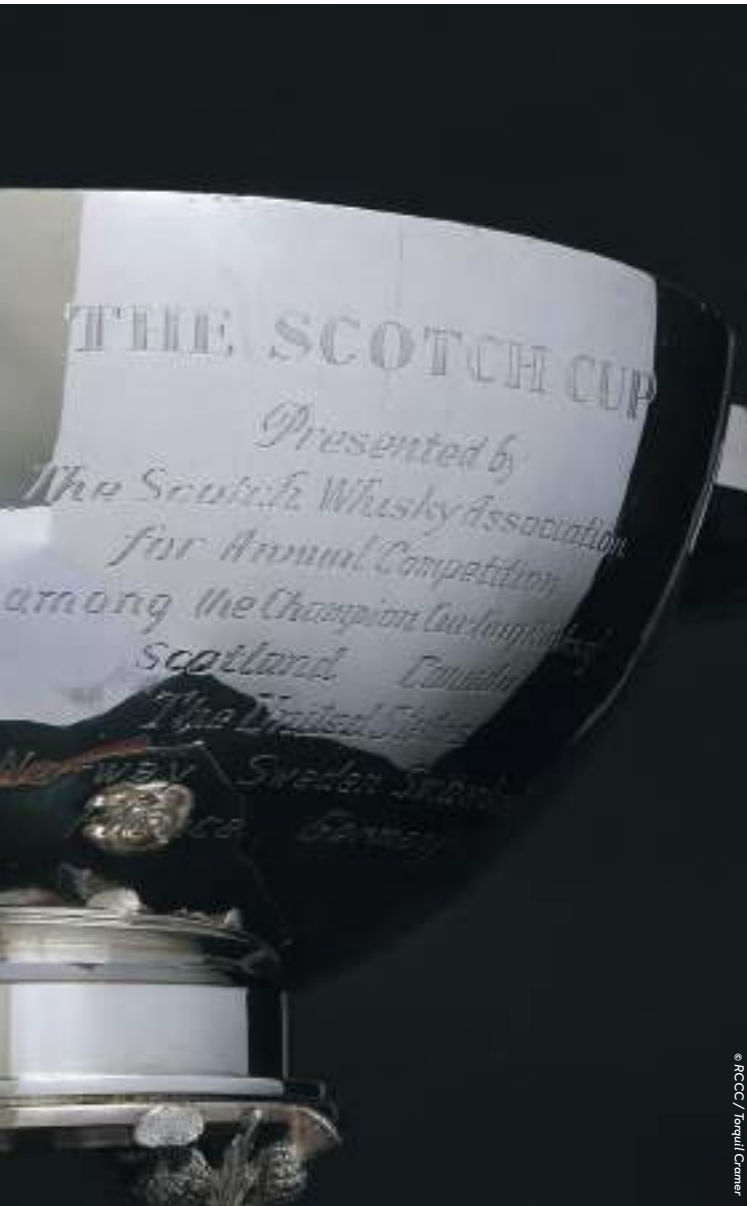
At the time of the Scotch Cup, and for the early men's world championship events, hosting was carried out by communities from Canada and Scotland. However, this was soon to change, with Utica in the USA hosting the 1970 event, followed by Megève in France in 1971. Germany hosted the championship for the first time in 1972, while Switzerland followed in 1974 and the teams travelled to Sweden in 1977.

Cortina d'Ampezzo in Italy hosted the 2010 edition while the championship was staged for the first time in Asia in 2014, in Beijing, China.

Over the decades, the World Men's Curling Championship has enjoyed long-term sponsorship support from a number of respected commercial organisations, each of them seeing benefit in developing a relationship with the curling family. The Scotch Cup itself – which incidentally is now the trophy presented to the Scottish national champions every year – marked the support in the early years by the Scotch Whisky Association.

After that Air Canada supported the championship all the way through to the 1985 championship, which was staged in Glasgow, Scotland. Following the withdrawal of Air Canada, a group of six entrepreneurial curling figures formed themselves into an entity called Hexagon Curling





© RCCC / Forquill Centre



Doug Maxwell Archive

International, and supported the next three World Championships as they sought out commercial sponsorship.

Major supermarket company Canada Safeway became involved for a number of years at this time, acting as title sponsors in 1991 and 1992.

The WCF's search for successful commercial partnerships continued, and in 1994, the WCF and the Canadian Curling Association entered into an agreement with Canadian company the St Clair Group, who successfully arranged the tie-up with car manufacturer Ford of Canada that first saw the light of day at the combined world championships of 1995 in Brandon, Manitoba. Ford went on to act as title sponsor of all the combined world championships until they were split again in 2005. After this, an agreement was reached that saw Canada host either the men's or women's championships every season, with Ford acting as title sponsor on Canadian soil – a situation that happily exists today



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Doug Maxwell Archive

WOMEN

As mentioned earlier, the women's World Curling Championship was established in 1979, and for the first three years was staged in Perth, Scotland as the Royal Bank Ladies World Championship. In subsequent years, the women's event was hosted in Switzerland, Canada and Scotland, as well as the USA and Sweden.

After the period of joint World Curling Championships, the first stand-alone event of the current arrangement was hosted in 2005, in Paisley, Scotland. The venue was literally across the road from Paisley Abbey, where the first written record of the sport was discovered, dating back to 1541.

The women's championship was staged in Asia as early as 2007, in Aomori, Japan. It took place in Asia again in 2009, being played in Gangneung, Korea – in the facility that will host the curling competitions of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games. The event has also been staged in two new European nations, with the 2011 championship being held in Esbjerg, Denmark and the 2013 edition in Riga, Latvia.



© Richard Gray



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© Alex C Cowper



© Richard Gray

Main picture: Canada's Nancy Kerr delivers at the 1980 Royal Bank Ladies World Championship in Perth, Scotland

From above, top to bottom: Japan play Canada in the 2005 Championship in Paisley, Scotland; Esbjerg, Denmark hosted the 2011 Championship; and Riga, Latvia was the venue in 2013.

Switzerland's Irene Schori and Toni Müller, inaugural Mixed Doubles winners



MIXED DOUBLES

Mixed Doubles is the newest discipline among WCF world championships, now boosted by its inclusion on the programme of the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Korea.

The inaugural championship was staged in Vierumäki, Finland, in 2008 with Toni Müller and Irene Schori from Switzerland becoming the first world champions, beating the hosts in the final. This is an open entry event and 24 nations were represented in this first gathering, a figure that had moved to a massive 42 nations, including newcomers Israel and Qatar, by 2016.

Eight different countries had held this event during its first nine years – Canada, Finland, Italy, Turkey, twice in Russia, Scotland, Sweden and the USA.

Mixed Doubles is such a young discipline that it is constantly under review with changes happening almost every season - such as pre-game stone positioning and team placements. The decision by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to include Mixed Doubles on the Olympic programme has been a major boost and Mixed Doubles has also opened up significant competition opportunities for many associations, as seen by nations like Austria, Czech Republic, France, New Zealand, Spain and Hungary – who have won the title twice – making it onto the podium.



The development of Mixed Doubles has seen Hungary reach the top of a world championship podium and expanded championship participation across many Member Associations, including recent newcomers Qatar and Israel.





WHEELCHAIR

This curling discipline first came to the fore at an international bonspiel and workshop held in Crans-Montana, Switzerland in January 2000 and coincided with the World Handi Ski Championships.

The first World Wheelchair Curling Championship was subsequently hosted by Sursee in Switzerland, in 2002, with the hosts emerging as the inaugural champions.

Since then, ten World Wheelchair Curling Championships have been held - no championship is held during a Paralympic year – and hosted in a further seven countries – Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, Korea, Russia, Scotland and Sweden.

Altogether 12 nations have won medals at these events, with Canada and Russia both having three gold medal victories, while China, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Korea, Norway, Sweden, Scotland, Switzerland and USA have all made it onto the podium at least once.

As is the case generally, interest and participation in this type of curling has grown over the years, and, in 2015, a World Wheelchair-B Curling Championship was introduced, with 15 teams taking part - including Poland. The top two finishers at that event - Norway and Korea - joined eight other nations in the 2016 World Wheelchair Curling Championship line-up and went on to claim silver and bronze medals respectively, at the top level.



MIXED

Mixed curling has always been popular, as have been mixed curling championships in one form or another. It is not surprising to learn therefore that the WCF sanctioned the first-ever World Mixed Curling Championship, in September 2015, which was held in Berne, Switzerland.

Equally, it was no surprise to learn that a total of 36 nations took part, with Brazil, Kazakhstan and Romania being some of the less-familiar names competing. Norway beat Sweden to take gold, while China defeated Russia for bronze.

The 2016 edition of this championship, held in Kazan, Russia also included Andorra and Croatia – their very first world championships.



Norway - first-ever World Mixed Curling Champions



Uniroyal's Bob Sutherland

JUNIORS

The first world junior championship, the Uniroyal World Junior Curling Championship – for men’s teams only – was played in East York, Ontario in 1975, with nine nations represented. To establish this, Uniroyal of Canada, producers of tyres, had been approached by curling enthusiasts to support an event in East York and their then Director of Public Relations, Bob Sutherland was key in setting the event up.

Through various negotiations, it was agreed that the Uniroyal support would be for a new world junior championship, for under-21s. True to their original pledge of support, and through Bob Sutherland’s ongoing efforts, Uniroyal continued to support the world juniors all the way until 1990, just before the company was bought over by French tyre manufacturer Michelin.

Nine teams took part in the first edition, with Sweden beating Canada in the final. For the 1976 championship, held in Aviemore, Scotland the field expanded to ten teams, with Denmark taking part for the first time.

In 1998, the first women’s junior championship took place in Chamonix, France while the men were in Füssen, Germany, where Canada emerged from a nine-team field to beat Switzerland in the final. From 1991 onwards, the men’s and women’s events have been staged together.

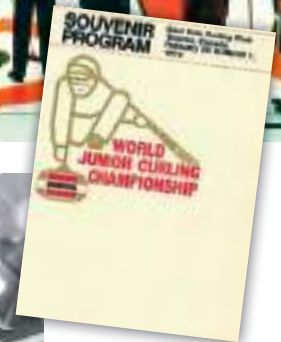
Gradually, the nations participating became wider, with Japan’s women making their first appearance in 1992, followed by Russia in 1999. After this, teams from China and Korea also started to appear.



A look through the record books of these championships shows that many curlers who went on to find great fame made their international debuts at this level. For example, eagle-eyed readers will spot future world champion Peja Lindholm in these pictures.

The venues used gradually widened too, with Sofia in Bulgaria hosting the 1994 championships and Jeonju in Korea being the venue in 2006. In 1997, the tradition of using the World juniors as the test event for the next year’s Olympic event was started, when Karuizawa in Japan hosted. Further spreading the geographic reach of the event, the 2015 championship was staged in Tallinn, Estonia - under the same roof and at the same time as that year’s World Junior Ice-Skating Championships.

The junior championships now enjoy sponsorship from USA and Singapore-based VoIP Defender.





© Celine Stucki

SENIORS

As is the case with mixed curling, senior curling has always been popular. After a number of unofficial championship events were held - including in Glasgow during the 2000 World Men's and Women's Curling Championships - the first formally-sanctioned World Senior Curling Championships were staged in Bismarck, North Dakota, USA, in 2002. Just seven men's teams and four women's teams took part then, a far cry from the 27 men's teams and 17 women's teams that contested the 2016 championships in Karlstad, Sweden.

Since the World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship was established, the seniors and mixed doubles have been held together, with only a few exceptions. These include 2009, when the seniors made the long trip to Dunedin in New Zealand - for the only world championship yet to be staged in the land of the long white cloud. Also, the 2012 World Seniors went to Copenhagen in Denmark, while the Mixed Doubles were staged in Erzurum, Turkey.



© Richard Gray



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© Celine Stucki



© Celine Stucki



© Laura Godenzi



© Laura Godenzi



Richard Gray



Top right: Scotland, winners at the first European Championships in Megève, France, 1975

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS

The first European Curling Championships were staged in Megève, France in 1975 and featured eight men's teams and seven women's teams. Since then, these championships have been held on another 41 occasions, with Swiss cheese company Le Gruyère AOP acting as title sponsor for 15 years.

These championships were originally managed by the European Curling Federation (ECF) but since 2013 the WCF has assumed direct control.

Nowadays, participation in the event has grown to such an extent that qualification from a special C-Division has become necessary. The A-Division consists of ten men's and ten women's teams, while the B-Division features 16 men's teams and another ten women's teams. Beyond that, as a sign of the popularity of these championships, the qualifying C-Division was established in 2010. In 2016, a total of eight women's teams and 11 men's teams entered the C-Division.



Bob Cowan Archive

In its 41-year history, the European Curling Championships has visited all corners of the continent, with venues used as far apart as Moscow in Russia (2011), Sofia in Bulgaria (2004) and Aviemore, Scotland (1978). A major part of its importance has been its role as the only qualification route for European teams to reach that season's men's and women's World Curling Championships and, then, of course, go on to earn Olympic Qualification Points.

In an interesting historical note, before the first event was staged in 1975, the WCF minutes show that in 1971, a proposal for a European Championship was considered but rejected after one year. This event - to be titled the Continental Europe Championship - would feature France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, but most definitely not Scotland.



Left: The 2015 Pacific-Asia Championships opening ceremony in Almaty, Kazakhstan

PACIFIC-ASIA CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Pacific-Asia Curling Championships started their life when what was called the Pacific Curling Championships were staged in Sagamihara, Japan in 1991. Three men’s teams, Australia, Japan, and New Zealand and just two women’s teams, Australia and Japan, competed.

Although small in scale, this event had a huge strategic importance in curling’s quest for Olympic recognition, allowing the WCF to demonstrate that championship-level competition was taking place in Asia and Australasia.

Apart from being an enjoyable but competitive championship event in its own right, showcasing the best of curling in this part of the world, like the European Curling Championships, the Pacific-Asia Curling Championships acts as the gateway to the World Curling Championships for the nations of the WCF’s Pacific-Asia Zone.

Over the years, participation has gradually grown and the entries for the 2016 event set a new record, with eight women’s teams entered, and nine men’s teams. Newcomers in 2016 were men’s and women’s teams from Qatar, and a women’s team from Hong Kong.

The most regular host nation has been Japan, with nine editions being staged in the land of the Rising Sun. New Zealand has hosted four times while China has staged the event three times. There have been three championships in Korea, two in Australia and one each in Chinese Taipei (2005) and Kazakhstan (2015). These championships have also been staged in British Columbia, Canada, twice – in 1998 and 2000.





OTHER EVENTS

The WCF is also involved in, or runs a number of other championships. These include:

- WCF's own Olympic Qualification Event
- Olympic Winter Games
- Paralympic Winter Games
- Youth Olympic Winter Games
- Americas Challenge
- World Junior and Wheelchair Qualification Events
- Winter Universiade Games
- Asian Winter Games
- European Youth Olympic Festival
- Winter Games New Zealand

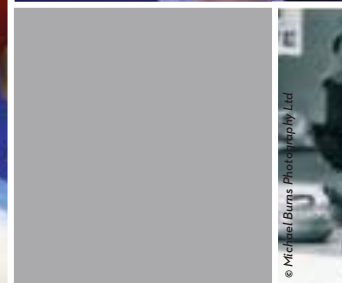
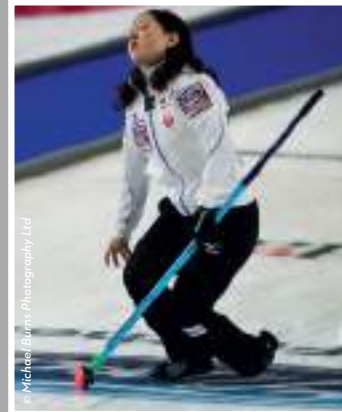
All in all, quite a development from the first eight-team World Curling Championship in 1968.

🎯 Jubilation...





🎯 ...and Dejection!





RISE OF **WOMEN**



Left: The ceremonial first stone of the inaugural Royal Bank Ladies World Championship, Perth, Scotland in 1979

Below: USA's Mabel de Ware

Bottom: The first ladies world champions - Switzerland's Gaby Casanova and her team

Right: China's Bingyu Wang



Courtesy of Curling Canada

When you consider the prominent role that women's teams play in modern championships it is hard to imagine that, although the ICF was founded in 1966, it was ten years before the first women's voice was heard in the organisation's meetings. In 1976, USA's Mabel de Ware was allowed to address the gathered delegates.

As President Kate Caithness noted in her speech at the 50th anniversary banquet in Basel, Switzerland, "ten years of female silence? All I can say is, it wouldn't happen now!"

As a result of pioneering work, led by Scotland's Frances Brodie, the first ladies championship was held in Perth, Scotland in 1979 and won by Switzerland's Gaby Casanova. The next two years also saw Perth used as the venue and what is now called the World Women's Curling Championship moved location for the first time in 1982, when Geneva in Switzerland was the host city.

In 1980, Marj Mitchell led the first Canadian team to the title but since then, eight other Canadian skips have won gold, the most recent being Jennifer Jones in 2008 in Vernon, British Columbia. After this Jones led her team to Olympic gold in Sochi, Russia in 2014. Other victorious nations over the years have been China, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland and USA – each of these nations has a strong tale to tell.



© Alex C Cowper



© Richard Gray

In 2009 Bingyu Wang led China to its first world title, becoming the first Pacific-Asia team to do so. To add to the occasion, the venue that year was Gangneung in Korea. This was the first time a WCF championships had been staged in that country and, following Aomori in Japan in 2007, only the third time that a WCF championship had been staged outside Europe or North America.

In recent years, Switzerland has won four of five world titles (2012-2016), with three different teams. Only Scotland's Eve Muirhead in Riga in 2013 has interrupted the Swiss successes under skips Mirjam Ott (2012), Alina Pätz (2015) and Binia Feltscher (2014 and 2016).

In earlier championships, Sweden's Elisabet Gustafson won the world title four times, (1992, 1995, 1998, 1999) although she failed to take Olympic gold in Nagano in 1998, having to settle for bronze. Instead it was Canada's Sandra Schmirler who led her team to Olympic gold in Nagano, adding to the three world titles her team gained during their career (1993, 1994, 1997).



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Surprisingly, despite her four world titles, Gustafson is not necessarily the clear-cut candidate to have led Sweden's best-ever team. Following in her footsteps, Anette Norberg won world titles in 2005, 2006 and 2011. But Norberg's team went better than Gustafson's by not only winning gold at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Pinerolo, Italy but also becoming the only curling team, so far, to retain an Olympic crown, beating Canada by 7-6 after an extra end in the 2010 Games, in Vancouver, Canada.

Norberg also has the distinction of producing the best-ever exit line from a media interview. After retaining Olympic gold in 2010 she said, "I must go - I have to meet the King!"

Among many other remarkable performances in women's championship play, Germany's Andrea Schöpp had a 22-year gap between her world title wins, beating Canada in the 1988 world championship in Glasgow, Scotland and then remarkably, in 2010, beating Scotland in an extra end for gold in Swift Current, Canada.

While there is much to celebrate in the on-ice endeavours of the world's women's teams, in President Kate Caithness of Scotland, curling has the first - and so far only - female leader of an Olympic Winter Sports Federation.

She was elected as President at the WCF Congress held in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, and has since gone on to be re-elected unopposed in 2012 and 2014.



© Richard Grey

Left: The original Swedish crystal World Ladies' trophy, hand-engraved by Harold Gordon of Forres, Scotland

Top: Promotional material for the 1979 Ladies World Curling Championship

Right: WCF president Kate Caithness OBE with IOC President Thomas Bach at the WCF 50th anniversary banquet in Basel, Switzerland

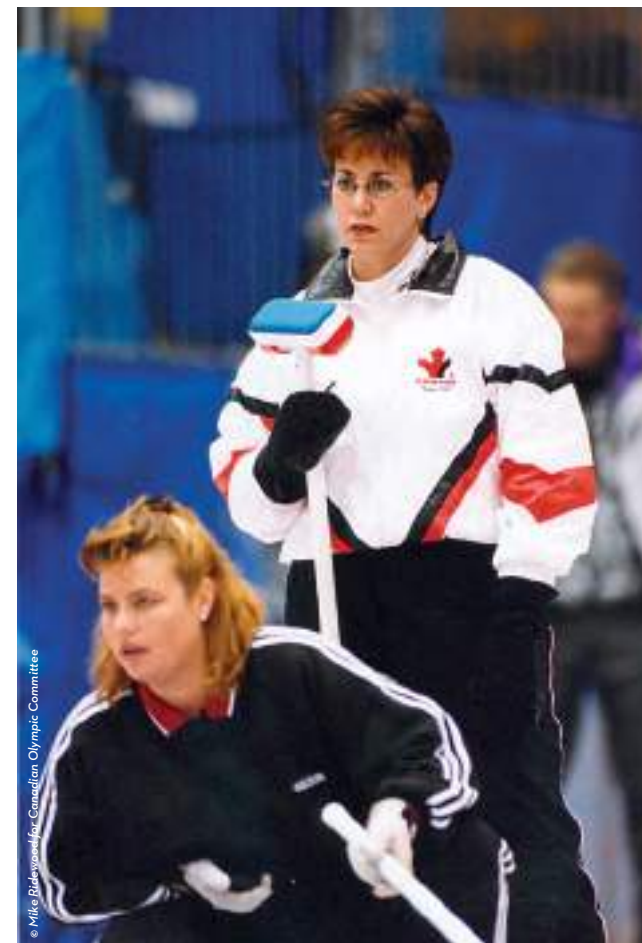
Below: the 1980 world champions skipped by Canada's Marj Mitchell

Right: the women's final of the 1998 Nagano Olympic Winter Games - Canada's Sandra Schmirler (gold) stands behind Denmark's Helena Blach Lavrsen (silver)

Bottom right: the current Olympic champions, skipped by Canada's Jennifer Jones



© Alex C. Cooper



© Mike Bales/World Curling Federation Olympic Committee



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Left: Switzerland's Mirjam Ott, world champion in 2012 Bottom left: Sweden, skipped by Anette Norberg, retain the Olympic title in 2010 Bottom middle: Scotland's Eve Muirhead, world champion in 2013 Top right: Switzerland's Feltscher, world champion in 2014 and 2016 Bottom right: Germany's Andrea Schöpp, world champion in 1988 and 2010

She was the driving force behind the WCF's development of wheelchair curling and was part of the team that created the first World Wheelchair Curling Championship. She was also responsible for securing wheelchair curling's place in the Paralympic Winter Games programme in Turin in 2006.

During and before her Presidency, Caithness played a full part in the management of Olympic sport. From 2005 to 2009 she was elected onto the International Paralympic Committee's five person Sports Council Management Committee and from 2006 to 2009 she served on the Paralympic Games Committee.

In March 2011, Caithness was appointed to the Olympic Programme Commission, which is responsible for reviewing and analysing the programme of sports, disciplines and events, as well as the number of athletes in each sport, for the Olympic Summer and Winter Games.

In February 2016, she was appointed to the IOC Coordination Commission Olympic Winter Games 2022 - a first for curling - and then later that year as one of the nine members of the new SportAccord Council.

It is hardly surprising to learn therefore, that in 2013 she was appointed an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE) by Queen Elizabeth II for services to curling and international disability sport.

It may have taken ten years for the first female voice to be heard in the corridors of the WCF, but nowadays, in actions on and off the ice, there is no doubting the female contributions to the future of curling and the Federation.



© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



© Richard Gray



© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



© Richard Gray

Anette Norberg's 2011 world champions (Esbjerg, Denmark): (left to right) skip Anette Norberg, third Cecelia Östlund, second Sara Carlsson, lead Lotta Lennartsson, alternate Karin Rudström, coach Magnus Swartling

🎯 Recording the Action - Now...



...and then





TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS



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Doug Maxwell/Archive



Doug Maxwell/Archive



© Aline Pavlyuchik

To the casual observer, curling must look like a simple sport – players take turns to deliver a succession of stones down a long sheet of ice and whichever team ends up closer to the target scores the points!

But, to get to this position, where all this is done with a clear shared understanding of how the game is – and should be – played, has taken a succession of negotiations and adjustments. Over the years these arrangements have been brought about by geographic and playing environment differences, technical and equipment developments, championship management requirements and the desire to make the game as attractive as possible – especially for television audiences, all while retaining the integrity and spirit of curling.



Doug Maxwell/Archive

Number of Ends

Originally it was common for curling games to be played over 18 ends, and, when the Scotch Cup was first played, the games consisted of 12 ends.

Games continued as 12 ends in the early years of the Air Canada Silver Broom, but in 1972 the first ten end games were introduced – with, ironically the final that year going to an extra end before Canada's Orest Meleshchuk emerged as 10-9 winner over the USA.

Championship games have stayed at ten ends ever since and, although over the years there have been suggestions that they should move to eight ends, ten ends remains the norm.

The Hack

As recorded elsewhere in this book, the original Scotch Cup was the spark that started the whole idea of international competition in the sport. In its early days one of the basic problems was that the Canadians were used to delivering from a hack carved out of the ice while the Scots used a metal platform, called a crampit. After a number of design experiments, it was agreed that the stones would be delivered from a hack, and eventually the modern-style hack became universal.

The Sliding Delivery

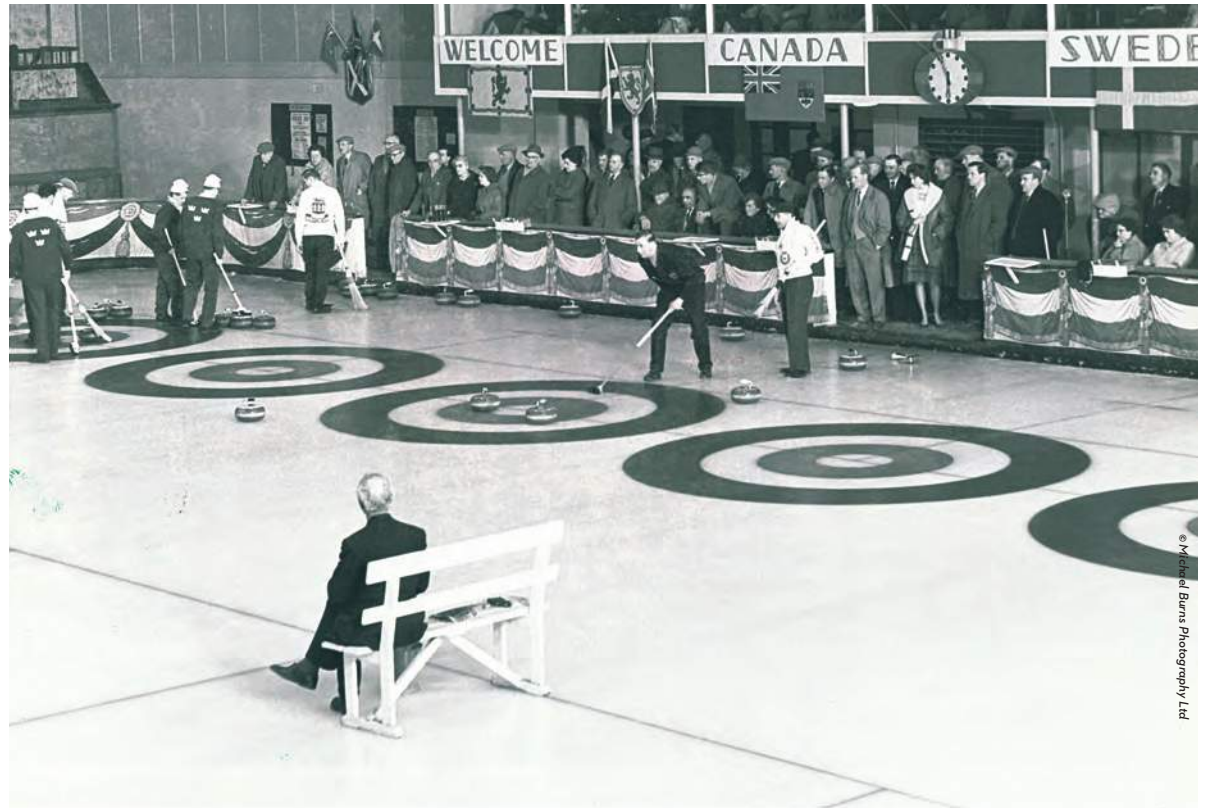
The adoption of the hack had another profound influence on the game – the development of the sliding delivery. While using the crampit involved a standing delivery, with a pendulum-style technique, using hacks meant that players could slide out as they delivered their stones. Of course, this meant that eventually a rule had to be devised and agreed as to just how far a player could slide before letting go of the stone. This sliding technique was helped by such developments as the introduction of teflon shoe soles and other aids, making sliding appear to be effortless.

The point came when it was agreed that the near hogline would mark the end of the sliding zone and the legal release point for deliveries.

Hogline Violations

Settling on the hogline as the release point seems straightforward enough, but even such a seemingly black-and-white idea was subject to interpretation – was a release legitimate only if the player let the stone go before the front edge reached the hogline, or was it ok if the player held on until the rear edge reached the hogline?

This debate reached a high point at the 2001 Ford World Curling Championships in Lausanne, Switzerland when, in the men's semi-final, Canada's skip Randy Ferbey - playing third stones - was penalised for three hogline violations before eventually losing the game to Switzerland. At the time, one of the reasons put forward for these aberrations was the different interpretation of the hogline rule that existed between Canada and the WCF rulebook. There was also the issue that, in those days, hogline violation decisions were made by the naked eye of an umpire, who could be sitting two or more sheets away from the action, with the added challenge of sometimes having his or her vision obscured by active players in other games.





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Electronic Handles

Hogline issues and debates of the sort outlined in the previous paragraph became a thing of the past when two developments happened. First, universal agreement that the handle had to be released before it reached the hogline and the introduction of touch-sensitive electronic handles. These handles were introduced at WCF championship events in 2004. The handles, when used with a sensitive electronic pad embedded in the ice at the hogline, brought an end to hogline violation debates, for the betterment of the game for everyone. The flashing green lights on the handle as the stones come down the ice – and the occasional red ones – have now become a common sight at the majority of WCF championships.

Time-clocks

Another problem that came to light was the increasing time it was taking to complete games. The solution to this problem was to introduce time-clocks – a move first introduced for televised games in Canada. However, when the men's and women's world championships were brought together for the first time in Milwaukee, USA in 1989, time-clocks became vital tools in managing the programme of competition.

When time-clocks were first introduced, they measured the playing time of each team, but it was generally understood that this concept penalised teams who attempted to play a drawing game rather than a hitting game. In 2014, this was changed to Thinking Time for WCF championship events, with each team being allotted 38 minutes – for a ten end game of traditional curling – to consider strategies and actions. Wheelchair curling teams are allotted 38 minutes for eight end games and mixed doubles teams have 22 minutes of Thinking Time.



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Free Guard Zone

It has taken a number of years to evolve, but, coming from an initiative first suggested by famous Canadian skip Russ Howard in the 1990s, every championships game is now played with a Free Guard Zone rule. This means that any of the first four stones of a game that land in the space between the faraway hogline and the rings cannot be removed at that stage of the game.

This has the effect of keeping more stones in play, rather than a game featuring a succession of take-out shots, making the game more interesting and attractive to watch and, no doubt, even to play in.

However, like many of the other developments outlined in this chapter, it took some time for a generally-agreed version of this rule to come about. For example, Canada played a three-stone Free Guard Zone for many years before the four-stone version was universally agreed.

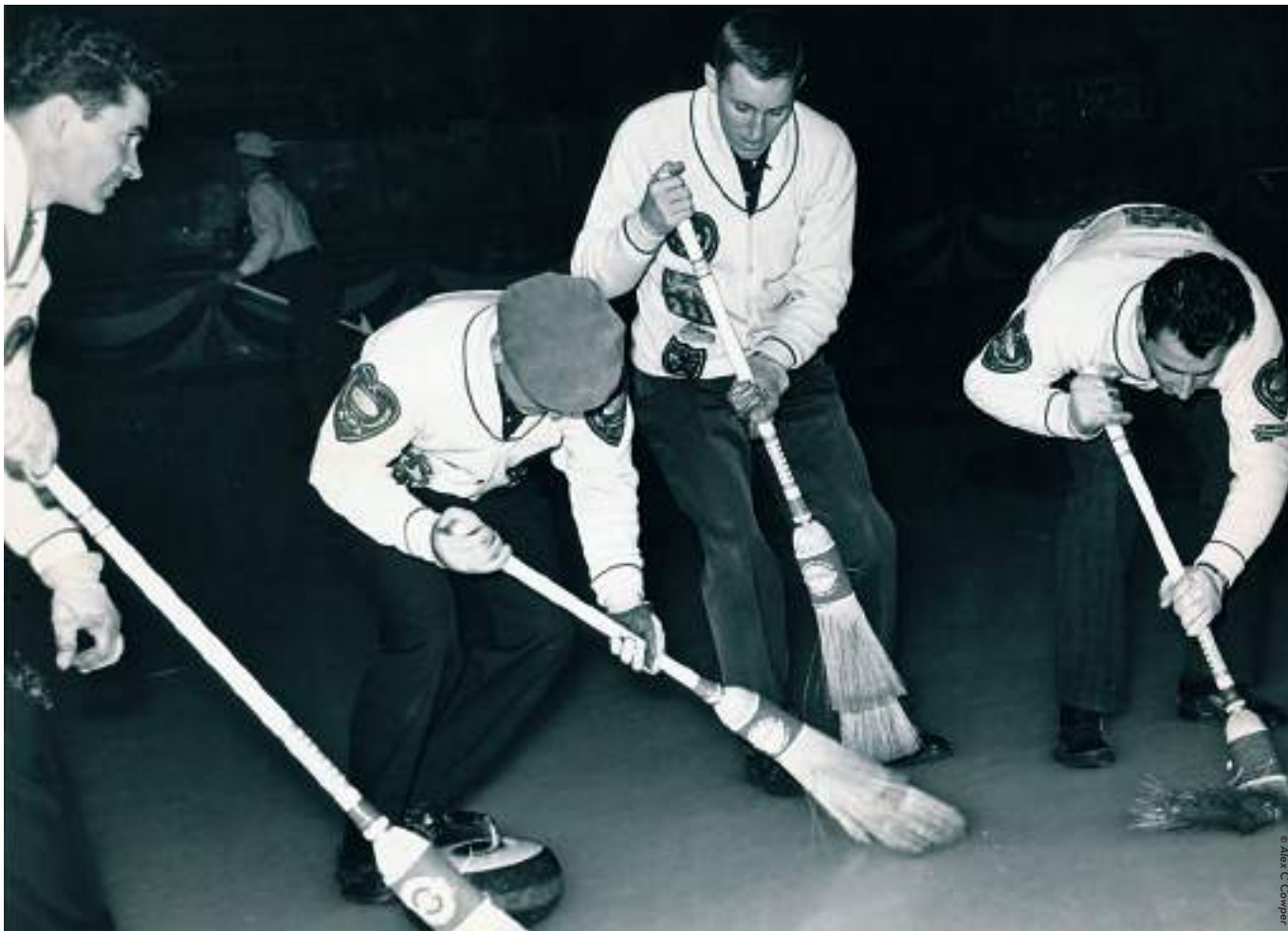
The idea of a Free Guard Zone rule was also supported in the early days by another famous curling skip, Eigil Ramsfjell of Norway, who made strong representations to then WCF Vice President Roy Sinclair. This also played a part in the adoption of a new rule which is still in force today, bringing an added emphasis to the importance of shot-by-shot tactics to the benefit of the game.



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Sweeping Rules

Although there was significant focus around sweeping in the 2015-2016 season, controversy in this area goes all the way back to when moves were made to ban corn-brooms from international competition.

One way or another, the dust settled on that controversy, but in 2015, it emerged that developments in the design, size and fabrics used in brush-heads, as well as variations in the techniques used in sweeping, could have a profound effect on the control of stone movement during games. By general consensus, it was agreed that these effects – whereby athletes could prevent a stone from curling, or stop a stone through a particular technique – were detrimental to the spirit and the scope of curling.

For the 2015-2016 season, a number of solutions and moratoriums were introduced, but it was apparent that something more permanent had to be done.

That's why in May 2016, the WCF convened a Sweeping Summit – near Ottawa, Canada – involving top international athletes and engaging with curling equipment manufacturers and other key stakeholders, to come up with an evidence-based solution that would restore the primary responsibility for shot-making to the thrower while continuing to maintain the relevance of sweeping.

This summit was staged with the co-operation of the National Research Council of Canada and on the basis of their scientific evidence a series of recommendations on sweeping were put to the 2016 WCF Annual General Assembly in Stockholm.

These recommendations, which had already been ratified by the WCF's Executive Board, Athlete Commission and Competition and Rules Commission, finalised arrangements for the standardisation of curling broom fabrics and stricter regulations on how brooms are used in competition, and were passed at the Congress.





© Richard Grey

Above: WCF ice-maker Hans Wuthrich shows complete impartiality (Swedish top, Norwegian pants) as he prepares the ice for the 2012 World Men's Championship Bronze Medal match in Basel



© World Curling Federation



Other Developments

It's not just developments in competition and rules that have shaped the modern game of curling, other moves have been on-going over the decades, many led by the WCF. These include:

- Progress in ice-making, with ice wizards such as Don Lewis, Shorty Jenkins and Hans Wuthrich all playing an unseen, round-the-clock role in providing the best possible, consistent ice conditions at major championships to help produce sparkling play.
- Umpiring and rule book advances, which have helped to ensure play is enforced - mostly by the players themselves it has to be said - consistently, and empathetically in the vast majority of instances.

- The role of the WCF's camps and courses - especially the annual Füssen courses and junior camp; the 'Business of Curling' seminars; The Olympic Celebration Tours, which bring famous curling Olympians and newcomers together in locations across the world to spread the enjoyment of the game as much as possible; and the Stepping Stones project, a newer development that has educated younger international teams' transition into the demands of elite curling.

All of these developments, and the occasionally circuitous routes needed to have them adopted, have contributed to making championship curling what it is today – an engaging, entertaining and skilful game that is played in a true spirit of respect.



© Christen Leibrandt



© World Curling Federation



WHAT MAKES INTERNATIONAL CURLING SPECIAL?



Doug Maxwell/Inchive



What makes international curling special?

*The fans will tell you it's the teams... the teams will tell you it's the fans...
the fans and the teams will tell you it's the venues...*

and all will agree that it's the game itself.



Above: The first-ever Grand Transoceanic Match held in Karlstad, Sweden in 1977. Former WCF Media Officer Håkan Sundström, who was a member of the organising committee, explains how it came about: "Lennart Hemmingson, chairman of the Organising Committee, invited all the fans present to play in a match based on the Scottish Grand Match, with the games played between teams representing Europe and North America. At that time, Karlstad could offer the largest space of artificial ice in Europe - an ice rink 181 x 67 metres, which had been built for bandy and speed skating, but it was possible to make 30 sheets of curling ice. Since the Swedish curling season was over, other curling clubs were able to lend Karlstad the necessary stones and equipment. Eventually 104 teams took part and they all had a special Swedish lunch of yellow-pea soup with hot punch."

Fans

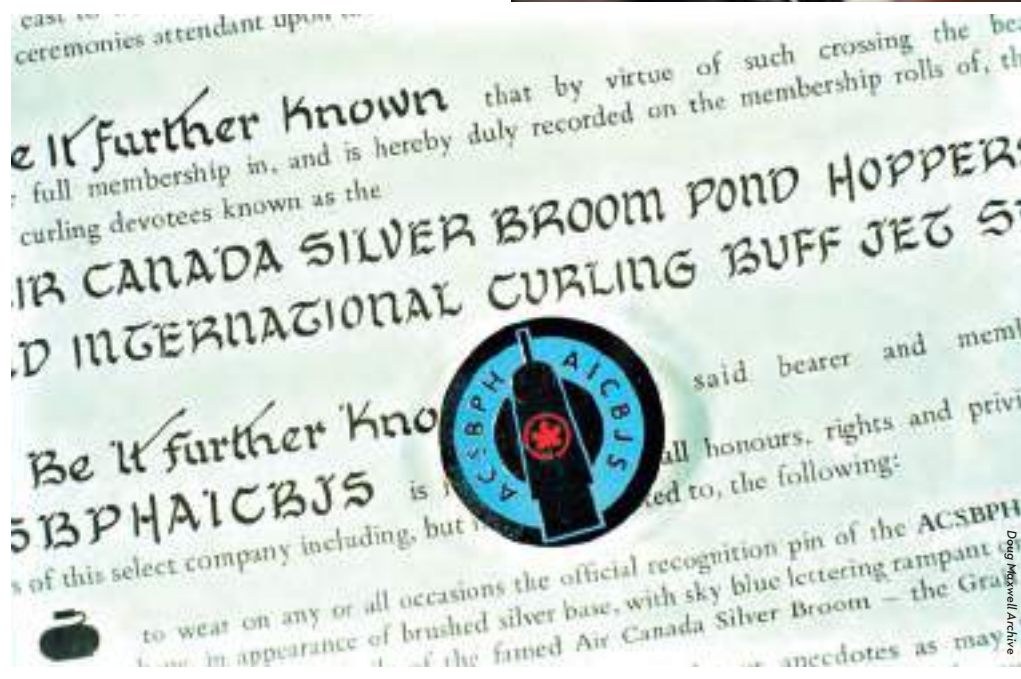
The presence of fans has always made WCF championships memorable. Whether it is sitting next to one another in the stands, or whiling away the time between games in the nearby social area at each championship - known as The Patch in Canada - over the decades, long-standing international friendships have been forged at WCF venues the world over.

Year after year The Patch becomes a vital week-long social hub, and while the likes of live music, team interview sessions and other attractions are always on offer, it is the simple interaction among curling fans that makes these locations the hottest - or should that be coolest? - spots in town.



Among the fans, many of whom return year-after-year, two great traditions have grown up. One of these is the Grand Transoceanic Match, or the GTM in short.

For many fans, it always pays to pack curling shoes in their luggage so that they can play in this fun-packed event. Although there can be changes to adapt to local circumstances, normally players are split into North America versus the Rest of the World with every effort made to mix up the nationalities of individual teams so that new friendships can be encouraged. This tradition began in Karlstad in 1977, where play took place outdoors, but nowadays a couple of sheets in a local club are almost always pressed into service.



Whether they realise it or not, most fans who take part in the GTM are also eligible to be called Pondhoppers – or to give the organisation its original 1970 title: the ACSBPHAICBJS – the Air Canada Silver Broom Pond Hoppers and International Curling Buff Jet Set. To become a member, all a curling fan has to do is to cross an ocean to attend a world championship. By 2000, it was recorded that Pondhopper Club membership had passed through the 10,000 mark.

As well as the GTM, another annual competition takes place during championships, contested by members of the media for the prestigious Brass Whisk. Modesty forbids your author from listing previous winners.





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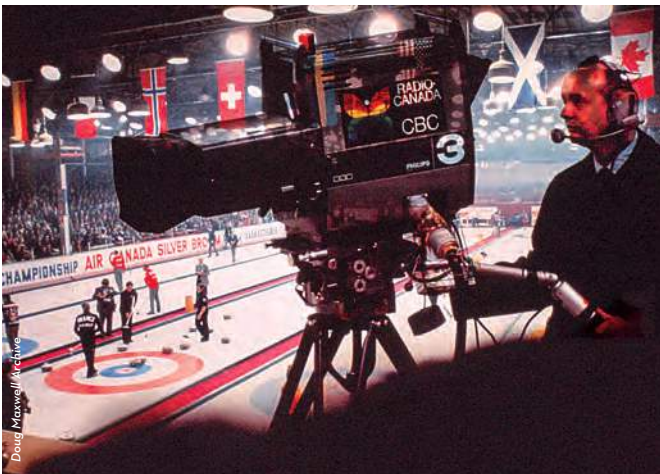


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The Coverage

Television coverage has always been a key element in promoting WCF championship events, and in recent years, this activity has grown, with worldwide coverage mushrooming too.

In 2004, the WCF established World Curling TV to produce, manage and distribute championship coverage as widely as possible. Now, in a normal year there will be TV coverage at both the Men's and Women's world championships, the Mixed Doubles championship, and the Junior championships, as well as both the European and Pacific-Asia Curling Championships.

Curling coverage at Olympic and Paralympic Games is also vitally important, providing as it does, a phenomenal shop-window for the sport, but, as is the case for all sports, this coverage is provided to national broadcasters by the Olympic Broadcast Service (OBS) or its Paralympic equivalent, rather than by World Curling TV.

Depending on circumstances, a growing number of nations will take live feeds. As well as Canada, most of the leading European nations and the likes of China and Japan, these include some more unexpected countries such as Brazil and Czech Republic.

At the Men's and Women's championships, edited news packages of each day's action are produced and distributed, and this work can crop up in news and sports bulletins anywhere in the world.

As an example of how this coverage has grown over the years, it is pleasing for the WCF to note that coverage from the 2015 World Women's Curling Championship in Sapporo, Japan reached over 300 million viewers.



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Clockwise from top left: The 1979 championship in Berne, Switzerland; the 1972 championship in Garmisch Partenkirchen; the 14 sheets prepared for the 2010 World senior Championships in Chelyabinsk, Russia; the 2000 World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland; the opening ceremony of the 1971 championship in Megève, France

The Venues

In the early days, WCF championships were held in either Canada or Scotland but, with the global growth of the sport, the roster of venues has expanded too. Now, places as far apart as Sapporo in Japan, Christchurch in New Zealand, Victoria in Canada, and Moscow in Russia have each hosted WCF championships, while across mainland Europe, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Italy, Norway, Slovenia, Sweden, and Switzerland have all had championships in their country, with each bringing its own personality to the events.

So, what makes international curling special? All of these different elements and, of course, the first-class competition provided by the best players in the world!



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Fans & Flags



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The Stones and the Ice

While it's a bad workman who blames his tools, good curling games can become great when the ice and the stones are in top order.

At every WCF championship, ice preparation is in the hands of a specially hand-picked, worldwide group of ice technicians, each with the experience and knowledge to produce the alchemy that will ensure great playing conditions no matter what challenges local circumstances may throw up.

The majority of championships use WCF-owned stones. If not, local stones made to the same specifications are brought into service. These stones are made of granite from the tiny uninhabited island of Ailsa Craig, a rugged one-mile long volcanic plug rising out of the Firth of Clyde, ten miles off Scotland's west coast.

The island's prized high-density blue hone granite is used as the running band on virtually every curling stone in the world, and is found nowhere else in the world in reasonable quantities, while the body of the WCF stones is made from Ailsa Craig Common Green Granite.

In recent times, the WCF has worked with curling stone manufacturers Kays of Scotland to ensure the supply of high-quality stones for club players and Olympic champions alike for years to come.

Altogether the WCF owns 24 sets of curling stones, four of which are permanently based in North America. The others spend their time being transferred from storage in Scotland to venues across the rest of the world.



© Richard Gray

Making the stones



All pictures © Richard Grey



**CHARACTERS
IN THE
GAME**

It would be strange for any organisation or activity to exist for 50 years without some memorable characters coming to the fore. Equally, it comes as no surprise to learn that over the WCF's 50 years there have been many superb players, thoughtful innovators, outstanding supporters and dedicated administrators who have all played their part in contributing to a sport that has produced unforgettable memories and life-long friendships.

The difficulty in entering into territory like this is that someone, some place, some event or something is bound to be left out. With that in mind, and apologies in advance for omissions, there are many people who deserve to be considered as real *characters of the game*.

PRESIDENTS

A good starting point is to note the ten individuals who have held the post of President.

Scotland's Elizabeth Paterson-Brown MBE



Courtesy Kenneth Paterson-Brown

They are:

1	1966-1969	Major Allan Cameron	Scotland
2	1969-1979	Brigadier Colin 'Collie' Campbell	Canada
3	1979-1982	Sven Eklund	Sweden
4	1982-1985	Clifton Thompson	Canada
5	1985-1988	Philip Dawson	Scotland
6	1988-1990	Dr Donald Barcome	USA
7	1990-2000	Günther Hummelt	Austria
8	2000-2006	Roy Sinclair	Scotland
9	2006-2010	Les Harrison	Canada
10	2010-present	Kate Caithness	Scotland

Each of these individuals contributed to the ongoing success and leadership of the WCF, with Clif Thompson and Philip Dawson being the early pathfinders in charting curling's journey into the Olympic family – a task taken on with great energy – and eventual success – by their successor Günther Hummelt. Following the inclusion in the Olympic programme, Roy Sinclair took over from Hummelt to lead an organisation that was transformed in many ways, while current President Kate Caithness has done much to consolidate curling's assured position as a popular mainstream Olympic sport through her involvement in high-level IOC Commissions and working groups. While President Caithness has become the first – and so far only female President of an Olympic winter sports federation, she was not the first female to take senior office at the ICF/WCF – that honour belongs to Scotland's Elizabeth Paterson-Brown, who became the first female Vice President in 1990. In this role, she was instrumental in the development of world junior curling.





© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



Main picture far left: **Arnold and Ernie Richardson with the Scotch Cup**

Top left: **A Scotch cup promotional leaflet featuring Ron Northcott (Canada), Chuck Hay (Scotland), and Bud Somerville (USA)**

Middle left: **Canada's Al Hackner**

Bottom left: **Scotland's Hammy McMillan**

Top right: **Austria's Sebastian Wunderer**

PLAYERS

Any consideration of characters in the sport naturally includes players, and in spotlighting players and teams there is no better place to start than the Richardsons from Regina, Canada. Ernie, Arnold, Garnet (Sam) and Wes Richardson arrived on the scene to dominate the early years of the Scotch Cup era. They inspired many others to emulate and eventually better the way they played and behaved, setting solid foundations for the early success of the World Curling Championships.

Among their many admirers was one of their toughest opponents, Scotland's 1967 world champion Chuck Hay, who says, "the Richardson team could play all the shots – take-out, draw, guard. We were enthralled by their play so decided to take it up." And take it up Hay and his team did, losing the 1963 Scotch Cup final to their heroes. Hay goes on to shed some light on the sportsmanship qualities of the Richardsons, saying, "Ernie invited us to his room in the hotel afterwards and explained to us that playing against the Canadian brooms you must always sweep all draws lightly due to the debris from their brooms."

In an earlier correspondence Hay wrote, "It was the marvellous way that Ernie and his team conducted themselves both on and off the ice, that sealed the success of the Scotch Cup. They won their games easily but never belittled or humiliated their opposition. They had such charm, charisma and a wonderful sense of sportsmanship. Their part in establishing the Scotch Cup was so important. It was because of them that we can all sit back and enjoy today's World Curling Championships."



That wonderful sportsmanship – sometimes known as the spirit of curling – has been sustained down the years. At the 2014 World Junior Curling Championships in Flims, Switzerland, Austria's skip Sebastian Wunderer, male winner of the players' Sportsmanship Award, spoke for many when he said, "the spirit of curling is here. Even though we're playing hard against each other, everybody's still friends."

Many teams and players have become memorable because of the strength of their play and characters – Canadian skips like Ron Northcott, Don Duguid, Ed Werenich, Al Hackner, Randy Ferbey, and Kevin Martin come to mind, as do other charismatic players such as USA's Raymond 'Bud' Somerville, Scotland's Hammy McMillan, and Sweden's Peja Lindholm.

On the women's side, there are also riches: Sweden's double Olympic champion Anette Norberg and her predecessors Elisabet Gustafson and Elisabeth Högström; Norway's Dordi Nordby, Germany's Andrea Schöpp and Denmark's Helena Blach Lavrsen - three skips with exceptional longevity at the top level; while from Canada, Sandra Schmirler, Colleen Jones and Marilyn Bodogh all graced the game exceptionally in their time.

At the Vancouver Olympic Winter Games in 2010, men's silver medallists Norway – who were to go on to win the World title in 2014 in Beijing – became memorable for an entirely different reason as they sported a wardrobe of colourful fancy-pants. They were an immediate internet hit and arguably did more than the actual games to publicise the sport, with the pants quickly gathering over a million Facebook Likes. At the 2014 World Men's Curling Championship, while wearing one of his team's more outlandish outfits – even by their own standards – Norway's skip Thomas Ulsrud confessed, "if you're wearing something like this, you just have to win!"



Former WCF Media Officer Håkan Sundström recalls a famous royal occasion:

“Over the years, some excellent curlers may have been nicknamed the “King of Curling”, but there has only been one real monarch to have played a curling stone in a world championship. That was in Karlstad, Sweden, during the opening day of the Air Canada Silver Broom in 1977.

Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, Swedish king and then only 30-years-old, had accepted an invitation to attend the opening ceremony and declare the championship open to play.

However, Swedish sports commentator Lars-Gunnar Björklund asked His Majesty to try curling for a Swedish TV programme and the King accepted - on one condition. His one demand was that the arena be closed to everybody except the TV crew. But, there was one photographer who had his working office inside the arena. Mike Burns Senior, the official photographer of the event, had his photo laboratory there and when he heard that the king would play, he fetched his largest lens and went sneaking up to a good position where he shot excellent pictures showing the Swedish king in action.

All interested media outlets were then given free access to these pictures which were then published widely, and this episode gave the King enough confidence to play the opening stone in public, the next time Sweden hosted an event, in 1983 at the European Championships in Västerås.”



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Bottom left: Norway's unique playing outfit
 Top left: Sweden's Peja Lindholm
 Top right: Japan's Satsuki Fujisawa
 Middle right: Canada's Marilyn Bodogh and her team
 Bottom right: Norway's Dordi Nordby
 Bottom middle: Sweden's Elisabet Gustafson and her team



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HALL OF FAMERS

The original incarnation of the WCF Hall of Fame came in 1978 when the Elmer Freytag award was established to recognise outstanding sustained service to curling. Freytag himself was the US curling administrator involved in the ICF from the very beginning. The first winner of this prestigious award was Canada's Ken Watson, who, among other curling contributions, spent much time developing common rules for the countries taking part in the Scotch Cup competitions.



After 1990, this Award was re-named the World Curling Freytag Award and finally, the WCF Hall of Fame was set up in 2012 to carry out the same duty of recognising outstanding contribution to the sport, whether through on-ice exploits or off-ice endeavours. Membership is awarded for two different types of achievement – as a curler or as a builder.

Among the players inducted into the Hall of Fame or its predecessors are: Canada's Russ Howard and Ray Turnbull; Switzerland's Olympic champion Patrick Hürlimann, Norway's Eigil Ramsfjell and Sweden's Elisabet Gustafson. The builders include the late Franco Zumofen of Italy, Japan's Hiroyuki Saito and Kay Sugahara from USA.

While Ken Watson was the very first winner of the Elmer Freytag Award, he was to be followed by many other famous names from international curling's past - names like Chuck Hay of Scotland, Canada's Doug Maxwell and Robin Welsh, another Scot.



Top left: Norway's Eigil Ramsfjell

Middle left: Kay Sugahara (USA)

Bottom left: Elisabet Gustafson (Sweden)

Top right: Keith Wendorf being applauded by his Germany team in 1979 when he was announced as the first winner of the Collie Campbell Sportsmanship Award



While the decision to change the name of the Award was made after 1990, the first re-named World Curling Federation Elmer Freytag Award went to the Canadian-born Keith Wendorf in 1994, who at that time represented Germany as a player. Keith has gone on to become one of the main contributors to world curling success, over the years travelling the world, hosting clinics - for example in Kazakhstan in March 2004 - and now leading the WCF's global programme of World Championships events as the WCF's Director of Competitions and Development.



Ken Watson being presented with the first Elmer Freytag Award in 1978, by Don McLeod of Canada, who went on to win the Award himself in 1985.

Elmer Freytag



Elmer Freytag was well-known as the face of USA curling in the early days of the International Curling Federation, but before all that, he had another claim to fame... or perhaps infamy.

Professionally, Elmer was a patent attorney whose family originally came from Germany. He piloted his own plane and it was this that got him into a little trouble.

On one stormy night in the winter of 1942, he was forced to make an emergency landing in the grounds of local major manufacturer Inland Steel (which at the time was heavily involved in supporting the USA effort in World War Two). After landing, he simply climbed the fence and took a cab home, leaving the mystery of a German-owned plane in the grounds of a major War manufacturer, and leading to speculation about German spies landing!

From left to right: Horace Vaile, Warren Peterson, Harold Built and Elmer Freytag at the Quebec International Bonspiel, a favourite of Elmer's.



This group picture, taken in the Station Hotel, Perth Scotland at the 1963 Scotch Cup, includes several well-known faces, including (seated right) Canada's Ken Watson, who became the first Freytag Award winner in 1978. By coincidence, Elmer Freytag himself is seated on Ken Watson's immediate right.



Doug Maxwell Archive

Michael Burns - Innovating Photography

No consideration of curling photography can be made without the considerable influence of Michael Burns Senior. While son Michael continues to serve curling media very well, his father was the first professional photographer to follow curling regularly across the world and record the top action.

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1926, his family moved to Canada when he was a boy. He became official photographer for the Canadian Curling Association in 1958.



Doug Maxwell Archive



Courtesy of Warren Hansen

INNOVATORS

Throughout the history of the WCF and its activities, individuals have come along who have made their mark on the game or the organisation – sometimes permanently.

For example, Frances Brodie from Scotland was a prime mover in establishing the women’s World Curling Championship. She also instigated The Frances Brodie Award for sportsmanship at the women’s championships, making the presentations herself every year until her health failed.

On the men’s side, there was Collie Campbell, the second President of the ICF, and the men’s championship sportsmanship award is named in his memory.

Over the years, the media bench at every championship was home to many larger-than-life characters, among them Doug Maxwell and



© Michael Burns Photography Ltd

Middle: Bob Picken

Above: Scotland’s Frances Brodie, presenting Kirsty Addison (Scotland) with the Frances Brodie Sportsmanship Award in 1996

Bob Picken from Canada, each of whom made contributions far beyond the world of reportage; former media officer for the WCF Håkan Sundström from Sweden; Switzerland’s long-time President of the World Curling Media Association Erwin Sauter-Hewitt; and Scotland’s Willie Kemp.

Other individuals have contributed in several different ways, for example, Scotland’s Richard Harding first appeared as a player at the 1977 Air Canada Silver Broom in Karlstad, Sweden before going on to report on the sport for various media outlets, including the British Broadcasting Company’s (BBC) Olympic coverage in 1998 and 2002. He then went on to be a leading light in the establishment of World Curling TV, which, from modest beginnings, has grown into a global success today.

Below: Willie Kemp, long-time curling correspondent for The Scotsman newspaper
Right: Canada's Doug Maxwell in conversation with Sweden's Lennart Hemmingson, who devised the first GTM
Far right: Warren Hansen (Canada)



Meanwhile, no list of characters of influence in the sport would be complete without mention of Canada's Hall of Famer, Warren Hansen. He has made influential contributions to the development of curling for more than 50 years, and these have been multi-faceted. Hansen can be attributed with developing many of the umpiring procedures in use today and introducing marketing and design features – four sheets of ice for championships and events held in large ice-hockey arenas – of national and international competitions that make up the spectacle of curling.

The fact that for every individual mentioned in these pages, most readers would add a few candidates of their own just goes to show that when it comes to characters in the sport, over the years, curling has had a bountiful supply.

🎯 Every picture tells a story





THE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC JOURNEY



© Richard Gray

From the early years, the WCF representatives were eager to see curling become part of the Olympic Games. After many years of hard work by several key players, including demonstrations of the sport at the Lake Placid Games of 1932 in the USA; the Calgary Games of 1988 in Canada; and in Albertville, France in 1992, curling finally appeared as an official sport in the Nagano Olympic Winter Games in 1998. The curling at these Games was staged in the Japanese town of Karuizawa.

Incidentally, in staging Olympic curling, Karuizawa became the first community in the world to act as host at both Olympic Summer and Winter Games, having staged the equestrian events of the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Summer Games.

Prior to all of this, it had been believed that curling had originally been a demonstration sport at the inaugural Olympic Winter Games in Chamonix, France in 1924. However, while researching those Games for The Herald newspaper in 2006, renowned Scottish sports journalist Doug Gillon uncovered the fact that curling had been a full medal sport in 1924 and had this confirmed by the International Olympic Committee (IOC). An IOC spokesperson confirmed, “we consider curling as an official sport in 1924 and all the winners of the events are considered as Olympic champions.”

Left: Canada's Olympic champions E J Harnden and Ryan Fry in action, Sochi 2014

Top right: The members of the first International Curling Congress, held during the Olympic Winter Games in Chamonix, France, in 1924

Other pictures: Curling at the first Olympic Winter Games



Scottish Curler

The quest for inclusion on the Olympic programme started early and, in fact, was one of the main drivers for the name change of 1990, with the International Curling Federation becoming the World Curling Federation. A first application for inclusion was made as early as 1968 but at that time the ICF was told that it had to have a minimum of 25 nations from at least three continents affiliated before any kind of membership consideration could take place.

In the 80s, under ICF President Clif Thompson of Canada and his successor, Scotland's Philip Dawson, attempts to join the Olympic Movement were increased. Thompson met the then President of the IOC - Juan Antonio Samaranch - in Lausanne in 1984 – a meeting which facilitated the appearance of curling as a demonstration sport in Calgary but also gave an indication that it was going to be less than straightforward for curling to become a full-fledged Olympic sport.



Courtesy of Erwin Sautter



Courtesy of Erwin Sautter



Courtesy of Ewin Sauter

Main picture: The British curlers, headed by Col Robertson-Aikman, in the march-past at Chamonix in 1924

Right: The final shot of the women's demonstration event in Calgary, 1988

Far right: The Olympic curling venue in Karuizawa for the 1998 Nagano Olympic Winter Games



Canadian Olympic Committee



Courtesy of Warren Hansen



Top: The Albertville demonstration curling venue, 1992
Below: Sweden win in Vancouver, 2010



Above: Switzerland's Franz Tanner (left) and WCF President Günther Hummelt of Austria (right) toast curling's modern Olympic debut
Right: Canada win gold in 1998



From this point on, the main movers in support of curling's case for inclusion included then President Günther Hummelt of Austria; Switzerland's former world championship curler Franz Tanner, a native of Lausanne, the IOC's hometown; and Canada's Jack Lynch.

Hummelt enthusiastically undertook the task of recruiting new countries into membership while, in tandem, important lobbying went on to persuade the IOC and the other winter sports International Federations that curling would be an attractive addition to the Olympic Winter Games programme. Eventually the barriers were broken down, and curling received the green light for inclusion at the 1992 IOC sessions in Barcelona.

By this point, the organiser of the Nagano 1998 Olympic Winter Games had expressed the wish that curling should be included on their programme and so, on 9 February 1998, eight men's and eight women's teams stepped onto the ice in Karuizawa to become the sport's first Olympians of the modern era. A week later, Canada's Sandra Schmirler and her team, as well as the Swiss team skipped by Patrick Hürlimann, were crowned Olympic champions.

For every Olympic edition since then, the competition has been among ten men's and women's teams. The next exciting step-change for Olympic curling came in 2015 when the IOC agreed that Mixed Doubles would be introduced as a new discipline at the 2018 Olympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Korea.

It has been a journey of highs and lows from the times when curling's Olympic prospects seemed remote to the point that currently exists, with curling now seen as a fundamental component of any Olympic Winter Games, but on the way the sport has made many friends in the Olympic Movement.





© Richard Gray



© Richard Gray



© International Olympic Committee

“Curling Pure Emotion” a statue by Switzerland’s Bjorn Zryd is unveiled at the Olympic Park in Lausanne



© Michael Burns Photography Ltd



© Canadian Olympic Committee

Above: The curling field of play at the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Winter Games
 Top: The 2014 Sochi Olympic cauldron
 Top middle: International Olympic Committee President Dr Thomas Bach
 Bottom right: GB win gold in Salt Lake City, 2002

A good example of this was when current IOC President Dr Thomas Bach visited the curling family in April 2016, in Basel, Switzerland to be the guest of honour at the WCF 50th anniversary banquet and to deliver the first stone of the World Men’s Curling Championship the next day.

In his speech at the banquet, Dr Bach was clear about curling’s position in the Olympics, saying, “I want to say how much we appreciate what curling is doing – in your ambitions you are truly Olympic and your sport has a great reputation in and around the Olympic family.” He also diplomatically described the 76 year gap for curling between Chamonix in 1924 and Nagano in 1998 as “a little pause” but he then added, “this renewal was a fantastic development.”

He spoke further about his personal journey with curling, saying, “my first experience with curling was in 1998 in Nagano when I saw it and followed it for the first time – since then I’ve been following curling and I am not surprised anymore about how popular it is. My first experience with curling’s popularity was in Salt Lake City in 2002. When we first saw the television viewing figures there at the time, we were

Right: 2014 men's Olympic medallist skips, (l to r) Niklas Edin, Sweden - bronze; Brad Jacobs, Canada - gold; David Murdoch, GB - silver
 Middle right: Switzerland's Patrick Hurlimann, 1998 Olympic Champion
 Far right: Canada's Kevin Martin, 2010 Olympic champion
 Bottom: The Ice Cube, curling venue at Sochi Olympic Winter Games 2014



really surprised. Since then we have seen a good and steady growth.”

There is no doubt that the sport's inclusion on the Olympic programme has transformed the WCF – not least in the organisation's finances, allowing the Federation to become stable and sustainable in a way that would have been impossible without Olympic involvement. That in turn has facilitated significant support to Member Associations and sustained much of the development work done around the world.

Also, curling's Olympic involvement has produced a growing number of celebrity fans, including Canadian superstars Michael Bublé and Donald Sutherland, USA's sprint Olympic champion Carl Lewis and Washington Redskins tight end Vernon Davis, Britain's five-times Olympic gold medal rower Sir Steve Redgrave, former Prime and First Ministers from Canada and Scotland – amongst others, and a host of European royalty, including Denmark's Crown Prince Frederik and Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden.

It is easy to argue that the Olympic Games have been good for curling, but it is also true that curling has been good for the Olympic Games.





© Alina Pomyuchik

Wheelchair curling

Wheelchair curling was first introduced to the Paralympic Winter Games programme in 2006. The venue in Pinerolo, Italy was used on this occasion as part of the Turin Games and eight teams competed, with Canada beating Great Britain for gold, while Sweden took bronze.

Four years later, the number of teams was increased to ten and Canada retained their title with a win over Korea on home ice in Vancouver, while Sweden won bronze for the second time. Canada then went on to make it a hat-trick of gold medals in 2014 when they beat Russia in the final in Sochi, with Great Britain picking up bronze. At the 2018 Paralympic Winter Games in PyeongChang, Korea, 12 wheelchair curling teams will compete for medals.

Canada's wheelchair gold winning team in Sochi, 2014 included three-times gold medallist Sonja Gaudet, pictured here with lead player Mark Ideson



🎯 Hurry Hard!





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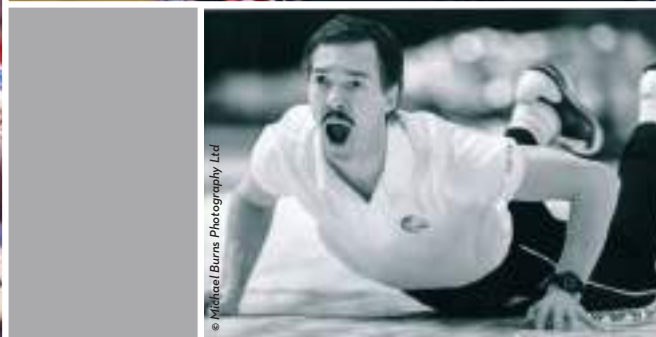
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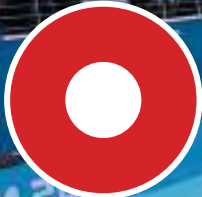
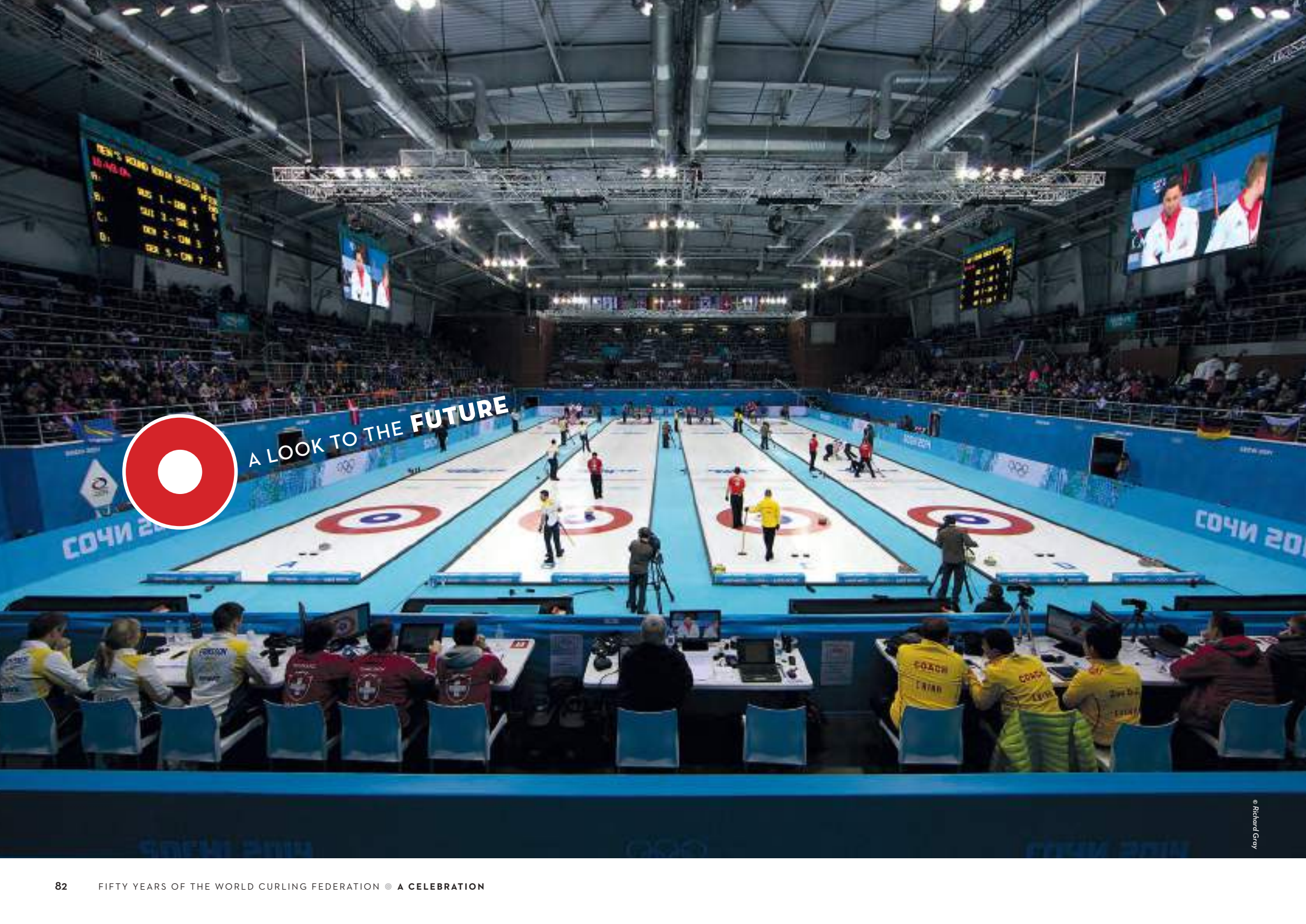
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A LOOK TO THE **FUTURE**



© Doug Maxwell/Archive

As this book clearly illustrates, a lot has happened in and around the WCF since the International Curling Federation was established 50 years ago.

In many ways, the WCF has found itself growing up fast, with unexpected twists and turns along the road. When the current, complex operating environment of the organisation is compared to the modest beginnings of half a century ago, it makes any accurate prediction of how the future will unfold very tricky indeed.

However, it seems likely that the WCF will be taken forward by characters every bit as colourful, purposeful and committed as those mentioned in this book – and those who haven't been – who have made their contributions over the years.

It seems likely that the WCF will continue to flourish and grow, working hard to take curling to every corner of the globe, and assisting national associations and others in spreading the enjoyment of the game.



© Christian Leibbram

It seems likely that the WCF competitions will continue to produce great play and sportsmanship, providing the best possible shop-window for the sport and its talented players.

It seems likely that the activities of the WCF will continue to act as a catalyst for forging life-long international friendships among fans, competitors and officials alike.

But most of all, it seems likely that the spirit of curling that has pervaded almost everything the WCF has done in the past 50 years will continue to be present into the future as a backdrop to whatever exciting developments will now come the WCF's way.



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🎯 Fan banners



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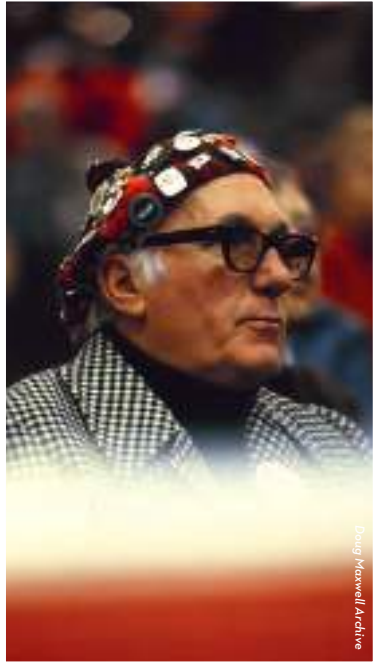


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Member Associations' Dates of Joining World Curling Federation

1966	Canada, France, Norway, Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland	1997	Belarus
1967	Germany, United States	1998	Brazil, Chinese Taipei
1971	Denmark, England	1999	Spain
1972	Italy	2001	Latvia
1975	Netherlands	2002	China
1976	Luxembourg	2003	Estonia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia
1979	Finland	2004	Croatia
1982	Austria, Wales	2005	Belgium, Serbia
1985	Japan	2009	Turkey
1986	Australia	2010	Romania, Slovenia
1989	Hungary	2012	Kosovo, Mongolia
1990	Czech Republic	2013	Bulgaria, Georgia, Israel, Ukraine
1991	Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, US Virgin Islands	2014	Hong Kong, Qatar
1992	Russia	2015	Greece
1994	Korea	2016	Guyana, Mexico

🎯 Faces in the crowd



Further information

The World Curling Federation's website,

www.worldcurling.org

contains details of:

- all WCF championship winners
- all individuals inducted into the WCF Hall of Fame and its predecessor Awards
- all athletes who have won Sportsmanship Awards at championships, voted for by their fellow-players
- information about the WCF Executive Board

It also details other important information about the Federation and its Member Associations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Thanks to all those who contributed written content and/or verified the information contained in this book:

Paul Ahlgren, Mark Callan, Kate Caithness, Terry Davis, Doug Gillon, Colin Grahamslaw, Newsquest (owners of Scottish Curler), Sander Rølvåg and Keith Wendorf

Thank you to all the photographers whose images have appeared in this book or have given us special permission to use their images:

Antonio Ahel
Alina Androsova
Archie Bogle
Michael Burns Photography Ltd
Canadian Olympic Committee
Bob Cowan
Torquil Cramer
Curling Canada
Louis Flood Photographers (owners of the late Alex C Cowper's photography)
Laura Godenzi
Christopher Hamilton
International Olympic Committee
Hamish Irvine
Bob Kelly
Katja Kiiskinen

Jesse Kushneryk
Christian Leibbrandt
Vladimir Lokotov
The late Doug Maxwell
Janne Ojanperä
Kenneth Paterson-Brown
Alina Pavlyuchik
Mike Ridewood
Royal Caledonian Curling Club
Erwin Sautter
Heinz Schmid
Scottish Studios & Engravers Ltd
John Sharp
Markus Sipilä
Hugh Stewart
Céline Stucki
Kay Sugahara
Rocky Sung
Varmlands Hemmingson
RDH Warren

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