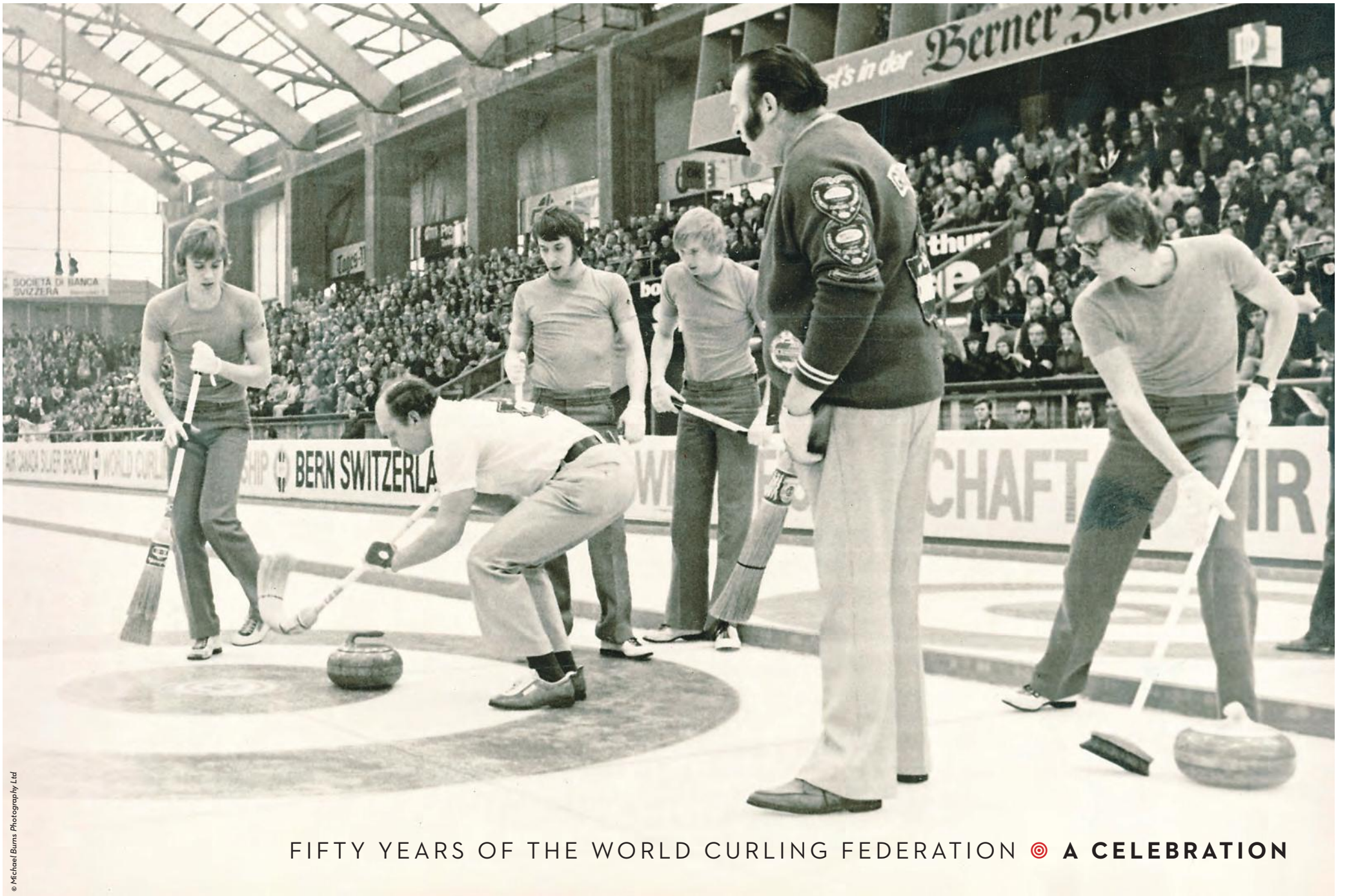




FIFTY YEARS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION © **A CELEBRATION**



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FIFTY YEARS OF THE WORLD CURLING FEDERATION 🌀 A CELEBRATION



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THE FULL LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS APPEARS ON PAGE 88

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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 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.

“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.”

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.



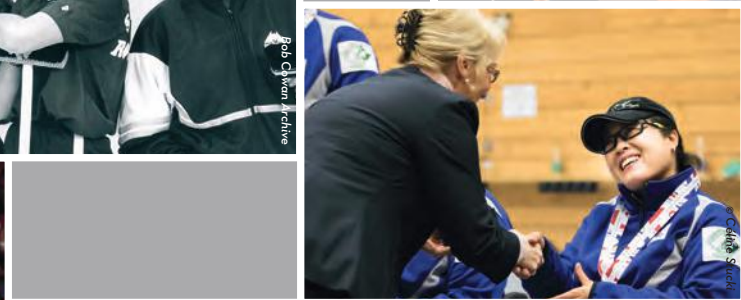
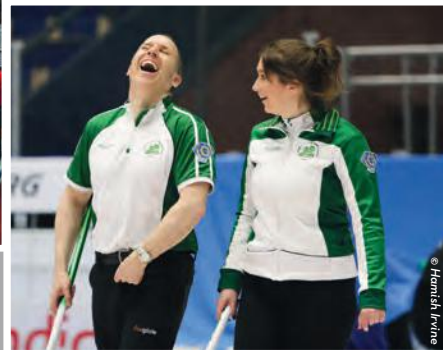
© Richard Gray

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

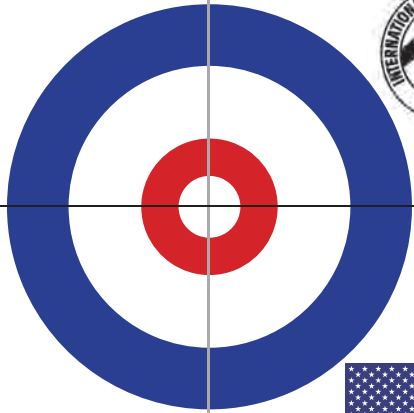


Scottish Curler

🎯 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



1967

USA and Germany join the ICF

First proposal by Canada for an over-55 championship



1968

First Air Canada Silver Broom contested - final televised



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"

1971

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



1975

First Men's World Juniors - East York, Ontario



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

1977

Playing of the first Grand Transatlantic Match in Karlstad, Sweden



1979

First World Ladies Championship held in Perth, Scotland



1983

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



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



1989

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



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



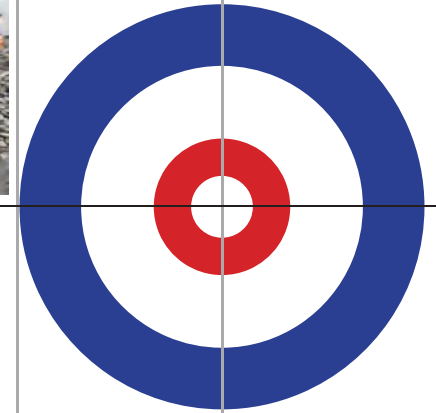
2013

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**

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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 Ramsfjell
 (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.

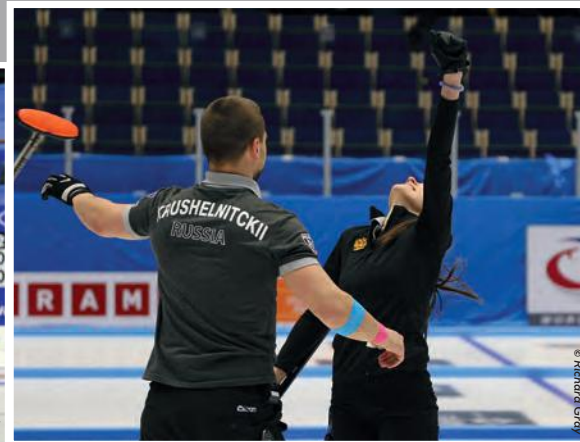




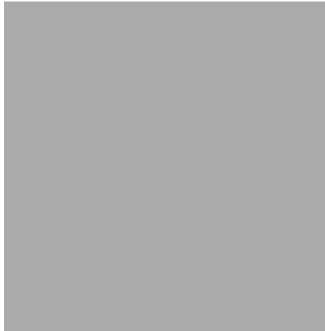
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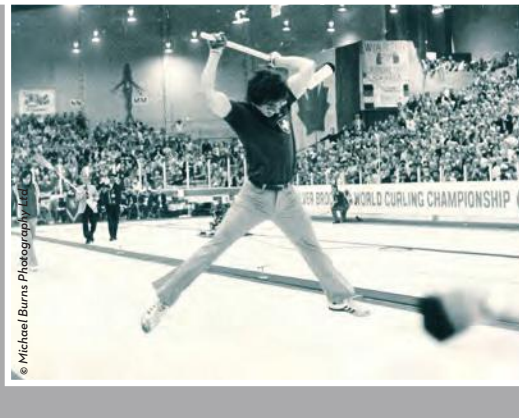
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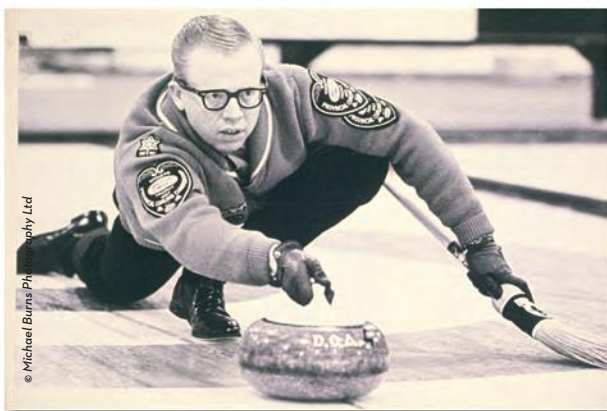
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CHAMPIONSHIP HISTORY



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.

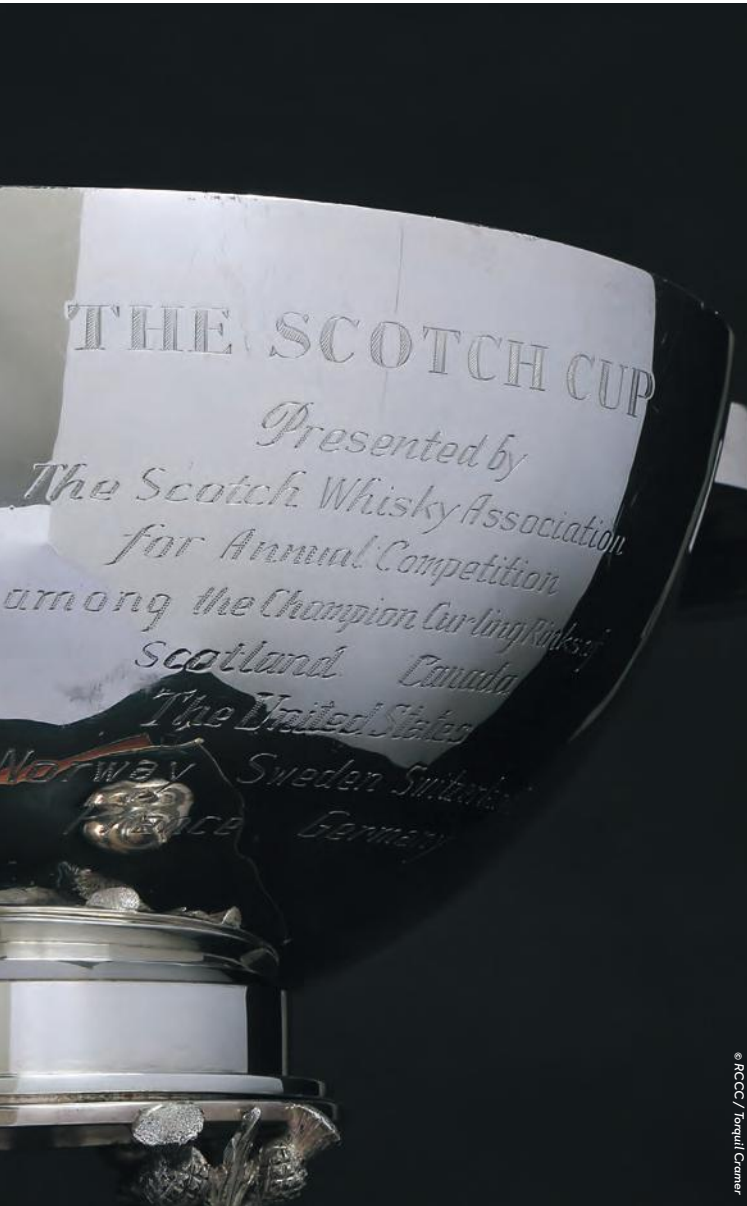
At the time of the Scotch Cup, and for the early men's world championship events, hosting was carried out by communities from Canada and Scotland. However, this was soon to change, with Utica in the USA hosting the 1970 event, followed by Megève in France in 1971. Germany hosted the championship for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

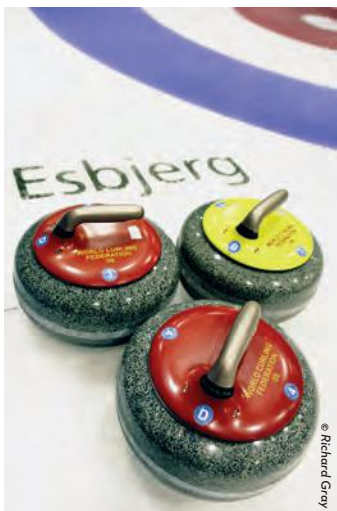
As mentioned earlier, the women’s World Curling Championship was established in 1979, and for the first three years was staged in Perth, Scotland as the Royal Bank Ladies World Championship. In subsequent years, the women’s event was hosted in Switzerland, Canada and Scotland, as well as the USA and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



© Richard Gray



© 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.

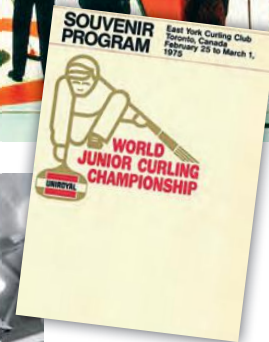
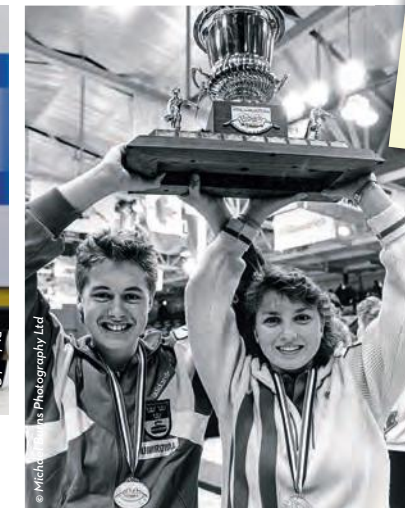
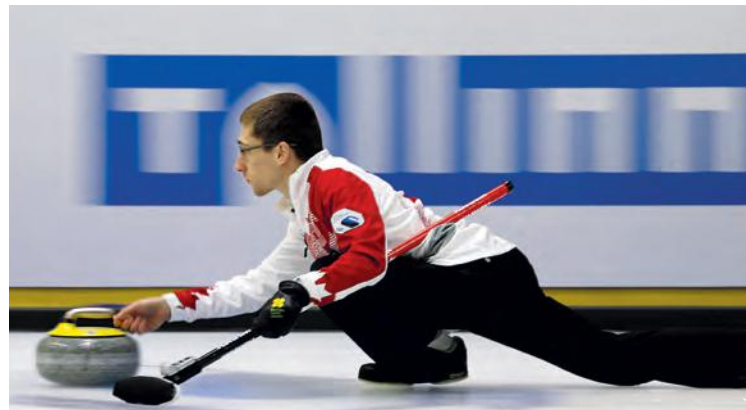
Gradually, the nations participating became wider, with Japan’s women making their first appearance in 1992, followed by Russia in 1999. After this, teams from China and Korea also started to appear.



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.





© Céline 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.



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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.

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.

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





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.

