



Colorful plaids, sweaters and glengarries put a strong dash of excitement in any curling scene.

Curling

This growing winter pastime can help solve financial problems at country clubs that want to stay open around the calendar

By LAURIE E. CARLSON

Country clubs can literally sweep out the "red" by adding a curling rink to their facilities. Such an installation will go many times farther than a great hall or a roomful of bridge tables and the bi-weekly or monthly dance toward meeting the winter overhead or the cost of keeping a club open on a year-round basis. What is more, it will keep a large part of the staff intact, and it will cut down on the considerable and annoying break in service that members at most Northern clubs have to contend with when the golf season fades out.

Curling is an ancient and, of course, honourable game that originated along with its partner, golf, in Scotland. The sport, some five centuries old, has flourished more in Canada than in its native surroundings. The color and pageantry of curling tournaments (bonspiels) bid to submerge the popularity of other winter sports in U. S.

Ten Clubs Have Rinks

At least ten country clubs that we know of have installed curling rinks in recent years in order to give their members 12-month sports activity. These are Exmoor, Skokie, North Shore, Indian Hills and Oak Park in the Chicago area; Brae Burn in Boston; Stevens Point (Wis.) CC; Elkhart, (Ind) CC and Mayfield CC in Cleveland. Membership dues plus fees combined with revenue from the dining room and bar have enabled one club to realize a \$150,000 gross during the curling season. This income enabled the club to pay \$12,500 on its mortgage principal, \$15,000 in in-

terest on its loan and put aside around \$18,000 for future contingencies.

People in the curling business recommend six sheets to cut down on congestion. The ice can be kept in use almost all day with men, women and Junior players occupying the sheets from morning until night. Weekend bonspiels are popular, often bringing curlers from neighboring cities and states to take part in them. Two draws in the evening, three evenings a week, will accommodate 300 curlers on six sheets of ice.

What Are The Advantages?

Other than putting a club back in a strong financial position, what are the advantages of converting club facilities to curling?

It offers a balanced physical activity that keeps otherwise sedentary businessmen in shape all winter. It is a participating sport, and fundamentals can be grasped quickly. Women can learn to curl just as easily as men, and become equally skillful. It is a game for all ages (some 1500 high school teams in the U. S. last winter).

The only equipment (individual) required — rubbers and a warm sweater.

Sociable Game

It's a sociable game. Each participant plays directly with seven others and alongside 16 more.

There's plenty of suspense! The last rock can change a near loss into a victory.

Curling is more scientific than bowling. The game requires a variety of shots, ability to "read the ice," and organized team play.

The most important thing to consider

in planning a rink is to secure competent advice on those factors which most affect the success of the installation. These include the rink floor, soil stabilization and drainage, equipment design, illumination and condensation control.

Source of Knowhow

Officers of the American Curling Foundation, of which Archie W. Rappana, 322 Ridgewood rd., Duluth 4, Minn. is president, are eager to supply counsel and co-operation.

Rinks have doubled in this country in the last decade, and now number about 100. These provide recreation for an estimated 20,000 curlers. Canada's statistics are even more spectacular — 660 rinks, 200,000 participants.

Club members interested in starting something this coming winter are urged to inspect if possible an existing rink in their community. Sometimes two or more clubs go together to get the project rolling. A committee is formed to locate ice, form teams, provide facilities, organize schedules, etc.

ABC's of the Game

Here are the ABC's of curling:

It is played on a level sheet of ice, 146 feet long and 14 feet wide, marked with a target (house) of multicolored 12 foot circles at each end. The distance from the "hack", where the 42-pound stone is delivered, to the center of the house (tee) at the other end is 126 feet.

Necessary equipment includes only the stones, a piece of smoothed granite with a looped handle on the top, and the brooms, much like the one in your kitchen except curling brooms have shorter handles and narrower straw widths.

A match is played between two teams (rinks) with each of the four players delivering two stones alternately with their opponents, making a total of 16 stones played by both teams in each inning (end). The object of the game is to place your stone closer to the tee than those of your opponents. Scoring is simple. A rink scores one point for every stone which is nearer the tee than any stone of the opposing rink, and in each end or inning only one team can score.

The stones are so located that a measuring device, resembling a compass, is used to measure the close ones.

The "lead", usually the rink's least experienced curler but very important, handles the first two stones for his team. When delivering a stone, the player braces his foot on the "hack" to keep from slipping

as he slides the stone down the ice. The lead must be able to accurately put his stone as far as the inner ring of the house for it is around his shots that the skip (captain) plans the strategy.

Sounds complex? Not at all. Very simple, once you've tried it.

When the "second" plays his two stones, there are four stones already on the ice to contend with. His job is to remove his opponent's stone and break up any possible "head" or fortress of stones. Also, he must be ready to guard and promote (push forward one of his own rink's stones toward the front of the circle).

With each succeeding player, there are stones on the ice and the placement of the stones becomes more difficult. The third (vice skip) shoots next and must be able to throw a stone fast enough to break up any combination in the house so that the skip, who shoots last, can score on his shot. The third must be able, too, to hide a stone behind a guard and to "chap and lie" (hit an opponent's stone and hide behind a guard).

Skip Plans Strategy

The skip is most important. He plans the strategy and directs his team's play while standing in the house. Before a stone is delivered, the skip marks the spot (with his broom) where he wants the stone to end up. The curling stone rotates as it travels down the ice, and thus doesn't slide in a straight line. A slight twist of the wrist accentuates the arc-ing, which is similar to a hook in bowling.

Further, the skip directs his rink's sweeping with commands of "sweep" when he feels the stone is moving too slowly, or "brooms up" when he feels it has been swept enough.

After all 16 stones have been played, the two vice-skips determine the score for the end. Next the process is reversed, and the house at the opposite end becomes the target.

Sweeping is done by the two players not delivering their stones. They follow each stone shortly after it has been delivered, and trotting alongside of it, they sweep vigorously or easily as needed.

Curlers often say: "Play 'em light and blame it on the sweepers".

Perhaps the most popular hobby connected with the old game is badge collecting. You can always tell how enthusiastic an individual curler is, how much he or she has travelled, by the number of badges worn on the Glengarry or Balmoral (hats or caps).