

EYE OPENER

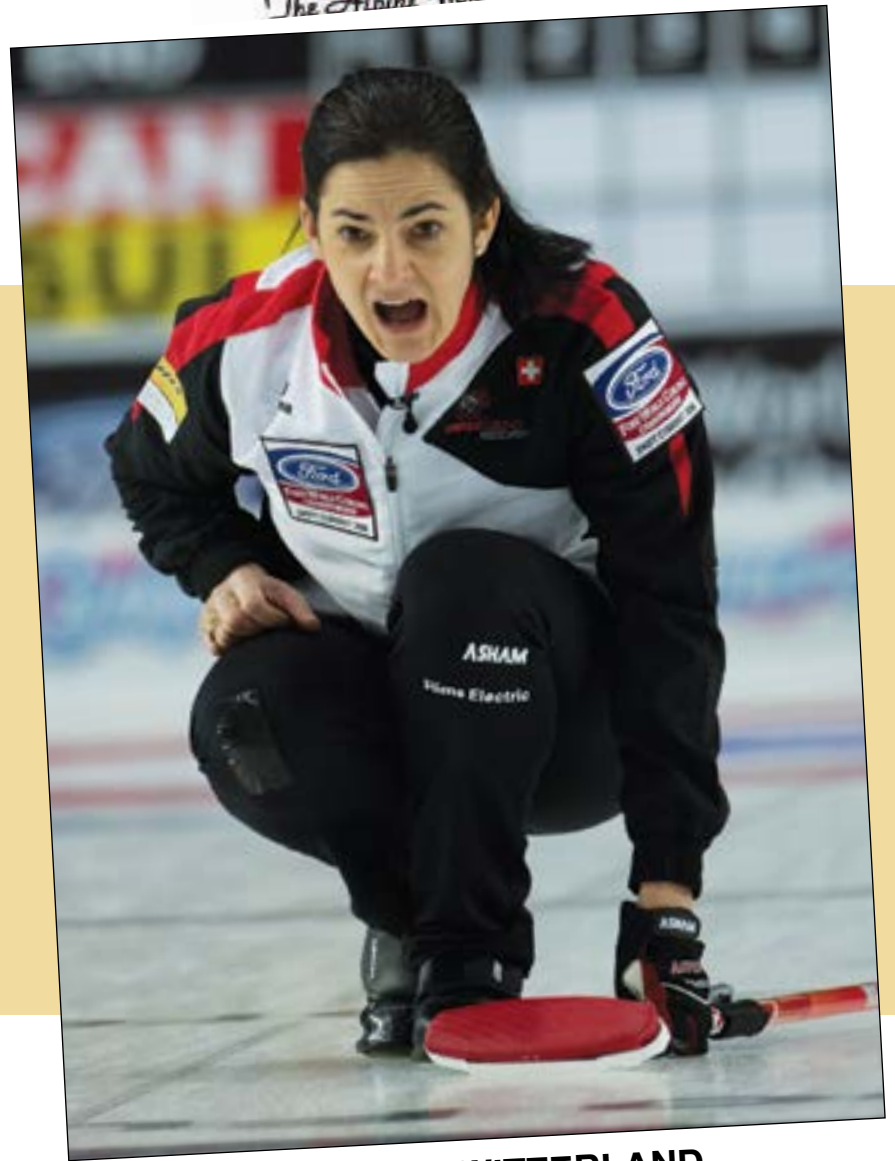


Issue 9 – Sunday, March 27, 2016 • An Official Publication of Curling Canada

Make the final... □ □ □



SATSUKI FUJISAWA: JAPAN



BINIA FELTSCHER: SWITZERLAND

ONWARDS TO 2016-2017

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 FEB 18-FEB 26
 MAR 4-MAR 12
 APR 1-APR 9

Sponsor of the Day

See Sponsor Profile on page 14

Semifinal

Medal a first for Japan

Faces former winner today

By **CAM HUTCHINSON**
Eye Opener Associate Editor

Japan made curling history Saturday night at the Ford World Women's Championship, presented by Meridian Manufacturing, when Satsuki Fujisawa and her young team defeated Russia's Anna Sidorova 7-5 in an extra end.

It is the first time Japan has been guaranteed a medal in world competition. Fujisawa advances to the gold-medal game against Binia Feltscher of Switzerland.

In the bronze-medal game, Canada's team of Chelsea Carey, third Amy Nixon, second Jocelyn Peterman, lead Laine Peters, alternate Susan O'Connor and coach Charley Thomas will play Sidorova. For Carey, a win will give her a spot in the Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings Trials for the 2018 Olympics.

Fujisawa is proud to be the winner of the first world curling medal for her country and hopes it will have an impact.

"Curling is still a minor sport in Japan," Fujisawa said through an interpreter. "It is only during the Olympics when it gets a buildup. Being in the final tomorrow hopefully will help gain more interest in the sport and build up a bigger fan base, so we are happy."

Fujisawa said the team was much more comfortable playing in the semifinal than it was under the bright lights of the Page 1-2 game the night before.

"Yesterday we had trouble reading the ice and weren't able to get our confidence. We had to throw without being confident in the shots we were calling. Today, we felt a lot better on every shot, we communicated more and really believed in what each other was saying. It all worked out better."

J.D. Lind, coach of the Japanese team, said he would have been surprised had someone told him a week ago that his team would be playing for the world championship.

"I knew this team had skills, but you never expect the first time at the world championships to show such poise and consistency throughout the week. They definitely played great today and I think they definitely deserve to be in the final tomorrow."

He said his team was fortunate to get a dry run at pressure-packed curling in the Page 1-2 game. It gave them a second shot after the loss. He said a lot of young teams play in the 3-4 game and bow out.

"The first time is always nervous, so we were lucky we had a bit of a free game last night. Obviously, we would have liked to have won that one, but having a second chance today ... was a huge help. They were way less nervous, much more comfortable with the ice. We had a really good meeting last night to go through a lot of things, and tonight they played like they did all week."

Lind is looking forward to playing the Swiss.

"The Swiss have been great all week. They have been so successful because they don't make mistakes. They don't give you much so when we get our chance we really have to capitalize. If we can put a little pressure on them and play like we did tonight, hopefully it will be another close game."

For the third consecutive year, Sidorova will be playing for a bronze medal.

"Japan played well and it was always tough to get two," Sidorova said. "We struggled a little bit with the ice. A couple of really disappointing mistakes made the difference."



Satsuki Fujisawa

The first time is always nervous, so we were lucky we had a bit of a free game last night.

— J.D. Lind

ROAD to the FINAL



How Switzerland made it to the Ford World Women's Curling Championship final:

- Game 1: W USA 5-4
- Game 2: L CAN 7-4
- Game 3: W DEN 7-6
- Game 4: W FIN 9-6
- Game 5: W GER 9-2
- Game 6: W SWE 7-5
- Game 7: W JPN 7-4
- Game 8: W SCO 7-6
- Game 9: L RUS 6-3
- Game 10: W ITA 5-4
- Game 11: W KOR 7-5

Page Playoff
1-2 Game: W JPN 8-4

How Japan made it to the Ford World Women's Curling Championship final:

- Game 1: W FIN 7-5
- Game 2: W ITA 10-3
- Game 3: W RUS 6-1
- Game 4: L DEN 11-4
- Game 5: W KOR 6-5
- Game 6: L SUI 7-4
- Game 7: W SWE 8-4
- Game 8: W GER 8-1
- Game 9: W USA 7-4
- Game 10: W SCO 10-4
- Game 11: W CAN 11-2

Page Playoff
1-2 Game: L SUI 8-4
3-4 Game: W RUS 7-5



Swiss skip
Binia Feltscher



Japanese skip
Satsuki Fujisawa

SCOREBOARD							
SEMIFINAL							
Russia (Sidorova).....	000	010	200	20	—	5	
Japan (Fujisawa).....	000	102	011	02	—	7	
RUSSIA	SH	P	%	JAPAN	SH	P	%
Ezekh	22	82	93	Yoshida	22	75	85
Raeva	22	67	76	Suzuki	22	77	88
Fomina	22	80	91	Yoshida	22	72	82
Sidorova	22	72	82	Fujisawa	22	82	93
Team Totals	88	301	86	Team Totals	88	306	87



Japan celebrates extra-end win over Russia, which sends them to the gold medal game.

What's their secret?

It's Crazy Uncle Al, of course

By **CAM HUTCHINSON**

Eye Opener Associate Editor

A song and a crazy uncle have helped propel Switzerland into today's final at the Ford World Women's Curling Championship, presented by Meridian Manufacturing.

Oh yes, there is really good curling as well.

The Swiss team of skip Binia Feltscher, third Irene Schori, second Franziska Kaufmann, lead Christine Urech, alternate Carole Howard and coach Al Moore will play the final game of the championship today at 3 p.m.

The team has an "aw-shucks" attitude as the big game approaches.

"Honestly, we are very proud and very happy to play for a medal and we already have a medal," Schori said after the team dispatched Japan on Friday in the Page 1-2 game. "We sure want to fight for the gold medal, but if there will be a failure, it will not be the end of the world."

The Feltscher team is seeking its country's fourth gold medal in five years, and the second for this group. It won the

world title in 2014 in Saint John, N.B.

The secret to the success?

"Maybe it's Crazy Uncle Al," Schori said with a big laugh.

Crazy Uncle Al is better known as Al Moore, the coach of the team. Why the nickname?

"Look at his boots?" Schori said, with another laugh.

Moore was sporting some shiny new red and black kicks, courtesy of Arnold Asham of Asham Curling Supplies and Equipment. Asham, who sponsors the team, sent a box of goodies to Swift Current earlier in the week. Moore was wearing his gift proudly.

A song has also become part of the team's routine. 500 Miles by the Proclaimers can be heard playing while the Swiss four does its pre-game practice.

"Two years ago in Saint John, they always played this song when we had practice, so we've always remembered this song," said Schori. "We had it on our playlist at the European championships in Champéry so they always played it there too."

"It's our lucky song. That's the secret."

Well, that and great curling.

Moore said the team's experience is a

big factor in its success.

"The number of times you do this — they have been in European finals and they're in world finals — it becomes a more easy feeling for them. They know what is going on ... so they're more relaxed."

He said the team will approach the final like any other game.

"We'll just be thinking of putting in the

best

game we possibly can, and whatever happens, happens. This is the easiest team to coach in the world."

Why?

"Joie de vivre. They're always happy, ready to play for the passion of the game. So that makes it easy on me."

And hard on the team's opponents.



Binia Feltscher

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PLAYERS CLUB



3-4 GAME

WOE, CANADA

Well, there's always the bronze

SCOREBOARD

Russia (Sidorova)..... 022 010 020 x — 7
 Canada (Carey) 000 100 201 x — 4

RUSSIA	SH	P	%	CANADA	SH	P	%
Ezekh	18	63	88	Peters	20	61	76
Raeva	20	76	95	Peterman	20	66	83
Fomina	20	70	88	Nixon	20	70	88
Sidorova	17	64	94	Carey	18	48	67
Team Totals	76	273	91	Team Totals	78	245	79

By **CAM HUTCHINSON**
Eye Opener Associate Editor

Canada's hopes of winning the Ford World Women's Championship, presented by Meridian Manufacturing, for the first time since 2008 came crashing down Saturday afternoon, when Russia's Anna Sidorova defeated Chelsea Carey 7-4.

The game was decided in the third end, for all intents and purposes. Close misses by Canadian second Jocelyn Peterman, third Amy Nixon and two by skip by Chelsea Carey led to a steal of two and a 4-0 lead for Russia.

"It's been a battle; it's been a grind," Carey said of her week. "There have been some frustrating times and some great times. It's been an adventure and certainly a journey, but we are so grateful to be here and wear the Maple Leaf. There is no greater honour that I can think of than that."

She said the second and third ends were key to the outcome.

"I just missed a double in the second end and we gave them a deuce, and then we struggled in three. We had some chances, but again we just

flashed on the wide side and then we'd just rub the guard and then were fooled on the speed for my draw. It was just one of those games. We weren't throwing them that badly and the weights weren't that far off, but we couldn't buy one for most of the game today."

Carey did get a deuce in the seventh end to get back within two. Sidorova might have looked at it as a cheap hammer at that point in the game.

Sidorova made a double with her first rock in the eighth and had an open hit for three with her last rock. She rolled out, but went up 7-3 to get right back to where she was after three ends.

That was that.

Sidorova said she knows it is not easy for Canada to play at home, despite the crowd support. She said she experienced the pressure of representing her country at the Sochi Olympics.



CONTINUED
 Opposite page



Russian skip Anna Sidorova had her game face on Saturday.

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"Swift Current, Saskatchewan has just finished hosting the World for 9 wonderful days. Thank you."

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“Everyone is cheering for them and expects results from them. We were under pressure as well (today), but it was not the same thing. When the Olympics were in Sochi, it was kind of the same, so I know how it feels. It is not always that (crowd support) can help you.”

Carey and her supporting cast of Nixon, Peterman, Laine Peters, alternate Susan O'Connor and coach Charley Thomas, drop to the bronze-medal game today at 10 a.m.

“We’re just going to leave it all out there,” Carey said. “We felt good going into today. It just wasn’t meant to be for us. We fought the inch and they made everything, so that is how it goes sometimes.”

A win in the bronze-medal game will give Carey a spot in the Tim Hortons Roar of the Rings Trials for the 2018 Winter Olympic Games. She said she won’t be thinking about that today.

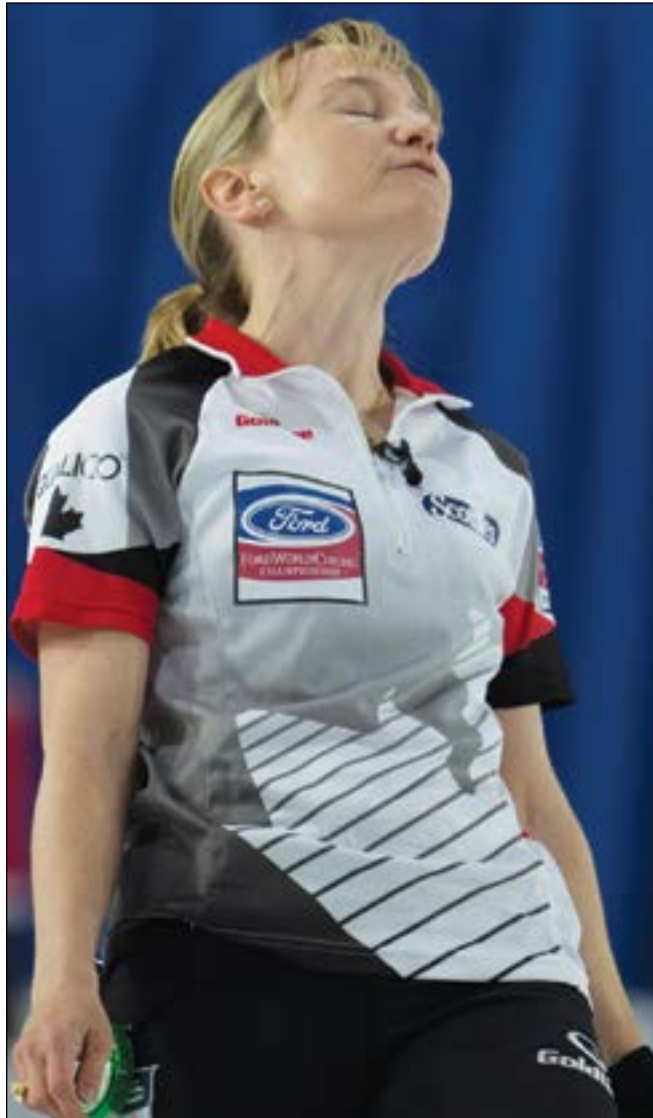
“No, you just want to stand on the podium. You just want to play a good game and nothing else.”

Jennifer Jones skipped the last Canadian team to win the worlds.



It’s been an adventure and certainly a journey, but we are so grateful to be here and wear the Maple Leaf.

— Chelsea Carey



It just wasn’t Canada’s day in the 3-4 game Saturday. Above, Amy Nixon reacts to a missed shot. Right, skip Chelsea Carey has an audience behind her.



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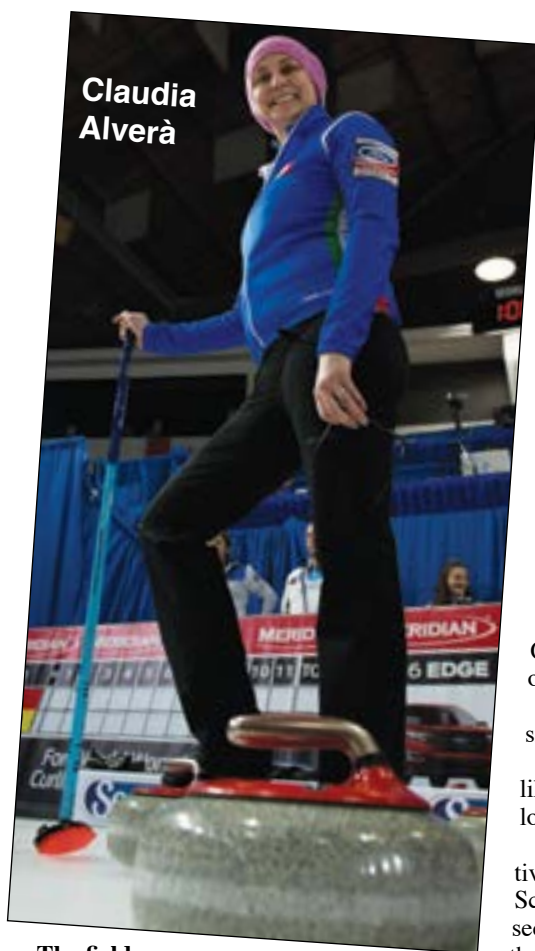
The ENVELOPES

... please!

So, here we are, putting the wraps on another Ford World Women's Curling Championship, presented by Meridian Manufacturing, a renewal that has been one of the better ones, from the spectacular curling, to the wonderful volunteers and committee members.

And keeping with tradition at the *Eye Opener*, we'd like to pass out some awards as the event comes to a close. Former *Eye Opener* editor Larry Wood used to close the show with something called his Hearts and Heartaches Awards, and it's something worth keeping.

So, without further ado, the envelopes, please ...



Claudia Alverà

Questionable call — Canada's Chelsea Carey playing the come-around tapback facing two South Koreans counters with her last rock in the 10th, instead of the double. She sailed by and lost by one. Even if she just gets one with the double attempt, she stays alive with the hammer in the extra end. Puzzling.

Happiest gang — The Danes were pretty happy all week because they live in the happiest country in the world, according to a report, but if you really wanted to see happy people, it had to be the Japanese. They are all bubbly and looked like they were having fun, win or lose (mostly win).

Coaching Award — Tie: J.D. Lind (Japan) and Rodger Schmidt (Russia).

Most inspirational — Claudia Alverà, who came to Swift Current with her Italian team, fighting the effects of the treatment she's undergoing for brain cancer. She couldn't play but remained upbeat and joyed by the fact she was able to participate, even if only as a non-playing alternate.

Cool Award — Playing a different country's national anthem before every draw. Handing out that country's flags to fans prior to the game made it even cooler.

Best uniforms — Certainly not the Swedes. Black, white and red work well, so Germany and Canada.

Best fans (other than those cheering for Canada): No one has more fun than the Swiss.

Curler most suited to doing stand-up comedy: Eve Muirhead has a great delivery on and off the ice.

Rookie reporter of the week: Michael Connors of the *Eye Opener*. Were there any other rookie reporters at the event?

Nicest photographer: Candace Woodside of the Southwest Booster.

Media's best friend: Amy Nixon tells it like it is, is incredibly articulate and talks in long sentences.

Biggest sigh of relief: TSN executives after Canada's Chelsea Carey defeated Scotland on the final round-robin draw to secure a spot in the playoffs. Viewership of the world championship goes through the basement in Canada without its team in the playoff mix.

The restaurants — The Akropol Greek restaurant downtown was good, but no pastisio, so that was a bummer. Wong's was also excellent.

The bars — The Patch is always the best bar in town for the week, so why go anywhere else? But Original Joe's or good ol' Boston Pizza were fun spots in a pinch.

Most sombre sight — The plaque in the main lobby of the Credit Union iplex, in memory of the four Swift Current Broncos who died in that horrific bus accident Dec. 30, 1986 — Chris Mantyka, Brent Ruff, Scott Kruger and Trent Kresse. For those of us who lived in Saskatchewan at the time, it brought back chilling memories.

The Patch — Packed! One of the best,

The field —

One of the better ones. If you follow curling, you'd recognize most of the names here, so that was good. And they didn't disappoint. The quality of play was first-rate.

The facility — At times it felt like you were a mouse in a maze, turning down one corridor or the other, but once you figured out where you were going, it was fine. Nice size for an event like this, and having The Patch attached was a big, big bonus.

The ice — Some carping. What else is new?

Biggest surprise — That would be Team Japan. Nobody expected them to challenge for the world title, but that's exactly what they did.

Biggest disappointment — A tie between the Americans and the Swedes. Both teams came in with high hopes but couldn't get any traction.



EVE MUIRHEAD



JAPANESE SKIP
SATSUKI
FUJISAWA

ever. There were times a fella couldn't find a seat in the place, and that's OK. There have been too many times this season when the Patch at other Season of Champions events was half empty, so this was refreshing to see. Good music, good food and a great party atmosphere. What could be better?

The volunteers — Warm and friendly, which is the Saskatchewan way. The volunteers make these things happen. No volunteers, no event, it's as simple as that.

The entertainment — Super! Trevor Panczak can play here anytime.

The attendance — Good, right from

the get-go. We don't know what the final attendance numbers will be, but it's certain the organizing committee will be pleased.

Most obvious no-show — Angus McStone may be the new face of Curling Canada, but where is he? The Great Scot never appeared at any of the Season of Champions events this year — including the Women's Worlds.

The weather — Good, for this time of year. Curling fans caught a break this time around.

Wish — Let's come back to Swift Current, real soon.

Q&A

With curling fans

If someone asked you 'why do you love curling,' what would you say?

"It's one of the most sociable and friendly games there is. Both players and fans get together to enjoy it, and it brings about a special type of energy. This energy goes back to the days of the bonspiels. It has that great spirit."

— Mac Forster
Swift Current, Sask.



"It's a social game. You meet a lot of people and drink! I do bonspiels, and bonspiels are all about drinking and being social. That's what I like to do!"

— Cody Conn
Morse, Sask.



"I've watched curling all my life and curled for some of it. Some people think it's boring, but I don't. There's a lot of skill. You're throwing far and there's so much precision involved. The skill is unbelievable, actually."

— John Kennedy
Swift Current



"It's a good reason to drink and a good reason to be sociable. It's a good social outlet and family outing."

— Shauna McBurney
Swift Current



"I love the adrenalin you get from throwing a really good shot. And the strategy required means you have to think about so many different options for shots. There are just so many things you have to consider in regards to strategy to call a good game and make it exciting for the fans."

— Namoi Greenwood
Swift Current



"I love curling because of the camaraderie and sportsmanship. It's something where people can come together, be super competitive, but then at the end of the day have a super good time."

— Anna Castellano
Denver, Colorado



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winds down nine action packed days!

What's the best way to celebrate the end of a long, exciting week? One more party in the Patch of course! Grab a cold barley nectar, a place amongst friends, and relax with the smooth tunes of the Vern Michaels Band to take you away. Rock out with a mix of their own songs and lay back with your favourite country and rock covers. See you there!



DON'T MISS OUT!

TODAY IS THE LAST DAY FOR LIVE MUSIC!

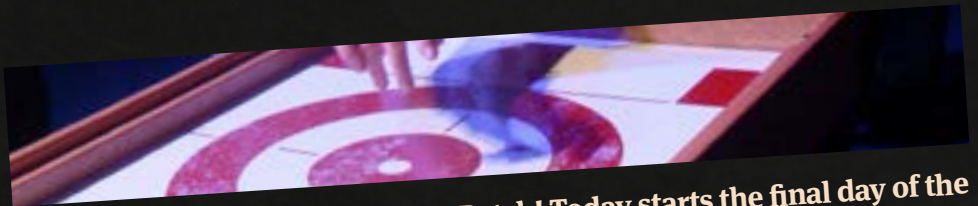
The FWWCC this year has been legendary! Join us in the Patch between draws to close out the weekend of Patch entertainment and the last nine days of non-stop action! Fun activities, refreshments & of course, barley nectar await you!

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“The fun & games continue in the Patch! Today starts the final day of the Cool Shots tourney! Daily winners compete for bragging rights & the chance to win the BIG CASH PRIZE! Just think of all the barley nectar for me — I mean, for you!”
— Angus McStone

GET SOCIAL!

The feel of the ice, the roar of the game, and the cold, cold barley nectar! We want to hear about all of your stories at this year's Ford World Women's Curling Championship! Great shots, triumphs or moments of awe — immortalize them into legend. Join your voice to the roar on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram!

CurlingCanada
Official tags: **#WWCC2016 #AngusMcStone**

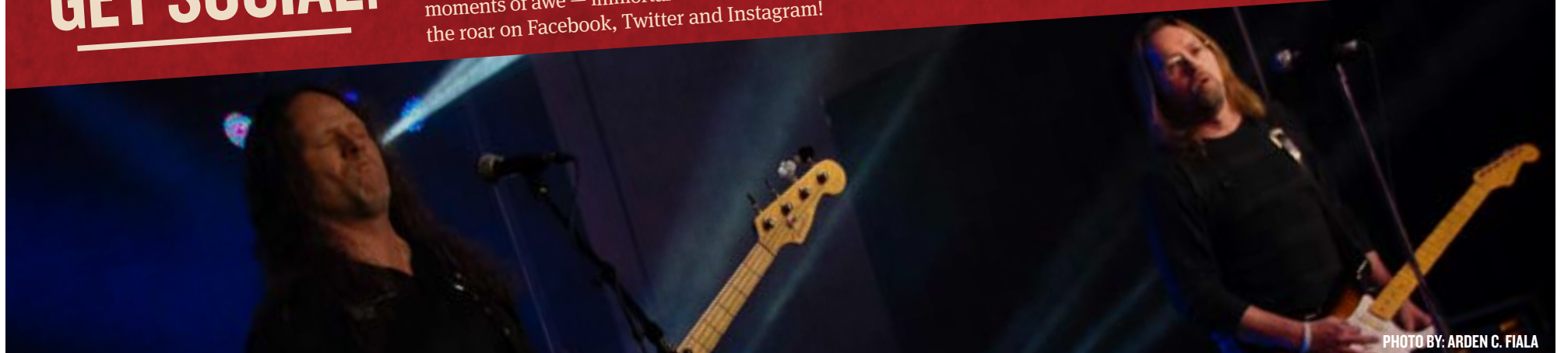


PHOTO BY: ARDEN C. FIALA

YOUR STORIES!

They will sing songs of this day! Here's what you're saying at the Ford World Women's Curling Championship!. You only have one more day to add your voice to the roar on social media!



tiagetz

"It was a Happy Birthday!" #feelin24 #fordcurling #wwcc2016



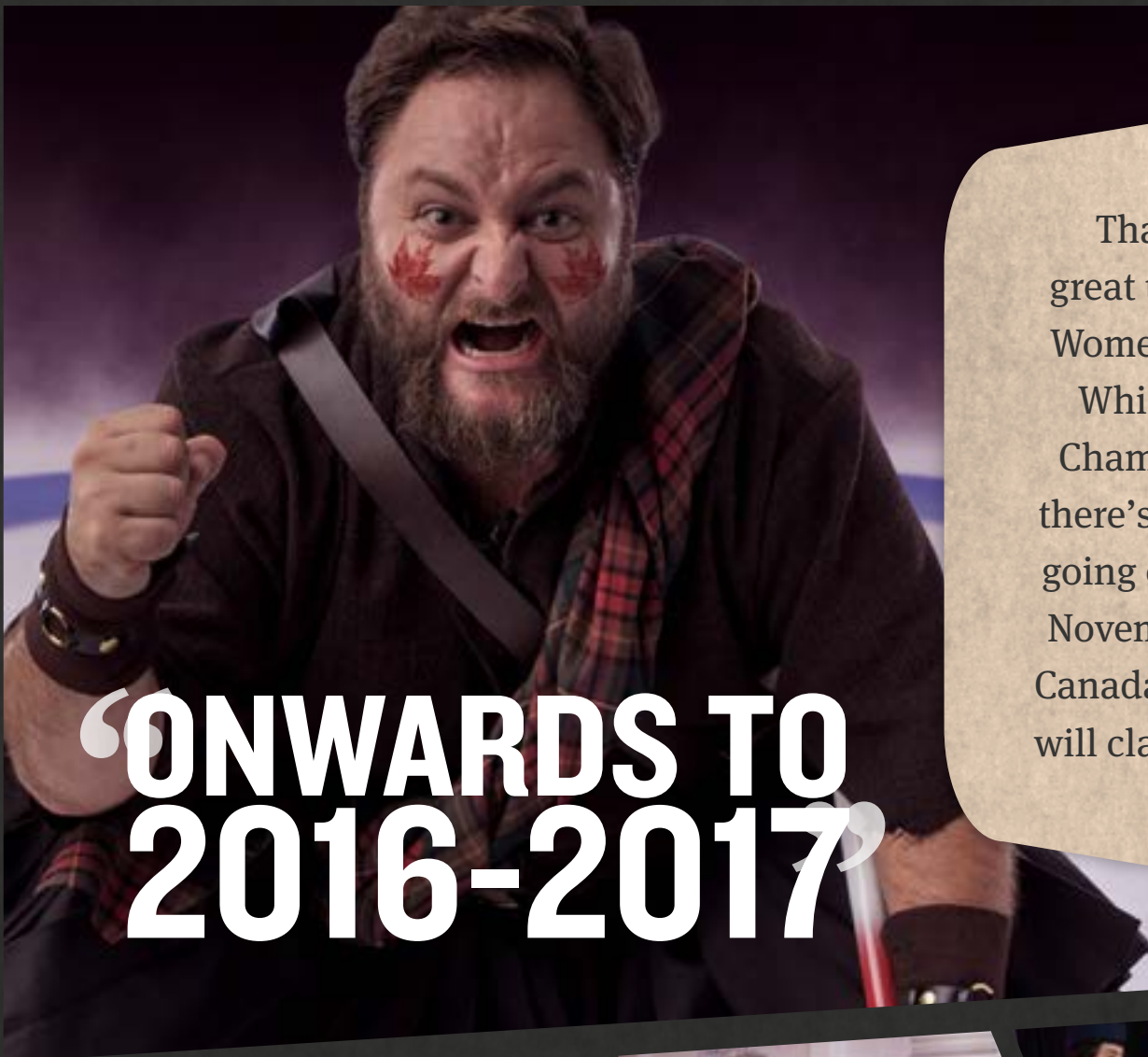
nliewicki

"Great times had by all in Speedy Creek." #wwcc2016 #patch



baeja1254

"#wwcc2016 #curling #womenscurling #teamsotland"



ONWARDS TO 2016-2017

Thanks, Swift Current, for a great time at the 2016 Ford World Women's Curling Championship! While the 2015-2016 Season of Champions has come to a close, there's always great curling action going on. We will see you again in November at the Home Hardware Canada Cup where curling legends will clash again for the title! Here's to 2016-2017!



“ THEY WILL SING SONGS ABOUT THIS ” — ANGUS McSTONE



Hats off to the volunteers

We would like to thank the players, fans and sponsors who have made the 2016 Ford World Women's Curling Championship, presented by Meridian Manufacturing, so successful.

An event such as this would not be possible without great volunteers. They are:

- Acton, Allan
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- Ahrens-Gruetzner, Jill
- Akre, Julie
- Allsen, Millie
- Altermatt, Linda
- Anderson, Rebecca
- Andreas, Daphne
- Anning, John (jack)
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- Appleyard, Jo
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Della Harder, Shirley Walker and Heather Wallace hand out flags



The Saskatchewan Pep Band volunteered its musical chops.



Shelley Drever sticks with the program.

Edmonton plans blowout party in 2017

It will be a going-away party to end all going-away parties.

The Ford Men's Curling Championship is headed for Edmonton next year, and it stands to be the last major sports event to be held in Rexall Place (previously known as Northlands Coliseum and Skyreach Centre).

The event will run April 1-9 and return to a city that has embraced major curling events with a passion.

And it should be no different next year as the city says goodbye to a place that is home to the Edmonton Oilers and their five Stanley Cup championships, and has hosted several major national and international curling events.

In fact, it was because of the arena's history of hosting curling events that the decision was made to keep the event out of Edmonton's new downtown Rogers Place and place it in an old, familiar place for a final

hurrah.

"This gives you some great closure on a fantastic legacy of curling in that building," Northlands president and CEO Tim Reid told the *Edmonton Journal*. "It'll kind of be like the last game of the Oilers. At least you know that it's coming and it's something to celebrate, and there's some brilliant memories of Canadian championships and world champions who have played in that building."

"This gives us a target for a last great curling event that will happen at Rexall Place as it stands today."

Edmonton has always been a great city to host major curling events. The 2005 Tim Hortons Brier drew what was believed to be a never-to-be-broken attendance total of 281,985. The 2007 Edmonton Worlds drew the largest attendance total in history



TERRY MORRIS

- 184,970.

Northlands will work with Curling Canada as a partner for this championship. In the past, the curling association took all the financial risks and did most of the work.

Terry Morris, who has been involved in every major curling championship held in Edmonton since 1987, will be Curling Canada's event manager for the world championship.

"This is Canada's 150th birthday and the sixth curling event held in this building, and will probably be the last," said

Morris.

"We're planning to have a blowout party for this last event and maybe bring back all the previous champions."

Morris says he hopes to recruit a younger class of volunteers for the event.

"Let's look at a younger demographic," he said. "If we can get people involved who are younger, it starts to attract the same generation of people."

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Bob Pickering



Sam Richardson

Photos courtesy of the Regina Leader-Post

Curling loses a pair of icons

For the Eye Opener

They were both giants in the sport, fierce rivals on the ice but good friends away from it. And both were proud Saskatchewan residents their entire lives.

And both, sadly, are now gone.

Canadian curling has lost two of its iconic figures in Sam (Garnet) Richardson and Bob (Pee Wee) Pickering, who passed away within eight months of each other last year. Richardson died in Regina at age 82 while Pickering passed away in Alberta, also at the age of 82.

Both put their stamp on the sport in different ways.

Richardson's life in curling went beyond merely throwing a rock or sweeping it. He preached the gospel of curling wherever he went after his competitive career was done, and become a much-sought-after banquet speaker.

"When you've been around Regina as long as I have, when you come into an arena, you're going to expect to talk to a lot of people. The biggest problem is you met some of them 20, 30, 40 years ago and you can't remember all their names. You can remember their faces," Richardson told the *Regina Leader-Post* in 2006, when he served as honorary chair of the Tim Hortons Brier.

Even though he was a member of one of the finest curling teams ever assembled, even though he coached a team to one of the most memorable championships in the history of the Brier, he was still one of the people, never above them, and always passionate about the Roaring Game.

Richardson rose to fame as the second for the legendary Richardson team from Saskatchewan. With his brother Ernie at skip, and cousins Arnie at third and Wes at lead, Sam won four Brier and world championships (1959, '60, '62 and '63; in the final year, Wes was replaced by Mel Perry due to a back injury).

In 1976, he served as a volunteer driver at the Macdonald Brier in his hometown, and was assigned to a relatively unknown team from Newfoundland, skipped by Jack MacDuff.

He would take on an unofficial role as team coach, and would mentor the team from the Rock to one of the most unexpected titles in Brier history — still the only Canadian men's championship ever won by a Newfoundland/Labrador team.

He, along with the other three Richardsons, are members of Canada's Sports Hall of Fame, the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame and the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, in addition to being a former winner of Curling Canada's President's Award.

When people look back on the life and times of Pickering, one enduring image will pop into mind: His backswing.

It was, from a curling purist's standpoint, ridiculous. Here was this slender man hoisting a 20-kilogram hunk of granite high above his head while in the hack, and then dropping it delicately on to the ice, like a butterfly landing on a flower, before sliding it down the sheet. The delivery amazed a legion of curling fans in the 1960s and 70s, who wondered how this curling legend from Avonlea, Sask. kept his shoulder rooted in its socket.

The backswing may have been Pickering's trademark, but there was much, much more to the man. Like his delivery, Pickering was unique. Consider this: How many men can say they ran a grain farm for four decades, became a world-class curler, made a major contribution in politics, was a devoted husband, father and grandfather, and all the time had to answer to the name of "Pee Wee"?

"He was quite a guy and a heck of a curler," says Ernie Richardson. "He didn't always have the best teams but he knew the game so well that you could never take him for granted or he'd beat you."

Pickering representing the province in six Briers, five as skip, and won four Saskatchewan titles in a row, which still stands as a provincial record. He went to his first Brier in 1961 as second for Jack Keyes, then skipped Saskatchewan teams in 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971. His team in 1968, 1970 and 1971 consisted of Keyes, Garnet Campbell and Gary Ford and was inducted into the Saskatchewan Curling Hall of Fame in 2005.

Alas, he never won a Brier.

Pickering jumped into politics later in life. He represented the area of Bengough-Milestone in the Saskatchewan government from 1978 to 1991. He served in cabinet as Minister of Rural Affairs, as Minister of Rural Development and as Minister of Parks and Renewable Resources.

Pickering was inducted into the Canadian Curling Hall of Fame in 1974.

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By PATTI DAWN SWANSSON

Eye Opener Contributor

The debate about gender equality in sports did not begin with Raymond Moore stuffing a Nike sneaker into his mouth by suggesting Serena Williams and all other female tennis players ought to get on their knees and chant hosannas to Rafa Nadal and Roger Federer. Nor does it end there.

I mean, as sure as Billie Jean King paddywhacked Bobby Riggs almost half a century ago, the dawn shall arrive when another misguided sportsman permits his misogynist mean streak to avoid the filter between his grey matter and his gob and he reminds us, yet again, that men are superior to women on the playing field. Any playing field.

On that matter, there is little avenue for argument.

Men, in general terms, are bigger and they are stronger. They run faster, they jump higher and they throw and hit things large and little for greater distances. (They also spit and grab their groins far more often, but they earn no bonus points for leading the league in boorish behaviour.)

So I'm sure we can agree that testosterone trumps estrogen in the playground.

Had Moore said only that, he likely would still be chief executive officer of the PNB Paribas Open, an annual gathering of tennis glitterati, both male and female, in Indian Wells, Calif., and the fifth most significant tournament on the calendar. Instead, he is the defrocked CEO because the filter between his grey matter and gob was on the fritz.

Curling:

The only sport where both men and women wear the pants in the house

If you missed it, here was his take on tennis: "In my next life when I come back I want to be someone in the WTA (Women's Tennis Association), because they ride on the coattails of the men. If I was a lady player, I'd go down every night on my knees and thank God that Roger Federer and Rafa Nadal were born."

So there. On your knees Serena and Venus Williams, Maria Sharapova and Victoria Azarenka!

We won't get into Moore going all-in on creepiness, whereby he sounded like your basic skirt-chasing dinosaur in lauding the physical attractiveness of the next generation of tennis's female elite, but suffice to say he likely travels to and from the Indian Wells Tennis Garden via horse and buggy.

Still, his misguided remarks set me to thinking: Is there a professional sport in which gender equality exists? Where the girls play the boys on equal footing?

I can think of just two: Horse racing and

curling.

While some of the old boys in the sport of kings are reluctant to give rides to women, I have yet to meet the race horse who quibbles about the gender of the jockey throwing a leg over its saddle. Colonial Affair certainly didn't complain when Julie Krone urged him to the finish line first in the 1993 Belmont Stakes, and nary a discouraging word was heard from the other 3,703 mounts she brought home first.

Rosie Napravnik, meanwhile, was the fifth-leading jockey in North America and sixth-highest money earner in 2014 before she chose to retire and have a baby.

So, sure, girls can have as much giddyup as guys.

In terms of team sports, though, there is nothing to equal the gender equality in curling at the highest loft.

Just a week ago, for example, one of the premier distaff outfits on the planet, Rachel Homan and friends, bettered one of the very

best men's sides, Charley Thomas of Calgary, in the Grand Slam of Curling Elite 10 in Victoria. Women and men have been competing side-by-side since 1964 in the Canadian mixed championships, an event that has featured world men's titleholders like Rick Folk, Jeff Stoughton, Kevin Koe and Rick Lang. A woman, Shannon Kleibrink, skipped the winning entry in 2004. And there's coed curling in the Continental Cup, with mixed teams in doubles and skins. In fact, it was a mixed team of two women and two men that delivered the decisive points for Team North America in the 2016 challenge in Las Vegas.

Gender equality even extends to the broadcast booth, where analysts/colour commentators Cheryl Bernard and Cathy Gauthier are given as much voice during a men's match as Russ Howard and David Nedohin.

It works in curling because, as much as the men can throw bigger weight and put more oomph into their brushing, drawing to the button against three in the final end knows no gender. Nor do the rocks, the rings, the hog lines, the hacks or the pebble.

Let's put it this way: Curling is the only sport where both women and men wear the pants in the house.

Patti Dawn Swansson is a longtime jock journalist who has covered numerous Briers, Scotties Tournament of Hearts, world curling championships and Roar of the Rings Olympic Trials. She would never get on her knees and sing hosannas to any male curler, not even Russ Howard.



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That's all, folks!

You've been reading the *Eye Opener* newspaper for nine days, but it's a sad fact we never put out a final edition, chronicling the final game.

It's not that we don't want to. We do. We're newspaper people. We want to get the final story.

But with the Credit Union iplex seats empty and the Patch deserted on the post-event Monday, it makes no sense to produce a paper.

So that means tomorrow curling fans who have been reading about the Worlds in the *Eye Opener* this week will have to find the final results elsewhere, beginning with Curling Canada's website. You will find everything you need right there at www.curling.ca

But before we go, we want to thank a bunch of people who have helped us

get the paper out to you on a brief, but daily basis.

Of course, we'd like to thank the competitors for their time and courtesy. It's hard to talk to reporters after a tough loss, but these folks do it consistently and without complaint. So hats off to the curlers, and also the coaches and fans who responded to our questions in the Patch. We couldn't produce the *Eye Opener* without your co-operation.

We'd also like to thank all the volunteers who worked the media room, our print partners at Transcontinental in Saskatoon, and to event manager Rob Dewhirst for his help and guidance.

But mostly we'd like to thank you, the readers, for your interest.

Hopefully we'll do it all over again next season.

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CURLING QUIZ

1. True or false: Scottish skip Eve Muirhead and brother Glen and father Gordon were in the running for the Triple Crown of curling this year, with her in the world women's event and the boys competing in the world men's and world senior men's championships.

2. She said it: "I remember as a young kid saying I would rather win the Worlds than the Olympics because that's the curlers' title. But nowadays you look at it and think you would rather win the Olympics any day."

- a) Chelsea Carey.
- b) Eve Muirhead.
- c) Laine Peters.
- d) Erika Brown.

3. Match the curler with her sports hero:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Franziska Kaufmann | Serena Williams |
| Erika Brown | Glenn Howard |

Min Ji Um

Binia Feltscher

Roger Federer
Jennifer Jones

4. Canada's voice of curling, Vic Rauter, estimates he has called this many shots during his time in the TSN booth:

- 1 million.
- 500,000.
- 750,000.
- 250,000.

5. These people invented curling:

- a) A bunch of Scottish men looking for something to do when golf season shut down.
- b) The famed Richardson family from Saskatchewan—Ernie, Arnold, Sam and Wes.
- c) Prairie farmers looking for something to do once the crops were harvested and sent to market.
- d) A group of Scottish women looking for something to do when the men were golfing.

ANSWERS:

1. It's true. The Muirhead clan has Eve, Glen and Gordon competing on the world stage this year.

2. That's Scottish skip Eve Muirhead talking about the Olympic Games vs. the world championship.

3. Franziska Kaufmann, Roger Federer;

4. Make the final 500,000 called shots for Vic Rauter.

5. It's generally accepted that Scotland is the cradle of curling and the game dates back to the 16th century.

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