

Novices Guide to Wheelchair Curling



INTRODUCTION

Wheelchair curling is a great way to meet new people, and a great way to keep healthy while having fun. Come along to one of our events, where you will discover why this is the world's largest such club for wheelchair users.

Members learn new skills...PLUS...

- They make new friends and savour 'the craic'
- They discover abilities they hardly knew before
- They have a fun, social and sporting experience
- They get enjoyable exercise normally denied them
- They take part in competitions and inter-club games

These are some of the reasons why our many members, of all ages, take part.

Curling is one of the few remaining amateur sports. Curling has always been known for the good sportsmanship among its members, both on and off the ice. While most courtesies suggested will not be found in the rule book, they are practiced by all curlers who understand the true spirit and tradition of the "Roaring Game."

Curling is a game of tradition as well as skill. Every game is started with a hearty handshake and a sincere expression of "Good Curling" to your opponents and you teammates. Every game is ended with a hearty handshake and a friendly comment to the winners regarding their play.

Traditionally, we gather with our opponents after the game to share a glass of our favourite beverage and enjoy a friendly discussion of shots missed and made in the game. Therefore, we never do or say anything on the ice, which would be a cause for embarrassment to ourselves or our opponents during the post-game gathering.

Although curling is a social sport, it also possesses a list of various conventional rules that should be applied to each and every game that you play. Remember it is a fun game. These rules will show your opponents that you have respect for them and your teammates.

Good curling!

Wheelchair Curling Is it the same game?

Wheelchair curling is an adaptation of curling for athletes with a disability. It is actually very similar to "ordinary" or (Able-bodied) curling. The rules are close to the same but do have differences.

Wheelchair curling is played with the same stones and on the same ice as regular curling, though the stones are delivered from a stationary wheelchair and there is no brushing or sweeping.

Stones are delivered while leaning over the side of the wheelchair, and pushed by a delivery stick. This is a stick with a bracket that fits over the stone handle.

This allows the stone to be pushed while applying the correct rotation. The stone must be within 18" of the centre-line at delivery, and be released before reaching the hog-line.

Anchoring the Delivery or “The Buddy System”

“The buddy system” is when one wheelchair curler grabs the player’s wheelchair from behind, stabilizing the player significantly. It also provides additional activity and role responsibility for the curlers, increases safety, and increases the confidence of the strong curler whose wheelchair can move around during the throwing action. When at all possible the player anchoring should place his/her hands on the inside of the wheel to avoid interfere with the player’s delivery.

Release in stick delivery

The handle of the stone needs to be placed at a 10 or 2 o’clock position. The stone will then be rotated at the end of the delivery, slightly clockwise or anti-clockwise to apply rotation. This is similar to opening a standard door knob. The rotation either clockwise or anti-clockwise only need be slight. Releasing the stone with this method is sometimes referred to as a ‘Palm Up’ for clockwise turn or ‘Palm Down’ for anti-clockwise.

Warm Ups

Like every sport warming up is the key to having a successful practice and preventing injuries. Wheelchair curling is no different. Due to prolonged exposure to the cold warming up prior to the game and proper stretching becomes vital.

General Equipment

Wheelchair curling in comparison to all other wheelchair sports will be found to be the cheapest and most economical wheelchair based sport that exists for the recreation player today. There is of course the option for players to invest greater amounts of monies if they wish to become more competitive.

Wheelchair

Over 98% of all wheelchair curlers use their everyday wheelchair, only has players become more advanced will they, if at all change their wheelchairs. Thereby reducing costs to a minimal.

Clean cloth

For the recreational player you will however require some basic tools for each person to be able to get started. Because over 98% of all wheelchair curlers use their everyday wheelchair, we tend to find that a large amount of dirt or debris will be collected in the treads on both the front and back wheels of the wheelchair. So before any wheelchair athlete heads out on the ice they will require clean rag(s) to use to clean your wheels. Remember both the front and the back wheels need to be cleaned. In reality the front wheels of the wheelchair will tend to collect more dirt than the back wheels. Paper towels are somewhat effective for drying off the wheels if they are wet but a cloth is highly recommended.

Clothing

These requirements as you will experience will range from short sleeves to snow suits! The athlete will be the best judge of his/her needs. However, it is recommended athletes wear warm jackets and/or layered sweaters and shirts. It’s also a good idea that each athlete wears gloves, hats and warm foot wear. Remember this is a sport played on ice and your wheelchair is not heated and made mainly from metal.

Delivery stick

It is highly recommended that delivery sticks, or cue sticks are used as the primary delivery method of the stone.

Curling Etiquette;

- Here are some basic points of playing the game that curlers should be aware of:
- Clean your wheels back & front before going on the ice. Dirt/mud collected on the wheels can fall onto the ice.
- Make sure your wheels are absolutely, 100% clean and dry. You may find that you can still curl with damp wheels, but it ruins the ice surface which makes it more difficult for everyone around you!
- Arrange stones in order once the game is complete.
- Introduce yourself and shake hands with your opponents before the game & wish everyone 'good curling'
- Be quiet when opponents are delivering their stones.
- Under no circumstances is food, drink or glassware allowed ON the ice.
- To avoid injury, slide the stones from place to place on the ice. **Do not lift them.**
- Only the skip & vice of the delivering team should be in the house.
- Leads & Seconds should be behind the opposition when stones are delivered by the opposition.
- You should avoid wheeling onto or wheeling up and down the sheet of ice next to the one you're playing on if teams are playing on it.
- All players should be aware of what's going on in a game. Be ready to throw your stone when it's your turn.
- Both teams shake hands after a game. If people are having a sociable drink after the game, it's considered good etiquette to sit with your opposition. Winning teams usually buy drinks for opposition & then opponents reciprocate.

- Show up to your game on time. If your game is at 7:00, show up at least 10 minutes before the game starts. If not, let your skip know that you will be a little late. If you cannot make your game for any reason, it should be your responsibility to find a substitute or to inform your skip.
- Never not show up, remember your actions will be affecting seven other players.

Positioning Hints:

- A player from one team tosses a coin, while the other team makes the call (mostly this task is done by the Leads). Whichever team wins the toss has the option of throwing the last stone (hammer), or choosing stone colour.
- The team that wins the toss will usually opt for the advantage of last stone, in which case the other team chooses the colour they want.
- As soon as the opposition's stone has been delivered, players from your team can then move into the area to prepare for your team's throw - and the rule applies the other way round.
- It's okay for a Skip to stand behind the other Skip to watch the line, but the Skip behind should try not to have their brush placed down vertically on the ice, since this may put the thrower off by seeing two brushes! It's courtesy for the Skip standing behind to position their brush horizontally across their body.
- Strategy and decision making is the responsibility of the Skip. When it comes time for Skips to throw, they should discuss strategy with their Third/Vice Skip. These decisions should not be drawn out.
- Taking too much time is unfair on the opposition. Seconds and Leads can get involved in some strategy discussions, but consistently being involved slows the game down.