

## **Scottish Wheelchair Curling Championships 2017**

A few thoughts after a great three days of curling that was the Scottish Wheelchair Curling Championship, held between Wednesday 1st to Friday 3rd March 2017.

Watching wheelchair curling is not like watching other curling. The first thing one will notice is the calmness, the quiet. There is no sweeping. Therefore a distinct lack of macho behaviour.

There are no skips screaming and roaring, line, line, 'where is it? where is it?' with answering calls, however obscure, of four, four, no six, six, no no, ten, ten, oh, feck it is through the back, as the sweepers thrash their brooms into a blur as they try and turn the ice back to liquid to get an extra few inches out of the stone. Many not even in front of the stone.

Sedate wheelchair curlers have no reason to shout as it will make absolutely not one whit of difference. No sweepers to manipulate the stone means one has to have the skill to place it exactly where one wants it with no help. Now that is a skill.

So in the peace and quietness one can hear the sound that brought about the name Curling. In 1867 Blackwoods magazine in an article on curling contained the following: 'They'll send stanes spinnan wi a whirr an' a CURR till they sit round the tee.'

Curr being defined as a whisper, a rumour, a grumble or a soft murmuring sound. The rumble like a murmur as the stone circles the length of the sheet. Probably from the old Norse word Kurr, to grumble.

It was a week of competition played with a high level of friendship and was, no, is inspiring. The vision of a person in a wheelchair, masks, in some cases, a deeper disability or perhaps a more complicated condition. Yet, do they mention any of that, no they do not. They get on with the game and they do not moan, not about their condition and certainly not about opposition who might be better than them. They are inspirational and some able bodied curlers might learn from them.

By the way, I penned the foregoing as my observation, solely mine. They, to a person, would never say what I have said and in fact some may even be embarrassed that I penned it. They are made of sterner stuff. 'Chapeau' as they say in the Tour de France.

I must also say thank you to the Chief Executive of the Royal Club, Bruce Crawford, who presented the medals.

A few wee images to round off a great week.

Report by

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