



Official Newsletter of the Ardsley Curling Club

DUCK SOUP

December 2013

"All the News That Fits"



Curling Club Makes Comeback 2 Years After Arson

Ryan Hanrahan, NBCConnecticut.com



North Mountain Drive
Ardsley-on-Hudson, NY 10502



Upcoming Events

Cool Duck (5 & Under Open)
Fri. Dec. 27 - Sun. Dec. 30
Ardsley Curling Club

Cracked Bell (open)
Thur. Jan. 3 - Sun. Jan. 5
Philadelphia Curling Club

Mitchell Invitational (Men's)
Thur. Jan. 9 - Sun. Jan. 12
Utica Curling Club

Chesapeake Funspiel (Open)
Thur. Jan. 16 - Sun. Jan. 19
Chesapeake Curling Club

Empire State Ladies (Women's)
Thur. Jan. 16 - Sun. Jan. 19
Utica Curling Club

A complete calendar of GNCC events is available at gncc.org

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The town of Norfolk and cold weather are synonymous. Banners hang from light posts in the center of town reading, "Norfolk: Icebox of Connecticut." It's a nickname that residents of the coldest and snowiest town in the state have come to embrace.

The town is home to one of only two curling clubs in Connecticut. It's one of a few things that make the town unique and it's something residents say they love having in their backyard.

On a predictably cold December night in 2011, two arsonists went on a crime spree through town. Kyle Majewski and Matthew Carey are convicted of setting two fires in Norfolk, one of which destroyed the Norfolk Curling Club.

Jon Barbagallo has been curling in Norfolk since he was 13 years old. He's also a volunteer firefighter in town. Barbagallo was putting out hotspots at a house fire in North Norfolk on Dec. 18, 2011 when he heard from the Norfolk Resident Trooper about a fire on Gulf Drive.

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Interview with Bill Stopera & Martin Sather

Raymond Ullmer



As many of us at Ardsley know, Bill Stopera and Martin Sather, along with Plainfield-based Dean Gemmel, competed mid-November at the US Olympic Trials in Fargo with skip Heath (Heater) McCormick. They played tough, but came up just short in a few games, any one of which had they won would have gotten them to the weekend finals.

Still, the team finished third overall and has an awful lot to be proud of. I personally felt that some sort of coda was needed to recognize their monumental personal efforts and performance. To that end, I asked Bill and Martin if they would chat with me about their

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Meechai and Gebauer Win 2014 Mixed Doubles National Title

Terry Kolesar (TEAMUSA.ORG)



(STEVENS POINT, Wis.) - A brand new champion was crowned today as Joyance Meechai (New York City) and teammate Steve Gebauer (Minneapolis, Minn.) defeated the defending champions to win the 2014 USA Curling Mixed Doubles National Championship in Medford, Wis.

"It really was a thrilling event," Meechai said. "We had great competition throughout the week, and we hope we kept our audiences entertained! Our goal for the tournament was to just keep learning and improving

from one game to the next. It truly is an honor to win the championship and become Team USA. The event coordinators, organizers, ice crew and support staff were all amazing. The Medford crew were a well-run machine and extremely gracious hosts at the same time."

It took an extra end to dethrone the champions - Pete and Maureen Stolt of Plymouth, Minn. - at the Medford Curling Club this afternoon as Meechai and Gebauer scored a single point in the overtime to secure the 7-6 victory. This is the first national championship title for the pair. They will be nominated to represent the U.S. at the 2014 World Mixed Doubles Championship, which will take place April 22-29 in Dumfries, Scotland.

The Stolts stole two points in the third end to grab the game's momentum and a momentary 3-1 lead. It was short-lived however, as leads can be in mixed doubles with all the rocks normally in play. Meechai and Gebauer struck for three points in the fourth end and added a single steal in the fourth to advance their lead to two points. The Minnesota couple tied the game with a deuce in the sixth and had the game where they wanted it in the eighth end with last rock. However, the 2013 champs could only score the single point and Meechai and Gebauer got one more chance with the final stone in the ninth end to win the tournament.

Final results can be found at www.usacurl.org.

Championship Final, Game Score

TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	EE	FINAL
Meechai-Gebauer	1	0	0	3	1	0	1	0	1	7
Stolt-Stolt	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	6

MONCTONIAN BONSPIEL

Jerry McCarty

Jerry McCarty, Bruce Huffine, Tom Jackson from Winnipeg Manitoba, Paul Sofuolis from Broomstones Mass, Bill Harper and Peter McCrady from Prince Edward Island competed in the 54th Monctonian Bonspiel in mid November 2013.

The team curled under the New York Caledonian banner and won two lost three games over three days. A total of 54 teams participated over two clubs in Moncton New Brunswick.

A good time was had by all!

Next year's event will be held from November 13 to 16, 2014.

Any member interested in curling in this maritime event should contact Jerry McCarty.

Messing Squad Wins Calder Cup at Newly-Reopened Norfolk Curling Club

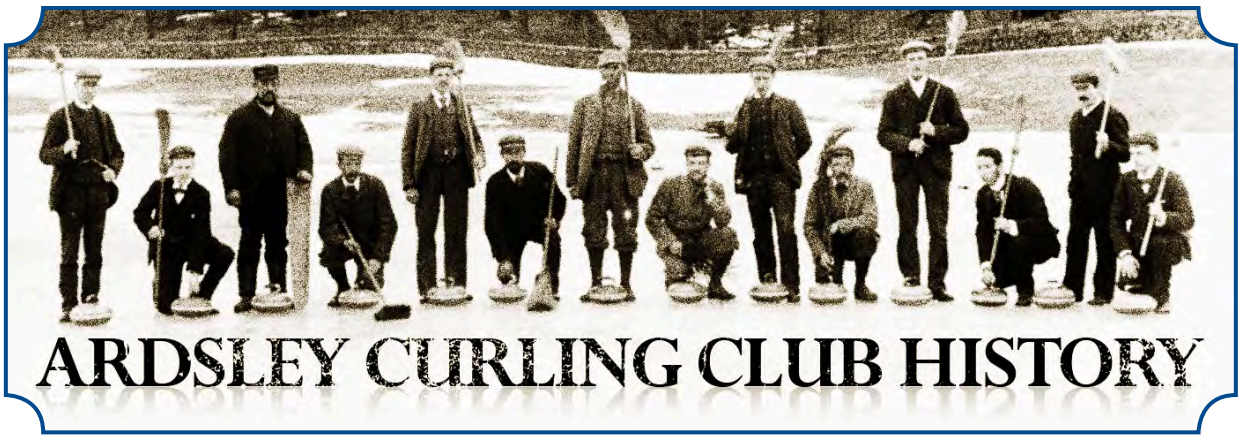
Gert Messing/Raymond Ullmer

Ardsley joined in celebrating the re-opening of the Norfolk Curling Club by sending five teams to compete there in the Calder Cup bonspiel. Gert Messing's senior squad of Dennis Mellerup, Bill Nickle, and Bill Peskoff defeated Mike Stefanik's Schenectady team to win the final.

The four other teams in the Ardsley field were skipped by George Austin, Walter Bagget, Jeff Lesuk, and Tim Klein.

Gert reports that the new Norfolk is really wonderful, and that despite having only 2 sheets the cathedral ceiling makes the rink feel much bigger. The ice conditions were excellent, fast with a consistent 4 foot curl. The warm room is large with a fireplace that incorporates curling stones from the original club in its design.

Welcome back, Norfolk!



Alexander Blanton's Medal

Geoff Broadhurst



In 1948, the Blanton Medal was introduced, in memory of Alexander Blanton who had been an ardent and well liked member of the Club. It replaced the Ardsley Medal, and has been pursued by male 'junior skips', since the mid-1950's. The first or second place winning skips of the Blanton moved up to become Windeler 'senior skips'. (The Windeler would then become the "Wells" which will be covered in the next Duck Soup). All ACC men members are assigned to rinks in these competitions. It affords an opportunity for even the newest members to compete with and against more experienced players.

It is notable that most curling clubs before 1960 appointed only senior members to be skips and they remained skips forever. Newer and younger members had to wait patiently until some senior skip passed along. With the Blanton and Windeler/Wells, the ACC adopted the enlightened method of competition and merit which is still used today. This approach was very progressive for its time and a large part of what makes the Ardsley Curling Club a truly great and special place.



A Note From The Editor

Raymond Ullmer

Last month, Jeff Casper wrote a short note welcoming me aboard as the new editor

of Duck Soup. I'd like to take a moment to thank Jeff for the hard work he's done for the newsletter in the past, and for the inspiring words he had for Joe Panella and me.

I got the gig by responding to Jeff's email to the club looking for a replacement, saying "If you strike out finding someone, I'll give it a go." That pretty much cooked my goose (duck?) immediately – Jeff wasted no time closing the deal with me.

My interest in being editor is the same as Jeff mentioned for himself in his note – to get a

little closer to the club, and to get to know all of you a little better. That's already started to happen in a very big way, and I'm very excited about how things will unfold throughout the season and the seasons to come.

There's a few things I will be trying to do with Duck Soup, and this month's issue showcases some of them. I'll be looking to have a focus piece each month on members who are doing special things within the club, and to that end with this issue I'm very excited about including an interview with Martin Sather and Bill Stopera on their Olympic Trial experiences. I'm also looking forward to working closely with Geoff Broadhurst on presenting a recurring feature of Ardsley club history.

I'd also like to continue with the feature we introduced last issue, "Ardsley On The

Road." This is where I will need your help. If you are participating in a bonspiel away from the club, please take the time to snap a couple of pictures of your team at the event, put a short write-up together, and email it to me when you get back. So many people are traveling to such interesting places – this is your chance to share that experience with the entire club!

Thanks to everyone who has offered me encouraging words and ideas – I really appreciate it. A big thanks also goes to Joe Panella who is just amazing at making Duck Soup look so good and turning things around at light-speed. What a great partner he is.

So, off we go! Be talkin' to ya.

Ray

2013 Turkey Trot



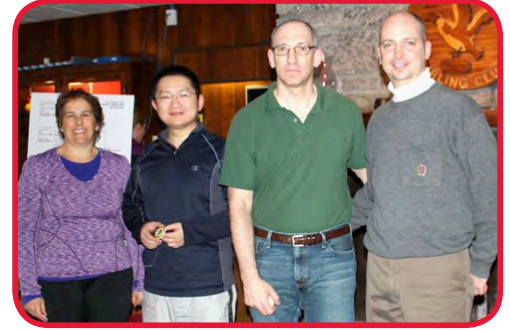
1st Event Winner *Lemon Ice*

Andrew Stopera
Rob Brantman
Sean Brantman
Bill Stopera
Wade Leon



2nd Event Winner *Curly Fries*

Dan Tufaro
Ray Ullmer
Kevin Grieves
Lyn Grieves



3rd Event Winner *Take Out Night*

Chris Banino
Jon Schuster
Yushi Yang
Judith Kelson

1st Event Runner Up *Dead End Donuts*

Jim McGuiness
Jim Duke
Andy/Leslie Eaton
Bob Kennedy

2nd Event Runner Up *Beer On Tap Up*

Matt Gallegos
Jeff Klein
Sharon Gallegos
Jane Lee
(sub Nick Beaton)

3rd Event Runner Up *Hog Line Roast*

George Austin
Mike Spensier
Steve Devaney
Nicole Mikoleski

A big thank you to Doug and Laura Hill who ran this year's Turkey Trot bonspiel! They did a great job, and wanted me to share their message of appreciation to all the competitors on the ice, and congratulations to the event winners.

Thanks to Bob Kennedy for his great photos!



Curling Club Makes Comeback 2 Years After Arson

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"I was one of the first ones to get here," he said. "Once we were coming up on the hill and could see the glow in the sky, you knew it wasn't good."

The club was established in 1956 and the old wooden structure was vulnerable to fire. Barbagallo said he always had a plan for how he would fight a fire there if one were to break out, but even the best-laid plan wasn't enough.

"I never envisioned it would be so complete by the time we got here."

The fire was so intense the 42-pound granite curling stones split from the heat of the blaze.

"Poking our heads in the back of the ice shed you could hear them cracking. There wasn't much to save," Barbagallo recalled.

After the fire was extinguished, there was virtually nothing left. All 32 stones were destroyed, as were the ice shed and the main building. Decades of memories were reduced to a pile of ash.

Nearly two years later, and after thousands of hours of work, the Norfolk Curling Club is almost ready for its rebirth. The bar is stocked, the fireplace is ready and so is the ice. This Sunday, curling will return to Norfolk after a 23-month absence.

"I think there's a lot of excitement and awe," club president Mary Fanette said.

Fanette is a relative newcomer to the Norfolk curling community. For years she was a "weekender," commuting from New York City to her Litchfield County home as a getaway on her days off. In 2005, shortly after retiring to Norfolk, she won a club membership at a silent auction for the Norfolk Public Library.

Fanette says she was welcomed into the community and for the last four years has served as president during some of the most trying times.

"We're looking forward to being here and having some great times and good curling," Fanette said.

Club members were the driving force behind rebuilding the facility, but they acknowledge that support from other Norfolk residents and the curling community was a huge help.

"Basically fundraising started that night at the fire and we still need more," Barbagallo said. "It's been an exhausting effort... thousands and thousands of man hours."

While missing the entire curling season last year was a disappointment, getting back open in time for the Sochi Olympics was critical.

"It's a huge time for us," Fanette said, "We get a lot of attention and we do get new members during that time and we need to be ready for it."

Interview with Bill Stopera & Martin Sather

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experience in Fargo to share with the club and they graciously agreed. The following are those interviews, conducted separately but woven together as I essentially asked both guys the same questions.

Ray: Two games went into extra ends, and another game was that 10th end double by Clark. What are your thoughts about having been in so many tight games and having them just not break for you?

Bill: I think we played well enough to win and unfortunately curling's a cruel sport and we just came on the wrong side of the one – we lost by one three times. We won four games which was good but lost three of the first four.

Martin: Well, I dunno it's just tough. But that's just how it goes. I mean the first game we had against Shuster we had a draw for

the win but we kind of shot ourselves in the foot there because we had time clock issues. I think before Heater threw his last rock we had like 4 or 5 seconds left on the clock, so we kind of rushed it a little bit. We played a good game and set ourselves up to win, but we just didn't manage our time well enough and Heater had to rush his last shot. He threw it 6 inches deep, that's all it was, maybe even a little bit less.

And in the game against Clark we were kind of stuck in the middle between wanting the rock to curl or come a little bit deeper and then it kind of ground up on us but we thought we put it in a good spot. He (Clark) made a shot that he probably misses 9 out of 10 times but that's what happens. That one really killed us – we needed that win. Either of those wins and we would've been in it.

Ray: How do you feel about how the team played?

Martin: I think we played better than normal. I think we played really well for most of the week. We had a couple of times where we didn't string enough shots together or we had too many misses in a row or we'd get a break and we didn't get the shot we needed after the break so there was a couple of those moments but overall throughout the week I think we played better than normal. We definitely played as best we had the whole year. Dean played very well for the first half, he was probably the best player on the team for the first half. We were solid all the way through, we just didn't get a shot here and a shot there that you need in a tournament.

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Interview with Bill Stopera & Martin Sather

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Bill: You're always thinking about a miss here and there. Overall as a team we played pretty well. It was just a shot a game that cost us those three games.

Ray: What was the experience of being in Fargo like? Was it unique or different in any way?

Martin: We had the Nationals there in 2011. It really wasn't that much different. The ice was better than it was – it was great, much better than the Nationals. The atmosphere was essentially the same, the same amount of people in the stands, nothing surprising, other than a little more media.

Bill: The facility is great, it's a beautiful arena, it's brand new. It was cool experience – you don't get to play in the Olympics trials very often. We got to know the guys we've played against the last four years, so [we got] pretty friendly with them – a neat experience.

Ray: What do think about Team Shuster's chances? They obviously have to go through a qualifying event first to make the Olympics.

Bill: I think they have a great chance. John probably throws it the best of all the skips that are left and they're going to be tough. The two young guys on the front end are real good.

Martin: Their chances are really good. I'd bet money on them. They're a good team, John's playing really well. He's a smart guy so he's going to manage things properly. They have a really good front end with a couple of young guys. I think Jeff Isaacson is playing really well, too. They definitely played well all week, they deserved to win, they were probably the best team there that week.

Ray: Where do you guys go as a team from here?

Martin: We always knew we were kind of done. We were either done in Fargo, in Germany, or Sochi. We were obviously hoping for it to be Sochi but we all knew and discussed it up front that we weren't going to play anymore as a team after this ended. We have no plans or expectations to be playing in the Nationals or anything.

What happened is Heath is going to play with Tyler George's team, and Tyler is going to play with us. I think it's good for everybody in that we've been together for the whole cycle, both teams, and I think it's good that we're going to try something different, a little bit of new life in each team. Everything was fine with our team - we had no issues or anything – we just knew we were done. It was a bit of a surprise for everyone, we had no idea anything was happening with those guys (Team George) and then all of a sudden Heath got a call from Chris Plys.

Bill: We got a call from Heath last Tuesday (Nov 19) basically saying he got an offer to play with Chris Plys that's intriguing and thought he would try it. Chris is one of the best guys in the country. We said go ahead and do it, we're still friends. Once we found out that Heath was leaving we picked up the phone and called Tyler, who was in the same place we were – we needed a fourth and he needed a team. So it just worked out. We'll see what happens – it's going to be a one-time thing unless we find that it really works. We'll decide where to go from there. Tyler's great, he's been close before. He almost won the trials four years ago which was the US Nationals then and he's obviously one of the best players in the country. So it doesn't suck to get him, but it sucks to lose Heath because he's a good friend. You move on, you never know how things will work out.

Ray (to Martin): Does this mean tiger jerseys for you guys?

Martin: Not for us! We'll let Heater wear them.

Ray (to Martin): What would you say to curlers in the US who are watching you, who want to ultimately compete at your level? What advice do you have for them?

Martin: It's like anything, it's just individual effort. You've got to practice and play. You've got to be open to learning as much as you can. It's a really complicated game when you get into the elite level, so you have to be open to changing everything, re-learning everything, and then working on it constantly. It's an individual thing to a certain extent. If you really want to get into it you've

got to make yourself better, you've got to practice and play, learn as much as you can, and then put yourself in an environment where you can be successful with other people.

Ray (to Martin): What is your reaction to the USA Today article about your musical interests?

Martin: I think it's great that they took notice. I guess they liked my story. It was really cool, the reporter Kelly was very nice and did a great write-up. We just chatted at the hotel, I got to play, got to hang out with my friends – it was great. Everything about it was really cool.

Ray: Any message for the folks at Ardsley who followed you guys and will be reading this in the newsletter?

Bill: Our club-mates have been great. Everyone's been incredibly supportive. From the board down to the membership, everyone's been very positive all along, rooting hard for us so it's been great. I can't thank them enough.

Martin: Just thanks for the support. It's awesome to have a club that's following you and being really supportive and cheering you on. Everyone is so great here – thank you!

