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■ CURLING

Throwing Rocks

Making good ice in time for the January Thaw

BY KAREN SOTVEDT

There was a two-week lull in league play at Middleton Curling Club but the icemakers never get a holiday during curling season. Ernie Killen and his crew used the time to get ready for the New Year, spending numerous days in ice maintenance, essentially remaking the ice surface so it will be in top condition for the return of the curlers.

The ice surface is flooded and burned to ensure uniformity and replace any uneven or damaged sections. The ice at Middleton is generally considered "good ice" by visiting curlers and the icemakers want to make sure that the club's reputation for having a good ice surface continues.



January Thaw

The New Year begins with a lot of activity because the 31st January Thaw Mixed Bonspiel is being held the weekend of January 9 and 10. This spiel draws teams from other clubs to come to Middleton for two days of curling competition and reconnecting with

old friends. This year the 12 teams include seven from outside Middleton.

On Saturday the curling is six-end games in a points scoring system which will result in three events for the eight-end games on Sunday. Mid-way through Saturday afternoon everyone will sit down for a supper meal before the final two draws which will still result in a reasonably early night for all.

Sunday's games will divide the teams into events based on Saturday's points and the two morning draws will give all teams another chance at the prizes. After a soup and sandwich lunch for everyone, the finalists will play one last draw with play over by about 3 p.m.

MCC is always happy to welcome teams from other clubs to this very social bonspiel that fits the club well in size and convivial character. The

club is open to spectators when bonspiels are being held and community members are invited to drop by and watch the competition.

League Play

This week also saw the resumption of normal league play and the popular Friday night Chase the Ace - with the Ace now worth \$500. After the excitement of the Thaw comes a Big Breakfast on Jan. 23 and the following week Middleton hosts the Provincial Masters. All the activity that gives the club a warm and welcoming atmosphere is open to be shared - check our website at www.middleton-curlingclub.com and plan a visit! January is a busy month and you are invited.

Karen Sotvedt is a member of the Middleton Curling Club.