

The Dominion Daily

Wednesday, November 25, 2009 – Day 1 of Gameplay

Spirits High at Opening Night Banquet



Glenn Howard shared tales of his past curling successes and the roadmap ahead towards the 2010 Olympics.

Lights shone brightly on the magnificently decorated Christmas trees in St. George's Golf and Country Club, welcoming everyone to last night's opening banquet. One by one, each of our twenty-eight teams stood proudly to warm applause on the eve of making history in Canada's first-ever national championship for club curlers.

The buzz of excitement continued to grow as each speaker talked

passionately about a sport that combines teamwork, skill, a friendly competitive spirit... and a drink or two at the bar. For many guests, the chance to meet 1998 Olympic Curling Silver Medalist Mike Harris and World Champion Glenn Howard was alone worth the trip to Toronto.

Event Chair Leigh Armstrong – who just this Monday took home top prize with Team Rizzo at the 2009 Sun Life Financial

Invitational Curling Classic – kicked-off the evening's program with remarks about the "exciting and surreal" experience of seeing the culmination of all the work, planning and, of course, playdowns that lead-up to this inaugural event.

Later in the evening, The Dominion's President and CEO George Cooke looked back over the past two years, from the birth of an idea to the proud

moment of speaking before these 112 assembled curlers. He praised grassroots club curling for fostering world-class and elite teams that so outstandingly represent our country on the world stage. Cooke also added to the earlier words of Bill Adair, Executive Director of the Canadian Paraplegic Association Ontario, on the importance of initiatives that "give something back to the community".

Perhaps the most impactful message of the evening came from keynote speaker Glenn Howard, who encouraged the curlers in attendance to look around the room and appreciate the significance of the event. At week's end, only one men's and one women's team will go down as the first-ever winners of The Dominion Curling Club Championship. Howard had the crowd in stitches with his down-to-earth stories of hernia operations, international negotiations with Korean skip Jimmy Lee, and why curlers should keep their gear with them at all times.

He concluded the evening with a few final words of wisdom, encouraging all teams to seize this opportunity to meet fellow curlers from across Canada, and, most importantly, to "have fun while you play the game".

Today's Draw Schedule

Blue Pool Grey Pool

Follow the action live on  at thedominioncurls.ca

		Sheet 1	Sheet 2	Sheet 3	Sheet 4	Sheet 5	Sheet 6	Bye
Men's Draw 1	10:00 AM	BC vs. MB	YT vs. AB	NO vs. NB	QC vs. SK	NU vs. ON	NS vs. NL	NT & PE
Women's Draw 2	1:30 PM	BC vs. MB	YT vs. AB	NO vs. NB	QC vs. SK	NU vs. ON	NS vs. NL	NT & PE
Men's Draw 3	4:45 PM	NS vs. ON	PE vs. QC	SK vs. NU	NO vs. AB	NT vs. BC	MB vs. YT	NB & NL
Women's Draw 4	8:15 PM	NS vs. ON	PE vs. QC	SK vs. NU	NO vs. AB	NT vs. BC	MB vs. YT	NB & NL



Anticipation Builds for Wednesday's First Draws

Although official draws were still a day away, Tuesday was full activity in the Dragon Lounge at St. George's. Teams arrived by air or train from their respective home provinces and territories, and were immediately processed through the well-oiled machine of transportation and player registration. By lunchtime, teams were hitting the ice for their scheduled practices and skills competition, the results of which may be used to break ties at the end of round robin play on Saturday.

Midway through the afternoon, all 112 curlers gathered for a massive team meeting, during which Head Official Jim Waite introduced the event's Host Committee, discussed the rules of play, answered questions, and reminded everyone of the "spirit of the game" here at The Dominion Curling Club Championship.

The excitement, however, isn't just limited to those of us in Toronto. We've seen press coverage of our teams in publications across Canada.

"The response has been great," said Curl Manitoba executive director Shane Ray to the *Winnipeg Sun*. "There were actually more teams competing for The Dominion than there were for the Brier last year."

InsideToronto.com profiled the Cochrane sisters, representing Ontario along with Kelly Scissons and Lisa Rawlings. Their male counterparts were likewise featured in the *Windsor Star*.

Out in Corner Brook, Newfoundland, The Western Star told the story of our curling "road warriors" who "juggled and adjusted work and family commitments" for their shot at a national curling title, while the Newfoundland men told the *Gander Beacon* that they're particularly looking forward to their match against Nunavut on Thursday.

Speaking of Nunavut, they were profiled yesterday by the CBC as the first teams from the territory to ever compete in a national curling championship for adults.

As we move into Wednesday's draws, all eyes are on our teams.



Head Official Jim Waite leads players through rules and regulations of gameplay at Tuesday's team meeting.



View photos and results, read messages from your fans back home and stories about your teams in the press, share memories and experiences of your week: it's all online at facebook.com/thedominioncurls.



Cartoon Corner

by Frank McCourt

