

The world curling Championship for men and women will be held in Oberstdorf in Germany from 9th to the 17th April. The annual European Championships under the authority of the European Curling Federation took place in Loèche-les-Bains from 6th to 11th December 1993 with the participation of twenty federations

Curling, from pastime to Olympic sport

Men's and women's curling will now feature on the programme of the Winter Games. An ice sport, the basic objective of curling is to get the stones closest to the center of the "house", which is 1.83m in radius. There are two teams of four players. Each player delivers two stones during each interval, called an "end", until a total of sixteen stones have been played. Games are played over ten ends, indoors or out, and last approximately two hours, depending on the condition of the ice.

The famous Stirling Stone in Scotland, inscribed with the year 1511, is the first evidence of the origins of curling. In the beginning, the stones, of all shapes, sizes and weights, were nothing more than rocks that were felt to be suitable. Today, most of them come from a quarry on the Aisla Craig in the Firth of Clyde in the west of Scotland, where, over a hundred years ago, a stone mason in Mauchline, Ayrshire, began grinding the blocks of granite into their special shape. No stone must weigh more





than 19.960kg, have a circumference greater than 91.44cm, or be less than 11.43cm in height.

A SPORT ORGANIZED WORLDWIDE

The World Curling Federation, founded in 1966 in Vancouver, Canada, has more than thirty national federations as members, from Andorra to Japan, from Liechtenstein to Wales. It is the seventh Olympic Winter Sports Federation. In 1990, Günther Hummelt of Austria became its seventh president.

The World and Junior World Championships are under the authority of the WCF. They take place every year in March or April in an arena with specially prepared "pebbled" ice. Most people agree that the resounding success of the Swiss men's teams at the Winter Games in Albertville and the World Championships in Garmisch-Partenkirchen was largely due to their experience of "swinging ice" in Canadian rinks. Curling has developed in different ways. Not only as an international championship sport played in indoor rinks and stadiums, but also as a game for youngsters. More and more sec-

ondary school children are taking to stone and brush, and in recent years there has been a strong revival of the open air game, not least under the dazzling skies of the Swiss Alpine sports resorts.



THE SPIRIT OF CURLING

Curling is a game of skill and tradition. A shot well executed is a delight to the eye. It is fine to observe the time-honoured traditions of curling applied in the true spirit of the

Curlers play to win fairly, never to humble their opponents. The main objective is to determine the relative skill of the players, whilst respecting the sporting spirit, a sense of fellowship and fair play. This spirit should influence the interpretation and application of the rules of the game and also the conduct of all participants on and off the ice.

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