



# Potomac NewsFlash

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Have news to share? Let me know. Tired of hearing just my opinions? Write an article. Have a topic? Send it my way.—[charrissalin@gmail.com](mailto:charrissalin@gmail.com)

## Upcoming Events:

Officiating Clinic	Dec 16
Hangover Spiel	Jan 1
USCA Men's Nationals Qualifer	Jan 4-7
EXTERNAL	
Cracked Bell (open- Phl)	Jan 4-7
Mitchell (M—Utica); Ben Ames Williams (X—Belfast)	Jan 11-14
Chesapeake (X); Broomstones (M); Empire State (W—Ardsley); GNCC Club championship playdowns (Petersham)	Jan 18-21

## Ms. Hog Line

Dear Ms. Hog Line

Please settle an argument between me and my friend Oscar. We are both new curlers this year.

I say that it is desperately important between ends to arrange all sixteen stone in perfect numerical order in matching precise 2 x 8 matrices. Otherwise the game cannot possibly proceed in an orderly fashion. I furthermore think this is WAY more important than getting to the hack as lead after my team scores. I should do my fair share of the stone organizing. This is especially true in Men's league with two full draws and a tight schedule.

Oscar says just get the No. 1 stones ready and push the rest back into two piles out of the way of the hacks so players have room to deliver. And when the team on which he plays lead scores, he selfishly finds

his own No. 1 stone, takes it the hack and starts cleaning it!

Please let us know who is right.

signed,

Felix

Dear Felix—

I want to applaud you for your commitment to neatness and to doing your fair share of the work. However, in this case, I have to side with your friend Oscar. Eight-end games are intended to take 2 hours. I'll wager that you're finding your team often only playing 7 ends (or maybe even less!). One of the reasons for this is slow play.

Lots of time is wasted between ends. Vices dawdle in calling the score. Skips and leads dawdle in getting ready for the first shot of

the next end. This is where Oscar is totally correct. If your team has just won the end, your lead should immediately find the No. 1 stone, get in the hack, clean it, and be ready to shoot as soon as possible.

Of course, this is situational and depends on whom you are playing with. I am assuming that all of the players can count to 8—so that they will be able to find their rock when it comes time. I've found in general that the club members at Potomac can indeed count—so you should be able to apply this across the board. If you do come across members that cannot—color coding often works better than meticulous arranging (bring colored bands to mark their rocks).

## USCA Men's Qualifying round teams determined

The deadline has passed and the teams coming out East to our qualifying round are set. There will be 9 teams in all, which means we will have a 9 team single round robin. Due to the number of entries in various locations, Potomac's qualifying round will advance 2 teams directly to the nationals and 2 teams to the challenge round. With at least two rounds reserved for tiebreakers, we will have a very full weekend with 9 full draws and 2 tie-breaker draws planned.

The teams (in alphabetical order):

**Calabrese:** Joe Calabrese (S), Mark Mooney (V), Ron Aubin (2), John Shields (L)

**Edie:** Scott Edie (S), Dannie Steski (V), Pat McHugh (2), Dennis Mellerup (L)

**Gemmell:** Dean Gemmell (S), Bill Nickle (V), Sean Murray (2), Aaron Dubberley (L)

**Mantha:** Ron Mantha (S), Joseph Amato (V), Jack Beck (2), Mike Hill (L)

**Persinger:** Greg Persinger (S), Steve Shuttleworth (V), Chad Persinger (2), Diminian Chagnon (L)

**Pustovar:** Paul Pustovar (S), Greg Wilson (V), Matt Mielke (2), Richard Maskel (L)

**Ruohonen:** Rich Ruohonen (S), Troy Schroeder (V), John Benton (2), Pete Annis (L), Tom O'Connor (5)

**Stopera:** Bill Stopera (S), Peter Austin (V), Ted Graves (2), George Austin (L)

**Van Cuyck:** Richard Van Cuyck (S), Phil Livingston (V), Rich Dimperio (2), Clark Raven (L)

Some tidbits about the competitors (what I know at least):

Pustovar has won 6 national titles, the most recent being in 2002. This is a slightly different line-up with Matt Mielke (just out of juniors) at second. Need a strong young-un to sweep those rocks! Matt hails from the Midwest and was on the junior boys' team that went to World's last year (I think he played 3rd) - currently studying at Princeton, so he plays out of Plainfield.

Ruohonen's rink has been a steady presence at nationals getting to the big show 4 out of the last 5 years (and finishing 5th each time—very steady, but I'm sure disappointing). New third this year—Troy Schroeder, who skipped his own rink last year to the nationals. The combination should be interesting as they are good friends, but also both fairly volatile personalities.

Persinger is coming to Potomac all the way from Alaska! Fairly young skip—played with Brady Clark's 3rd place rink at the Olympic trials. Steady presence at Junior Nationals for many years until he aged out. Steve Shuttleworth is his vice—Steve won the Mixed National in Mankato in 2004. Apparently the cost of the ticket to the East wasn't much more

than to Seattle, and the Persinger rink is avoiding bad mojo at Seattle (they had a bad run at the Seattle cash).

Stopera's rink surprised everyone last year when they made it out of the qualifying round to the challenge round and then had a good showing (although not quite good enough) at the challenge round. Good rink working hard out of Ardsley

Edie—well everyone here knows Scott! Scott's rink made it to Nationals in 2004 and of course, Scott had that very exciting run to runner-up last year at the Mixed Nationals. Just missed the challenge round last year, look for them to make it out this year.

Dean Gemmell's rink could be a dark horse—at least to go to the challenge round. Dean hails from Canada originally and is the voice behind The Curling Show—curling's podcast. Strong line-up from Plainfield plus our own Sean Murray at 2nd.

Ron Aubin from our club is playing with Calabrese. I believe some combination of this rink played last year in the qualifying round in Boston and had a tough go of it. Another year of experience will certainly help.

Mantha, Van Cuyck—to be honest, I don't know much about them. I know they've played down for the last several years but haven't had successful go's of it yet.

