

Team Practices

POINTS CURLING - PRACTICE SESSION AND SCHEDULE (by Warren Hansen)

Many teams and individuals never develop appropriate skills in curling because of hours spent in meaningless practice. Just as with other sports, practice time and routines must be established so the entire time is profitable.

Possibly the best system for perfecting shot execution is points curling. This can be set up into a semi-competitive situation as well with the players working in teams of two while the coach holds the broom. The points could be tabulated at the conclusion of each week with small incentives built into the contest. Be careful however, when teaming people up, don't segregate the front end and back end of the team, in other words put the skip with the lead and the second with the third. Sweeping drills can also be added to points curling.

If the ice isn't marked, the stones must be placed approximately as shown in Figure 1. The stones are positioned in figure 1 for shots using the in turn.

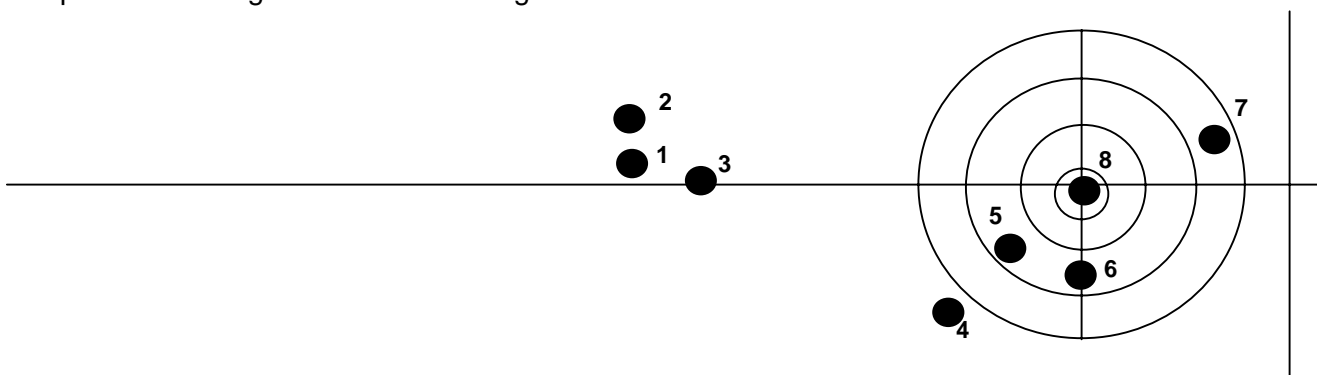


Figure 1

- a) Area 1 is 3.70 m from the centre of the house.
- b) Area 2 is 6.09 dm from the centre line and parallel to 1.
- c) Area 3 is 2.45 m from the centre of the house.
- d) Area 4 is 1.83 m from the centre of the house and at a 45 degree angle to the T-line.
- e) Area 5 is 7.72 dm from the centre of the house at a 45 degree angle to the T-line.
- f) Area 6 is 60.9 dm from the centre of the house.
- g) Area 7 is 1.22 m from the centre of the house.

Placed stones are designated by ● and played stones by ○

1. Sticking

A stone in position 6. If hit, count 1, hit and stay, count 2 (Figure 2).

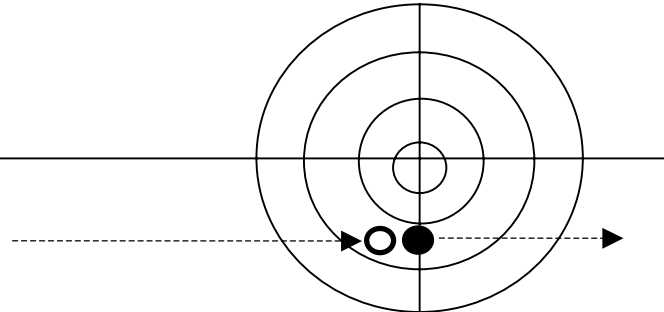


Figure 2

2. The Double

Stones are placed in positions 5 and 8. If the played stone strikes stone 5 on the inside, one point is scored. If both 5 and 8 are hit, score two points (Figure 3).

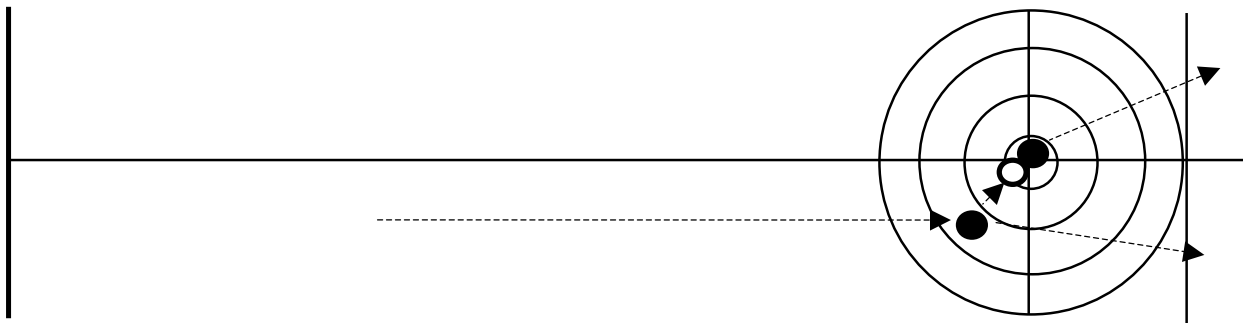


Figure 3

3. Drawing

Attempt to draw to the circles. If the rock stops in the 12 foot, one point is scored; if it stops in the eight foot, score two points. (Figure 4)

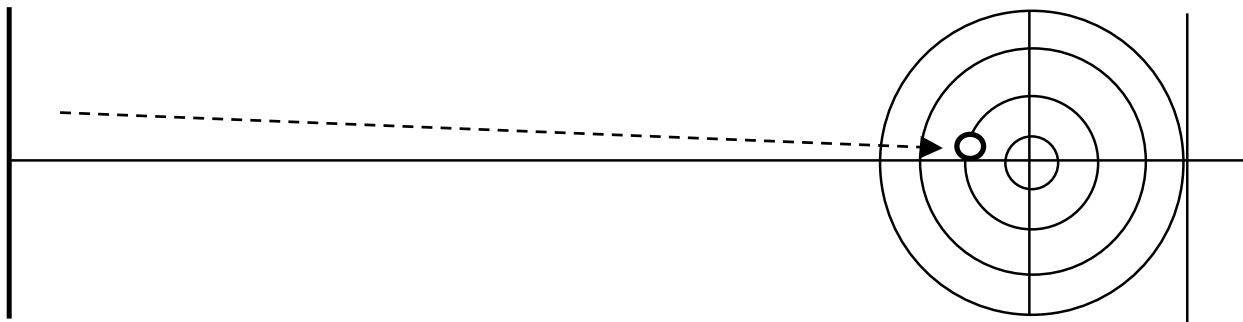


Figure 4

4. Guarding

Place a stone in position 8. The guard must not enter the rings. If it is within 1.52 dm of the centre line, count one point, and if it touches the centre line, count two points (Figure 5).

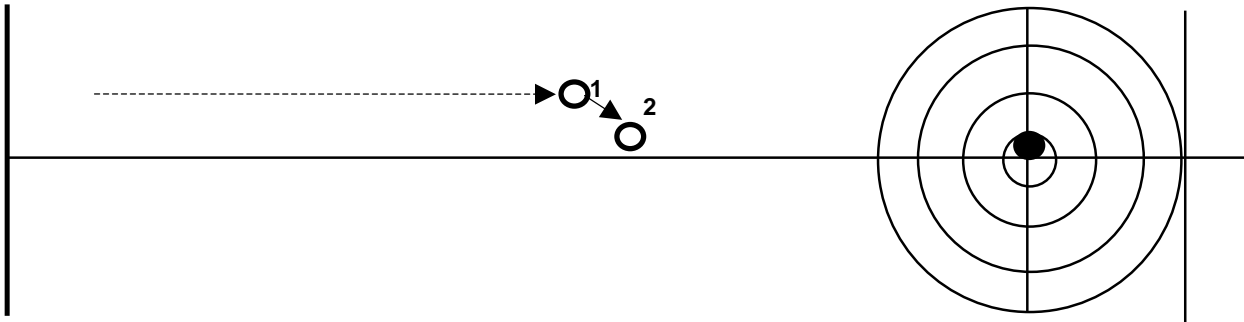


Figure 5

5. Chap and Lie

A stone is placed in position 6. If the shooter hits and stops within the eight foot, count one; if the shooter hits and rolls to the four foot, count two points.

No points for the 12 foot (Figure 6).

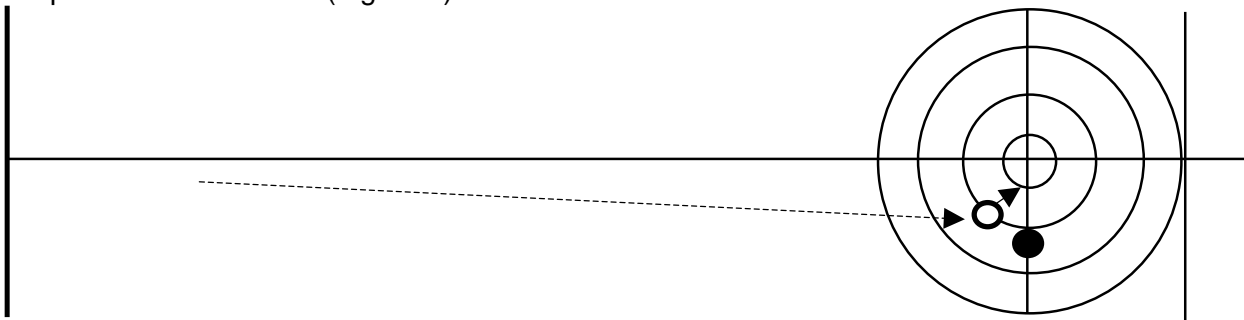


Figure 6.

6. Hit and Roll

Place a stone in position 4. If the stone is hit and the shooter rolls to the 12 foot, count one point. If the played stone rolls to the eight foot, count two points. (Figure 7)

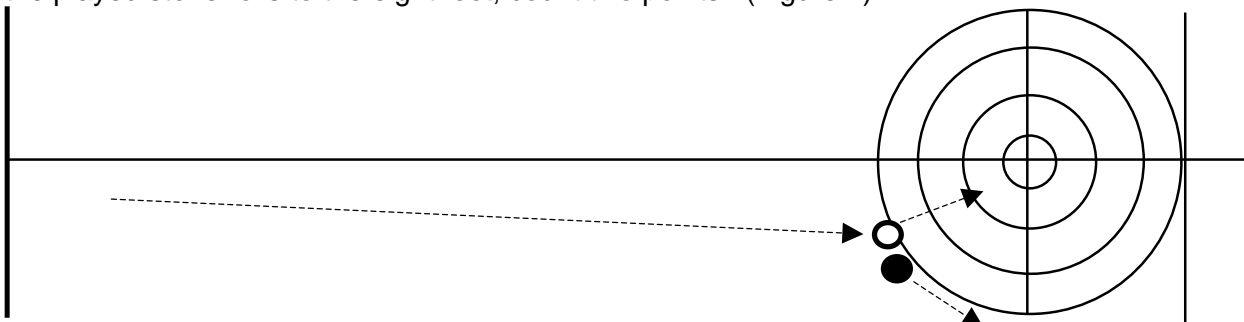


Figure 7.

7. The Raise

Place a stone in position 3. If the shooter hits and raises the placed stone into the 12 foot, count one; into the eight foot circle, count two. (Figure 8)

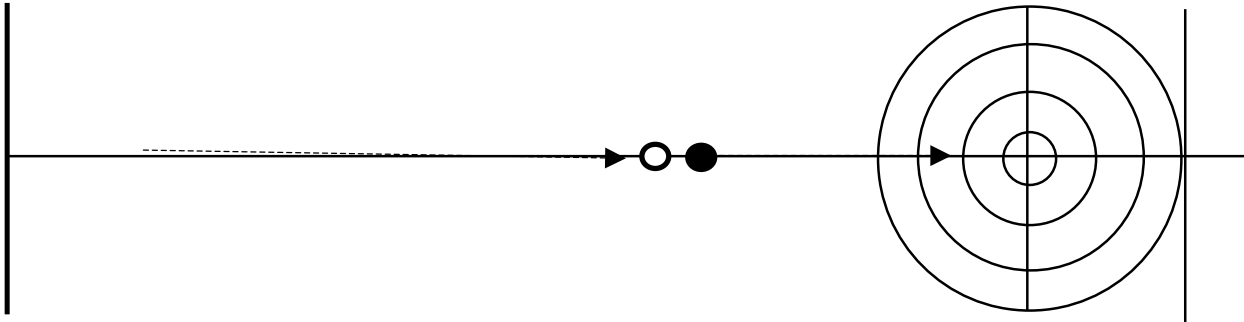


Figure 8

8. Drawing the Port

Stones are placed in positions 1 and 2. If the played stone draws between 1 and 2 into the 12 foot, count one point. If the stone makes it into the eight foot, count two. (Figure 9)

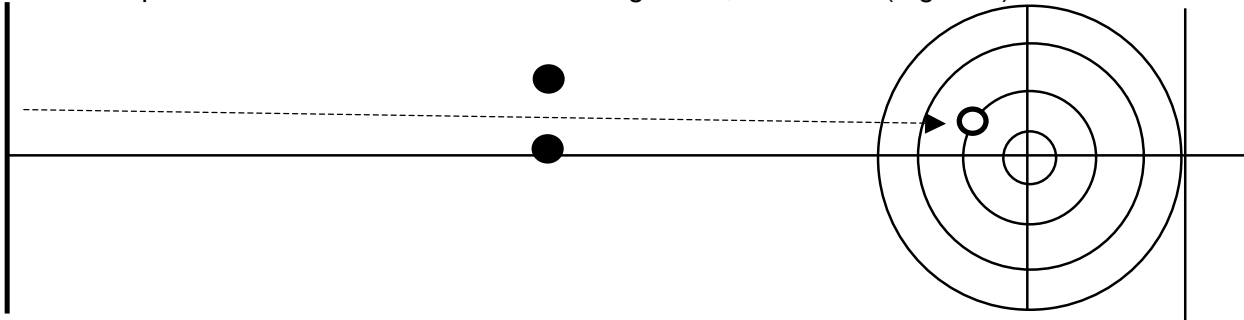


Figure 9

9. Chip the Winner

Place stones in positions 1, 8 and 7. If the shooter strikes the rock in position 8 and stays for shot, two points. If it hits the stone in position 8 but rolls out, or for second shot, count one point (Figure 10).

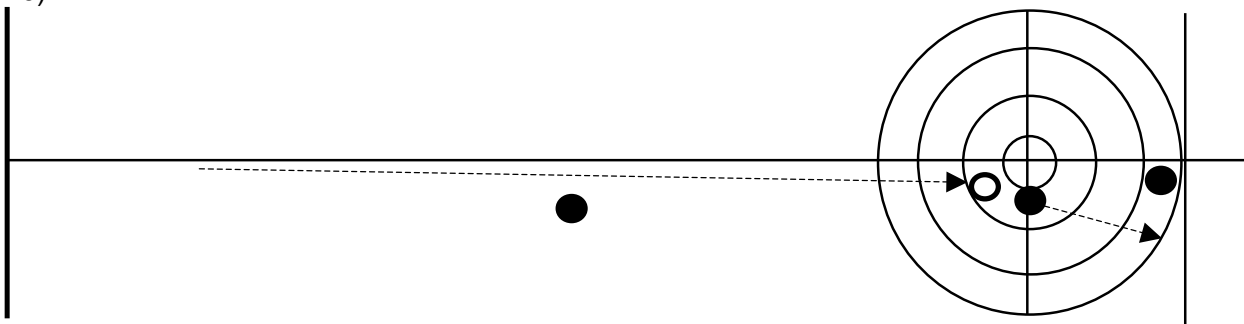


Figure 10.

Team Practices

When a team is into mid-season, practice should take place every day if possible; but at least every second day. On the basis of practicing three times a week with the duration of each session being approximately thirty to sixty minutes, a schedule might go as follows depending upon the number of executions:

Day 1

Warm up 5 minutes

Free slides from the hack 5 minutes

Hold target at near hog line or at the distant end. Work on one turn at a time, and begin with the broom on the outer edge of either the 12' circle slowly work it to the opposite side (about 8 positions). The thrower only concentrates on throwing at a target with a consistent, constant release. 15 minutes

Work on open takeouts utilizing first one turn and then the other alternately. Throw the same weight for every shot. 10 minutes

Play the takeout shots of Points Curling. 10 minutes

Day 2

Warm up 5 minutes

Free slides from the hack. 5 minutes

Throw normal hitting weight at a varied target (quick repeat of Day 1) 5 minutes

Work just on the in turn, then the out. Draw four stones to the top of the 12 foot; four to the back of the 12 foot; four to the backboard; four normal weight takeouts. 15 minutes

Play the draw shots of points curling 15 minutes

Day 3

Warm up 5 minutes

Free slides. 5 minutes

Play an in turn draw, then an out turn draw, then an in turn normal hit and out turn normal hit followed by hack weight with the same rotation. Vary the position of the broom, as well from inside out to outside in. 15 minutes

Points curling. 20 minutes

Practice is essential! How it is approached is up to the individual, but it must be practical and meaningful to assist in the development of the fundamental skills.

SCORING

At regular intervals during a curling season, it is essential for the coach to score his or her team's performance. For the coach to acquire a detailed picture of the game, which is essential for post game analysis, a four point scoring system may be used.

Individual Score Sheet

COMPETITION: _____ DATE: _____

PLACE: _____ SCORER: _____

TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	#	#	#	#	total	%
1-															
2-															
3-															
4-															
Total Points/Cumulative															
Score:															
Score:															

TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	#	#	#	#	total	%
1-															
2-															
3-															
4-															
Total Points/Cumulative															

The type of score card generally used is illustrated above. A space is provided to record the type of shot each player has thrown and the score achieved. The top portion of the box is for recording the type of shot which is recorded as T-takeout, D-draw. A possible modification might also be considered which would provide information on which turn was thrown.

Example OT or IT, that is, out-turn takeout and in-turn takeout. The four point system might also be best utilized by the following grading system. If the shot was called correctly by the skip, a 0, 2, or 4 is granted to the player. If the skip has possibly made an error in calling the shot, the player is awarded 1 or 3. With this type of system, it is quite easy to determine if improper skipping is a problem with the team.

1. Scoring the draw

If a draw shot has been called for in the house in front of the T-line, the thrower has a bit of

Team Practices

leeway in order to score four points.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) in the rings in front of T-line | 4 |
| b) in the rings behind T-line | 2 |
| c) in front of the rings | 0 |
| d) in the rings in front of T-line but a fair way from centre line | 3 |
| e) in the rings behind the T-line but a fair way from the centre line | 1 |

2. Scoring the takeout

Removing guards (skip giving correct ice)

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| a) miss | 0 |
| b) hit on the nose | 0 |
| c) hit and roll to outside | 2 |
| d) hit and roll out | 4 |

Doubles

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| a) hit and roll outside | 2 |
| b) double kill | 4 |

If a skip is intentionally attempting to blank an end, hit and roll out records four points, while hit and stay is only good for two.

3. Scoring guards

Two situations certainly exist and one is guarding a rock in the circles, while the second is the provision of a guard for the purpose of coming around. Guarding a stone in the rings:

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) between the hog and house close to what has been called | 4 |
| b) in the rings but still protecting the stone in front of the T-line | 2 |
| c) stone that would ultimately stop behind the T-line | 0 |

Guarding for the come-around

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) the stone is in front of the rings positioned close to the are requested | 4 |
| b) stone enters rings | 0 |

There are, of course, many different situations and shots from the ones mentioned, but in each case the scorer must use his own discretion when awarding points. At the conclusion of the game, each player should be presented with a summary of his or her performance completely from an objective point of view. Do not allow players to become too caught up in the individual percentages; the final score and overall team performance is what counts.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT DRILLS

THEME: Line of Delivery
Release
Weight Control

**SESSION #1 - REGULAR TAKEOUT AND SWEEPING SKILL DEVELOPMENT
FOUR PLAYERS PER SHEET**

The difficulty of the drill will be determined by the coaches and relative to the skill level of the team.

The individual skill assessment sheets that were filled out by the club coach during the game can be reviewed and further developed at this time. Skill Development techniques should be recommended.

DRILL #1 (approx. 15 min.)

- in turn hits (8 per player)
(4 to home end and 4 to away end)
- player #1 throwing
- players #2 and #3 individual sweeping (alternate)
- player #4 acting skip
- switch roles after four hits

DRILL #2 (approx. 15 min.)

- repeat Drill #1 with out turn and partner sweeping
- player #1 throwing
- players #2 and #3 sweeping together
- player #4 acting skip
- switch roles after four hits

DRILL #3 (approx. 15 min.)

- hack weight hit drill
- combine Drill #1 and Drill #2
- 2 in turn and 2 out turn hits (hack weight only!)
- partner sweeping
- thrower, sweepers acting skip communication

The focus of this drill is weight control and consistency for the thrower and basic communication for the sweepers.

Team Practices

SESSION #2 - FINESSE SHOTS, WEIGHT CONTROL AND ADJUSTMENTS, SWEEPING JUDGMENT AND FOUR PLAYER COMMUNICATION.

Coaching Component

- #1 How to improve your draw weight skills.
- #2 How to make minor adjustments to improve weight control.
- #3 Developing consistency in weight control.
- #4 Weight judgment for sweepers - "Develop the Feeling".

Demonstration Component

- #1 The technical skill of throwing draw weight using predominantly the throwing arm to produce rock speed. Leg drive will be minimal and provide body speed equal to rock speed.
- #2 Adjustment techniques to improve weight control.
- #3 Practice techniques designed to develop draw weight consistency.
- #4 Practice techniques designed to develop weight judgment skills for sweepers.

The delivery objective of Drill #1 will be to develop coaching component #1. Releasing the stone at approximately the front of the house will ensure leg drive is substantially reduced. The athletes may initially wish to develop this skill with a much slower sliding surface (tape over slider). In the development stages, the trailing leg should remain in contact with the rings upon completion of the follow through motion. The length of the release point and follow through motion may be extended as the athlete develops a "feel" for this weight control technique. The difficulty of the draw drills will be determined by the coaches and relative to the skill level of the teams.

DRILL #1 - in turn and out turn draw drill
(approx. 15 min.) (8 per player - 4 to home end, 4 to away end)
switch roles after four draws
player #1 throwing
players #2 and #3 sweeping in partners
player #4 acting skip

The sweeping objective throughout the drills will be to develop coaching component #4.

- a) Assess the weight at release with input from the thrower and communicate to the acting skip.
- b) Communicate with sweeping partner to reassess weight at the half way point and communicate to the acting skip.
- c) Determine by the far hog line exactly how much weight remains with the delivered stone and advise the acting skip where the stone will stop.

DRILL #2 (Approx. 15 min.)

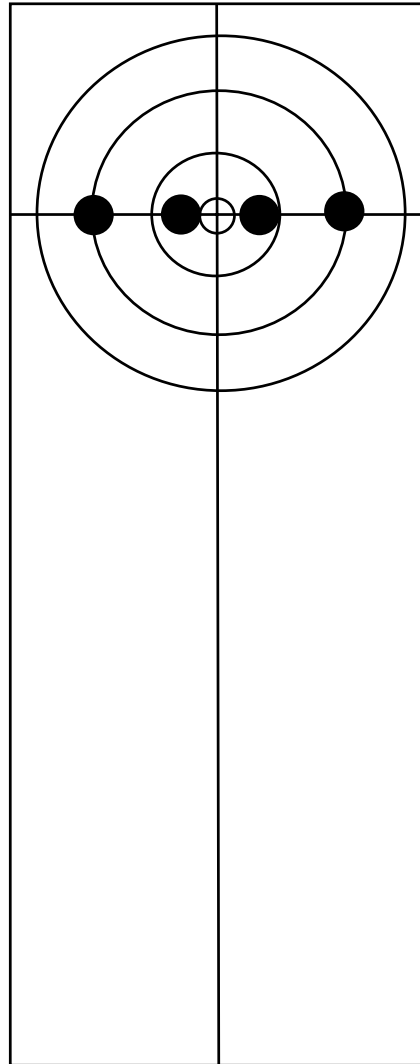
The delivery objective of Drill #2 will be to develop coaching component #2. Weight control assessments (Drill #1) will be made in the hack and weight control adjustments (if necessary) will be made during release. Remember, it is better to be adding weight at release than taking it off. As players become comfortable with the techniques, add coaching component #3 to your skill development drills.

DRILL #3 (Approx. 15 min.)

The objective of Drill #3 will be to combine all coaching components into the successful execution of finesse shots. The degree of difficulty in shot selection should increase with the skill comfort level of the athlete. This would be a good time to add guards to specific shots.

SESSION #1**TAKEOUT DRILL**

Each curler may throw at the 4 rock locations shown here. Each curler will throw 4 hits to the right side of the sheet throwing toward the far end and 4 hits to the left side of the sheet throwing toward the home end. Each curler will throw a total of 8 in turns and 8 out turns.

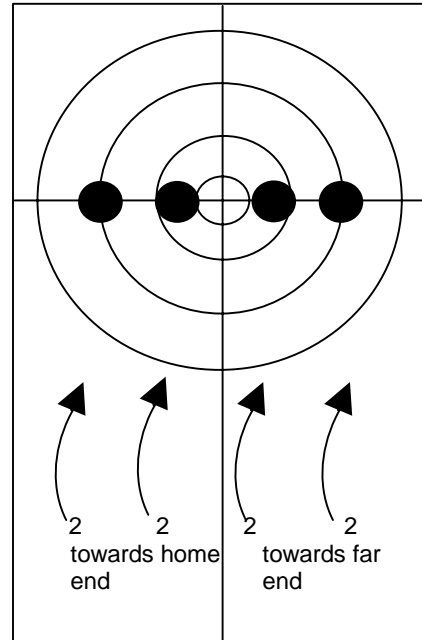


Team Practices

TAKEOUT DRILL (CONTINUED)

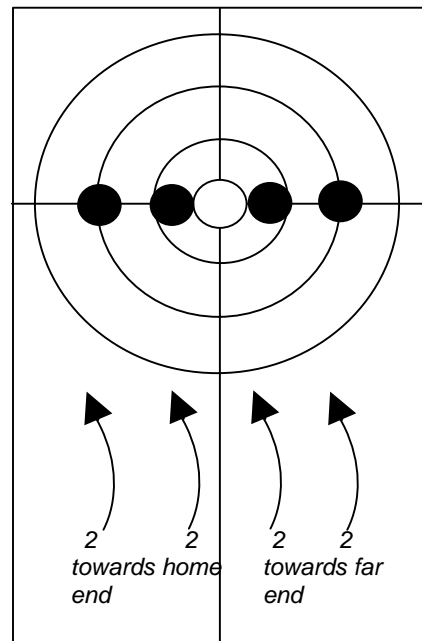
DRILL #1

Each player throws at the 4 rock positions with the in turn.



DRILL #2

Each player throws at the 4 rock positions with the out turn.



DRILL #3

Combine Drill #1 and #2 with hack weight.

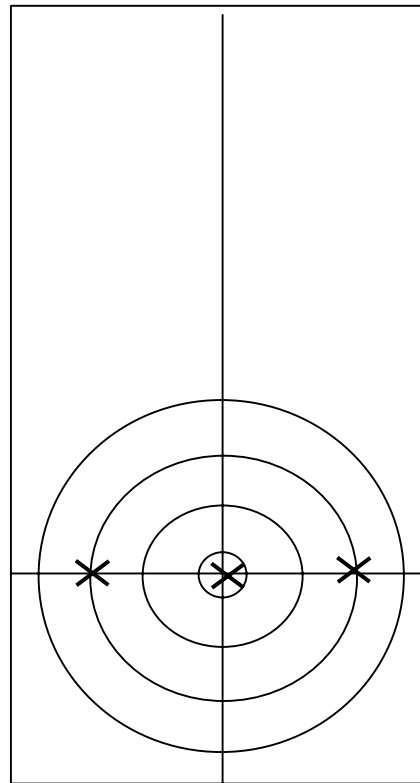
SESSION #2

DRAW DRILL

Place the broom for the curlers so that the shots, if perfectly delivered, would end up on the "X's". Each curler will throw 4 draws to the button throwing towards the far end and 4 draws (2 each side) to the sides of the sheet throwing toward the home end.

NOTE: Draw Drills #1 and #2

As each player is developing the technique of producing draw weight with the forward acceleration of the throwing arm, the target zones may be moved closer to the throwing end. The player could initially attempt to throw the stone half the length of the sheet and then gradually increase the distance of the target zones.

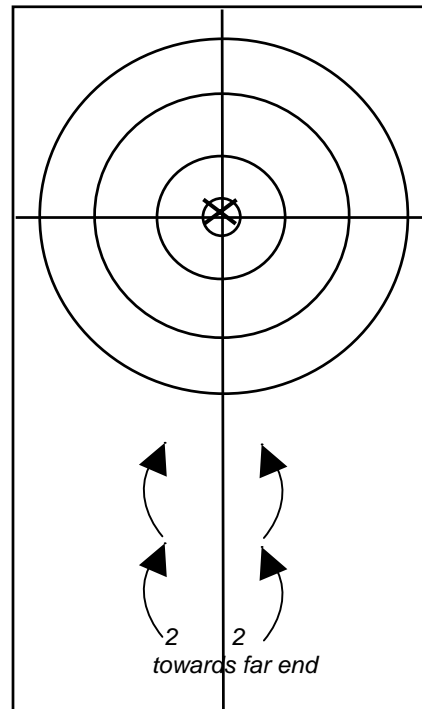


Team Practices

DRAW DRILL (CONTINUED)

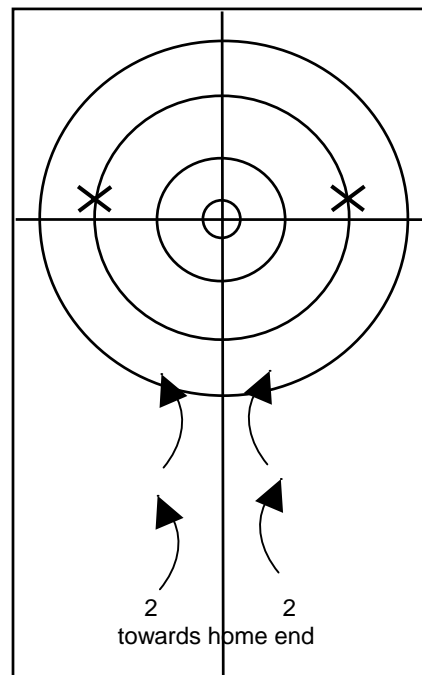
DRILL #1 AND #2

Each curler throws 4 attempts at the button shot: 2 in turns and 2 out turns.



DRILL #1 AND #2 CONTINUED

Each curler throws 4 attempts at the side shot: 2 in turns and 2 out turns.



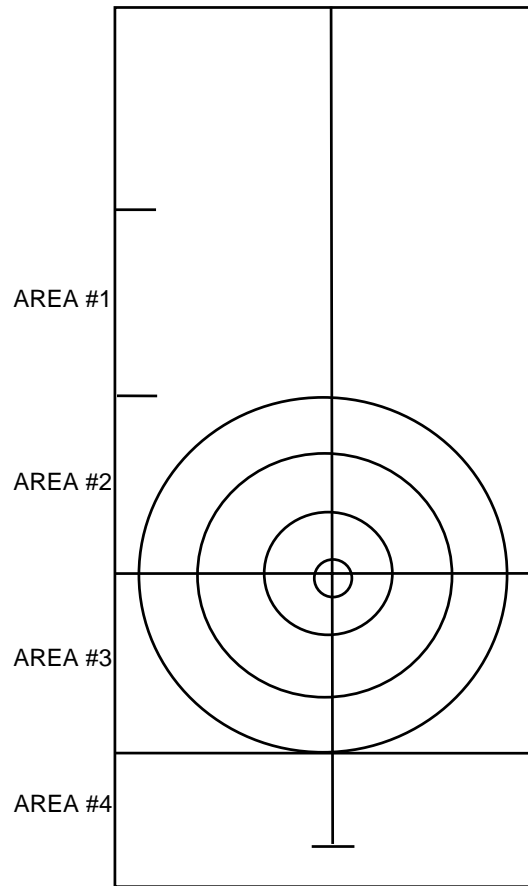
DRAW DRILL (CONTINUED)

DRILL #2 VARIATION

Each delivering player will choose a draw weight control area (coaching and demonstration component #3). They will attempt to throw two consecutive draw shots into that area, then pick a new area and repeat.

DRILL #3

Half guards and full guards should be added to the rock positions in takeout and draw Drills #1 and #2.



PRE-COMPETITION PRACTICE

This routine which the team utilizes will obviously be determined by the amount of time that the event permits! Usually all teams are allocated 10 or 15 minutes per sheet. With this in mind, don't burn out the curlers on the first sheet. They will need to repeat the routine on each sheet and be as mentally and physically alert on the last sheet as the first one.

What do you expect to learn as you practice on each sheet?

You need to leave each sheet feeling confident that you have a matched pair of rocks, rocks which will travel the same distance when they are given the same amount of initial momentum and curl similar amounts! The pair can be any combination of rocks. The number on the handle simply identifies the rock; it does not suggest that the #1 rock is the mate of #2, etc.

Before the event, call the iceman or a good curler at the club to ask for a report on the rocks. This call suggests that the person has sufficient curling skills to know the rocks.

As coach, you may wish to withhold the report until your curlers have obtained their own pairings. If their observations confirm your prior knowledge, you can then compliment the team on their expertise. If they did not find a concern, perhaps your information was incorrect. To be on the safe side, recheck the identified "bad ones".

<p>Remember to match both sets of rocks on the sheet as you might be required to use both sets.</p>
--

SAMPLE INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM DRILLS

BY PAT B. REID

1. Line of delivery
2. Drawing skills
Weight Control/Sweeping
3. Hitting skills
4. Peeling
5. Raises
6. Turns and rotation
7. Cool down
8. Practice scoresheet

PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

PRACTICE DRILLS

Some practice tips :

**** PERFECT PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT ****

- be specific - match the drill to the skill
- require and measure results not just effort
- work with pace, as you must in a game
- practice as you intend to play because that is indeed what you are practicing

Good practices have : good organization
 specific objectives
 pace
 variety
 high levels of activity
 athlete understanding

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

- have signals that mean “stop”, “listen” etc. and use them
- name the drills - identify the skill being tagged and precisely what you expect the athlete to do
 - describe it briefly
 - why it is important
 - when it is used
 - highlight the key points
- demonstrate if required
- do the drill right away
- give feedback - positive, specific, “the next step”
- use warm up and stretch time to explain the practice objectives
- give athletes a practice outline
- review the practice during cool down
- monitor the practice for achievement, i.e. score drills, etc.

ALL THESE TIPS APPLY WHETHER THE PRACTICE IS CONDUCTED BY YOUR COACH, WHETHER YOU ARE PRACTICING BY YOURSELF OR WITH A TEAMMATE.

Know what you want to work on....

Do drills that specifically deal with that skill....

Make the drills very precise....

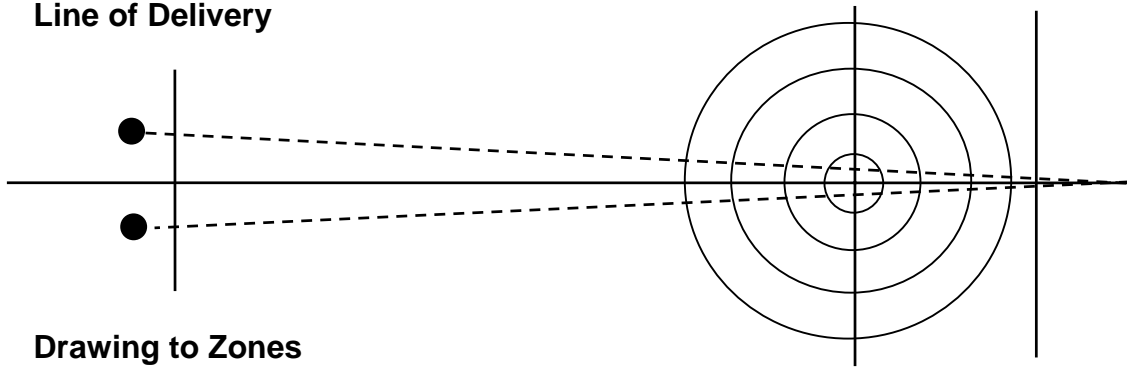
Keep a record of your results....

Work with pace and energy as if a timeclock was in use....

Evaluate your effectiveness during cool down - both your results and your effort.

DRILLS

1. Line of Delivery



2. Drawing to Zones

Hack (NOT backboards) to backline	Zone 4
Backline to tee	Zone 3
Tee to head of the house	Zone 2
Head of the house to 1/2 way to the hog	Zone 1
HGH.....	High Guard from HELL

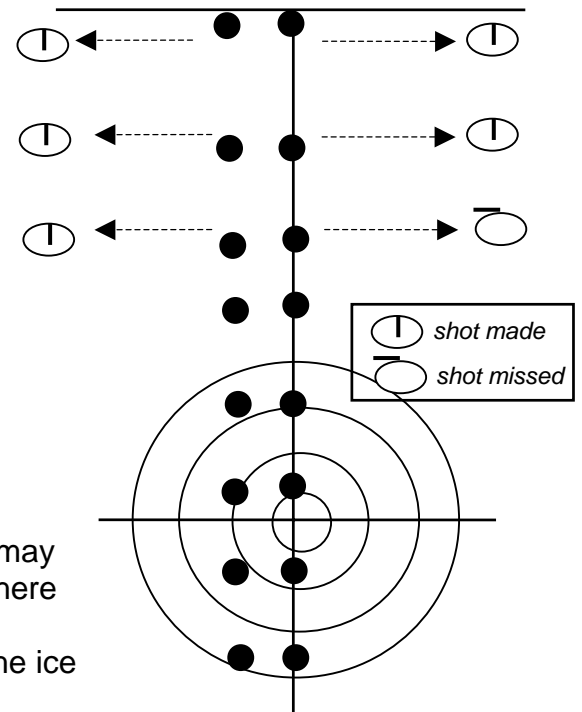
Call out the zone or use scoreboard markers to indicate the zone.

Weight Control/Sweeping - "Climb the Ladder"

Drill goals -- The objective for the thrower is to work on "feel" for draw weight, using an appropriate FTM where necessary. The objective for the sweepers is to judge differing targets in a highly specific and measurable way that is team based.

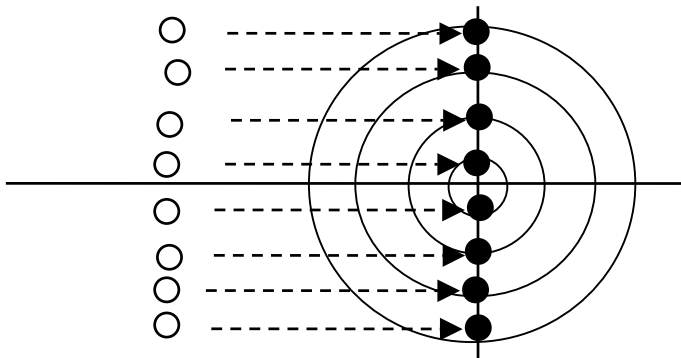
Process -- The drill is executed with a thrower and 2 sweepers with with the other player at "rest", ready to become the next thrower or holding a broom at the far end. Players rotate - thrower to sweeper to sweeper to "rest" to thrower again. All 16 rocks on a sheet are thrown as draw shots. The first target is the far hogline, the next "target" is 3 feet further, then 3 feet further, etc. - 3' increments until you reach the back line, then you back up toward the hogline.

The thrower tries to put it close, the sweepers try to get it to the target... this is a team drill. A shot is considered made if it comes to rest on or within one foot of the target. After each shot, move the thrown stone to the sidelines. Place the handle of the stone perpendicular to the hogline if the shot was made, place the handle parallel to the line if missed. Count your score after all 16 have been thrown. No player may shoot 2 shots in a row - you cannot do it in a game, there is no sense to practicing what you cannot play. No rethrows for "picks" - the sweepers are in charge of the ice surface, as in a game.



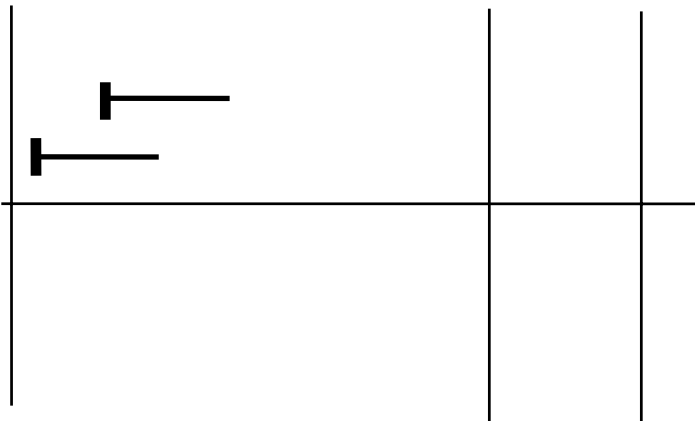
3. Precision Takeouts

Line up 8 rocks across the tee.
 Try to replace them exactly.
 You must throw 4 in turns and
 4 out turns and may execute the
 shots in any sequence you want.
 No doubles allowed!!



4. Application of Turns/Rotation

Place brushes at the natural
 release point for the athlete's
 draw and takeout. The athlete **MUST**
 start to apply the turn at the start
 of the brush **AND** complete its
 application by the head of the brush.
 It is visible to the athlete.

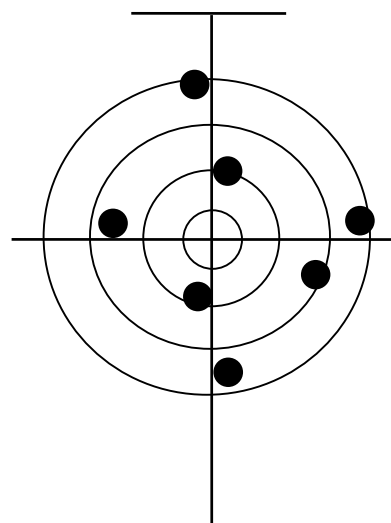


5. Partner Draw/Takeouts

- first thrower draws to the house
- partner executes a hit and stay
- first player then executes a hit and stay
- pattern is repeated - if one athlete hits and rolls out, the partner must then draw
- *** NOTE *** you must alternate your turns on every shot
- objective is to throw one draw shot and replace it 15 times with precise takeouts

6. Peeling

Position the rocks in the house
 as diagrammed.
 The objective is to remove all
 counters **AND** eliminate your own
 shooters from play. If a shooter
 remains in the house, then it
 becomes a target for removal.
 This drill promotes hitting at angles.
 Keep score of the number of rocks
 remaining. 8 shots per player.
 The elite objective is to remove all
 rocks in the fewest possible shots.

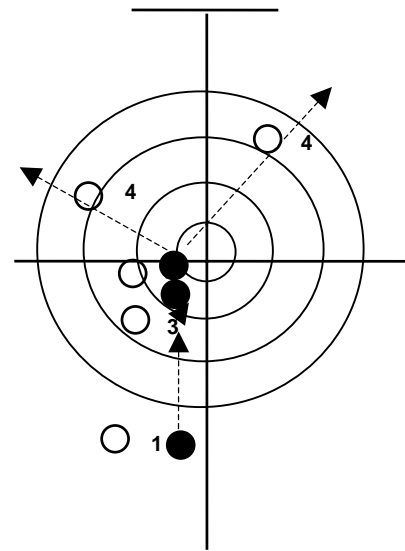


7. Raises

4 shots will be executed in rotation until all 4 players have completed all 4 shots. Use sweepers.

Shot order :

1. tight guard
2. raise to the tee
3. raise takeout and stay
4. raise takeout and roll out



This drill is executed with a “skip”, 2 sweepers and a thrower. Take 2 rocks to the far end for use in positioning for subsequent shots. This drill involves continuous play from end to end until all shots are completed. The Skip for the first shot becomes a sweeper for the second shot. One of the sweepers of the first shot becomes the thrower of the second shot. One of the sweepers of the first shot becomes the thrower of the second stone. The athlete who threw the first shot now becomes the skip at the far end and he rotates with a sweeper on the next turn down the ice. The “skip” for each shot must position the rocks accordingly e.g. place a rock for the raise or place the rocks for the raise hits. The only shot for which no positioning is required is the tight guard. Play is continuous and keep up the pace!! There should be no stoppage in practice other than to clear rocks from the shot just thrown and position rocks for the next shot at the other end. Therefore, all athletes have a turn as skip, all 4 athletes sweep and all 4 throw each shot. This gives each athlete a real perspective on the demands of other positions also. It isn’t so easy to call line perfectly or sweep from end to end with the chips on the line. Score every shot for team execution.

The key to the entire drill is positioning on the tight guard. It must be close enough to the rings to “control” the raise.

*** NOTE: Remember - the stationary stone being raised will take the OPPOSITE turn to the one thrown!

PRACTICE COOL DOWN

- The end of practice drill -

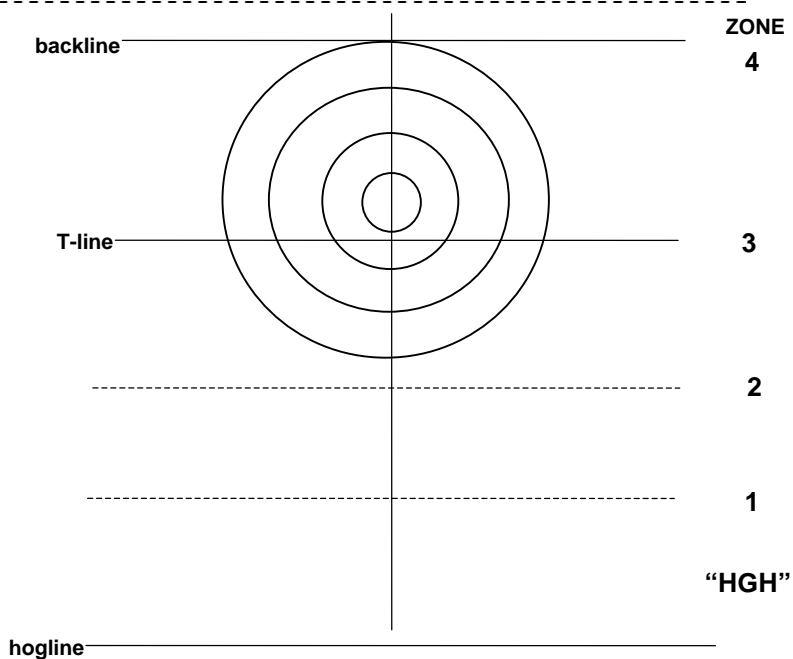
Name: _____

Date: _____

Place: _____

Score: _____

- Execute the shots in order
- No re-throws
- Score each shot 1-4 points
- Place rocks if necessary



SHOTS:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. Draw for shot rock _____

Score _____

PRACTICE SCORESHEET

Name:

Date:

Practice: Team_____ Individual_____ Partnered_____

You or a partner keep score for your drills execution.

Line of delivery	In turns (4)_____	Out turns (4)_____	____/8
------------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------

Drawing to zones	In turns (4)_____	Out turns (4)_____	____/8
------------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------

Hitting	Opposing rocks removed	____/8
---------	------------------------	--------

	Counters remaining in the house	____/8
--	---------------------------------	--------

Partner Draw/Hit Drill

# of draws thrown	_____
-------------------	-------

# of draws made	_____
-----------------	-------

# of hits thrown	_____
------------------	-------

# of hits and stay	_____
--------------------	-------

# of hits and roll out	_____
------------------------	-------

Peeling	# of rocks removed	____/8
---------	--------------------	--------

	# of shooters remaining in play	____/8
--	---------------------------------	--------

2 End Mini-Game _____ vs _____

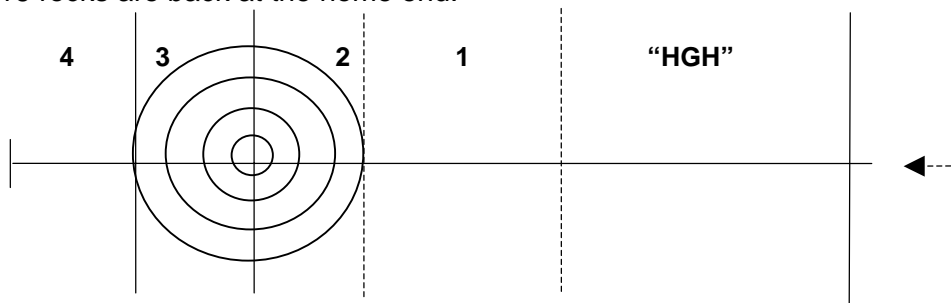
Winners : _____ Score: _____ # of ends _____

Cool down score: _____

SAMPLE PRACTICE

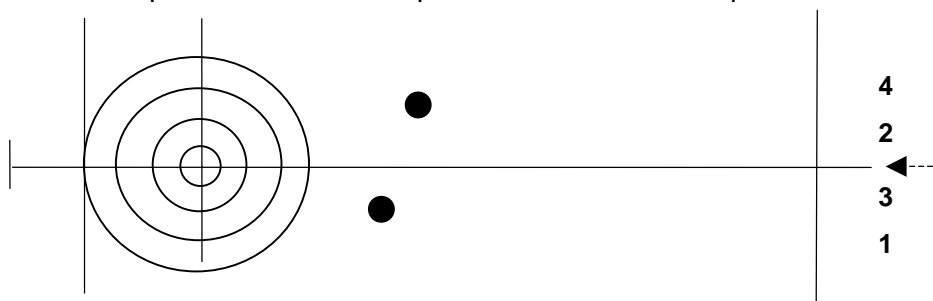
Practice objective : to work on drawing skills

1. Stretch and warm up ready for ice time at _____.
2. Line of delivery drill - 2 athletes per sheet throwing alternately (16 rocks).
3. Zone drawing - draw to zones 1-2-3-4 with sweepers. The extra athlete declares the zone, then prepares to become the next thrower. Continue in turn until all 4 athletes have thrown 4 shots and all 16 rocks are back at the home end.



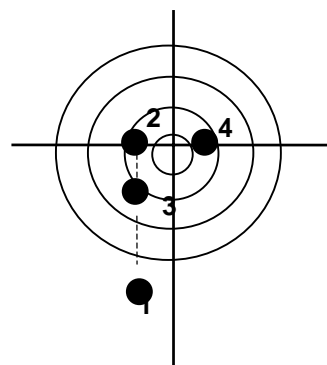
4. Precision drawing.....

Place 2 guards outside the rings. Each athlete throws 2 inturn and 2 outturns, outside in and inside out. Use sweepers and score on a practice drills sheet. Repeat.



5. Draw sequences.....

First thrower throws a tight guard. Second throws the come around to the tee. Third executes a draw raise on the tight guard. Fourth draws for shot. Use sweepers and rotate until all 4 athletes have executed all 4 shots. Repeat.



6. 2 end mini-game

7. Cool down drill

- Partners, with one throwing from each end, setting up and calling the partners shot sheet.

CURLING DRILLS TO DIE FOR

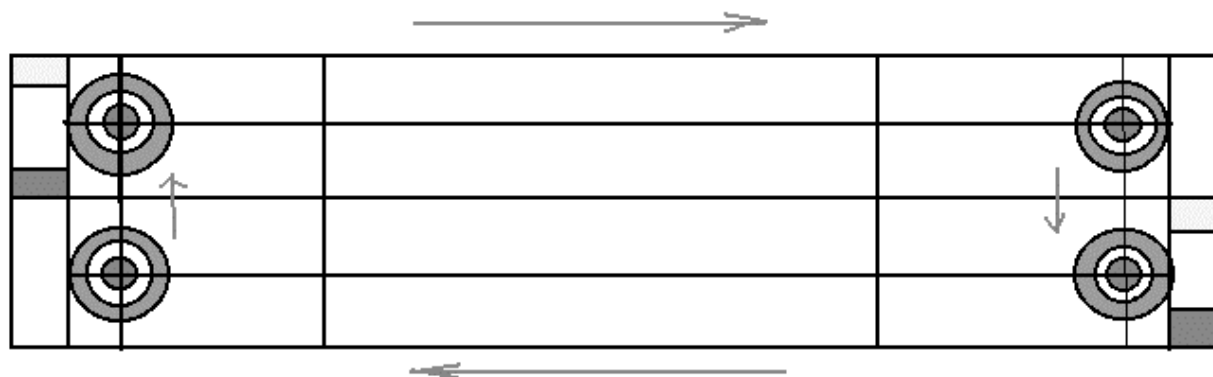
by Bill Tschirhart,
CCA National Development Coach

Most of the following drills were developed while coaching at the University of Waterloo. Each one was designed to fill a need. Sometimes the need was personal skill development and sometimes it was a team requirement. The drills described here are meant to be altered to fit your team's needs. Most have an element of competition. They're all supposed to be FUN! Enjoy!

CIRCLE DRILL

This is a great drill for those of us who work with many curlers at once. During the tryout portion of the season it is an excellent drill for assessing talent. The drill can have any focus the coach or instructor wishes to give it. Here's how it works.

The stones begin at either end of two adjacent sheets. We'll assume for the purposes of this explanation, there are eight players involved. On each sheet the players assume the normal playing positions of shooter, two brushers and skip. Simultaneously, the shooters deliver their stone. When the shot concludes, the players rotate positions (shooter to brusher one, brusher one to brusher two, brusher two to skip and the skip crosses over to the adjacent sheet to become the shooter on that sheet). The drill continues until all the stones have been delivered. That's one rotation! Have as many rotations as necessary.



The coach/instructor can position himself/herself in the middle of the drill and monitor it. The value of this drill is its full involvement by many players simultaneously. This is one drill I use at virtually every practice. If you have more than eight players try establishing a "rest station" at each end after the "skip" position. It's a good time to provide some quick feedback to a player without centring him/her out. It also gives the player an immediate chance to affect change.

LINE DANCING

This drill sounds ridiculously simple. Try it! This is a team drill. A team can try to break its own record or the team can break into two and the twosomes can play against one another on adjacent sheets.

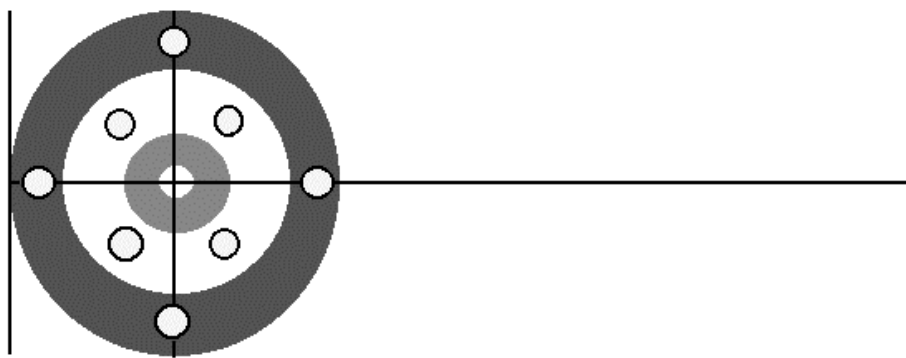
The object of the drill is to deliver all eight of a team's stones and to have them all come to rest on the center line. A point is awarded for each stone (after the eight have been delivered) that touches the center line. By the way, did you know that the center line is not in any of the playing rules of the game? Why then do we have a center line? Well, according to DAN PROHASKA (ice technician at the Ilderton Curling Club north of London Ont.) "It's there to guide the skips back to the other end of the sheet".

Team Practices

This is an excellent weight control and line of delivery drill. If the lead and second can deliver their stones to the back of the house on the center line, the third (or mate) and skip have a relatively easy time of it. If, on the other hand, the lead is short of the rings, well, "let the games begin"!

CRAZY EIGHTS

This is probably the all-time favourite. Again it's best played between two teams on adjoining sheets. The stones of one colour are placed systematically and symmetrically in the rings. We started by placing one in the twelve foot circle on the center line at the top of the house, and one in a similar position at the back. The remaining six were placed on the tee line in each of the 12, 8, 4, 4, 8 & 12 foot circles. Come on, use your imagination! They're in a straight line! We now use a variety of "starting positions". Our current "best set-up" is four stones in the 12 foot (splitting the tee line and the center line thus forming a square) and the other four in the 8 foot midway between the two rocks in the 12 foot (forming a second square at 45 degrees to the first).



The stones of the opposite colour are the shooters at the other end of the sheet. In turn, the team players try to remove the "target stones" (with a skip to call and brushers to, what else, BRUSH).

The object of the drill is to remove all the target stones but retain all the shooters. When the pebble settles, score one point for each shooter on the rings but deduct one point for each target stone remaining in the rings. A perfect score is EIGHT! Crazy eh?!

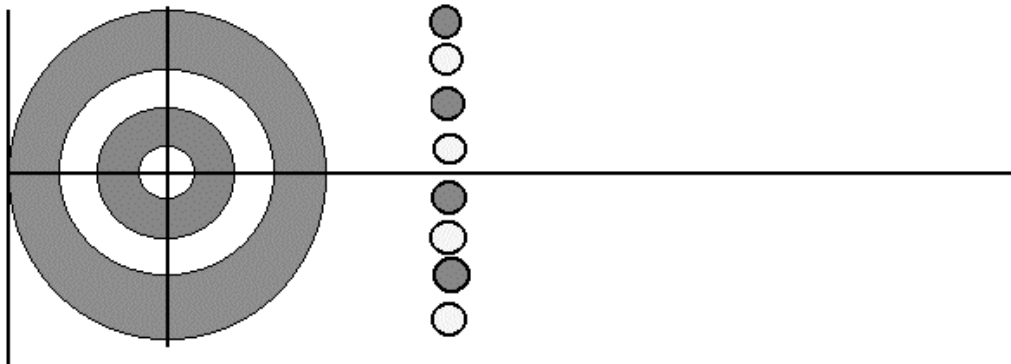
KEEP AWAY

Players play as individuals for this one. A game then is one-on-one. It involves drawing the house and brushing. Alternately, the players shoot and brush all the stones of one colour. A point is up for grabs on every shot. If the shooter draws the house, he/she wins the point. If, on the other hand, by "gorilla" brushing or keen judgement, the brusher keeps the stone out of the house, the brusher wins the point. Obviously there are 8 points per game. If the score is tied at 8, the players flip with the winner choosing to be the shooter or brusher for the decisive 9th point.

This is an excellent drill for interval timing, brushing technique and stamina. The drill is best done near the end of practice when players are a bit tired already. It's a great "tournament" style drill, getting down to a final game.

LAS VEGAS

Two teams play against one another on the same sheet. Each team donates four of its stones to be part of a line of stones in front of the house. These stones are placed alternately by colour with about a stone's width between each.



Each player then delivers one stone in game fashion alternating with the other team. The object is to score points by "raising" stones into the rings. The rings have value with the 12 ft. worth 2 points, the 8 ft. worth 3, the 4 ft. worth 4 and the button a big 5 points. If you can remove an opponents stone(s), go right ahead.

When the last stone has come to rest and the score is determined (each team can score points), the team with the lower score (or if tied, the team that delivered the first stone) can DOUBLE the points. If that's the case, then that team MUST shoot first or pay up on the first "bet". At the conclusion of the "double" end, the same regulation is used to allow for a TRIPLING of the original bet.

HORSE

This is a direct copy of one of the most traditional basketball one-on-one shooting drills called "horse" (or some other unmentionable and truly obnoxious and politically incorrect name).

In the basketball version, two players try to match shots. If the first player makes his/her shot, the other must duplicate it or get a letter from the word "H-O-R-S-E". If the first player misses then the other gets to establish a shot and if successful, his/her opponent must match it or get the letter. The game ends when someone is a H-O-R-S-E!

In curling, the two players try to draw to one of four zones. Zone one is the front half of the "free guard zone". You guessed it, zone 2 is the back half of the free guard zone. Zone 3 is the front half of the rings and zone 4 is the back half of the rings. You decide about the tee line, its your team! The player shooting first simply declares a zone and if successful forces the opponent to match it. If the first shooter is unsuccessful, the second can hang a letter on the first by either successfully drawing the declared zone or he/she can choose to establish a new zone. If the second player chooses to try to draw into the declared zone and is unsuccessful, the first player retains the declaration of the next zone. Success in drawing the zone declared by the player who declared it, results in retention of the right to declare the next zone.

HIDE AND SEEK

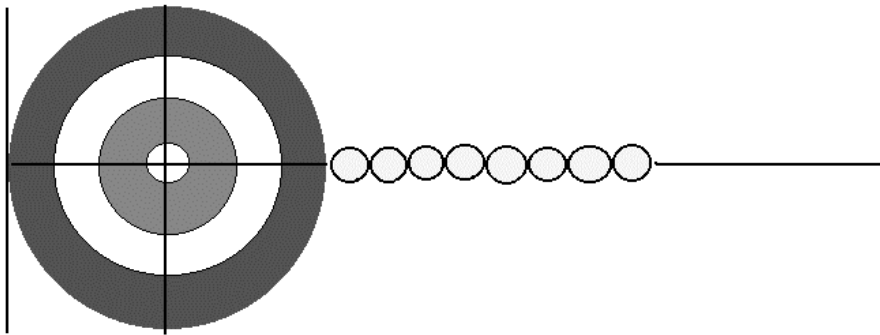
Team Practices

Teams of two work best here. The object of this drill is to draw behind guards in an effort to prevent, or at least make it as difficult as possible for your opponents to remove your stone from play.

One team manually places a guard stone. That team then attempts to hide behind it. The opposing team's task is to remove that stone from play. If the drawing team fails to draw behind the guard, it's a simple matter of an open hit. If the draw behind the guard is successful, then we're talking a down weight hit or possibly a run back of the guard onto the target stone. A point is the prize to the hitting team if the drawn stone is removed from play but the drawing team scores the point if the hit is unsuccessful.

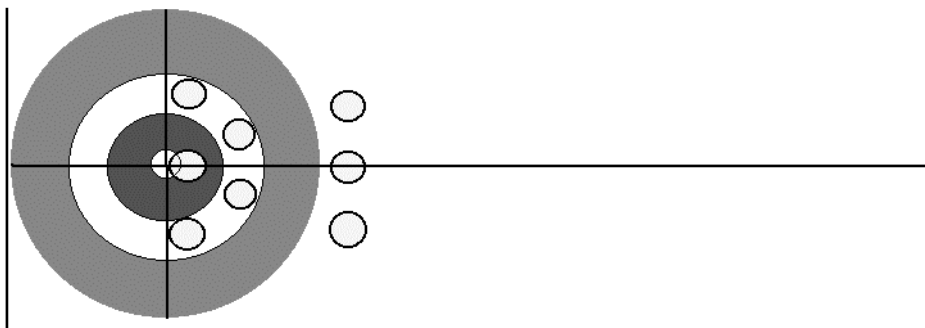
POP GOES THE WEASEL

This is another drill for which teams play on adjoining sheets. All the stones of one colour are placed on the center line from the edge of the 12 ft. toward the hogline (with the stones in contact with one another [sort of the ultimate "freeze"]). The stones of the other colour are at the shooting end of the ice. The object is to raise as many stones from in front of the house onto the rings as possible. (Use the 5,4,3,2&1 counting system.) Experiment with new and exciting formations for the stones out front!



PICKET FENCES

Each team has its own sheet. Stones are arranged according to the diagram below. The space between the three stones in front of the rings is EXACTLY the diameter of one stone! Like "crazy eights" the object is to remove as many of the target stones and retain as many of the shooting stones as possible. Executing the drill and counting is the same as "crazy eights" as well.



HOT SHOTS

Ford really did have a better idea! The advent of this company's sponsorship has seen a rebirth of the old "points game" that was popular in clubs in the 40's & 50's (that's the 1940's and 50's). But who would have thought then that success at this "game" would win you a new automobile?

Of the six shots, all but the last "tie breaker" shot are scored 5,4,3&2 with the button worth 5 and the 12 ft. worth 2. Here they are as described to me by one of the FORD HOT SHOT winners, KAY MONTGOMERY of Saskatchewan (Scott Tournament of Hearts 1995).

1. **Draw to the button.**
2. **Raise.** A stone is placed on the center line tangent to the top of 12 foot circle.
3. **Draw the port.** A stone is placed adjacent to the center line just off the top of the 12 foot. The other side of the port is another stone, placed a predetermined distance from the first. The stones may be placed to allow for either rotation of the shooting stone (i.e. inturn or outturn).
4. **Hit.** A stone is placed on the center line tangent to the button behind the tee line. Contact must be made with the target stone.
5. **Hit and roll.** A stone is placed adjacent to the 12ft. circle midway between the tee line and the center line. The target stone may be placed to allow for either rotation of the shooting stone. The shooting stone must make contact with the target stone.
6. **Double take out.** Two stones are placed on the edges of the 4 ft. at a forty-five degree angle to the tee line. The shooter must cause both target stones to be removed from play.

THE GREAT SHOOT OUT

Full credit for this goes to JIM WAITE and the staff of the first Trillium Curling Camp (Peterborough, summer of 1993). It is a great way to end a camp, clinic, seminar, course etc.

Basically it's a draw-to-the-button! The rings have value (5,4,3,2,&1 for the f.g.z.). In camp situations, there may be many teams represented (In Peterborough there are now 24 in three divisions). All the leads get in the hack (with their skip in the house and brushers at the ready) and on a signal they all deliver their draw. Points are recorded. Then it's the seconds' turn, followed by the thirds and skips. Now groups get together (boys & girls, jr.'s and sr.'s, reds & blues & golds ...). Each group chooses four players from within the whole group, one to shoot, two to brush and one to skip the shot. These players are now shooting one shot for DOUBLE points (10,8,6,4&2). Points are then added and recorded. Now, the groups reassemble in conference to choose a new group of four to shoot for TRIPLE points (15, 12, 9, 6&3).

The double and triple point shots generate much enthusiasm 'cause there are now supporters who hopefully will be very vocal in their support!

SCOTCH TWOSOMES

Team Practices

Wonderful people those Scots! They gave us golf, curling, haigus, scones, bagpipes (and the two songs that go with them) and scotch whiskey. In terms of the whiskey, they also brought the containers in which the whiskey was held (mind you the containers were the Scots themselves). Few realize that in the birthplace of our great game, SCOTCH TWOSOMES is the preferred form. The rule variations are simple.

One player plays the first four stones of the end and the "skip" the remaining four. The player in the house may only brush when the delivered stone reaches the hog line. Usually a game is of 6 ends duration.

It's a great way to practise thanks to the Scots! We owe them much!!

RADAR O'REILLY (M*A*S*H 4077)

Like "Keep Away" and "Horse" this is a one-on-one drill. Player "A" delivers a shot that must remain in play. Player "B" to win the point must make contact with it and move it to within a pre-agreed distance (i.e. brush handle length). The shot by player "B" may be altered so that it does not come in contact with player "A's" shot but comes to rest within a pre-agreed distance. Player "A" wins the point if player "B" is unsuccessful. Players alternate as "A" and "B". This is a good drill for player "B" to practice judging line and time (i.e. stopwatch) on an opponent's shot.

CLIMB THE LADDER

If there is any question asked of me more than any other it's, "If you had to identify one team skill which is the key to success, what might it be?"

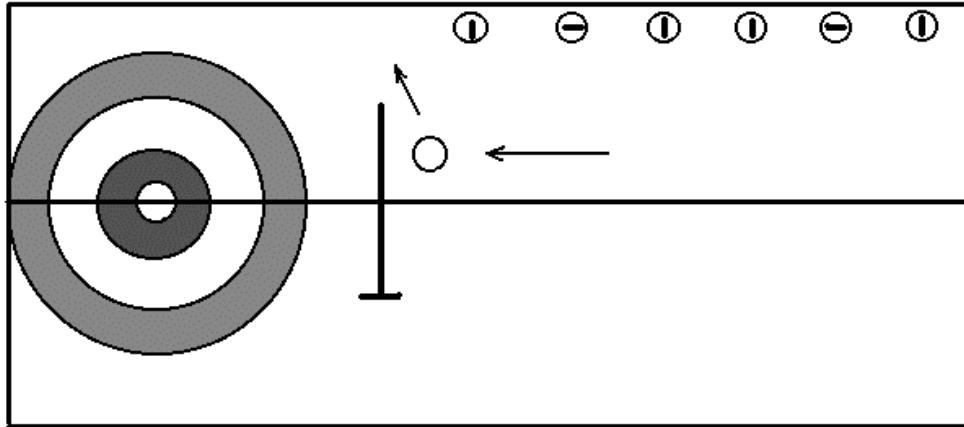
In my mind, there is a clear cut winner, it's WEIGHT CONTROL and its companion, WEIGHT JUDGMENT. Climb the Ladder was designed by Pat "B" Reid (Ontario has more than its share of "Pat Reids" in curling) precisely for this purpose. It's the newest in the stable of "Drills To Die For".

As with most of the drills, it's a team drill in that the players deliver their two stones in the normal rotation (lead, second..) with the skip in the house and the brushers doing what they do best, brushing. The object of the drill is to deliver stones to pre-arranged distances in either an ascending or descending sequence.

In ascending sequence, the lead attempts to deliver his/her first stone just over the hogline (within a brush handle length of the hogline). When the stone comes to rest, it is pulled to the side of the sheet and the handle is positioned either perpendicular to the side board (made shot) or parallel to it (missed shot). The lead then delivers his/her second stone within a brush handle length of the previous stone. That stone is then pulled to the side and its handle positioned either perpendicular or parallel to the side board. After all eight stones have been delivered, simply check the handle positions for the team score.

It helps to position a brush on the ice (see diagram) as a target. In descending sequence, the first stone is delivered by the skip to within a brush handle of the backline. The rest of the stones are then delivered to come to rest in positions toward the hogline. The last two stones are delivered by the lead.

Try a variation where all sixteen stones are delivered, thus making each "zone" smaller. (I know, I omitted the tee line in the diagram. Feel fortunate you got a diagram!)

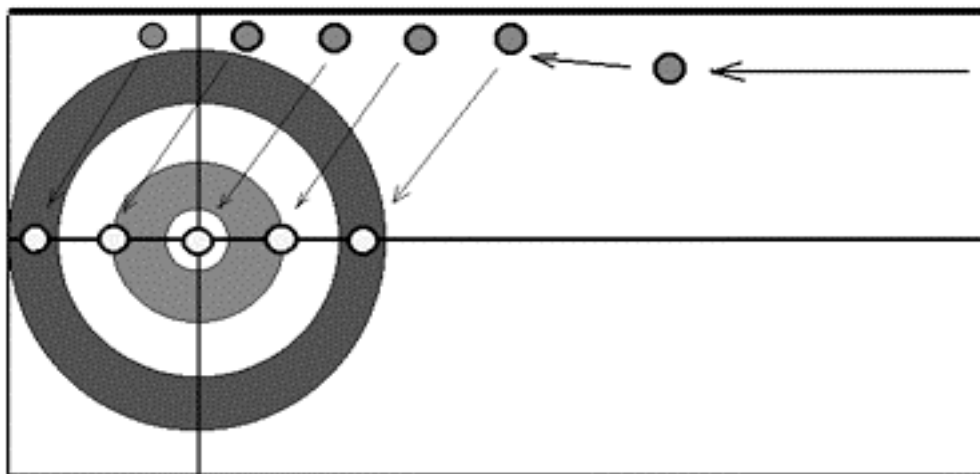


SHOOT-OUT AT THE "OK CORRAL"

One aspect of the game that has changed is the ability of some of the top level teams to use stones that end up near the side boards in the free guard zone, to re-direct their stones into the house to remove an opposition stone and score "the big end". The Wayne Middaugh's and Sandra Schmirler's have turned this into an artform. Here is a drill which will go a long way into putting this weapon into your team's arsenal.

Stones are positioned in the house (number and exact position at your discretion, the diagrammed configuration is just a sample). Stones are then placed near the side board in the free guard zone. These are the stones that will re-direct the shooters into the house to "pick off" the "hombres".

Be sure to position the re-direct stones on both sides of the sheet.



SOME THOUGHTS ON PRACTICES FOR COACHES

A practice is an investment in time and effort for all involved! For my scholastic athletes it's about 2 hours from their studies. If I'm asking them to give up that amount of valuable time, it places a

Team Practices

responsibility on me to provide a practice that will justify the time and effort the players are willing to put forth.

1. Practices should be FUN (for the coach and the players)!
2. Each practice must be pre-planned. It is a sign of strength, not weakness for your players to see you with a written plan in your hand!
3. Each practice should have a focus or theme and that focus should be announced to the players prior to the practice.
4. Some activities should be part of almost every practice. i.e. pre-game on-ice warm-up
5. There should be something new to do at each practice.
6. The activities selected should advance the players' physical and mental preparation for play in competition. In terms of physical preparation, some drills should be anaerobic and others aerobic in nature. Time should also be set aside, not necessarily on-ice time, for mental toughness and stress management strategies.
7. There should be time in each practice for dialogue between the coach and each player.
8. There should be time in each practice for dialogue between the coach and the team.
9. Maximize ice time! Don't use the ice for something that could be handled just as well in the curling lounge. The players WANT to be active!

HAVE FUN!!!!

Matching Rocks & Reading Ice

BY C.W. "Shorty" Jenkins

This is the system I have devised over the years to match rocks and reading all the ice surface in a ten minute practice period.

(Diagrams attached)

Diagram 1: Lead throws odd number rock (or low number rock) ie. #1, #2 or #3, #7 to the away end. Throw draw edge of the 4 foot out turn to the corner.

Diagram 2: Second throws odd number rock (or low number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the corner.

Diagram 3: Third throws odd number rock (or low number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the centre.

Diagram 4: Skip throws odd number rock (or low number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot out turn to the centre.

Diagram 1: Lead throws even number rock (or high number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of the four foot out turn to the corner.

Diagram 2: Second throws even number rock (or high number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the corner.

Diagram 3: Third throws even number rock (or high number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the centre.

Diagram 4: Skip throws even number rock (or high number) to the away end. Throw draw edge of four foot out turn to the centre.

Diagram 5: Lead throws even number rock (or high number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of the four foot out turn to the corner.

Diagram 6: Second throws even number rock (or high number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the corner.

Diagram 7: Third throws even number rock (or high number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the centre.

Diagram 8: Skip throws even number rock (or high number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot out turn to the centre.

Diagram 5: Lead throws odd number rock (or low number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of the four foot out turn to the corner.

Diagram 6: Second throws odd number rock (or low number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the corner.

Team Practices

Diagram 7: Third throws odd number rock (or low number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the centre.

Diagram 8: Skip throws odd number rock (or low number) to the home end. Throw draw edge of four foot in turn to the centre.

By doing this system each player is reading a different part of the ice. Reversing the rocks while throwing to the home end, allows for any subtle differences in the delivery. Cutters and straight rocks will show up much more quickly.

Normally, a cutter is a slower rock and a straight rock is a faster rock.

Once team members have become comfortable with their rocks, it would be wise to throw rocks with hit weight to different areas of the ice, outside in and inside out.

The above practice should be for eight minutes, thus allowing 2 minutes to do the final check on rocks, as see in diagram 9.

Diagram 9: Place one rock on the tee line just biting the centre hole. Team should throw out turn hits 12-13 second from hog to hit, with the skip first throwing both of his rocks, followed by the third with both of his rock, followed by the second throwing both of his rocks, and the lead throwing both of his. Replace the target rock on the tee line after each hit. You **MUST** be throwing at the same rock with each shot. This will ensure that all your rocks will act the same on impact. Eg. If one target rock has a chip and the other one doesn't, the player's rocks will react differently. Therefore, you must always throw at the same target rock.

If you run out of time, it is better to catch the lead. If possible, have your coach or fifth player hold the broom n the edge of the rock on the out turn side to watch line and to time the speed of rocks. By throwing in this pattern, any straight rocks or cutters will definitely show up.

While throwing your rocks in the eight minute practice, it would be wise to have the fifth or coach at the hog line timing and calling out split times for each rock thrown. Split times are measured from back line to hog line.

It would also be wise to check the hitting band on the rocks to see if they are at the same height. If you were throwing a heavy hit at a rock that is frozen 3/4 on, and there is a difference in band height, the target rock will go straight up in the air and not out, leaving a saucer shape chip in the ice surface. Use these to your advantage, but get to know which does which.

In ending, I hope my method will help create better curling games and more rocks in play, with close scoring games.

Get as comfortable as you can with the curling rocks, for you must play with the ones on your sheet. There is no such thing as a bad rock once you know where it is. For example, if you feel the rock is inconsistent, throw 4 or 5 turns on the handle. If you feel the rock is really heavy (30 feet), learn to throw 9-10 turns on the handle.

By practicing this method, it is possible to throw 64 rocks in a ten minute practice.