

Wild win for Team Welsh in last Wednesday's curling action

By Shellee Morning

King Curling Club

The Welsh versus Rhind game, that began in a trouble-free, almost reserved manner last Wednesday, slowly anticipated a boring rock for rock take-out, low-scoring type of game.

In fact, by the third end, this match was just the opposite. Skip Chris Welsh, his vice Eric Heise, second Mike 'Blister' O'Hara and Judy Tripp as lead, played a cautious first end, collecting a single.

Skip Wayne Rhind with the hammer was able to earn his respectable two points and take the lead after the second end.

The third end is where things got interesting. For Ray and Margaret Martin and Cathy Harris, along with their skip Rhind, a whole new game was unfolding in front of their eyes. With lots of rocks in play, Welsh attempted a shot through a small port just to score one, but crashed high in the rings of his opponent's stone, allowing Rhind to steal four and take a hefty 6-1 lead.

Things may have looked grim at the half-way point for the Welsh team, but superior sweeping by O'Hara and Tripp on Welsh's last throw dragged the skipper's stone into the rings for the count of three, making it a 4-6 game.

With the hammer, Rhind was sure to use it wisely and not let the opposition get any closer on the board. His final shot was an excellent draw to the four-foot after his front end brushed the pebble, making the path to score another two and increase their lead 8-4.

If the game was playing on Sportsnet, the sixth end would be awarded the TSN Turning point for Team Welsh. Down by four, with only two ends to make up any ground, the pressure was being felt rink wide. Opening rocks were placed on either side of the house in preparation for a multiple score. Rhinds' squad had difficulty with their take-outs, enabling Welsh to load up the rings.

By skip rocks and already counting three, captain Welsh elected to remove a Rhind stone on the edge of the house for a hit and stick, and with any luck, count five for the lead. Too much weight and not enough curl, the rock hit the target but rolled out of the rings leaving a count of four making it now a tied game.

Time was running out and both Welsh and Rhind had sweat bubbling on their upper lips. Welsh needed a steal, and Rhind with hammer, needed a single for the win. Judy Tripp threw a solid guard, but Cathy Harris for team Rhind threw her stone perfectly around it to rest in the four-foot dead buried. Tripp attempted to freeze to the Harris stone, but slid millimetres behind. O'Hara, famously known as the quiet one, threw a brilliant freeze on his first for the Welsh team, and then followed with a guard after Rhind missed their take-out. The house was now congested with Welsh rocks, but many options were still available for team Rhind. After great shot making through-out the game, both teams were facing their most difficult shots yet. Vice Heise made a great effort for his draw shot, but unfortunately fell short.

The wall of guards were now forcing tough raises for either Skips.

Welsh's first rock was another guard closing the left side of the house. Skip Rhind removed the newly placed guard that had the lone Welsh rock in counting position, sticking out like a sore thumb. Welsh, needing to guard it up again, threw an ounce too light, allowing the stone to over-curl and a glimmer of hope was left for Rhind.

Rhind unleashed what looked like the perfect shot to hit and stick for the win. As it passed the hog line, the rock violently curled off line and ever so lightly wicked into a guard, re-directing what might have been the shot of the night. Welsh stole the point and claimed victory over one of the wildest back and forth wins in the Wednesday Social League.

Rhind commented later that everyone on his team played quality curling and the score could have gone either way in the final end. Welsh agreed that all eight players from both teams made great shots to be proud of. Lead players for both teams had strong consistent games hitting the broom while executing great weight control allowing the skips to build the game they wanted to play.

The Welsh win moves the team into a three-way tie for second place in Division 2.

Monday Night Men's League

moving toward playoffs.

Reported by Larry Sheardown

After two rounds of play, one thing is for certain in Men's Curling.

Team Barber is the team to beat.

Rolling along with an unbeaten record over the first 14 games, skip Dave Barber, vice Dan Steenhoek, second Peter Kamstra, and newbie lead Brent McLean have taken no prisoners with their strong take-out game and precise rock placement. The only question is whether they can maintain the pace with Teams Frans, Tim Gerrits, George Gerrits and Karl Davis whom are all taking dead aim toward them. Team Sheardown and MacDonald round out a very competitive A Division who will attempt to stay in the A loop as

playoffs are only a month away.

In B division, Boynton's boys moved down from A to B and are sure to want to show they still have game. David Barber (the other Barber team) has shown he can play with the best and the worst. Jim Smith may be one of the best rock tossers in the club, but his Team has struggled with consistency this season. Team Sidon have also been demoted for this round after going 0-for-7 in A league play, but many of those games were very close losses. Moving up from C to B Division are the unpredictable Witherspoon Family and a new and improved Al Scott, looking to show they belong.

In C Division all bets are for some crazy scoring games as the ice is level for Teams Groombridge, Howard, Livingstone, Muller, Wright and Phillips. Yes, Monday Night Curling is more and more broom gripping, rock banging, and hurry-hard exciting as ever and we wouldn't want it any other way.