

# Plainfield Curling Club Faces Scots for American Honor

By WAYNE BAKER  
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD** — Most of us know of curling, but understand little of it. While football, basketball and baseball get most of the sportswriter's ink, curlers practice their sport in virtual obscurity. That's probably why you're unaware that a major international competition came to South Plainfield on Friday.

Members of Scotland's Royal Caledonian Curling Club (RCCC) visited the Plainfield Curling Club to compete for the Herries-Maxwell Trophy. The Scots will return home in possession of the trophy, as the matches were completed on Sunday in the Boston area with a final score of 949 to 869. In the world of curling, the Herries-Maxwell Trophy roughly

equates to the Ryder Cup in golf.

The Scotsmen have been touring the U.S.A. to battle for the Herries-Maxwell Trophy since their first matches in Chicago on January 15. They've traveled through much of the upper Midwest, then worked their way east, sliding their stones in both South Plainfield and Ardsley, NY (just across the Tappan Zee Bridge) last Friday. The Scots arrived in the metro NY area with a 781-746 lead, and left with an 856-800 lead. The matches at Plainfield were won by the Scotsmen 16-11 and 16-10. Ardsley's team captured the morning matches 21-17, then dropped the afternoon matches 26-12.

The Herries-Maxwell trophy has been competed every five years since 1952 and had been in American hands since 1982. Prior to that, it had been

held by the Scots from its inception 30 years earlier. The trophy is named for Commander Desmond Herries-Maxwell, a former president of the RCCC, who conceived the idea of the competition in 1951.

A curling match normally takes about two hours and consists of eight ends. Each end, which roughly compares to an inning in baseball, consists of both teams delivering eight stones each. Four players make up a curling team, one is designated as skip, essentially captain and on-ice coach.

The teams alternate sliding the 42-pound granite stones along a narrow ice covered court called a sheet, and the teams alternate delivering stones. The stones are slid with a turning motion. This spin both keeps the stone traveling consistently, like a spiral pass in football, and also permits the stone to curve as it travels down the ice, much like a bowler's hook. It's this curve from which curling gets its name.

The sheet is 146 feet long and about 15 feet wide. The surface of the ice is sprayed with droplets of water, which then freeze, creating a bumpy surface called a pebble. This pebble makes the stone slide more readily.

The shooter delivers a stone by pushing off the hack, a rubber covered starting block fixed into the ice, and sliding forward, usually trying to either place the stone as close as possible to the center of a target 12 feet in diameter with its center 126 feet away or to knock an opponents stone(s) away from the center. The team with the stone closest to the center of the target scores one point for each stone closer than the closest opponent's stone, while the other team scores zero.

The Plainfield Curling Club is a two-sheet facility, meaning they can play two matches at a time. Curlers from both countries spoke about the camaraderie of the sport, and this is one reason why the Scots will be taking home much more than the trophy, they'll be taking home fond memories of their American friends and their hospitality.



Wayne Baker for The Westfield Leader and The Times

STONE, COLD ATHLETIC TEAM...Scotland's Royal Caledonian Curling Club.



Karen Clarkson for The Westfield Leader and The Times

**CHASING A VIKING...** Blue Devil Dylan Moran, center, chases a West Morris Central Viking in Woodbridge on January 30. Westfield won, 6-4. On January 31, the Blue Devils defeated Summit, 5-3, at Warinanco Arena in Roselle.

## FSPY 'A', 'B' Gymnasts Fare Well in Quad Gymnastic Meet

The Fanwood-Scotch Plains Y (FSPY) A and B Division Gymnastics teams turned in solid performances against teams from the Madison, South Mountain and Somerset Valley YMCAs on January 28.

A Division: 13U Alivia DeMaria placed second on vault. 14-plus Jenna Skoller placed third all-around, second on uneven bars and fifth on vault and floor exercise. Gina Pelosi captured first on vault, third on uneven bars and fifth all-around. Hannah Kronick took fifth on beam and Patty Matejek earned fifth on uneven bars.

B Division: 11U Kacie Bumiller took first on vault and uneven bars to finish fifth all-around. Zoe Stein placed fifth on vault and fourth on uneven bars.

12-13 Lisa Matrale captured first place all-around, first on vault and floor exercise, second on uneven bars and third on beam. Kaitlyn Frey earned third all-around, after taking first on vault, uneven bars and beam. Alexa Uvino placed third on vault, uneven bars and floor.

Allison Lasher placed second on vault and beam, and third on uneven bars. Kelsey Herbig earned third on vault and fifth on uneven bars. Allison Zeller grabbed fifth on vault and beam.

The "A" and "B" Division gymnasts will be hosting their first home meet on Saturday, February 24. The FSPY "C" Division will be competing at home on

Saturday, February 10. Spectators are welcome for all competitions, which are scheduled to begin at 3:30 p.m.

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## RE/MAX Properties Unlimited of Westfield is very pleased to announce Diane Kontra has joined their office.



Diane was licensed in 2001 and is a life long resident of New Jersey. Her experience is beneficial to families relocating to this area. She is a member of the Garden State Multiple Listing Service and the Greater Union County Board of Realtors. Diane achieved both the NJ Association of Realtors Circle of Excellence and the ERA Beyond Excellence award for 2005. Her goal is to provide a seamless transaction for her customers by going above and beyond their expectations. Her unwavering high moral standards and professionalism has earned her the respect of both her peers and her customers alike. She is a true professional.

Camie Delaney, Manager of the Westfield office, was quoted, "I am so very pleased to have Diane join our office. She is a great agent and realizes the potential RE/MAX offers to grow her business."



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