Curling is an ice sport of fitness and finesse that began in 16th century Scotland. Like golf, curling is a lifetime sport. It's played for both recreation and competitive satisfaction by men and women from 8 to 80. It is also an Olympic sport.

During the curling season, generally October through March, over a million curlers take to the ice in Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, many European countries and 23 of the United States.

Size and strength are not key factors for success. Children are ready to curl at about age 12. Skill is more a function of finesse and concentration.

**Brief Description of the Game:**

Each player shoots or delivers two stones each end, or inning, alternately with their counterpart on the opposing team. A twist of the handle on release makes the stone curl a little like a "hook" in bowling.

While one player shoots, two sweep as needed. Sweeping polishes the ice so the stone travels farther if delivered too softly.

All four team members shoot two stones an end and sweep for their teammates' shots. The skip acts as team captain and strategist. Strategy is a major factor in curling, as important as shooting skill. Some people refer to curling as "chess on ice".

The playing surface is called "a sheet of ice", and is illustrated in the diagram. The design allows play in both directions.

By now you've gathered that curling has its own language. For example, your stone better get over the hog line or it's removed from play!

The object of shooting is to get the stone, or rock, to come to rest at a predetermined place (a draw or guard) or to move another rock (a takeout or raise).

The score is determined after each end of 16 stones. A scoring example is illustrated in the diagram. A 12 foot circle, the house, is the scoring area. Stones in the house must be closer to the tee (center) than any opposing stone to score. The maximum score in one end is eight points (an eight-end is rarer than a hole in one in golf!) Typically, one to three points are scored. Games are usually 8 or 10 ends, lasting two to two and a half hours. In Intramurals we play 4 ends and it takes approximately an hour.

**INTRAMURAL RULES**

1. **Players** - There are 4 players on each team (lead, second, vice-skip, skip). A team must have at least three players to start. A team with only three players shall have the "lead" throw 4 stones while the vice-skip and skip shall throw two each.

2. A game consists of 4 ends or 1 hour. End (an inning, or division of a game): means that each player of both teams has thrown 2 stones alternately and a score is determined. The first end starts on the north side of the ice arena and then alternates.

3. **HOW TO CURL** - Each player shoots 2 stones each end, starting with the lead and ending with the skip's final shot.

   The object of the game is to have your team's stone(s) closest to the center of the target rings (house) after the last stone is thrown. A stone touching the outside circle is considered "in".
Sweeping: A stone, which otherwise would stop short, can be "brought along" to its proper destination by two players sweeping the ice directly in front of the stone. Sweeping polishes the ice so the stone travels further and straighter. The entire brush head must be on the ice surface and you must move the brush from side to side. The sweeping stroke should be short, vigorous and with some pressure. It is illegal to hit the broom against the ice.

While one person shoots, 2 team members are sweeping and the skip holds the broom nearest the target rings and advises where to place the shot. The person shooting aims at the broom (held by the skip) and a twist of the handle on release makes the stone curl, a little like a "hook" in bowling.

4. The lead player Team A shoots a stone, then the lead player of Team B shoots a stone. The lead player Team A shoots their 2nd stone, lead player Team B shoots their 2nd stone. Now the 2nd shooter for each team is up.

5. All games shall start promptly. Late teams shall be penalized one point for every five minutes that they are late. If they are at least 10 minutes late, they will not play half an end. Forfeit time: 15 minutes.

6. Substitutions may be made only at the start of an end. Any player may substitute for any other player at this time.

7. Team winning the coin toss shall shoot second in the first end, while the losing team shall have choice of stone color. The winning team of an end must play the first stone of the next end.

8. Only vice-skips will be allowed to enter the house at the end of an end to determine the scoring for that end. All other players shall remain outside of the house until scoring has been determined.

9. If measurements are necessary, they shall be performed by one of the Rec Services supervisors.

10. If the game being played is the last one to be played on the ice for that night, the players will help to remove the stones from the ice to the storage area.

11. SCORING - One point is given for each stone your team has closer to the button (center) than the other team. Only one side can score in an end. As in the game of horseshoes, only the stones that are nearest the center of the goal, count. A game that is tied after the regulation number of ends shall be decided in the following manner: a team member from the team that scored last in the regulation ends shall throw one stone. If it stops in the house, its distance from the center shall be noted and the stone shall be removed. If it does not make the house, it shall be simply removed. Then an opposing team member shall throw one stone. The team whose stone stops closest to the center of the house shall be awarded a point and be declared the winner. The stone must be in the house for a point to be awarded. No sweeping by either team is allowed during the overtime throw-off.

12. Between the tee lines, any or all of the throwing team members may sweep. After a stone has passed the tee line of the house, one player on the playing team has the first privilege of sweeping their own stone. If they choose not to sweep, one opponent may try to sweep it out of the back of the house.

13. A stone which does not completely clear the "hog line" shall be called a "hog" and shall be removed from play, but no stone shall be considered a "hog" which has struck another stone lying in position. A stone coming to rest after passing the "back line" and being clear of it must be removed from the ice.
14. The stone must be released from the hand before it reaches the nearer hog line. Failure to release the stone results in immediate removal of the stone.

15. Any stone that is touched by a player or a broom while it is in motion shall be declared "burned." If the stone is from the team of the player who committed the "burn," it shall be stopped immediately and removed from play. If the stone is of the team opposing the player who committed the "burn," the vice-skips shall determine the correct resting position of the stone. The latter shall also be the case when a non moving stone is accidentally moved by any player.
