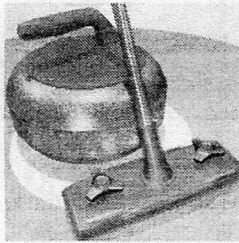


Curling – the best value in the sports world

The increased popularity of curling as a spectator sport, occasioned by the huge interest in Olympic curling, did not emphasize enough the advantages of curling as a club player. Whether for the younger curler of school age, someone who is still going out to work, or the senior looking for some gentle exercise and sociability, you cannot beat curling as good value for money.

Unlike many sports that our school-age children are involved in, curling makes very little impact on the wallet. And nobody has to get up before dawn to drive to practice! Requiring only clean



Throwing Rocks

Karen Sotvedt
Middleton
Curling Club

sneakers and a bike helmet at the youngest level, it has to be the least expensive team sport a child can take up. Most clubs have sliders or even the duct tape that can be used in its place, and the rest of the equipment – brooms and

rocks – are provided at the curling rink. The fees are low and for this the student still participates in an active sport that promotes team-building and the benefits of regular exercise.

For high-school level curlers, the investment is similarly low, with the skill level increased including lessons on strategy in addition to the purely physical benefits of exercise. There is healthy competition both with teams of peers, as in other sports, and in many curling clubs, teams from this age group often compete in adult leagues, giving experience at a higher level. If a student curler is committed, the only equipment to be purchased is still not extensive, just shoes and a broom. But for students who feel they may not continue in curling, the clean sneakers are still the only mandatory requirement.

Adult curlers require no more than the junior curlers, and what could be a better pastime when the golf courses are closed? You have all the benefits of being outdoors, but there is no weather. And when the knees and back start to be an issue, now there is the stick delivery instead of bending down in the hack. This is the best innovation in years, as it effectively extends the ability of aging or disabled curlers indefinitely. The stick can be used from a wheelchair, or with just a gentle stroll down the ice, for delivery of the rock.

Any way you look at it, curling is the best sports value going, in this town or anywhere. Check out Middleton's club at www.middletoncurlingclub.com