

Friday, January 18, 2019 • An Official Publication of the World Financial Group Continental Cup.

# WISH YOU WERE HERE?

For those who are rolling into town for the final couple of days of the WFG Continental Cup here in the Curling Oasis, we thought we'd share the magic of Wednesday's Opening Night. As great as these pictures are, they only tell a small part of the story. Maybe next time, eh????!!



Photos by Mike Burns, Curling Canada.

**We are looking  
for the best...**

**WFG FAN  
SHOTS**

Complete details on page 3

Whether you are at the Arena, the Pool, the Patch, the Strip, the golf course, the canyons or where ever your adventures take you... please send us your selfies and photos - the more fun, the better - for your chance to win a \$250 dining certificate from the Orleans Hotel and Casino, plus other great prizes. A winner will be announced each draw.

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## Today at the Cup

Friday, January 18th

- 8:30 am Draw #4 Mixed Doubles
- 11:30 am The Patch is open
  - Outdoor Pool Area
- 1:30 pm Draw #5 Mixed Doubles
- 3:30 pm The Patch is open
  - Mardi Gras Ballroom
- 4:00 pm Up Close and Personal
  - Women's Skips, The Patch  
Mardi Gras Ballroom
- 6:30 pm Draw #6 Men's Team Competition
- 9:00 pm Steelheart performance  
Orleans Showroom - free
- 9:00 pm The Patch is open
  - Mardi Gras Ballroom



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**to America's home of live curling.**  
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# The World's Curling Oasis

**The ORLEANS**

**Orleans  
ARENA**



# AN ASTONISHING START FOR TEAM WORLD

By Dave Komosky

It was a tale of two sleep patterns when curlers involved in the 2019 World Financial Group Continental Cup, presented by Boyd Gaming, hit the pillow Thursday night in Las Vegas, NV.

For members of Team World, it was sweet dreams and visions of good things to come.

But for those who wear the colours of Team North America, it was likely a night of gnawing on their bedclothes.

That's what happens when one team jumps out to a commanding lead in any event. And that was Team World, which won all nine matchups played on Day One, but more importantly, took control of the confidence factor. There's still three days to go before a winner is decided, and plenty of points on the table in the race to 30.5, the number needed to secure the championship when the event finishes Sunday, but Team World is surely in a comfortable spot — in the standings and in their minds.

A few more days of this and Team World will snap an ugly six-year losing streak to Team North America in this annual battle of the best teams and players in the world.

Team World swept three morning and three afternoon mixed team matches, then completed the rout by winning all three evening women's competition games.

Yowza!

Team World got a big day from Anna Hasselborg of Stockholm, Sweden, the 2018 Olympic gold-medal winner. She teamed with countrymate Oskar Eriksson to win a mixed doubles event in the afternoon, then followed it up by skipping her team to a convincing 8-3 win in the evening over Team North America's Rachel Homan of Ottawa.

Hasselborg took control in the fourth end when she made a spectacular double for three to grab a 5-1 lead after it looked like Homan was primed for a steal.

Hasselborg said it was amazing to think that one team could sweep the other in one day.

"We said before this draw what was better than six and oh and we



said nine and oh," said Hasselborg. "We did that and we're super happy and everyone is playing great and having tons of fun. We'll have some celebration tonight in our players lounge."

Hasselborg didn't want to comment on the play of the North American side, saying only that they will be coming hard at them on Friday.

"It's going to be a battle all the way through," she said.

Team World completed the clean sweep after Eve Muirhead's Scottish team from Stirling edged Jennifer Jones and her Winnipeg foursome 5-3, and Silvana Tirinzoni of Zürich defeated Jamie Sinclair's Minnesota-based crew 6-5.

Team North America looked poised to get on the points board after Jones jumped ahead 2-1 after four, but Muirhead battled back to go up 3-2 after six ends. Jones, with the hammer and with last rock, elected to try to chip her rock out and blank the end and carry the hammer into the final end, but flashed her final shot to score one.

Continued on Page 4

**DRAW 1**

Chris C. @chriscc

Just went to Opening Ceremony. Now trying to decide where to place the rocks! #WFGfanshots

**DRAW 2**

benjamin.everly • Follow

benjamin.everly 6am workout before the first draw!! Came all the way from England to watch the curling! #wfgfanshots #dedication

**DRAW 3**

Jon Peterson is @ watching Las Vegas Curling Rocks at The Orleans Hotel and Casino - Las Vegas.

Made it here JUST in time. My Uber driver may or may not have broken some traffic laws from the airport. I will not confirm. I love Vegas! Happy to be here with my Mom and Dad. Go team North America! #WFGFanShots

*Yesterday's winners*

**SEND US YOUR SELFIES!**

Ensure your post or account is set to "Public" during the event. (We can't see it otherwise). If you would like to receive direct notification that you won, make sure you "follow" or "like" the Las Vegas Curling Rocks account. Winners will be announced at the end of each draw, included in the #WFGFanShots album on Facebook and published the next day in the Morning Cup. Contest begins at 12:01 am January 16.

**Post your entries on our social media platforms:**

**@LVCurlingRocks @VegasCurlingRocks**  
**AND**  
**use the hashtag #WFGFanShots.**

Complete contest rules and prize details available at [www.LasVegasCurling.rocks](http://www.LasVegasCurling.rocks)

# Point Tracker

## Thursday, January 12

Draw	Sheet		Points	
1		Mixed Doubles Competition (3 points)	0	3
2		Mixed Doubles Competition (3 points)	0	3
3		Women's Team Competition (3 points)	0	3

## Friday, January 13

Draw	Sheet	Mixed Doubles Competition (3 points)	Points	
4	A	Joanne Courtney/Denni Neufeld Silvana Tirinzoni/Benoit Schwarz	1	
4	B	Sarah Anderson/John Landsteiner Eve Muirhead/Bobby Lammie	1	
4	C	Dawn McEwen/Ben Hebert Sofia Mabergs/Christoffer Sundgren	1	

Draw	Sheet	Mixed Doubles Competition (3 points)	Points	
5	A	Emma Miskew/Matt Hamilton Lauren Gray/Grant Hardie	1	
5	B	Jamie Sinclair/Chris Plys Niklas Edin/Sara McManus	1	
5	C	Colton Flasch/Taylor Anderson Melanie Barbezat/Valentin Tanner	1	

Draw	Sheet	Men's Team Competition (3 points)	Points	
6	A	Team Koe Team de Cruz	1	
6	B	Team Shuster Team Edin	1	
6	C	Team Gushue Team Mouat	1	

## Saturday, January 14

Draw	7	Women's Team Scramble	3
Draw	8	Men's Team Scramble	3
Draw	9	Mixed Team Scramble	6

## Sunday, January 15

Draw	10	Skins	15
Draw	11	Skins	15

# ASTONISHING START

## Continued from Page 3

Muirhead made a nice tapback through a port to count two in the final end to secure the victory.

"To be nine nil up feels great," said Muirhead. "But there's a long way to go."

Muirhead agreed with Jones' shot selection in the seventh end.

"I wasn't surprised when I saw it but I imagine people in the crowd might have been surprised because they're not used to teams taking out their own rocks," she said.

Nothing worked for Team North America on Thursday. Even reliable Kevin Koe, a two-time world champion, couldn't get it going.

Team World's Jennifer Dodds and Bruce Mouat crushed Koe and Homan 12-2 in a bizarre early-morning mixed doubles game that saw the Europeans crack a six-ender on the opening end and stretch the lead to 8-1 after three ends. But more bizarre was the struggles of Koe who wobbled out of the hack on several occasions, including in the first end when he missed both his shots, opening the door for Team World to score big.

"A little bit of a rough start," Koe said. "I didn't play very well and didn't give Rachel much to shoot at."

He said his struggles weren't helped by a slight injury.

"I just tweaked my knee a little bit," he said. "It was giving me a bit of a problem. It will be fine."

Team North America will lick their wounds, said coach Jeff Stoughton, and come back Friday and play better.

"We just need to play better," he said. "It's as simple as that. They have just outplayed us. I thought we were going to get on the board this evening, but it just didn't work out. But tomorrow is another day and there's still a lot of points on the table."

There are two more rounds of mixed doubles Friday, followed by men's competition.

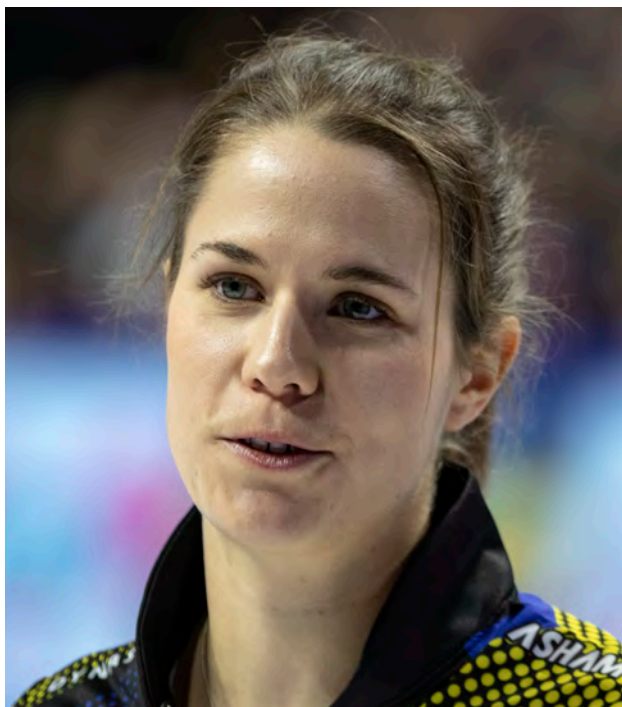
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**next game!**

**Hmmm....maybe you need to take one home for each member of your team???**



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# Kelly's Heroes

By Colin Kelly



## A YEAR FLIES BY WHEN YOU'RE HAVING FUN

So who's had a better past 12 months than Anna Hasselborg? In the curling world, you'd be hard pressed to find anybody with greater achievements in that stretch.

As skip for the Swedish women's national team, Hasselborg started the year off with a big bang, claiming the gold medal at the 2018 Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea, last February. Sweden dominated South Korea 8-3 in the championship match.

In March, Team Hasselborg snared silver at the World Championships in North Bay, Ontario. And it was nearly gold, as Sweden scored two points in the 10th end, pushing Canada to an extra end in the championship match.

That would be a phenomenal season by most any curler's standards, and both achievements happened in the space of about a month. But as they say in those late-night TV ads trying to sell you amazing juicemakers or cleaning solutions: "But wait, there's more."

In November, at the European Curling Championships in Tallinn, Estonia, Hasselborg and her teammates bagged another gold medal. Sweden collected two points in the 10th and final end to beat Switzerland 5-4.

Such accolades would mark a great career for many athletes. Hasselborg and teammates Sofia Mabergs, Agnes Knochenhauer and Sara McManus put together that run in about 10 months. It's eye-popping stuff, even for a curler who has always had very high expectations.

"It's been amazing really, to be living in your own goals and your own dreams," Hasselborg said. "To do this with the best team in the world is a fantastic honor. We are really thankful and loving every second of this."

David Murdoch, Team World captain at the

World Financial Group Continental Cup, said the success stems from a multi-faceted effort by all four players.

"They've always focused on key aspects, strategy and analytics, and the physical component," Murdoch said. "They're training off-ice really hard. It's paid dividends for them."

A year like this certainly doesn't come together overnight. Hasselborg, 29, was born in Stockholm and got into curling at a young age.

"I was 7 years old, and my parents were curlers. They met through curling," Hasselborg said. "I've always been a very competitive person. I love the sport, and I wanted to be the best at it."

Hasselborg's team won the Swedish junior championships in 2009 and 2010, followed by a big move toward her goal of being the best. At the 2010 World Junior Curling Championships, she skipped Sweden to the gold medal. And two of her current teammates, Knochenhauer and McManus, were on that winning unit as well.

"I guess 2009 was the year when I started believing, when I won my first Swedish junior championship and went to Junior Worlds," Hasselborg said. "But I always had that belief. If you love the sport and you're a competitive person, you don't have a point where you say, 'I believe it now.' You always believe it. Not in a cocky way, just in a way of me loving the sport."

In 2015, Hasselborg's current team came into place. That squad built up to the aforementioned successes by winning silver medals at the 2016 and 2017 European Championships.

"It's our fourth season together. Our goal was to qualify for the Olympic Games and to eventually win it," she said. "And we did that!"

Murdoch has certainly enjoyed watching Hasselborg's ascent to the top of the women's

curling ladder. He pointed to one component he believes has been the most important.

"The biggest thing with Anna is she's just gained a ton of confidence. She really believes in herself and her team," Murdoch said. "You see that out on the ice. They're hard to beat. They've been hot."

The World Financial Group Continental Cup doesn't quite have the pressure of the Olympics, and although Hasselborg is always playing for keeps, she said she very much enjoys the relaxed atmosphere. Hasselborg is competing in her third straight Continental Cup and second one in Vegas.

"We've had so much fun at these events, and it's such an honor to be a part of Team World," she said, adding she likes the unique format of the tournament. "You push yourself out of your comfort zone. I think a lot of the fun has to do with that."

Hasselborg said she can tell it's a different experience not only for the players, but for the fans, as well – particularly these raucous crowds in Vegas, which is hosting the Continental Cup for the fourth time. The loose team atmosphere and amped-up fans make for a memorable four days of curling.

"You can definitely feel that," Hasselborg said of the energy at this event. "When you're having fun on the ice, they're having fun in the stands. And it goes both ways. When they're having fun in the stands, you're having fun on the ice."

"We try to make this a memorable trip for the fans, and they make it memorable for us. We're really happy they want to come here and watch curling."

It's certainly a fun way to cap one of the best 12 months any curler could ever hope for.



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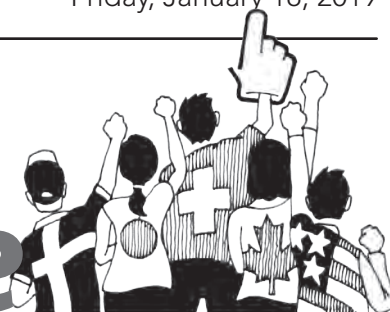
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# LET'S BE SOCIAL!

# Fanning the Flame

## CONTINENTAL CUP INSPIRES LOCAL CURLING LEAGUE

By Colin Kelly



Emily Martinelli isn't your stereotypical curler. She's not from Canada or Minnesota or Wisconsin. In fact, she's from Texas.

After graduating from Texas Tech, she moved to Las Vegas in 2008 for a job working with David Copperfield's show at the MGM Grand. She left Vegas in 2009, but returned in 2011 and met Brian Martinelli. The two ultimately married and call Las Vegas home, although Emily has been in Reno much of the past few years, at the University of Nevada's medical school.

Before the spring of 2015, neither Emily nor Brian had curled in their lives. But that's when it all changed.

"We were hanging out one night, and curling was on TV. And we thought, 'Well, curling looks fun,'" Emily recalled. "So we started looking into it online, and saw that the Vegas Curling Club had a Groupon for a learn-to-curl program. We went out, and we've been hooked ever since."

So how does that tie into this week's World Financial Group Continental Cup, here at Orleans Arena? Well, allow me to play six degrees of separation, if you will.

Back in 2011 or so, Hollywood Curling Club founder Nick Kitinski decided to launch the Vegas club – formally called Las Vegas Curling – aided by Brad Whitlock. The organization was still a bit under the radar until 2014, when the Continental Cup first came to Las Vegas. Then, a lot more locals got to see elite-level curling firsthand, and found out that there actually was a curling club right here in town.

Before you knew it, there were even Groupons you could purchase for learn to curls with Las Vegas Curling. And about a year after that inaugural Vegas Continental Cup, Emily and

Brian Martinelli became curlers.

So let's see here ... Kitinski, Vegas Curling Club, carry the one, Continental Cup, Martinellis ... I guess that's four degrees of separation?

Whatever. I was told there would be no math.

Regardless, not only have the Martinellis become curlers, they've become very good curlers – along with their teammates Jason Peck and Mike Tulloch. Last weekend, Brian skipped Zamboni Tracks – that's their team name – to the B bracket title at the annual Sin City Spiel. The team also has a bracket title to its credit in the Hollywood Bonspiel.

"It's been great for Las Vegas as a curling club and for Las Vegas as a city," Emily said of the Continental Cup.

Now, not everybody who joins the Vegas Curling Club has such success. But pretty much all of them are immediately hooked on the sport and have a really good time playing it. And the Continental Cup played – and continues to play – a key role.

"I was at the first Continental Cup. I was heavily into it, and I wanted to get as involved as much as I could," Whitlock said. "I volunteered and had a great time. That cemented everything I thought about curling. I got to see some great curling and meet some great people. It was a tremendous experience."

Whitlock moved up to work on the ice crew for the 2016 and 2017 Continental Cups, and

last year's World Men's Curling Championships. He's back on the ice crew this weekend, as well. Of course, he wasn't alone, as many Las Vegas Curling members now volunteer for this tournament, helping give the club a big platform to get the word out.

"The one word that comes to my mind is exposure," Whitlock said. "From that exposure, all the other things follow. In 2014, almost nobody in Vegas but us in the club knew what the Continental Cup was, or that Vegas had a curling club. Now, it's pretty interesting. I mention the Continental Cup to people, like my barber for instance, and he's like, 'Oh yeah, that's the curling thing.'


"The Canadian fans pushed it along, but now, there's definitely local interest. Our club feels the effect of it. No. 1, we have more volunteers here than ever, and No. 2, we have more people coming to us, learning to curl. This year's Continental Cup helps carry things until the next Olympics. It keeps people interested and engaged."

But as Whitlock pointed out, with that interest and engagement comes need. There is no dedicated curling facility in Vegas, and with hockey's rising popularity in town, ice time is hard to come by. So the Vegas curling community is very hopeful it can find a partner to help create more access to the sport in Southern Nevada.

The Martinellis would certainly tell you it's a worthwhile investment. After all, once you step on that ice, regardless of your ability, you're hooked.

"I'm still a little surprised that as soon as we did the learn to curl, we knew we wanted to keep curling," Brian said. "That speaks to the enjoyment you get out of playing the sport."





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