

Sweeping Moratorium on Brush Head Technology

In effect September 12, 2016 – April 30, 2018

The purpose of this **Curling Canada Sweeping Moratorium** is to ensure a level playing field while protecting the integrity of the sport and the spirit of fair play. This will require **voluntary player compliance** without the intervention of officials. This Moratorium will be in effect for the remainder of this quadrennial (ending April 30, 2018) and the subsequent updating of Curling Canada's Rule Book in June 2018.

PART ONE – Moratorium Statement

- Only World Curling Federation (WCF) approved brush heads* will be allowed for use at Curling Canada championships leading to WCF events, WCF-sanctioned events, **and any event where CTRS points are available**. Approved equipment will be assigned a WCF Product Code. * *Currently Nylon Oxford 420D (mustard yellow)*
- Many competitive events in Canada are not formally officiated; therefore, in the spirit of the sport of curling, **the obligation is on individual players (and/or coach)** to source a compliant brush head for play in these events. Players and coaches **will be** responsible for ensuring any sweeping brush brought to the field of play is compliant with this Moratorium.
- **Hair brooms and corn brooms are banned for use as sweeping devices**. During this moratorium, however, hair brooms and corn brooms **will be** allowed to serve as sliding brooms.
- Any Canadian player using a sweeping device in competitions noted in (1) that is **not approved** by the WCF will be suspended from the remainder of the competition and the game in question will be forfeited. The team **will not** be allowed to replace the player for the remainder of the competition and will play with three players. A second infraction by the same player or same team (any player, any time) will suspend that team for the remainder of the competition in question and for the next 365 days. In addition, the team will forfeit any Canadian Team Ranking System (CTRS) points earned in that season. A second infraction by a specific player will suspend the team for the remainder of the competition in question, regardless if the player's first offence was with another team. The player with a second offence will be suspended for 365 days from the date of the second infraction. (A first infraction in Mixed Doubles will result in suspension for the rest of the competition.)
- Each player must declare his or her approved sweeping device at the start of a game. **Only that player can use that device for sweeping during the game. Penalty:** if a player sweeps with another person's sweeping device, the stone shall be removed from play
- A player may not change their brush head during a game, unless the Chief Umpire grants special permission. **Penalty:** If a change is made without permission, the team will forfeit the game.
- If an alternate or substitute player comes into a game, they must use the brush of the player they are replacing. **Penalty:** If a new sweeping device is brought into the game, the team will forfeit the game.
- The target broom must be the declared sweeping brush of the skip and vice-skip. Using a separate or different broom as the target broom is **not** allowed (even if a compliant and approved version). **Penalty:** if the skip or vice-skip sweeps with a brush used for sliding, or any other non-declared broom, the stone shall be removed from play
- This moratorium also covers any pre-competition practice, pre-game practice, and the draw for last stone advantage. Evening practices are exempt. **Penalty:** If an unauthorized sweeping device is used, the offending team will relinquish last stone advantage in the next scheduled game.
- The sweeping techniques from Curling Canada's General Play Rule **11(8)(a)(b)(c)** and Officiated Rule **12(8)(a)(b)(c)** will continue to be enforced:
 - Given that the intent of sweeping is to keep the path of a stone clean and to take a stone farther, there must be brush head movement in the sweeping motion**
 - The sweeping motion shall not leave any debris in front of a moving stone
 - The final sweeping motion shall finish outside the path of any stone.

** *The WCF sweeping summit clearly showed that the direction of the brush head movement (i.e. east to west or straight up and back) had little if any **out-of-the-ordinary** impact on the curling stone when sweeping with a **compliant** brush head. (See National Research Council Public Executive Summary)*

- Random inspections of equipment by an umpire may be carried out during the event and/or during a game. Players may request that an umpire inspect a brush prior to or during a game.

Authority:

- The Chief Umpire is authorized to administer this Moratorium and may assign other umpires to perform various duties, as required.
 - The Chief Umpire is authorized to make decisions regarding this Moratorium not specifically covered in this protocol.
 - All decisions of the Chief Umpire regarding this Moratorium are final.
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PART TWO – Recreation & Club Play, Bonspiels, Funspiels, etc.

Surveys show almost 99% of all Canadian curlers are recreational players. We understand the reluctance of a weekly or casual player to discard a relatively new brush head, and we agree with the WCF statement (September 10, 2016): *“The WCF recognises a great deal of previously compliant equipment, both new and slightly used, remains in the hands of manufacturers, retailers and individual curlers. It is neither reasonable or practical to expect this equipment should be immediately discarded in favour of equipment conforming to the pending specifications.”*

Curling Canada played a major role with the World Curling Federation and Canada’s National Research Council in understanding, researching and creating new equipment guidelines to re-establish integrity in a fair playing field. As the world’s largest curling jurisdiction, we are confident that the great Canadians who play this game each and every day will continue to curl within the true spirit of the game we are noted for.

While the moratorium does not extend to recreation play, club play or bonspiels that are not part of the Canadian Team Ranking System, and while curling rinks in Canada have autonomy over their own fields of play, we suggest recreation players may use brush heads previously banned or built during the 2015-16 season (or earlier).

Additionally, we wholeheartedly support these WCF statements for your consideration at the club level:

- *“For leagues, competitions or events contested primarily for recreation or fun, or for competitions or events contested primarily by novice or inexperienced curlers, it may not be necessary to limit which sweeping equipment can be used as a condition of competition.”*
- *“For leagues, competitions or events where substantial prizes or awards are earned, it may be advisable to require sweeping equipment conforming to WCF specifications be used as a condition of competition.”*
- *“In keeping with the ‘Spirit of Curling’, individuals who are elite competitors or very proficient sweepers should consider whether it is ‘fair’ that they use non-conforming equipment in a recreational competition even if the rules allow it.”*

We would also encourage everyone however, to consider the true spirit of the sport of curling, and regardless of the brush head in use, all players should **revert to the sweeping techniques / styles in play prior to the 2015-16 season**. Most of the ‘unusual’ sweeping methods encountered last season have been dispelled as demonstrated / verified by the results of the Sweeping Summit and the executive summary of the NRC.

- When **using compliant material**, the sweeping angle (90 degrees **or** north-to-south **or** 45 degrees) was determined to **be irrelevant** in affecting the stone other than taking it farther or keeping it straighter. Or more simply put, **sweeping east to west does not make a non-compliant brush head compliant. Conclusion:** sweep in any direction you want, but do not leave debris in front of the stone and the last brush stroke should be away and to the side of the path of the stone.
- When using compliant material, having two sweepers on a draw shot **will** carry a stone further than using one sweeper. **Conclusion:** return to form from the 2014-15 season with **both** sweepers brushing on either side or the same side of the delivered stone.
- When using compliant material, sweeping take-outs with one sweeper to either keep it straight or to make it curl more, had little if any effect. **Conclusion:** using two sweepers for take-outs is better than one sweeper only.