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# 2021 Mixed Curling Provincial Qualifier Coming to Olds

Olds Curling Club will be playing host to some of Alberta's best four-player teams as they vie for provincial berths at the Mixed Provincial Qualifier February 25-28, 2021. With a solid volunteer base and strong town support for sporting events, Olds is well known for their hospitality.

“Olds loves hosting events, and when we hold an event, we are all in,” says Jennifer Lutz, Vice-President of the club.

So, what exactly is Mixed curling? Both Mixed and Mixed Doubles involve coed teams and have no age restriction. While Mixed Doubles has two players, one of each gender, Mixed teams are composed of two males and two females, playing in alternating positions. In both platforms, games are eight ends and scoring is the same as a regular curling game. A key difference with Mixed Doubles is the placement of two rocks (one per team) at the beginning of each end and each team only throws five stones per end, versus the typical eight.

Mixed curling has a broad appeal to curlers of all ages and abilities since the first Mixed Canadian Championship in 1964. While still highly competitive, Mixed curling has a very different social dynamic on and off the ice. Curling Alberta's Britney Anderson commented, “the fun thing with mixed curling, is that we get a wide range of competitors involved, such as previous provincial champions or part of team that curl in the Alberta Scotties and Boston Pizza cup, to parents that just want to curl with their kids and recreational curlers.”

Two-time Mixed champion Warren Cross of the Saville Community Sports Centre in Edmonton, skipped Alberta's 2020's Mixed provincial team. When asked about their experience

on the road to becoming Team Alberta, Cross had tales to tell of a humbling loss in the first game, rocky starts, hard-won come backs, and a nail biter of a final against Brook's Albert Gerdung. Winning a berth in the championship and going on to represent Alberta is not a moment that Warren Cross will ever forget.

“By and large everyone is so open to everyone that is around the event, the community, the volunteers, the officials, let alone the players,” says Cross. “It really becomes an inclusive atmosphere that draws the community out and a creates a special sort of vibe.” Team Cross went on to represent Alberta at the National championships in Saguenay, Quebec and are looking to defend their title in Black Diamond this fall.

The Olds Curling Club has seen significant growth in their membership, particularly in their Junior program. They have brought the Rocks and Rings program to seven local schools, hosted several sold out curling clinics. Olds has a vibrant curling community within Olds College, Olds high school, and a middle school academy program. With a beautiful viewing area and newly rebranded bar, the club's members and the public are welcome to experience Alberta curling at its finest. Yes, Olds loves curling, and it shows.

With several successful events already under their belt, Olds Curling is looking to the Mixed qualifier as a good warm up to the Humpty's Champions Cup in April.

“The youth are really going to appreciate the opportunity to see more competitive curling. That will be big for them and it's a big reason why we brought it in,” says Lutz.

Teams will be competing for a coveted berth at the Curling Alberta Mixed Championship in Black Diamond, March 17-21, 2021. Whether you are new to the sport or a seasoned fan, what better venue than Olds Curling Club to enjoy a week filled with laughter, camaraderie and good curling.



Team Cross picture courtesy of Warren Cross



Olds Curling Club pictures courtesy of Jennifer Lutz

