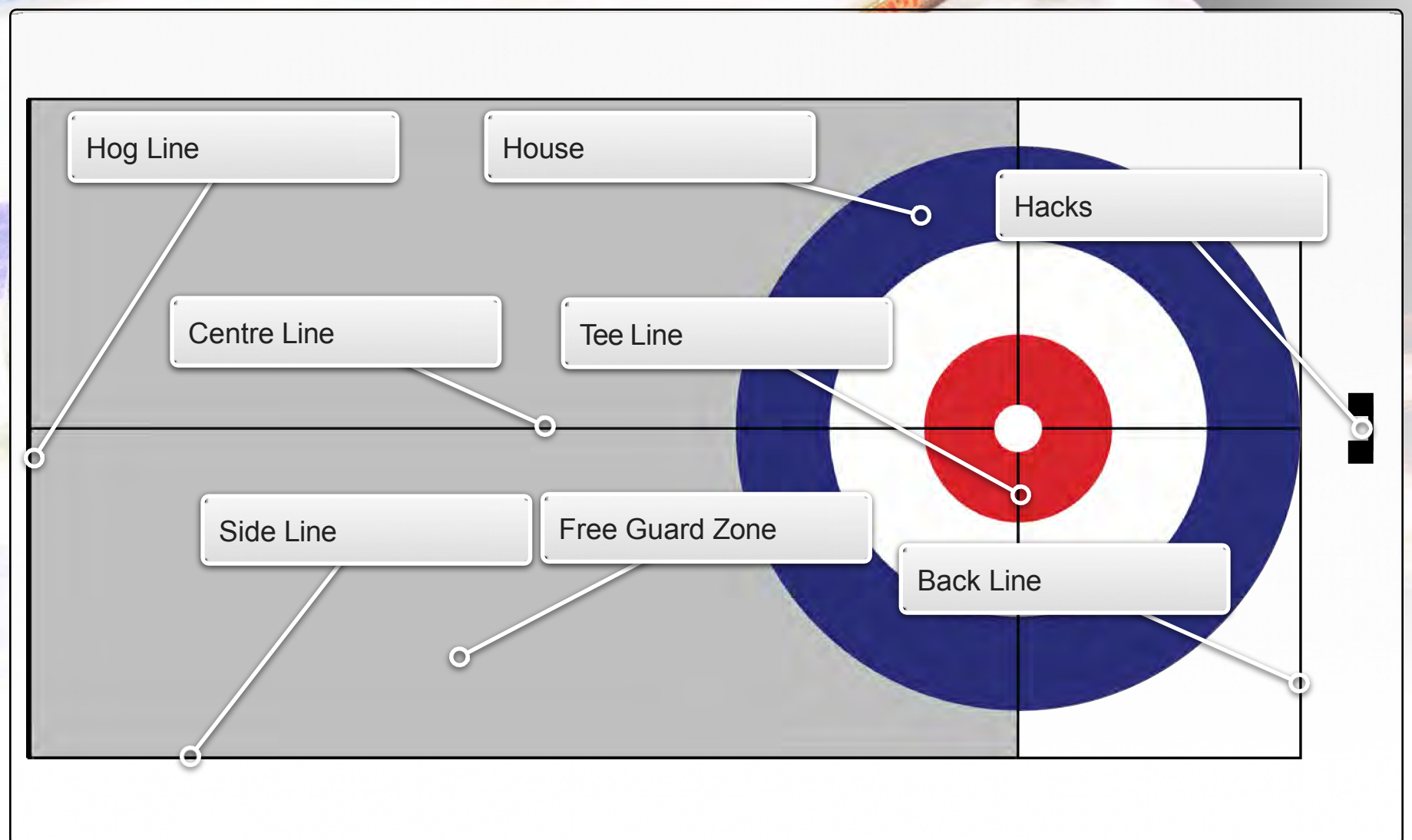
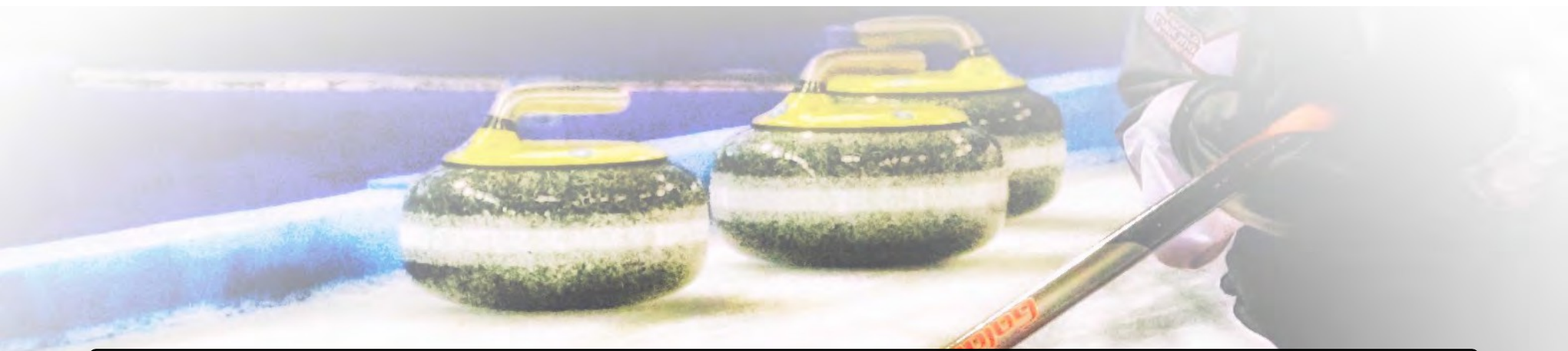


CURLING ICE AND STONES

Summerland Curling Club



Pebble



It is important to have some idea of how and why a **sheet** of curling ice is prepared prior to play. Factors that determine the “**weight**” or “speed” and “curl” of the ice include ice temperature, humidity, and type of **pebble** applied to the **ice surface**.

Pebble is the many tiny frozen bumps found on the surface of the ice. They vary in size, texture and amount. **Pebble** is applied by a special type of handheld sprinkler. Generally, **pebble** is put on the **ice surface** before the start of each **game**.

Pebble has a tremendous influence on “**draw weight**” because the delivered **stone**, as it travels along the ice, rides on top of the **pebble**. Without **pebble** most curlers would be unable to throw the **stone** hard enough for it to reach the **house** at the distant end of the **sheet**. **Pebble** raises the cup at the bottom of the **stone** off the surface and allows only a portion of the **stone** to be in contact with the ice.

Too much **pebble** can actually be detrimental by slowing down the **stone** because more of the running edge is in contact with the ice and the cup must cut through the rough, protruding edges of such **pebble**.

There are three inevitable results as the crests of **pebble** become worn down with the passage of **stones** up and down the **sheet** and by **brushing**:

The ice becomes keener (less **stone** speed required).

The **stone** curls more as the **pebble** wears down and more of the running surface contacts the ice. With a large portion of the running edge in contact with the **ice surface**, friction will be increased.

When the **pebble** is worn down even more until it is almost flat, the ice may become heavier since much of the running surface is now contacting the ice.



Curling Stones

A curling **stone** is circular in shape, made of hard, dense granite and weighs approximately 40 to 42 pounds (20kg). A curling **stone** must be able to resist abrasion, be uniform in colour and non-absorbent. This latter quality is very important because moisture penetrating a **stone** and then freezing will cause chipping of the **stone**.

Each side of a curling **stone** has a concave area commonly referred to as the cup. The edge of the cup is appropriately called the running edge and it is this thin edge that actually contacts the **ice surface**. The running edge is not polished like the rest of the **stone**, but is comparatively rough. For curling to be played correctly the running edge must never be allowed to wear smooth or be damaged. When the running surface has become smooth from wear, the **stone** must be reconditioned to restore a like-new running edge. When the edge loses its texture, the **stone** will **curl** very little because there is nothing on the edge to cause friction with the ice. As a result, the **stones** will glide a lot

further when they are slowing down, making it difficult to judge **weight** when delivering or **brushing**.

The dull grey band around the greatest circumference of the **stone** is the striking band and is designed to absorb the shock when one **stone** strikes another. On a new **stone** the striking band is a slightly convex shape.

Over years of pounding, the striking band may wear away to a flatter contact surface. Flat spots on the striking bands are caused when the granite beneath the surface has been crushed as a result of an extreme impact. Eventually the outside granite will break loose and a large chunk will be missing from the outside of the **stone**. When chunks come out of the striking band, the **stones** are non-repairable.

Proper care of curling **stones** is essential. Curlers should not take the **stones** off the **ice surface**. The running edges can be easily damaged from contact with abrasive surfaces. The ice technician is the only person who should decide where the **stones** are to be placed when they are off the **ice surface**. Curlers need to be encouraged to keep the playing surface as clean as possible by ensuring their footwear is clean.