



The PIC Times

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Day 3 Activities – by Mike Hanafin

Playoff races are heating up after three full days of action at the 16th annual Pacific International Cup (“The PIC”) at the Richmond Curling Centre.

Washington State’s unbeaten run in women’s play came to halt on Friday, losing 6-5 to California in an extra end. The California ladies jumped out to 5-1 lead after 5 ends, then watched Claire Bonin’s team fight back with one in the 6th, a steal of one in the 7th, and a steal of two more in the 8th to force the extra end. In the 9th, Washington was on the verge of another steal, lying one and buried, until California skip Sarah Walsh made a fantastic raise double-takeout to help clinch the win.

California improved their record to 4 and 2 in the International Pool, while Washington falls to 5 and 1, tied for first place with Illinois. Michelle Rittgers’ Illinois squad had convincing wins over the Yukon and Brazil.

In the B.C. Women’s pool, Campbell River continued to roll, improving to 5 and 0 with wins over Royal City (New Westminster) and Coquitlam. The Island North team is skipped by Lonnie Schopp (a 2-time PIC champion), with former Richmond member Cynthia Lu playing Third. Lower Mainland favourites Cloverdale and Royal City are now tied for second place at 4 and 1, two games ahead of the rest of the field. Only three teams make the playoffs in each pool.

On the men’s side, Chilliwack is the only undefeated team left at 6 and 0, leading the B.C. Pool by two games. The Chilliwack team skipped by Kevin Britz managed three wins on Friday, beating Fort Rupert, Kerry Park and Creston. The Okanagan (skipped by former PIC champion Kevin Geistlinger of Vernon) also won three games to improve to 4 and 2. Vancouver Curling Club is tied with Vernon for second place, after beating Richmond 7-5 in a Lower Mainland battle. Vancouver skip Brock Tully made a tricky final shot raise take-out for 3 in the 8th. That was Richmond’s third loss of the day after a 3 and 0 start.

The Yukon continues to represent Canada well in the men’s “International” pool. Whitehorse skip Tyler Williams is at 5 and 1 after a Friday night win over Oregon. The win helped the Yukon boys erase the sting of an 8-0 loss to Arizona in the afternoon draw. Australia and New Zealand are tied for second place at 4 and 2. The Ozzies had a 5-ender to beat Colorado 9-3. Oregon remains in playoff contention with a 3 and 2 record.

Round Robin play wraps up on Saturday, with the playoffs set for Sunday. The championship finals are on Sunday afternoon at 1:30 PDT.

The PIC features club curling championship teams from all over British Columbia, along with teams from the Yukon, eight U.S. states, Australia, New Zealand, and Brazil. It is one of the premier curling events in the world for the development of the sport at the grass-roots level.

At stake for the British Columbia men’s and women’s club champions is a chance to represent the province at the 2015 Travelers Canadian Curling Club Championship in Ottawa this November.

The PIC also raises money for the event’s official charity: Spinal Cord Injury BC, thanks to the generosity of the participating curlers who have contributed prizes to a silent auction.