



CURLING ALBERTA ANNOUNCES NOTEWORTHY REVISIONS TO COMPETITIONS FOR 2019/2020

You spoke, and we listened. Curling Alberta is excited to announce that a number of revisions for competitions have been made which aim to increase participation, highlight developmental opportunities, and promote fairness.

Thank you to those who completed the survey that was sent out at the end of the season, and to those who shared their feedback through other means. We reviewed the feedback and trust that these changes will be pleasing to the majority of competitors. We are dedicated to building policies and rules that encourage our athletes to enjoy the thrill of competition for life, and truly feel that these changes are a positive measure.

Below is a summary of the most noteworthy changes coming for the 2019-2020 curling season. Please be advised that the related policies which will govern Curling Alberta's competitions are still undergoing the final phase of review. The complete and board-approved versions will be released shortly.

Berth Policy

Curling Alberta will sanction three provincial qualifiers in each event category where qualifiers are scheduled, except women's and master women's, as previously announced. A minimum of one provincial berth per qualifier will be awarded, contrary to last season's two berth minimum. Similar to last season, any additional berths in each qualifier will be allocated in a prorated manner based on the remaining number of entries after the mandatory berths have been allocated and subtracted from the total number of entries.

This change is in response to feedback collected that clearly expressed that teams should have to compete and win their way into a provincial championship wherever possible, and to address the lower/decreasing number of entries in specific categories.

In addition, the number of provincial berths for the women's category will be reduced from twelve to eight. This change is intended to maintain the significance of qualifying for a provincial championship, and to ensure that the provincial draw is filled for planning and sponsorship purposes.

Excel Points Race & Prequalifying Berths

Each of the categories listed below will receive pre-qualifying berths into their respective provincial championships. Where a prequalifying berth is determined by the Excel Points Race, August 1st of the current season will be the start date of the points accumulation. As stated above, the berths remaining after the prequalifying berths are awarded will be applied among the provincial qualifying events on a prorated basis.

Women's

Three prequalifying berths total, awarded in the following order:

1. One to the defending champion. If the defending champion does not or cannot accept the berth, this berth will be offered last and to the highest ranked remaining team on the Excel Points Race;

2. One to the highest ranked, Alberta-based team on the Canadian Team Ranking System (CTRS) as at December 3, 2019;
3. One to the highest ranked team on the Excel Points Race as at December 3, 2019.

Note: Since the number of women's qualifiers is reduced to two this season, and the number of provincial berths has been reduced from twelve to eight, there is a reduced number of pre-qualifying berths. The Excel Points Race pre-qualifying berth will replace the berth previously decided by the Alberta Curling Tour (ACT) standings.

Men's

Four prequalifying berths total, awarded in the following order:

1. One to the defending champion. If the defending champion does not or cannot accept the berth, this berth will be awarded last (4th) to the remaining highest ranked team from the CTRS standings that meets the residency criteria.
2. One to the highest ranked, Alberta-based team on the Canadian Team Ranking System (CTRS) as at December 16, 2019;
3. Two to the highest ranked teams on the Excel Points Race as at December 16, 2019.

Note: The Excel Points Race prequalifying berth will replace the berths previously decided by the Alberta Curling Tour (ACT) standings.

Mixed Doubles

A maximum of three pre-qualifying provincial berths will be awarded in total, including one to the defending champion. More information regarding the criteria for these berths will be released as soon as possible.

U18 and Junior (U21)

One prequalifying berth, in both categories and genders, awarded as follows:

1. One to the highest ranked team on the Excel Points Race immediately following the Excel U18 Cup and the Excel U21 Cup (as at December 2, 2019)

Note: If offered, teams must participate in the Excel Cup in order to be eligible to accept the prequalifying berth. Click [here](#) to read more on the U18 and U21 Excel Cups. More information on the Excel Points Race and how your team can earn points can be found [here](#).

Alternates, Substitutions, and Replacements

This season, Curling Alberta will relax the substitution and replacement requirements for all competitions and will allow an alternate (5th player) for the majority of categories. The primary rationale for these changes is to provide more flexibility for players. This will also reduce the administrative burden related to special requests.

More information:

A registered team must have a minimum of four players and a maximum of five for all categories except U15 (must have four), U21 Mixed Doubles (must have two), Mixed Doubles (must have two), and Mixed (must have four). Original players are defined as those named at the qualifier registration deadline and/or on the berth acceptance form prior to a championship, which may include an alternate (5th player) and coach. Coaches must be identified and are considered a member of the team for U15, U18, U21 Mixed Doubles and Junior competitions.

Please note that the Curling Alberta office must be notified of any changes to the roster by email, including addition of an alternate, coach or replacement. Changes after the qualifier registration deadline are subject to an administration fee. Once competition has begun, it is the team's responsibility to inform the Chief Umpire of any substitute or roster change prior to stepping onto the ice.

1. Alternates (5th Players)

- a. Alternates are considered team members and are expected to follow all guidelines with the exception of team obligations. Note that dress standards, cresting, and code of conduct policies will be strictly applied to alternate players.

- b. The alternate must meet eligibility requirements (age, gender and residency, be affiliated with a Member Club and must not have competed in any level of competition within that category).
- c. Alternates are not permitted in U15, U21 mixed doubles, mixed doubles and mixed team competitions. Although it is permitted, Curling Alberta does not encourage the use of an alternate at the younger categories (U18 and U21) wherever possible. Rather, players are encouraged to find a team on which they can gain regular playing experience.

2. Substitutes

- a. A substitute may be utilized at any time for any reason provided he/she is eligible and is not or has not been a member of another registered team at any level of play within that category. Substitutes can compete for more than one team at any time. Players who are registered members of a team (including alternates) may not act as a substitute for any other team.
- b. Excluding U21 mixed doubles and mixed doubles, teams must maintain three original, registered players on the ice at all times. The only exception to this rule is in the unexpected event of a sudden and severe injury, acute illness or other rare circumstances that may occur after the start of a competition; in that case and subject to approval of the Chief Umpire, a temporary substitute(s) may be used. Approval to compete with less than three of the originally registered players will be extremely rare.

3. Replacements

- a. A maximum of one on-ice replacement will be allowed at any time for any reason provided he/she is eligible.
- b. Teams must maintain three original players, except in mixed doubles where two original players must be maintained.
- c. A replacement is a permanent substitution, and the original team member being replaced will no longer be eligible to compete. This action will result in an amended roster.
- d. The permanent replacement may join the team at any time before or during the competition.
- e. For mixed doubles, and only prior to any qualifying or provincial competition, a replacement will be granted if one team member is representing Alberta or Canada at national or international competition in another category with a conflicting date.
- f. A mixed doubles team cannot replace more than one player.

4. Additional Notes

- a. In mixed team competition, a spare pool will be provided. The substitute or replacement player must be the same gender as the missing player and play either position appropriate for his/her gender. Spare pool will be further defined in the Mixed Appendix.
- b. In Mixed Doubles competition, a substitute is not permitted. In the event any one mixed doubles competitor becomes unable to compete, the team would be required to replace the player. If both original players are absent, the team is disqualified.

Coaching Requirements

Quality and trained/certified coaches benefit children and adult athletes in countless ways. By setting standards for coach education, Curling Alberta is demonstrating a commitment to the safety, well-being, and developmental interests of its athletes. Coaches who have received proper education are better equipped to teach skills and drills properly, thus reducing the chances of injuries occurring. Coaches also receive critical education regarding abuse, harassment, making ethical decisions, in addition to concussion awareness, first aid and other safety training to help control the severity of issues that can surface in a sports environment.

Curling Alberta believes in the tremendous benefits of participating in sport for all ages, and especially for youth. Trained and certified coaches that understand the importance of establishing a fun-filled and stress-free atmosphere that keeps athletes engaged, increases curling's ability to have a positive impact on them, which in turn, will encourage curlers to continue in the sport. The coach is the key to making an athlete's experience fun, safe, educational – and memorable for all the right reasons.

For these reasons, Curling Alberta's coaching requirements have been updated as described in the table below:

CATEGORY	MINIMUM NCCP QUALIFICATIONS	OTHER REQUIREMENTS
U15	None	Criminal Record Check, plus Respect in Sport – Sport Activity Leader/Coach Program*
U18	Competition Coach – Trained	Criminal Record Check, plus Making Ethical Decisions or Respect in Sport – Sport Activity Leader/Coach Program
U21 MIXED DOUBLES	Competition Coach – Trained	Criminal Record Check, plus Making Ethical Decisions or Respect in Sport – Sport Activity Leader/Coach Program
JUNIOR	Competition Coach – Certified	Criminal Record Check
MIXED DOUBLES	Competition Coach – Certified	Criminal Record Check
WOMEN'S	Competition Coach – Certified or Chartered Professional Coach	Criminal Record Check
MEN'S	Competition Coach – Certified or Chartered Professional Coach	Criminal Record Check
WHEELCHAIR	Competition Coach – Certified	Criminal Record Check
MIXED	Competition Coach – Certified	Criminal Record Check
SENIORS	Competition Coach – Certified	Criminal Record Check
MASTERS	None	Criminal Record Check
CLUB CHAMPIONSHIPS	None	Criminal Record Check

**if a coach in this category is 18 - 20 years of age, at least three references must be provided for additional screening.*

All coaches must be 21 years of age or older except in the U15 category, for which coaches may be 18 and older. In addition, the same coaching requirements apply at all levels of competition within the event category (i.e., qualifiers and provincial championships) to promote fairness in all Curling Alberta competitions. All coaches, except a mentored coach, must have the above category-specific qualifications and requirements. A coach who does not meet the necessary NCCP requirements as listed may be designated as a 'mentored coach', subject to Curling Alberta approval. A mentored coach can apply for a one-year exemption to the applicable NCCP requirement(s) provided that a Certified Competition Coach accompanies him or her and is on site for the duration of the event.

If you are planning on coaching this season, but do not have the requirements listed here or would like more information visit the [Curling Alberta website](#). Check out the [course schedule](#) to find out where a course is being held near you.

Stay tuned... the revised competition policies, appendices, and Competitors' Guide will be released soon!