

# HOUSE CALL: STOP SLOW PLAY!

February 17, 2011

Two hours is plenty of time for 8 ends. If you're having difficulties getting through your game in the allotted timeframe have a look at these ideas for picking up the pace. Not only will curling in a timely manner be better for your own game it will make you an opposition others like to play. Slow play is frustrating but easily solved. So let's all make a promise from this week forward to work on speeding up our games.

- Be on the ice 5 minutes before game time. This allows for handshakes, warm-up slides, coin toss and still allows you to start on time.
- Sweepers should get out their own player's next rock if they are able to get to it faster than their player. Think about courtesy and efficiency. If your second has to get his slider on why not get his rock out for him while you're waiting.
- Do not pull out the opposition's stones. Teams often throw their rocks out of order and you may not know what the order is. Also, pulling out rocks creates a tripping hazard.
- As soon as the opposing player has released their stone, the next player to throw should move quickly to the hack so they can be ready to throw as soon as their skip takes control of the house. The sweepers can watch what happens with the opposition's rock. The thrower should be cleaning their rock and setting up so they're ready to go when their skip takes control of the house.
- At the beginning of an end, if you do not have hammer, your lead should not help to put the rocks away. The lead should find their first rock, get in the hack, clean their rock and be prepared to throw as soon as the skip is at the other end.
- Curling is not a democracy. Front end players should not provide input on strategy unless asked. Be prepared to contribute when asked but otherwise, keep it to yourself. Even the thirds need to exercise restraint when it comes to giving advice. Not only does second guessing undermine the skip, it also slows down the game.
- Other than at the end of the game, rocks do not need to be put away in order (this one is hard for many people to let go of). Simply putting the rocks neatly in the corners and not worrying about number order saves a lot of time. If you are compulsive about putting rocks away in order skips can help by putting rocks that are out of play in their appropriate place as the end progresses.
- Rocks don't have to match up with the colour of the rock boxes until they're put away at the end of the game. It will not affect the game so there is no need to waste time switching corners.
- Skips must stay focused on the next shot and not be chatting with the opposing skip or players on adjacent sheets.
- Skips could call a simpler game. Simple strategy usually means simpler shots with a higher execution rate which is good for our confidence as club level curlers. It also means there is less likelihood of having a million rocks in play which lead to complex, multi-option situations where too much deliberation about the next shot occurs.

Try them all, try a few, but pick up the pace. It makes our sport more enjoyable for everyone involved.