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News / Calgary

Curling sweeps into downtown

Six local teams to compete for Brewery Trophy at outdoor event



JENNIFER FRIESEN / FOR METRO

Kirstin Evenden, executive director of the Lougheed House, holds up the grand prize for the Beltline Bonspiel — the historic Brewery Trophy which can be traced back to 1915.

By: Jennifer Friesen/For Metro Published on Fri Feb 16 2018

While Canada's Olympic athletes battle it out on the curling rink in Pyeongchang, Calgarians are being given a shot to try their own skills on their own ice.

The second annual Beltline Bonspiel will take over the Lougheed House grounds this Saturday, as six community teams vie for the top prize.

A coveted gold medal may not be at stake for this competition, but the teams will be competing for Calgary's historic Brewers Cup. The massive sterling silver trophy was made in 1915 and hadn't been awarded since 1965 — up until last year, anyway.

Before last year's inaugural event, it had been a century since Calgary had an outdoor curling rink due to the chinook-prone winters.

"There's no other place in Calgary right now that offers outdoor curling," said Kirstin Evenden, executive director of the Lougheed House. "But at one time, when curling first came to the city, all you did was play outside."

One of two curling lanes will be open to the public, while the other will see six community teams face off in a bonspiel. Beside the ice will be a fire pit, hot dog and hot

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chocolate station and a beer garden featuring Village Brewery.

But if it gets cold, the interior of the mansion will have live music, crafts for kids, a “Best Curling Sweater” contest and tours of Lougheed House.

“There’s lots of contemporary reasons to do this, but it was grounded in the house,” said Evenden. “It’s a way to look back at how Calgarians played outside all those years ago, celebrate that, and bring the community together.”

For the second year, The Brewers Cup is on loan from the Southern Alberta Curling Association’s museum at the Calgary Curling Club.

When approached by the Lougheed House last year, past president of the association, Mark Pfeifer, said they were immediately on board with the idea of giving the sport more exposure to the city.

At last year’s event, he watched the entire match alongside 750 others. With his one-year-old son strapped to him, he watched as people who were brand new to the sport got their first glimpse into a game he loves.

“Anybody walking by could hop on and throw a few rocks,” he said. “Seeing all the little kids and the diverse group of people, some who had maybe never even seen curling before, give it a try is such an incredible opportunity.”

The free event runs on Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information go to beltlinebonspiel.ca.



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