

A WINTER SPORT ON THE RISE



Curling is played throughout the world. Forty-five Member Associations belong to the World Curling Federation and the sport's popularity grows as Asian countries take to the sport with enthusiasm.

Increasing popularity and global expansion

The popularity of curling is increasing all the time, along with the global expansion of winter sports. As Official Media and Marketing Partner of the World Curling Federation (WCF), Infront is offering all media and marketing rights to forthcoming WCF events and consults the federation on the development of the sport.

Tradition and a potential for growth

The game of curling is more than 500 years old and has a rich history. The competition – between two teams of four, played with stones on ice – was featured at the first Olympic Winter Games in Chamonix, France in 1924.

After a gap of 74 years, it returned as an Olympic Winter Sport at the 1998 Nagano Winter Games, with both men's and women's tournaments. Becoming an official Olympic sport, improvements in ice making and changes in the rules to make the game more attractive and promote complex strategy, have increased the appeal. Both tactical and strategic, the game has been compared to "chess on ice" with a skilful and team-orientated ethos.

Annual Schedule of events

There is an annual schedule of international events at World and European level for both men and women.

The annual World Curling Championships involve the top 12 curling countries in the world. Each Championship takes nine days and is played in a round robin format to determine the qualification for the final rounds. While the Women's World Curling Championship is played in March each year the men's event takes place in April.

The men's and women's European Curling Championships always take place in December and are split into A and B groups, with group A containing the top ten European national teams. The final top eight of group A qualify for the next World Curling Championship.

Excellent TV exposure

Curling is played throughout the world. It is most firmly established in Canada, Germany, Scotland, Sweden and Switzerland. It is also growing fast in Eastern Europe and Asia, including China. In total forty-five member associations belong to the WCF and the number is rising.

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WORLDS TOP CURLING EVENTS



As well as the traditional winter sports countries, Asian teams have qualified for the World Curling Championships. China – where the popularity of the sport is soaring – televised over seven hours of curling accounting for over 12.3 million viewer hours, 37% of them in prime time. The main TV broadcasters include Eurosport, CCTV, TSN, SRG, SVT and DW.

The last World Women's Curling Championship in Gangneung, Korea, was covered in over 60 countries. Total broadcast reached almost 60 hours, with a cumulative audience of 58 million viewers. This is a viewership increase of over 1,000% on the previous event and an indicator of things to come.

Making viewers feel part of the game

Curling works extremely well on television. The competition is direct and simple, making comparison easy for the spectator, who can soon pick up the essentials of the sport. Players' voices can be heard by the viewers, making them feel very much part of the game. The tension is prolonged and the excitement builds.

The sport has found a new world audience, inspired in considerable part by its Olympic exposure. Curling received the third most coverage globally at the 2006 Winter Olympics – this contributed to its position as the seventh most popular sport in terms of viewer hours at the Olympic Games.

As Official Media and Marketing Partner of the World Curling Federation, Infront handles all forms of worldwide media rights for the forthcoming WCF events outside Canada, including TV and new media, offering live, delayed and highlights coverage.

A production team dedicated to curling

The World Curling Federation has its own dedicated in house production, using an international team of up to 40 members to cover each event. This means carrying forward expertise to ensure that the signal is of a consistently high standard.

Upcoming Events

2010 Ford World Women's Curling Championship
20 – 28 Mar in Swift Current, Saskatchewan (CAN)

2010 Capital One World Men's Curling Championship
3 – 11 Apr in Cortina (ITA)

2010 Le Gruyère European Curling Championships
4 – 11 Dec in Champéry (SUI)

2011 Capital One World Women's Curling Championship
20 – 28 Mar OM Esbjerg (DEN)

2011 Ford World Men's Curling Championship
2 – 10 Apr in Regina (CAN)

