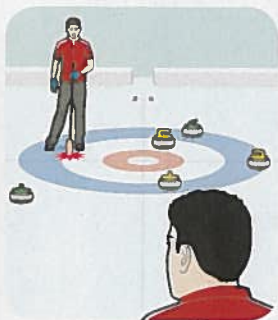




Sticks and Stones

'Tis the season... for curling. Here's a primer on how to slip and slide with the best of them.



LESSON 1:

SKIP KNOWS BEST

The goal of curling is to slide your stones (called rocks) onto a bull's-eye (the house) etched into the ice and get them closer to the center than your opponents' stones. One of the four members of your team (the skip) will stand in the "house" and read the ice, like a golfer surveying the green, pointing with his broom where you should place your shot.



LESSON 2: A PERFECT DELIVERY

First, you'll position one of your feet on a "hack," much like a starting block in track and field. You'll grip the rock's handle with your fingertips, positioning it at either 2 or 10 o'clock to get the spin you wish. You'll crouch down—with your other leg stretched behind you—bring the rock to your hack foot and push your body outward, releasing the rock as you glide forward.



LESSON 3: CLEAN SWEEPS

If you're the player making a delivery, all you can do is sit back and watch the rock's movement as two of your teammates, brooms in hand, scrub the ice in front of the moving stone. By attempting to reduce friction on the ice, the sweepers can prevent the rock from slowing down or direct it toward a given spot. This process continues until all 16 rocks have been delivered.

WHERE TO LEARN

Northbrook:

Chicago Curling Club classes are select weekends through March. curlingchicago.org

Woodridge:

Windy City Curling Club classes are Nov. 13, Dec. 4, Jan. 8 and Feb. 12. windycitycurling.com