



NOVA SCOTIA CURLING

Competition Advisory Panel (CAP) Feedback Report

Mersey Sea Foods 2026 U18 Provincials

December 27-December 31, 2025

Lakeshore Curling Club



Final Report Prepared by Dan Baldwin, Executive Director, Nova Scotia Curling Association with input and review by the Competition Advisory Panel (CAP), Chief Umpire, Greg Thorbourne and NSCA Board Liaison, Hugh Avery.

CAP Core team members:

Jill Brothers, Technical Director, NSCA --- Kevin Ouellette, High Performance Coach, NSCA --- Dan Baldwin, Executive Director, NSCA, --- Hugh Avery, NSCA Board of Directors Liaison

To learn more about the CAP, visit <https://nscurl.com/playdowns/championship-rules/>.

Notes about this report:

1. Survey results have not been edited or omitted; what's presented in this report is the exact feedback collected.
2. The Feedback Survey was sent to team contacts provided during registration for the event. Team contacts were asked to forward the survey to their teams.
3. There were **9** women's teams and **9** men's teams registered in the men's.
4. We received **13** responses to the survey.
5. Survey questions specific to the *host committee* have been removed from this report. This feedback has been sent to the host club for review and consideration. This report is *competition* focused.
6. Club Rocks were used for this event.
7. Bruce Lohnes, Competition Manager, retired December 30th, 2025, and did not participate in the feedback review. The Chief Umpire, Greg Thorbourne, was asked to participate in the feedback review and recommendation process.
8. A watermain leak and power outage complicated event logistics.

Executive Summary

Participants of the 2026 U18 Provincial Championships were surveyed following the event. The survey included questions covering:

- Pre-event information: timeliness and completeness of the Official Draw Document; whether teams received, read, and understood the event rules.
- Practice and playing conditions: adequacy of pre-game practice; ice speed/curl standards met; space to note issues.
- Event design: perceived length (too long/short/right) and whether the format enabled the best teams to succeed.
- Equipment: suitability and condition of championship rocks.
- Officiating and fairness: consistency of rule enforcement; accuracy of timing clocks; space for feedback on officials' communication and approach.
- Coaching accommodation: adequacy of time and seating for coaches.
- Open feedback: an "other comments" prompt for anything the Competition Advisory Panel should consider.

Overall, the feedback was positive. Most elements of the championship met participant expectations, including the quality of the ice and rocks, adequacy of practice time, seating for coaches, and the professionalism and approachability of officials. The Official Draw Document and event rules were generally viewed as thorough and timely, and respondents largely felt that competition rules were enforced consistently.

The primary area identified for improvement related to communication and implementation of new or modified rules, most notably surrounding broom-head inspections. Feedback indicated that these requirements were not well understood, were communicated late due to holiday timing, and were inconsistently interpreted, creating stress for teams and officials. Additional themes included mixed opinions on championship format and event timing, particularly given the holiday window, as well as isolated timing clock and officiating communication issues that were addressed during the event and did not materially impact competition outcomes. The CAP focused on identifying common themes in the feedback rather than individual comments or results.

The key recommendations from this report:

- ✓ When distributing future draw documents, include clear explanations and clarifications for any new or amended rules that may cause confusion (e.g., broom-head specifications), and ensure all rules posted on the NSCA website are current and consistent.
- ✓ Publish Official Draw Documents on the NSCA website in addition to emailing them to teams, supported by social media announcements, to improve accessibility and reduce missed communications.
- ✓ Continue planning for expanded live streaming capabilities, with a goal of streaming up to two sheets at most provincial events beginning next season.

Survey Results

The following summarizes the Competition Feedback Survey results by question, along with CAP's recommended actions. Identifying questions (Questions 1 & 2) and responses have been excluded. For the complete set of survey questions, refer to **Appendix One**.

Question 3:

3. Was the Official Draw Document received in a timely manner? Note: we send the document to the team contact listed in Curling IO - the team contact is to share the document with their respective team and coach.

● Yes 13
● No 0



Actions/Recommendations:

Respondents were happy with the timing and delivery of the Draw Document. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 4:

4. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the timelines of receiving the Official Draw Document:

6 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	It was quickly sent to my coach and distributed to the members of my team in a timely manner.
2	anonymous	Need more time for seeding responses. Our team contact was the skip's mom. She was a couple of days late sending it around and we missed the cut off. Not enough time given.
3	anonymous	Satisfactory
4	anonymous	n/a
5	anonymous	Draw bracket and schedule were sent in advance in plenty of time
6	anonymous	Timeline was fine.

Actions/Recommendations:

Respondents were happy with the timing and delivery of the Draw Document. No action or recommendations are required. Regarding the seeding time, we aim to send this as timely as possible.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 5:

5. Did the Official Draw Document provide all the necessary information required?

● Yes 13
● No 0



Actions/Recommendations:

Respondents were happy with the contents of the Draw Document. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 6:

6. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the thoroughness of the information contained in the Official Draw Document:

3 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Satisfactory
2	anonymous	n/a
3	anonymous	The information was fine minus the exception of the foams for the brooms.

Actions/Recommendations:

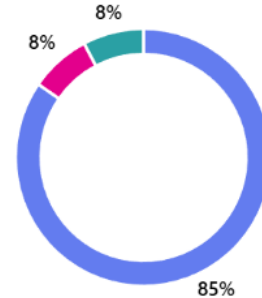
Feedback received indicated that the Draw documents are thorough and provide the necessary information. No changes to the Draw documents are recommended. Rules are provided in the Competitor Guide and Championship Appendices. We acknowledge that the timing of the new Broomhead rules resulted in complications for teams, officials, and the CAP team for this event. When sending future draws to teams, the CAP will include clarifications and information on new rules to help teams prepare.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: Immediately

Question 7:

7. Were the rules for the event forwarded to you? Rules are sent to the Team Contact person listed in Curling IO when registering for an event

● Yes	11
● No	1
● Other	1



Actions/Recommendations:

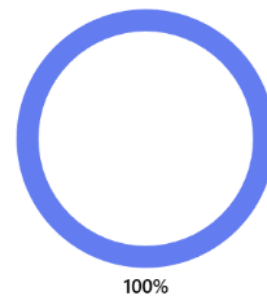
All but one respondent indicated they received the rules; no action or recommendations required; continue with the current process. **Note:** If the team's contact is using a corporate email address, it increases the chances you will not receive information; companies and organizations filter incoming emails as common practice. We recommend publishing Draw documents to the NSCA Website AND emailing to teams, accompanied with social media announcements

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: Start posting Official Draw documents on the NSCA website within 30 days.

Question 8:

8. Did you read the event rules before the event?

● Yes	13
● No	0
● I never received the rules	0



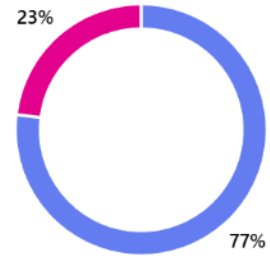
Actions/Recommendations: All respondents indicated they read the rules before the event. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 9:

9. Were the event rules clear?

● Yes	10
● No	3
● I never received the rules	0



Actions/Recommendations:

Most respondents indicated that the rules were clear. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process. We suspect the No answers are related to Broom Inspection, and this has been addressed in a previous question.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 10:

10. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the thoroughness and clarity of the official rules of the event:

9 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	The new rules regarding broom heads inspections were unclear and created a lot of anxiety and stress among the teams. Given the time of year, many other curling clubs were closed so new foams and or broomheads were hard to come by.
2	anonymous	The rule regarding speaking to the coach before rock passes hog line wasn't made very clear on which hog line. I feel that could've been made more clear, but if read properly it makes sense.
3	anonymous	The rules were thorough however there was some confusion surrounding the details of broom head foams. This rule was unclear to my team, and caused us to require new foams on the day of the competition.
4	anonymous	Overall, the rules were clear, but I did reach out for clarification on the equipment rules. This was the first year for inspections, and there were lots of rumors re: foam head. I was sent a second document when I reached out. I think the equipment guidelines should have been included. I also found it difficult to get a straight answer out of folks in my emails. I was asking a very straightforward question (do the foam pads need to have the 2025 stamp on them). The answer, as it turned out, was no... but the emails folks wouldn't just say "no". They sent the document which was still unclear on this point, so I had to go back again seeking clarification. If the answer is no, just say "no". Seemed to be lots of confusion this year around equipment and foam heads. Lots of failed brooms. We even had 2 fails after all my emails to seek clarification. Thankfully, we brought extra supplies.
5	anonymous	There was some discrepancy between the rules posted on the NS Curling website and the information shared directly to teams, particularly concerning rules regarding coach-interactions. This was easily cleared up with a quick chat with event officials.
6	anonymous	The rules of the event were clear except for the. Inspections of the broom foam and plastic. Everything was shut down for the holidays (curling store and club stores) so there was no way for teams/players to get new equipment. Luckily they were able to get a hold of someone from the curling store who went in and brought us enough foams for everyone's who failed inspection. My suggestion would be to send an "inspection expectation" email before the next event letting teams/players/coaches know what will be required and give them the chance to purchase the required stuff beforehand or have them in stock for purchase at the event.
7	anonymous	n/a
8	anonymous	The event rules were not made clear for two specific items: 1. Draws to the Button when the team with first practice does not record a measurable LSD. One team was not permitted to throw a second rock in the event that the team with second practice also does not record a measurable LSD. This in fact happened, and the team with first practice then had to go out after the second practice and perform a LSD on the side of the sheet that has been cold for 10 mins. This should not have been the case 2. The compliant broom heads and foams caused lots of undue stress on the athletes and coaches as no had any indication prior to the event of what constituted a legal foam. What appeared to be perfectly good foams were being rejected for discolouration, rather than physical rips/tears in the bottom of the foam that would actually impact the sweeping. Discolouration and tears at the top would not impact the brushing. Last minute calls to both Mayflower and the Curling Store we made to provide the remainder of their inventory so that teams could be compliant. Officials stated to both these young athletes and their coaches that if they had these "illegal" foams, their teams would forfeit the event. Teams understand that this event leads to a National, however, the equipment requirements were not communicated clearly enough to the teams so they could be prepared.
9	anonymous	Other than the foams, rules were very clear.

Actions/Recommendations:

Common themes in the feedback included: rules were mostly clear, but broom-head/foam inspections were poorly communicated and inconsistently applied, with unclear criteria (discoloration vs damage, stamp requirements), late notice during holiday closures, and conflicting answers that caused stress and some failed checks or forfeiture threats; smaller issues were ambiguity about which hog line applies to coach interactions, an unclear Last Stone Draw no-measure scenario, and a brief website vs team-email discrepancy.

Action: Include Broom Specific (Or any new rule causing confusion) information when sending draw to teams. Ensure rules posted on the NSCA website are up to date.

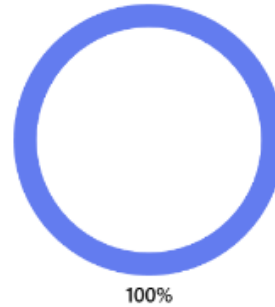
Timeline to Implement Recommendations:

Immediately

Question 11:

11. Did the event provide adequate pre-game practice time (only applicable for Tier 1 and Tier 2 events)?

● Yes 13
● No 0



Actions/Recommendations:

All respondents indicated that practice time was adequate. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 12:

12. Did the ice conditions meet the requirement for play? Our standard is to provide at least 4 feet of curl and minimum speed of 14 seconds hog to hog.

● Yes 13
● No 0



Actions/Recommendations: All respondents indicated that the ice was satisfactory. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 13:

13. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the practice time and ice conditions of the event:

8 Responses

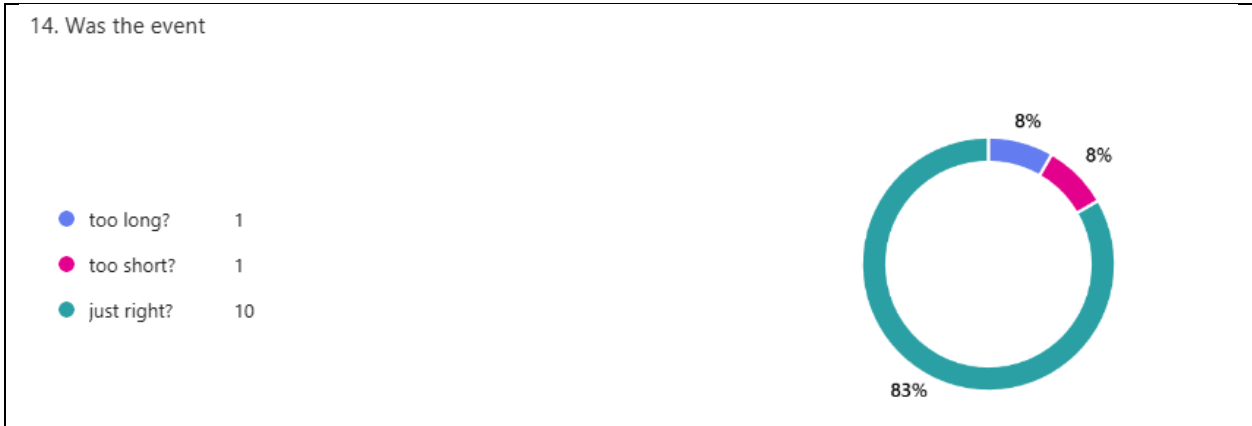
ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	The water main break prior to the first practice was unpredictable and unfortunate. I did find the communication around the delay was poor and better updates on the reason for the delay and how it was being managed/rectified would have been appropriate. We spent an awful lot of time waiting around wondering what was going to happen.
2	anonymous	It was usually 15 to button, very consistent time throughout the event.
3	anonymous	The ice was wonderful to play on with exactly 4 feet of curl and 14.5 seconds to button. The ice was well maintained throughout the event.
4	anonymous	Ice was great. Even after a water main beak and a power outage during the event
5	anonymous	Satisfactory
6	anonymous	n/a
7	anonymous	The ice conditions were excellent. Graham and his ice crew were very engaged and dedicated to the event, athletes and coaches. They managed both a water interruption and power outage with no issues.
8	anonymous	The ice conditions were very good. The newer rocks were also nice.

Actions/Recommendations:

Despite watermain issues practice and ice conditions were managed appropriately.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 14

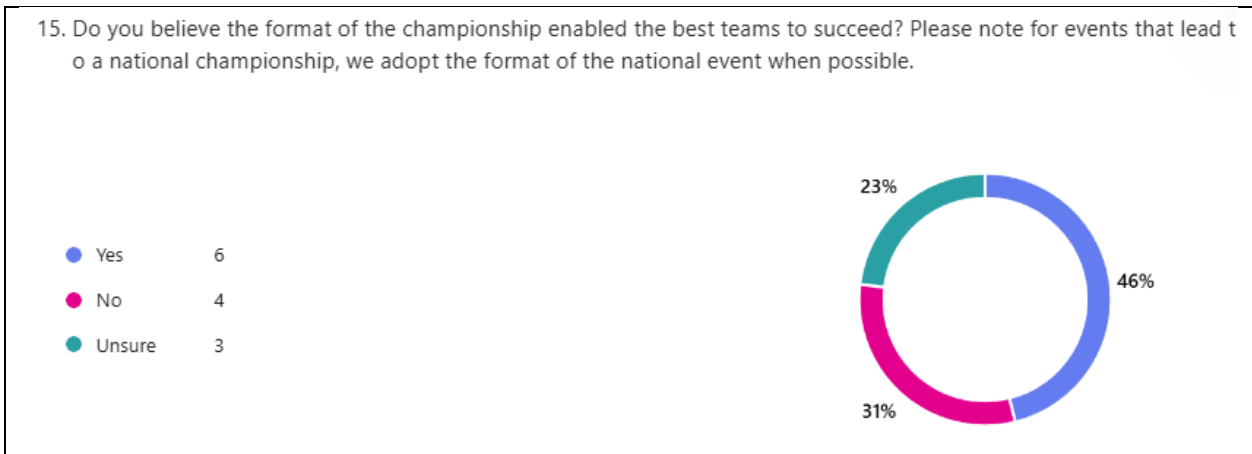


Actions/Recommendations:

Actions/Recommendations: Overall, the responses indicated that the length of the event was satisfactory. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 15:



Actions/Recommendations:

Feedback on whether the format “enabled the best teams to succeed” varies by season. The final structure is determined by factors such as number of registrations, sheets of ice available at the host venue, scheduling windows, and proximity to national/world events. When feasible, we adopt the national championship format to align expectations and prepare athletes for the cadence, playoff path, and tiebreak procedures they will encounter at U18 Nationals. In years where adjustments are required, we prioritize fairness (balanced pools/schedules, transparent advancement) and a high-quality participant experience.

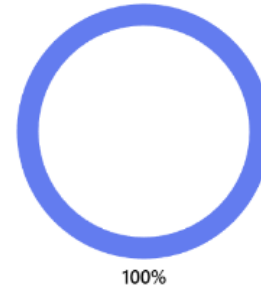
Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 16:

16. Were the rocks used adequate for competition?

M

- Yes 13
- No 0
- Other 0



Actions/Recommendations:

Overall, the responses indicated that the rocks were adequate for competition. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 17:

17. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the length and format of the competition as well as the condition of the rocks:

9 Responses

1	anonymous	The timing of the event isn't great. Even if it took place first week of January. It's not ideal between Christmas and New Years which is typically a time for family and to recharge for then new year.
2	anonymous	I think the schedule was a bit packed, leaving things rushed the morning after the power outage.
3	anonymous	It is awful that this event is held over the holidays. Just awful. As a coach travelling from Cape Breton, I had to leave my family behind over the holidays to coach these kids. It might work for families in the HRM, but it is very inconsiderate for away teams. At least make the event a little shorter so we can see our families. Last year, our team made it to the second finals and I didnt get home until just before New Years. It's a terrible time to hold the event. The season runs about 6 months. Im sure another time could be found. I took my son to a provincial event in Feb 2020 at Truro. Much better.
4	anonymous	The knockout format used was suitable for the number of teams, as well as providing a comfortable number of games which rewarded high performing teams. It is interesting to note that the 2025 provincial used a round robin format, which is the same as the national, while we returned to the knockout format for 2026.
5	anonymous	Satisfactory
6	anonymous	Our first game was at 19:00 on day 1, our second game was at 19:00 on day 2 and our third game 14:00 on day 3. There was a lot of wait time between games. Don't know what the solution is and I understand that it may have been unavoidable with the number of team we had.
7	anonymous	I noted that the team who lost the 1-2 game had to immediately play the winner of the 3-4 game. I noted that the #2 team in both male and female divisions lost in the competition to become team NS2. I think it is exceedingly difficult to bounce back so quickly to be at your best after a loss in a 1-2 game. I much prefer a triple knock out style of format.
8	anonymous	The draw for the qualifiers was adequate qualifying four teams for the Championship round. There was concern that only Qualifiers 1 & 2 had a chance to become Team #1. There is an argument that any team qualifying should have a chance to win the event. Secondly, both teams that lost the 1 vs 2 game and dropped down to the Team #2 event, lost that game. Is that the correct format to send the best representative, as technically, in a triple knockout event, that team may only have 2 losses. Also, unlike a Bronze medal game, both teams would be coming off a loss rather than just the one team.
9	anonymous	I still believe an undefeated team should not lose a championship on a first loss. Though I know most of the events have been won by undefeated teams, there will be a time when it happens. How disappointing it will be for that team in that position. If you do not have time for a true triple knockout, the championship should be at least changed so your first loss is not counting against a team that already has a loss.

Actions/Recommendations:

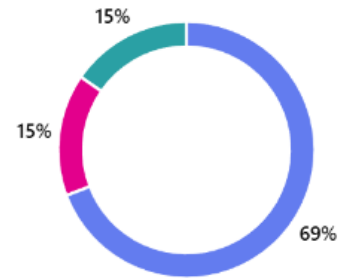
Feedback highlighted unpopular holiday timing, especially for out-of-town teams, uneven pacing after the outage with long waits, and mixed views on format, with preferences split between knockout, triple knockout, and round robin. With Nationals likely moving to late year, which gives more scheduling flexibility, we will reassess timing and continue to balance fairness with the realities of competitive curling, recognizing that competitive athletes often make difficult tradeoffs between family time and the opportunity to compete.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 18:

18. Were competition rules enforced consistently during the event?

● Yes	9
● No	2
● Unsure	2



Actions/Recommendations:

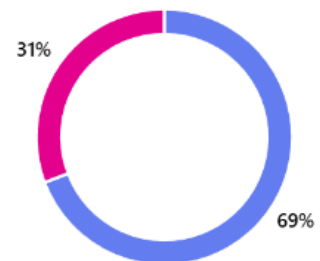
Most respondents indicated that the rules were enforced consistently. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 19:

19. If applicable, were the timing clocks accurate for your games?

● Yes	9
● No	4
● We didn't using Timing Clocks	0



Actions/Recommendations:

Although we strive for perfection, we're satisfied a significant majority of the respondents said the clocks were accurate. Timers for competitive events are unpaid volunteers, that receive training prior to the event starting. Note: teams are to report timing inaccuracies between ends for correction.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 20:

20. Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the officiating during your event:

- First game draw to the button wasn't in rings; officials were asked if we throw a 2nd to have a measurable one, they said no. Other team throws through the house. We had 1st practice and had to go out cold to throw another draw to the button and the other team was allowed to throw 2 in a row following their 7 min practice.
- Hard to get answers from at times.
- For the most part yes but we had a game where 1 time was ran longer then it should and umpire had to get them to add time.
- During one of our games the clock began to malfunction and the umpire had to time out 4th end break, however it was well managed but the officials and fixed in a timely manor.
- We often saw that our clocks were running by mistake while the other team was preparing to throw. Our girls were quick, so it didnt matter in the end.
- There was some disagreement between officials on what was allowed regarding involvement of alternate players during games.
- The timing clocks did not work properly for our first game but the officals stepped in to help keep the time for us
- The officials for the event were great, very professional, helpful and approachable.
- n/a
- Officiating was fine. There were a couple of times the clock accidentally ran down when it should not have.

Actions/Recommendations:

Overall feedback on officiating was positive, with many teams describing officials as professional, helpful, and approachable. Isolated concerns were noted around timing clock operation, including clocks running unintentionally or requiring manual intervention, though these situations were generally addressed promptly and managed effectively by officials. One specific concern was raised regarding the Draw to the Button procedure in the first game, which created a perceived imbalance between teams; this appeared to be a communication error between the umpire and the team. There was also a brief instance of uncertainty regarding alternate player involvement; officials reviewed the applicable rules and provided clarification after the first draw to ensure consistent application going forward. These issues were limited in scope and did not appear to significantly impact the overall quality of officiating at the event.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Question 21:

21. Please provide any other relevant information that you want the Competition Advisory Panel (CAP) to consider:

6 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	A change in the dates for the event. So it doesn't interfere with Christmas break.
2	anonymous	Broom head inspections were not great. Their wasn't adequate communication regarding what would be failed (ex. yellow on the sides of the foam). There were many brooms that were failed with no ability to purchase replacements. This added extra, unnecessary stress and confusion for teams prior to the event.
3	anonymous	Possible use of the streaming/video equipment to help answer scoring conflicts.
4	anonymous	The rule about no alcoholic beverages for a coach from the time I leave Cape Breton until I return is ridiculous. Over the holidays. Ridiculous. I'm a grown woman and i can't enjoy a beer with my dinner? I don't know who ruined it for everyone else prior to this.... but they are pushing sugar and candy and baked goods on us at the door. People can smoke. One beer at my meal is not unreasonable, but i fear someone finding out and disqualifying my team. Please be reasonable.
5	anonymous	The Ice team mentioned that the rocks were papered and there was a recent flood and that the pre-tournament practice was the first time anyone has been on the ice. I do not recall that information being told to the teams, it may have but I don't recall. The ring measurements about whether the rings were true, was not posted. I recall that being posted by the draw but didn't see it this year.
6	anonymous	My concern for the CAP is with regards to the upcoming U20's. Awarding a second spot without it being earned dilutes the value of the sport. It also appears three teams had prior knowledge of this as an option and no other teams in the U20's were aware of at registration. I think was a poor decision. Select the event you want to play in - National Scotties or Provincial U20's. To me, it's not a tough choice.

Actions/Recommendations:

Several comments raised items already addressed in previous sections. Regarding streaming, the Association is actively working on a solution to enable coverage of up to two sheets at most provincial events; this is targeted for implementation next season. Regarding the alcohol policy, no changes are planned, as a zero-tolerance approach remains in the best interest of all junior athletes.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: Implement Live Stream Solution by next season.

Question 22:

22. Was adequate time and seating provided to team coaches?

[More details](#)

● Yes 12
● No 1



Actions/Recommendations:

Respondents were happy with the seating provided. No action or recommendations required; continue with the current process.

Timeline to Implement Recommendations: N/A

Appendix 1: Feedback Survey Questions

1	Name or Team Affiliation: (removed from results)
2	Your role in the event: (removed from results)
3	Was the Official Draw Document received in a timely manner? Note: we send the document to the team contact listed in Curling IO - the team contact is to share the document with their respective team and coach.
4	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the timelines of receiving the Official Draw Document:
5	Did the Official Draw Document provide all the necessary information required?
6	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the thoroughness of the information contained in the Official Draw Document:
7	Were the rules for the event forwarded to you? Rules are sent to the Team Contact person listed in Curling IO when registering for an event
8	Did you read the event rules before the event?
9	Were the event rules clear?
10	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the thoroughness and clarity of the official rules of the event:
11	Did the event provide adequate pre-game practice time (only applicable for Tier 1 and Tier 2 events)?
12	Did the ice conditions meet the requirement for play? Our standard is to provide at least 4 feet of curl and minimum speed of 14 seconds hog to hog.
13	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the practice time and ice conditions of the event:
14	Was the event too long, too short, just right.
15	Do you believe the format of the championship enabled the best teams to succeed? Please note for events that lead to a national championship, we adopt the format of the national event when possible.
16	Were the rocks used adequate for competition?
17	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the length and format of the competition as well as the condition of the rocks:
18	Were competition rules enforced consistently during the event?
19	If applicable, were the timing clocks accurate for your games?
20	Please provide any relevant feedback regarding the officiating during your event:
21	Please provide any other relevant information that you want the Competition Advisory Panel (CAP) to consider:
22	Was adequate time and seating provided to team coaches?