

Build a Bridge to Curling

Build Sports Bridges by fostering practical relationships with successful sports. For example, Curling is a natural 1st cousin of Lawn Bowling. Conceptually, the play is very similar to Lawn Bowling and the seasons are so compatible. That explains why so many people play both sports. However, Curling is immensely more popular, especially among the youth. There seems to be no logical explanation for this phenomenon other than Curling is much better organized and marketed thus attracting TV coverage and more mass appeal. In fact, millions just like to watch on TV.

Curling has a well developed youth program. Adults who play both sports have often tried to link these sports, unfortunately to no avail. Although kids love lawn bowling, clubs expect them to convert to members. Lawn bowling clubs do not provide the environment nor the programs necessary to appeal to young people. However, Curling clubs do so and can take advantage of the similarities between the two sports by introducing the sport of Short Mat Bowls in their rinks for play during the off season, when the Curling rinks are idle most of the time.



Let's examine why this idea is not so far fetched. Short Mat carpets are only 45ft X 6ft. They easily fit in either direction on the curling rinks. The rink surface is hard, smooth and level, ideal for the padded Short Mat carpets. The carpets are also portable and can be deployed quickly and easily by two persons, thus providing flexibility for the Curling Clubs to utilize their facilities for other occasional activities. Because of the large amount of space available, the growth of this sport has no bounds. Curling clubs are designed to accommodate large tournaments events. And, as an added bonus to this out of the box idea, Curling clubs could use the equipment from the nearby high schools that play Short Mat. In fact, one can imagine the development of Short Mat in tandem between the schools and the Curling Club. The Curling club could own the Short Mat carpets and loan them to neighborhood high schools during the curling season – a true win-win! The low entry level cost of this idea makes it all possible. For example, a complete set-up to service one classroom of 32 individuals, if playing in pairs, would include: a set of 4 carpets, a 4-carpet handling unit, 4-accessory kits and 8 sets of narrow-bias lawn bowling bowls, which can all be purchased for approximately \$10,000. This is a sum that can easily be raised through lottery funding, service club or through commercial sponsorships. Revenues will depend on the Curling Club's market conditions and marketing acumen.