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Briar '87 in Alberta's Capital: Edmonton

From the time of our arrival until our departure we had a taste of the warm hospitality and vitality that is characteristic of northern prairie cities such as Edmonton. We were a little early for the yearly Klondike Days but had memorable Friar days in conjunction with the playdowns sponsored by the Canadian Curling Association.

Our accommodations were at the Relax Inn on Calgary Trail, directly north of the Edmonton International Airport. Because the manager was the son of our treasurer, a repetitive Briar participant, we had extra good care taken of us. This probably accounted for the fact that, shortly after our arrival, Friar guests found a bright red sweater with the words RELAX INN printed thereon on their beds as a courtesy of their patronage.

Our first official event, arranged by a fine committee chaired by Friar Howard Guse and assisted by others, included Lucille Ross, Don Brown, Phil Hink, Norman MacDonald, Curly Doan and Wayne Shirton, was an opening breakfast at Highlands United Church.

From this orientation breakfast, we proceeded to the Northlands Sportex where all our Friars' Briar games were played. Eighteen rinks participated: twelve from Alberta, two from B.C., two from Manitoba and two from Ontario. Guy Scholz of Stony Plain, with a rink consisting of Don Anderson, Herb Eriksson and Herb Scholz (Guy's father) took the gold. Howard Guse of Edmonton, including Randy Hirsch, George Friedrich and Ernie Paetsch won the silver. Joe Rostad's rink from Calgary, skipped by Sid Haugen, took home the bronze medallions. Bruce Vanstone's Calgary rink was fourth.

The Labatt Brier national playdowns took place in the large Agricultural Complex in the same Northlands recreational grounds. Most of the out-of-town Friars watched these games.

A social highlight of the '87 Friars' activities was a reception at the home of one of the committee members, Marion Tannahill on Westridge Road. Finding her beautiful home proved to be a real adventure for many of the out-of-city curlers.

During the annual meeting of the Friars' Briar Association held in conjunction with the Awards Banquet and program, it was decided to have the next one in Chicoutimi, Quebec. The two directors from Ontario were asked to acquire information and set up what arrangements were possible. This proved to be a tough assignment as the next chapter will attempt to explain.

Besides helping his team win the gold medallions in their home province, our poet, Herb Eriksson came up with the following lines at the time of the 1987 Friars' banquet.

*We're curling again,
and the besom and stane
re-echo their sound in the rinks
Edmonton gives us a toast
as the Briar we host,
and East and West find here new links.*

*The Friars' Briar meets
on the curling sheets.
Each rink strives to win every game.
But, as we meet and play
we sincerely will say,
"You're welcome! We're glad that you came."*

*Let's all give our best
as we meet each game's test,
and the social times too we'll enjoy.
As we joyfully host
rinks from East and West coast
all our talents we'll surely employ.*

*So we hope you will find
e'er you leave us behind,
you enjoyed every game you did play.
And you'll want to give thanks
to our God, from all ranks,
that in fellowship also we pray.*

Entries in the 1987 Friars' Briar at Edmonton

Division 1	Division 2	Division 3
1. Guse (Wetaskiwin)	7. Scholz (Stony Plain)	13. Hink (Edmonton)
2. Brown (Edmonton)	8. Olsen (Edmonton)	14. Doan (Edmonton)
3. Christmas (Calgary)	9. Rostad (Calgary)	15. Vanstone (Calgary)
4. Oliver (Toronto)	10. Rivers (Hamilton)	16. McNaught (Toronto)
5. Ward (Lethbridge)	11. McMurtry (Winnipeg)	17. Muldrew (Winnipeg)
6. Bayne (Trail)	12. Bray (Vancouver)	18. Ream (Fort Sask)

Playing the role of a good host in his home city and province, our poet Herb, treated us to a second offering of poetry.

Surprise

*At the Sportex we've learned
that the points we have earned
can be counted in more ways than one.*

*For in fellowship here
and with food and good cheer,
we play in the sport to have fun.*

*When the rocks are all thrown,
and the scores are all known,
the results of the game do not end.*

*For in meeting again
on a different terrain,
very likely we've met a new friend.*

*This ninth Friars' Briar
I am sure will inspire
everyone to play each game with zest.*

*We may win, draw or lose,
off the ice we will choose
to be friends, and we know we've been blest.*

*As the Briar proceeds,
and our nation's best leads,
The Friars are having their test.*

*In the race for the prize
there may be some surprise
as the medals are dealt to the best.*

Inspired by winning the gold medalions under skip Guy Scholz, Herb, burst forth with a third poem entitled:

Sequel To Surprise

*In the middle of the night
God said to me, **Get up and write**
So I got up and penned some lines
Which were to be prophetic
More than they were aesthetic,
In that they seemed to point a sign.*

*They spoke about surprises
In the giving out of prizes
To the winners of the famous Friars' Briar.
The writer did not know
That he was soon to go
With the winners, the gold medal to acquire.*

*For Guy, Don and two Herbs
Played with great skill and verve,
To eliminate the other seventeen
Rinks from across the land.
They found they could not stand
Against the rocks we threw. The Ice was keen.*

*Now with us gold medals rest
To remind us we were best,
And the trophy has been given to our care.
But the secret of the story
Is that God deserves the glory
As we meet with friends and our good fortune share.*

