



LOCAL COMMITTEE PLANNING GUIDE

Planning a Friars' Briar Curling Bonspiel

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Introduction: The Friars' Briar provides an opportunity for clergy, church workers and associates to gather for a rich week of fellowship with the challenge of sporting competition. For most of us this is such a rare opportunity that it becomes a highlight of the year. Lasting friendships, which cross regional and denominational boundaries, are the result of regular participation in the Friars' Briar. The Local Planning Committee has a critical role in staging an event that can fulfill these expectations. Here is a guide for the committee planning a Friars' Briar Bonspiel (FBB).

1. The Local Planning Committee

- a. Forming a committee of capable planners is a key ingredient of success. Some FB events have been planned with as few as two members on the planning committee or as many as fifteen. This will depend largely on the availability of willing volunteers, but it is optimum to have between 6 and 12 members of a committee to fill the following roles:
 - 1. Chair
 - 2. Secretary
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Registrar
 - 5. Draw Master
 - 6. Communications/Publicity/Sponsorship, final write-up of event

7. Hospitality Services (Housing, Transportation)
 8. Banquet Coordinator
 9. Safety
- b. This committee should be formed as soon as the site is identified as a host for the FBB, and could even meet more than a year in advance to prepare a live invitation to attend this event at the event one year before.
 - c. In addition to the specific area of responsibility for each member, all committee members are expected to pitch in and help with certain aspects of the planning.
One of these is the search for suitable sponsors to offset the cost of the event.

2. The Chair

The Chairperson maintains a view of the big picture and helps all the committee members progress with their plans. Having someone who can run an efficient meeting and provide support and encouragement to the committee is an asset. The responsibilities are to:

- a. Assemble a committee up to thirteen months in advance of the event.
- b. Have an organizational meeting to outline areas of responsibilities and appoint committee members to take responsibility for each area. Be sure to have someone assigned to take responsibility for Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Registrar, Hospitality, Accommodations, Transportation, Facilities, Safety, Coordinator, Draw Master, Sponsorship, Banquet, Public Relations and Local Historian to assemble data and anecdotes to include in the annual history chapter.
- c. It is great to have someone to Liaise with the Brier.
- d. Decide if there will be Friars' Briar apparel or merchandise and assign someone to be responsible for this.
- e. It is helpful to also include the Curling Club Manager early in the planning process. Their experience with planning curling events will be invaluable.
- f. Schedule a couple of meetings before summer to ensure basic arrangements are in place.
 - Ensure Curling Rink is booked well in advance, and negotiate prices.
 - Decide as a committee on Accommodation options and reserve a block of rooms.
 - Update Website as soon as there is new information to share.
- g. Have regular meetings as needed beginning in the fall to make sure all arrangements are in place early. Ensure each area is moving forward with plans.

- h. Determine the registration cost and update the registration form. Get this onto the web site about four months before the event. Plan to have registrations available in December.
- i. Using Friars' Briar Gmail accounts communicate with the general Friars' Briar Community about the upcoming event, notifying them when the web site is updated. Ensure that the Gmail contact list is updated to include the current year's registrants. For access to the FB Gmail account contact the FB President.
- j. Check with Friars' Briar Association President to ensure the trophies and medals will be on site for the event. There are four trophies for the event:
 - i. Medal Event Trophy
 - ii. Don Amos Plaque
 - iii. Hugh Christmas Plaque
 - iv. Amazing Grace Plaque

3. Secretary:

Having a secretary to record important decisions will ensure that the same issues aren't rehashed over and over and that progress is made at each meeting. Minutes allow the committee to build on their previous work, and serve as a reminder of the tasks and commitments of each committee member between meetings.

- a. Secure Email addresses for all Planning Committee members as well as for the general membership of the local Clergy Club, noting those without Email access.
- b. Make arrangements for minutes/information to get to those without Email.
- c. Send out Email notices of meeting times/places to Planning Committee/Club members, as directed by the Chairperson, together with the Agenda of the meeting and other pertinent information.
- d. Take notes at all Planning Committee meetings.
- e. Write up those notes immediately following the meeting, while everything is still fresh in mind.
- f. The same day, if possible, submit a draft copy to the Chairperson for corrections, additions, adjustments, etc.
- g. Email the minutes to all Planning Committee members as soon as a final copy is agreed upon, in order to guide them in tasks assigned to individuals.
- h. Email a copy of the minutes to ALL members of the local Clergy Club for their information and in order to build enthusiasm for the coming event, adding an introductory note to highlight special items or requests for specific volunteer needs.
- i. Keep a file of all minutes, including rough copies that may be needed for reference.

4. Treasurer

A person responsible for overseeing all financial aspects of the event is very important. A background in accounting is an asset. General duties include the following.

- a. Open a bank account at start of planning.
 - Ask for an account with no bank charges for charity/community organization.
 - Purchase 50 cheques. (Would need over 100 if paying everything by cheque.)
 - Best to use cash for prizes and travel subsidies.
- b. Estimate budget for the event. For comparison, ask one or two hosts from previous years for a copy of their budget.
- c. Determine the registration fee based on previous years and projected costs.
- d. Remember to include in the budget a fee of \$5.00 per registered curler which is payable to National Friars' Briar for their annual membership fee.
- e. National Friars' Briar may provide advance for travel assistance upon request.
- f. Budget for nominal travel assistance is best established in consultation with the national treasurer.
- g. Budget for prizes and arrange to have cash on hand for the closing event.
- h. Finalize all expenses; summarize income & expense for committee; send balance to the national Friars' Briar; close bank account. **Note:** Surplus funds from a FB are intended to support the national association and not the local clergy club.

With the help of the rest of the committee, secure sponsor support [vital to the event]

- i. Prepare list of potential sponsors, together with entire planning committee.
- j. Assign persons to contact potential sponsors.
- k. Have local committee chairperson write a letter, which can be given to potential sponsors.
- l. Sponsors respond to a friend/business connection. They do not deem the support to have significant advertising value. Their support is more of a gift for a fun cause.
- m. Contact potential sponsors personally.
- n. Consider establishing recognized levels of sponsorship: Gold sponsors- over \$1,000; Silver over \$500; Bronze over \$250.
- o. Obtain logo from each sponsor of more than \$250.
- p. Prepare summary page of sponsor logos for the Web site.
- q. Include copy of this page in the curlers packet when registering.

- r. Prepare larger "charts" that can be displayed at the curling rink during the event.
- s. Have fun showing the logos as though they are sponsoring certain events, such as opening supper, closing lunch, Brier tickets, banquet, and prizes.
- t. Advise sponsors of the Friars' Briar website, so they can see the draw schedule and that their logo is displayed.
- u. Thank the sponsors personally (as often as you see them!), and with an official letter of thanks after the event.

5. Registrar

A key role on the committee, which requires some administration and organizational skill to keep things running smoothly, is the registrar. The following list of responsibilities paints a good picture of the role the registrar plays.

- a. Revise the existing Registration Form to include pertinent information.
- b. Communicate with the Webmaster to make the Registration Form available for download (for mail-in registrations) and to revise existing online Registration Form. Ensure online form is functioning properly and that completed forms are sent by email to Registrar's address.
- c. Check player eligibility for certain positions during registration process. (See Friars' Briar Rules on Website.) If in doubt, contact the FB President.
- d. Provide personal contact information on Registration Form and on Web Site. Be prepared to answer any email or telephone inquiries from registrants.
- e. If possible, establish method of credit card payment with curling club.
- f. Coordinate record of payments through curling club staff. (Weekly coordination with the curling rink staff to receive credit card stubs and a list of who has paid how much is necessary closer to the registration deadline.)
- g. E-mail registrants to confirm: 1) receipt of registration form, and 2) payment of fees.
- h. Create a spreadsheet to record information, including:
name, contact information, emergency contact, status, position, team, guests' names, whether guests are registering for all meals or banquet only, arrival and departure information, accommodation, transportation requirements, health concerns, dietary needs, fees, whether payment has been received.
- i. Share information with Treasurer on regular basis and submit cheques for deposit.
- j. Share information with Banquet Hosts including the number of registrants and guests and their special dietary requirements.
- k. Share information with Hospitality person including where people are staying (so that gift baskets can be provided.) Also numbers of players and guests for the Monday and Friday meals.

- l. Print name tags for registered curlers and guests to be included in welcome packet.
- m. Share information with Transportation Coordinator so they know who needs rides, arrival & departure times from airport, where people are staying.
- n. Share information with Draw Master in regards to the number of teams and names of players.
- o. Regularly share information with Web Master in regards to the number of teams and names of players who have registered so that the website can post an up-to-date roster of participating players.
- p. Form "make-up" teams of individual registrants in consultation with the Draw Master.
- q. Set up and staff Registration Table at the event. Be prepared to greet, inform and connect participants.

6. Curling Facilities/Draw/Awards

- a. The first order of business for the committee is to book the curling facility. Ensuring that the rink is available for the dates needed and establishing a working relationship with the rink management should happen between thirteen and eleven months prior to the event.
- b. The facility should be one that can accommodate the participants and guests for an opening supper meal on the Monday of the FBB and a closing awards lunch on the Friday. During the FBB curlers are responsible for their own meals, but having a breakfast and a lunch special available at the rink is helpful, ensuring that the staff is prepared to fill orders quickly during the rush between games.
- c. Planning of the draw must be carried out in accordance with established practices of the Friars' Briar Association.
- d. **The Draw Master** must become familiar with the rules, which have been approved by the Friars' Briar Association over the years to help make the events more consistent and fair.
 - a. These rules include:
 1. Criteria for eligibility of players
 2. Structure of the Draw with Round Robin and Play Off rounds.
 3. A shoot-out format for breaking ties in the standings.
 4. A format for breaking ties in games.
 5. Decide with the curling facility the length allowed for each draw. Normal time for club curling is 2 hrs. Whereas spiels need leeway: 2 hrs. 10 minutes with buzzer sounding at 1 hr. 50 minutes.

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- b. Once the rules become familiar making up the draw will be easier and will be consistent with expectations of participants. The following is a checklist of considerations which are the responsibility of the Draw-master:
1. Balance the four pools of teams according to province and relative strength: Request input from the local committee. Send to the committee chair and web master two weeks before the event. Remember: teams prefer to curl a team in the round robin other than one that they play during the year in their local club.
 2. Set up the schedule for the first five draws: Times of games, team match-ups, ice placements.
 3. Send opening draws for Monday to committee chair, and web master two weeks before the event.
 4. Make a list of basic instructions to share with teams at the opening meal: Where to check the draws and game results, procedure for tie breaker draw to the pin in order to help rank teams for playoff events, breaking tie games during round robin and playoffs...
 5. Post the draw schedule and round robin pools on bulletin board at the curling rink.
 6. Post the tie-breaker shoot-out scores after the Monday evening draw.
 7. Work with curling rink staff to have score cards and team names on the boardwalk at ice level before each draw.
 8. Work with curling rink staff to record and post game results after each draw. Give game results to local committee chair and web master at the end of each day.
 9. Work with curling rink staff to fine tune the playoff draws: Times, teams, and ice placement.
 10. Rank all teams after round robin play, and give the information to the local chair and the web master.
 11. Deal with requests for time changes of games and spares as necessary.
 12. Listen and try to respond to concerns expressed by teams.
 13. Accurately record all playoff game results to have them ready in time for the closing prize distribution.

- e. Awards for each event must be in accordance with established practices of the FBA. Cash awards will be presented to the top three ranked teams in each division. All prize money for each event is equal in value: (e.g. 75.00 or 300.00 per team first; 50.00 or 200.00 second; 25.00 third or 100.00. [Total is 1,800.00 prize money but can be adjusted according to funds and sponsors.]

Example:

- a. Medal Event: First - \$300, Second - \$200, Third - \$100.
- b. Don Amos Event: First - \$300, Second - \$200, Third - \$100.
- c. Hugh Christmas Event: First - \$300, Second - \$200, Third - \$100.
- f. Trophies and awards should be returned so they can be on site for presentation. Work with the national board to ensure this happens. The national board will provide medals for the medal event.
- g. Report to the committee as plans are made with a view to coordinating and communicating relevant information to curlers as it becomes available.

7. Housing

Most of the work for arranging housing must be done well in advance of the event. Here is a list of responsibilities to keep in mind.

- a. Designate Hotel(s) or other accommodation using the criteria of proximity to the Curling Rink, price and value.
- b. Negotiate with the person at the hotel designated to book Group Events to get the best group rate. A group contract may be set up by the hotel to hold a block of rooms.
- c. Consult the rink manager to find out if they have any working agreements with sponsoring hotels.
- d. Consider the possibility of offering an alternate form of accommodation such as a retreat centre or dormitory, if this seems worthwhile.
- e. Submit information for booking hotel rooms to the web-master for posting on the web-site as soon as it is available. Curlers must make their own room bookings and pay their own costs.
- f. Ensure that the deadline for booking rooms in the block of held rooms is publicized.
- g. If the local committee is inclined to pursue billets this may also be an option for some.

8. Transportation

- a. If possible and practical, recruit local drivers to help transport curlers from the airport to the rink and between the hotel and the rink.

- b. Begin a month ahead of time to collect flight information and plan a schedule for drivers. Plan ahead for good communication with drivers through cell phones so unexpected transportation needs can be met efficiently.
- c. Recruit someone to greet Friars' Briar members at the airport and guide them to the place where their ride will meet them.
- d. Plan a daily shuttle schedule to the rink. Strive to be accommodating to the needs of the curlers, but within reasonable limits since we are not providing a taxi service.

9. Hospitality

The whole event becomes a positive memory when participants recall how welcomed and comfortable they were at the FBB. To ensure this is done well a hospitality coordinator may consider some of the following small touches to make the event more enjoyable.

- a. Arrange volunteers to greet curlers at the airport and connect them to the shuttle.
- b. Arrange volunteers for registration/greeting at the rink where they will hand each skip their packet of information. Make appropriate signage for the venue.
- c. Put together information packets for each skip, which may include four Briar tickets, four tickets to supper at the rink, four tickets for closing lunch at the rink, four tickets to the banquet and information regarding local attractions and facilities.
- d. Work with the Rink management to have the five days scheduled for the Friar's Briar. Book the opening and closing meals at the rink. Plan meals with the rink kitchen staff and make sure they are aware of when the rush times may occur so they can be properly staffed and prepared. Advise kitchen of any special food requests.
- e. Make sure rink is prepared for the hours of the Friars' Briar as well as having coffee/tea/water at all times. Often we have been able to have a loony jar for the coffee/tea on the honour system.
- f. Recruit volunteers to set up tables on the Monday afternoon and take down on the Friday afternoon at the rink.
- g. Initiate a list at rink for local league curler volunteers to sign up for shuttle driving, greeting, and setting up/taking down of tables.
- h. As an extra touch, consider having wicker baskets to be donated for use of welcome baskets filled with amenities to have in hotel rooms. Welcome baskets for each hotel room could include food and drink such as muffins, cookies, chocolate bars, fruit, nuts, juice and water.
- i. Work with the chairperson and committee to plan the Opening Ceremony including greetings from local dignitaries and/or major sponsors, a piper, a singer for 'O Canada', someone to throw the first stone,

10. Safety

Running a safe bonspiel is a priority for the hosting committee. Discuss in advance what safety measures will ensure a safe and enjoyable Friars' Briar event. Be sure to include the following items:

- a. On the registration form be certain to request information related to allergies, diet, health concerns and emergency contact information.
- b. Have a copy of each individual's registration on-site at all times and at any official off-site event so that the appropriate information can be readily available for medical personnel and for emergency contact.
- c. Discuss safety issues with the curling facility be sure to inform players of any safety issues unique to that facility.
- d. Determine if the curling facility has a defibrillator on-site and if any of the staff are trained in its use.
- e. All volunteers and hosting committee members should know the location of first aid supplies and equipment that are available on-site at the curling facility. Ensure that a well-equipped first aid kit is readily at hand.
- f. Determine with the curling facility what safety support is available from their staff. Are any of the curling facility staff trained as medics or qualified to administer CPR? If so, who are they and where can they be reached?
- g. Do any volunteers, members of the hosting committee, or FB participants have medical or emergency training? If so, consider appointing them as the on-site medic for the week. St. John's Ambulance may also be a resource for support or information.
- h. Ensure that key hosting committee members and volunteers carry on their person the address of the curling facility so that it is readily available in the event a 911 call needs to be made. These same individuals should also know what phones are available in the curling facility and ideally be carrying cell phones on their person.
- i. At the beginning of the bonspiel remind participants about safety and of any safety issues unique to that facility and introduce anyone who may have been designated as an "on-site medic" for the bonspiel.

11. Banquet

The comfortable, relaxing, fun evening of the banquet is usually held on the Thursday and provides a great social opportunity. Here curlers have the opportunity to get to know each other on another level. It is a celebration as the event draws to a close. It is a rest before the final decisive games.

- a. Book a location and caterer.
- b. Select a menu. [Any wine etc. is the expense of the individual curlers]
- c. Arrange for appropriate decorations.

- d. Line up a short entertainment program.
- e. Work with the committee to set up the order of the program, emcee, person to say table grace and other participants.
- f. Be aware that the banquet must include the annual general meeting of the Friars' Briar Association and time for this meeting needs to be factored into the plans.

12. Publicity and Liaison

The important work of getting information out to the FB constituency and the public can be designated to someone who is able to speak on behalf of the event. Someone should be responsible to ensure that information about the event is delivered in a timely manner through a combination of email messages, mailings if necessary and web site updates. In addition this person can establish a link between the Friars' Briar and the Brier. Any public media that can be accessed helps to raise the profile of our event, which enriches the experience.

To the Friars' Briar Constituency

- a. September 1 – Send out a “save the date email” to the FB mailing list using the Gmail account.
- b. November 1 – Have the Web Master post as much of the basic schedule as possible for the event including the Monday start time for the first draw and the time the Friday lunch and awards are expected to conclude. This is important information for out-of-province curlers who want to book an early flight and take advantage of seat sales.
- c. December 1 – Send out an email with registration information with a January 31st deadline for registrations.
- d. January 15 – Email a deadline alert to encourage last minute registrations.

To the Brier

- a. Establish connection with the Manager of the Event
- b. Invite Manager to attend a meeting of Planning Committee
- c. Arrange with the Brier Manager to have Brier Bear at the Opening Ceremony
- d. Arrange for purchase of a block of tickets to a draw of The Brier
- e. Establish connection with the editor of Tankard Times

To the Media

- a. Obtain a list of email addresses for newspapers and radio/TV stations. Sometimes the manager of the Curling Club can assist with this.
- b. Send four News Releases to those on this list
 - First Release approximately two months before Friars' Briar
 - Second Release approximately one month prior to the Friars' Briar
 - Third Release about two weeks prior to the Friars' Briar
 - Fourth Release sent the day after Friars' Briar concludes
- c. Remember to give telephone number as well as email address of the person to be contacted for more information and arrangements for interviews, etc.

13. Meetings

- a. The committee will need to decide how frequently to meet and when a convenient time is. Not including the summer months, most committees find it useful to meet monthly to report progress and address issues as they arise. As the event draws near there may be a need for extra meetings, or sub-committee meetings.
- b. It is recommended that the committee have a final meeting after the event is over. All the meetings may be over a meal, but the final one is especially a good time to gather for celebration as well as evaluation.
- c. Remember to include in your evaluative discussion ideas that you would like to pass on to the national board for inclusion in the planning manual or suggestions for improving the events.
- d. Be assured that the national board and all of the participating Friars deeply appreciate the hard work you invest in making the FBB a fun and memorable event. Feel free to contact them as needed for support and advice.

14. Timeline

13 – 11 Months Prior to Event:

- Form a committee to plan the event.
- Establish roles for committee members, ensuring all responsibilities are covered.
- Book the curling facilities.
- Throughout the planning process keep the web-master informed so the site can be kept up to date.

10 – 7 Months Prior to Event:

- Seek sponsors for the event.
- Reserve a block of rooms in one or more hotels, or other accommodations such as a retreat centre. Hotels will usually hold rooms until about a month before the event.
- Begin discussing the budget for the event and decide whether you will need to request a loan from the national treasurer for seed money.
- Enjoy the summer and take a break from curling.

6 – 4 Months Prior to Event:

- Establish registration fees.
- Develop the online registration form with the web-master.
- Post information about accommodation options on the web site.
- Look into getting a block of tickets to the Brier for one evening draw if possible and the budget can cover the cost.

3 – 2 Months Prior to Event:

- Refine plans and work on details of every aspect of the event.
- Ensure the registration process gets underway
- Track the progress of registrations and trouble shoot as questions arise.
- Be sure to involve the national executive in questions of eligibility or exceptions to established rules.

1 Month prior to Event:

- Begin planning for ride coordination from the airport to the rink.
- Recruit hospitality greeters for the airport and rink.
- Finalize all teams. (In order to have an even number of teams, it might be possible to create an extra team from interested individuals.)

2 Weeks Prior to Event:

- Submit draw schedule to the web site
- Make final preparations in all areas.

15. Conclusion:

Taking on the task of planning a Friars' Briar Bonspiel can seem like a daunting challenge, but it is one well worth the effort. The participants will enjoy their memories of a well-planned event. And even when things don't run as smoothly as hoped, the group always rolls with it and has a good time no matter what. The important thing is to enjoy the process at every stage. Certain expectations have become part of the event. But each bonspiel has a few surprises as each local group puts their own stamp on it. All will look forward to attending the event that you have planned.

One final word to the local committee – always be in touch with the National Executive and Board. Provide updates and answer any questions the National Board might ask. And remember that your Provincial representative on the Board is by virtue of the FB Bylaws a member of the local planning committee. See 6:2 of the Constitution and Bylaws.