



SEASONAL SPORT AND HOSPITALITY AT FLOORS CASTLE

With the Castle and Grounds closed for the season, activities on the Estate turn towards sport. The

Grouse season began on August 12th, and runs until December 10th, whilst the Pheasant season commences at the start of October, and continues through the cold months of the year until the 1st February. Floors Castle Estate hosts a number of shoots throughout the season, and is the base for wider ranging shoots up into the hills to Rawburn and Byrecluch.

It is to another Winter sport that we shall now turn to, one in which Scotland has had a great deal of success in recent years in International competition; the unique sport of Curling.

Curling can be said to be a quintessentially Scottish game. The Low Countries have staked a claim to its origins, but lack something fundamental to the practice, and the most important resource for the game - the hard, igneous rock from which the Curling Stones are made. The world's oldest Curling

Stone dates to 1511, and can be found in the collection of the Stirling Smith Museum. The first recorded game dates from 1541, and was between a monk from Paisley and a relative of his Abbot.

Sadly, we do not know who won!

The game really began to flourish in the 18th century, with Curling Clubs and Societies springing up across Scotland, with the Royal Caledonian Curling Club being created in 1838, making it one of Scotland's oldest sporting societies. Curling spread wherever in the world the climate was right for frozen bodies of water, and Scottish emigres imported the tradition. Canada and the United States thus have long standing traditions for the sport dating back to the nineteenth century. It was first included in the inaugural Winter Olympic Games in 1924, and has been a staple of the modern games since its reappearance in the 1990s. There are at present 54 international associations worldwide, but Scotland remain the team to beat.

Curling remains very popular in Kelso, and the Scottish Borders in general, with the local ice rink here host to a number of clubs and competitions. Floors Castle itself had a curling pond that froze over in winter well into the 19th century, and there remains a legacy of this activity in the Curling Stone to be found in the Entrance Hall.

