

CAPITAL NEWS

SPORTS



Scott rink pursues third Canadian title

WARREN HENDERSON
STAFF REPORTER

Thanks to four consecutive appearances from 2005 to 2008, competing at the national women's curling championship is a little like old hat for Kelly Scott.

Still, a one-year respite from the Scotties Tournament of Hearts has clearly rekindled the competitive fire for the Kelowna curlers.

"I think missing one year and sitting back and watching it from home made you realize how exciting it is and it's not a given that you're going to get there every year... you have to earn it," said Scott, whose rink failed to qualify for the 2009 Scotties in Victoria. "We know where we're going and what we're headed for, so our eyes are as wide open and it's not as thrilling or overwhelming as the first time. But it's still the big show, it's what we play for."

"We need to remind ourselves of all the good things to keep it fresh, the great rivalries and all the people we've met over the years. I think we'll be able to do that."

Scott, third Jeanna Schraeder, second Sasha Carter and lead Jacquie Armstrong will take to the

ice Saturday night in Sault Ste. Marie for the start of the 2010 Scotties Tournament against Alberta's Valerie Sweeting.

Among other rinks expected to contend over the next nine days include the two-time defending champs, Team Canada's Jennifer Jones, Ontario's Krista McCarville and Amber Holland of Saskatchewan.

Then there are other lesser-known names, such as Andrea Kelly (N.B.), Jill Thurston (Manitoba), Shelley Nichols (Nfld.), and Nancy McConery (Nova Scotia) who are largely unfamiliar to the

general curling public.

Still, Scott doesn't expect the 2010 event to be any less competitive or intense than past years.

"It's exciting and good for the sport to have so many new and different teams involved," said Scott. "These teams may not be well known across the country, but we've seen a lot of them in cash events and anyone who gets to the Scotties has to be a pretty good team."

"I would expect to see a lot of exciting games and it's all going to depend on who has a good week and who doesn't."

The Scott team is

Scotties Tournament of Hearts teams

Jennifer Jones, Team Canada
Kelly Scott, B.C.
Sharon Cormier, NWT/Yukon
Valerie Sweeting, Alberta
Amber Holland, Sask.
Jill Thurston, Manitoba
Krista McCarville, Ontario
Eve Belisle, Quebec
Andrea Kelly, N.Brunswick
Nancy McConery, N. Scotia
Kathy O'Rourke, PEI
Shelley Nichols, Nfld/Labrador



MARK BRETT/BLACK PRESS

THE KELLY SCOTT RINK, which includes Sasha Carter (middle), Jeanna Schraeder (right) and Jacquie Armstrong, is in Sault Ste. Marie this weekend for the start of the 2010 Scotties Tournament of Hearts national women's curling championship.

looking to get back to the pinnacle of Canadian curling after winning the 2006 and 2007 national titles as well as the 2007 world championship.

The Kelowna foursome's ultimate goal during the 2009-10 season was to represent their country at the Olympic Games in Vancouver, but

Scott fell short at the Canadian trials last month in Edmonton going 1-5.

A goal that was nearly four years in the making came to an abrupt and disappointing halt, but the Kelowna skip insists her team has moved on.

Proof came three weeks ago at the B.C. championship in Pentic-

ton as Scott rolled to an 8-1 record in the round robin before beating Royal City's Kelley Law in the final.

"We want to come back to the game and be as fresh as were before the whole Olympic run started," said Scott. "That was a really long grind getting there, it was disappoint-

ing, but it just wasn't our week and it wasn't meant to be.

"Maybe with our struggles at trials week, we got it out of our system," added Scott. "We've refocused and regrouped, so we like where we are right now."

whenderson
@kelownacapnews.com