

## 2006 Olympic Winter Games – Curling

**About the curling competition:** Ten men's and 10 women's teams will compete in a weeklong round robin to determine the four semifinalists, who will then play for the medals. The draw for the competition will be completed this summer by the World Curling Federation and made available on the USCA web site. The curling competition will take place Feb. 13-24.

### **Who's competing?:**

- **Women's field:** Great Britain's Rhona Martin team is the defending champion. Other teams that have qualified to compete include Canada, Denmark, Italy, Japan, Norway, Russia Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA. The USA women finished fourth at the 2002 Olympic Games.
- **Men's field:** Norway's Pal Trulsen team is the defending the champion. Other competing teams include Canada, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA. The USA men finished seventh at the 2002 Olympic Games.

**About Team USA:** With an average age of 22 years old, the Cassie Johnson rink of Bemidji, Minn., will be one of the teams to beat after an impressive second-place finish at the 2005 World Women's Championship. The Pete Fenson rink also made a few heads turn with an 8-3 finish in the round robin at the 2005 World Men's Championship. Fenson's team finished the round robin tied for first with five other teams, but wound up finishing sixth after losing a first-round tiebreaker game. Team Fenson knocked off four-time world champion Randy Ferbey's team from Canada in the round robin, marking the first time the American men beat Canada at the Worlds since 2001.

**About Pinerolo:** Pinerolo, a small town nestled in the hills of the Alps in northern Italy, will host the curling competition. A town with a lot of history, Pinerolo is known for its old castles, jewel collections and bustling streets.

**Curling's Olympic History:** This will be the third time that curling will be featured as a full-medal sport. Curling debuted at the 1998 Olympic Games in Nagano, Japan, where the U.S. men finished fourth and the women finished tied for fifth place. At the 2002 Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Utah, it was the women this time that made the semifinals, losing the bronze medal game to Canada. The men finished seventh after several last-rock defeats in the round robin portion. The U.S. has yet to medal at the Olympic Games (not counting demonstration years) and looks to change that in 2006 in Torino, Italy.