

An Litir Bheag

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 1,103 (which corresponds to Litir 1,407). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

We were looking at the Gaelic vocabulary for curling. Here's what we had: cròladh 'curling'; cròlach 'curler'; clach-chròlaidh 'curling stone'; sguabag 'brush'; sguabadh 'sweeping'; spèileadh 'skating, sliding on ice'; a' chuaiirteag 'the house or circles'; a' bhioraid 'the tee'; sùil na cuairteig 'the button'.

In this Litir, we'll look at other words and phrases connected with curling. The 'leader' of the rink is the 'skip' in English, sgiobair in Gaelic. The skip throws the final two stones.

The person that throws the first two stones is the 'lead'. The 'second' and 'third' come after him.

To throw a stone, the curler puts one foot in the bacan or 'hack'. He pushes himself off the hack. He must relinquish his hold on the stone's handle before he reaches Sgor na Caillich or the Hog Line.

The curler must throw the stone with the appropriate weight [strength]. And he must put the correct spin on the stone also. The stone will curl to one side according to the spin on it.

Bha sinn a' toirt sùil air briathrachas Gàidhlig a' chròlaidh. Seo na bha againn: cròladh 'curling'; cròlach 'curler'; clach-chròlaidh 'curling stone'; sguabag 'brush'; sguabadh 'sweeping'; spèileadh 'skating, sliding on ice'; a' chuaiirteag 'the house or circles'; a' bhioraid 'the tee'; sùil na cuairteig 'the button'.

Ann an Litir seo, bheir sinn sùil air faclan is abairtean eile co-cheangailte ri cròladh. 'S e an 'ceannard' aig an sgioba – an skip ann am Beurla, an sgiobair ann an Gàidhlig. Bidh an sgiobair a' tilgeil na dà chloiche mu dheireadh.

'S e an neach a thilgeas a' chiad dà chloich a' chiad chròlach. Bidh an dàrna cròlach agus an treas cròlach a' tighinn às a dhèidh.

Airson clach a thilgeil, bidh an cròlach a' cur aon chas anns a' bhacan no hack. Bidh e ga phutadh fhèin far a' bhacain. Feumaidh e a ghreim air làmh na cloiche a leigeil às mus ruig e Sgor na Caillich no the Hog Line.

Feumaidh an cròlach clach a thilgeil leis an neart iomchaidh. Agus feumaidh e toinneamh ceart a chur air a' chloich cuideachd. Bidh a' chlach a' tionndadh gu aon taobh a rèir an toinneimh oirre.

Sometimes the curler will make a draw. That leaves the stone in the house, without hitting another stone. Sometimes, a stone will be left outside the house as a guard-stone.

However, sometimes a stone will be thrown to hit another stone. If it is a 'takeout' – sending the second stone out of play, we call it a sgram. Sgram an gearr! 'take out the guard-stone!'

Much in modern curling depends on the sweeping. A curler or two curlers sweep ahead of a stone that is moving. That changes the distance it goes and the path it takes. The sweepers are extremely important.

And the stones themselves are very Scottish. Those in the Olympic Games are made of granite that comes from one island in Scotland - Ailsa Creag, off the coast of Ayrshire.

Uaireannan, bidh an *cròlach* a' dèanamh tarraing. Bidh sin a' fàgail na cloiche anns an taigh, gun a bhith a' bualadh air clach eile. Uaireannan, bithear a' fàgail clach taobh a-muigh an taighe mar gheàrd no *guard-stone*.

Ge-tà, uaireannan, bithear a' dèanamh sgailc le bhith a' bualadh clach ann an clach eile. Mas e *takeout* a tha ann – a' cur na dàrna cloiche a-mach à cluich, canaidh sinn *sgram* ris. Sgram an gearr! 'take out the guard-stone!'

Tha tòrr ann an cròladh san latha an-diugh an crochadh air an sguabadh. Bidh cròlach no dithis chròlaichean a' sguabadh air thoiseach air clach a tha a' gluasad. Bidh sin ag atharrachadh an astair a thèid i agus an t-slighe a ghabhas i. Tha na sguabairean air leth cudromach.

Agus tha na clachan fhèin gu math Albannach. Tha an fheadhainn anns na Geamannan Oilimpigeach air an dèanamh de chlach-ghràin a thig à aon eilean ann an Alba – Creag Ealasaid, far chosta Siorrachd Àir.