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England's Kirsty Balfour, a radiographer from Newcastle, overcame Shari Leibbrandt-Demmon of the Netherlands to finish eighth at the Le Gruyère European Curling Championships 2008 and will face a challenge series for the last European berth in the 2009 Worlds.

Balfour played an aggressive 10th end with the last stone of third Caroline Reed, and was rewarded when Leibbrandt-Demmon missed her final shot to hand England the 7-6 victory.

The English will stay in the A-Division of next year's Europeans in Aberdeen, Scotland while the Dutch drop to next year's B-Division, alongside 10th-place finishers Czech Republic.

"It's a great day for English curling," said Balfour, 31.

"Our first goal was to stay in the A, and now we have a chance to play for the Worlds.

"I'm so, so happy. It's brilliant."

Balfour also has a chance at the final berth into the 2009 World Women's Curling Championship in Gangneung, Korea next March. She meets the winner of the B-Division playoffs -- one of either Norway, Finland, Hungary or Poland -- in a best -of-three challenge series to decide the final European berth.

If the English advance from the challenge, it will mark only their third appearance at the women's worlds, the others coming in 1979 and 1993.

Both Euro A-Division men's and women's playoff games take place at 19:00 GMT on Thursday night. The women's Switzerland/Sweden match will broadcast on SVT Sweden while the men's playoff between Germany's Andy Kapp and Norway's Thomas Ulsrud will be webstreamed live on the Eurosport Player.

The Eurosport Player web TV portal is offering special "curling discounts" for selected European countries. Visit the World Curling Federation website (at www.worldcurling.org) and the event website (at www.ecc2008.se) for the list of countries and the special access code.

Live scoring can be viewed at www.cuponline.nu

Game feeds and highlight packages are also available for broadcasters from World Curling Television (WCTV).