

## 9. 12. 2008 ÖRNSKÖLDSVIK, Sweden - by George Karrys

Italy's women overcame deficits of 6-2 and 7-5 to shock powerful Scotland at the Le Gruyère European Curling Championships 2008.

Diana Gaspari, the surprise 2006 Euro silver-medallist, dropped another stunner on observers at Swedbank Arena by taking four points in the final end for a wild 9-7 win over Scotland's Kelly Wood, the 2007 Euro runner-up.

Gaspari opened with a 2-0 lead which was quickly erased in the second end of play, and despite a three-ender in the sixth to close the gap to a single point the Italians trailed all the way up to the fateful 10th frame.

The youthful Italians leapt into the air in victory.

"It was incredible," said Gaspari, a 24 year-old student who has been curling for half her life.

"After the fifth end we thought we would just play a few ends more and that's it. Then we scored three and we thought, maybe we're back in the game.

"We had a lot of energy and we really fought at the end."

Italy, Switzerland and Germany are all tied in second place at 4-2 behind Sweden (5-1). Gaspari has already beaten Switzerland's Mirjam Ott and Germany's Andrea Schoepp.

Gaspari's 2006 silver was scored in Basel, Switzerland and came with a different player on the

team. New third Giorgia Apollonio, 20, is competing in only her second season at third position. Apollonio threw second stones in 2006.

"Because we are a new team our goal is just to qualify for Korea (Worlds)," said Gaspari.

"But now we have four wins, so anything is possible -- again."

Sweden's front-running Anette Norberg dropped her first game, a 13-4 thumping to Germany. Denmark's Angelina Jensen climbed to 3-3, tied with Scotland and Russia, with a 7-3 win over the Netherlands. Switzerland dispatched Russia 9-4 and England defeated the Czech Republic 8-3 in a battle of last year's B-Division qualifiers.

In men's play, the Czech Republic won their third in a row after an 0-4 start to climb back into Worlds qualifying contention. The 8-7 extra-end win over Switzerland puts them at 3-4, tied with Denmark (7-4 losers to Scotland), France (who fell 5-4 to Germany) and Sweden, who defeated Spain 8-1, for fourth place.

Switzerland's Stefan Karnusian is in third place at 4-3, with defending champion David Murdoch of Scotland at 5-2. Germany's Andy Kapp and Norway's Thomas Ulsrud, who crushed Ireland 9-4, are tied for first with 6-1 records.

Curling fans can see game coverage on Eurosport (in High-Definition) and also online, with special "curling discounts" for the Eurosport Player web TV portal listed at the World Curling Federation website (at [www.worldcurling.org](http://www.worldcurling.org)) and the event website (at [www.ecc2008.se](http://www.ecc2008.se)).

Live scoring can be viewed at [www.cuponline.nu](http://www.cuponline.nu)

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