

14. 9 2009



The Federation is sorry to record the passing of its former Convenor of Competitions, Mr. Ainslie Smith, following a long fight with cancer, engaged with characteristic resolution.

Ainslie was indeed a loyal and longstanding friend of European curling. Not only did he serve with distinction on our own Executive Committee, he was also a Past President of the RCCC. His predecessor in that position, Malcolm Richardson, has expressed his sincere gratitude for Ainslie's valued advice and guidance of which he was, on many an occasion during his term of office, the beneficiary.

Ainslie also served as RCCC Representative to the W.C.F. and the E.C.F. Those of us of who, for some time, have been attending the deliberations of those two organizations will recall his much valued contributions, fruit of considerable experience and insight, especially upon the subject of rules.

Ainslie's contribution to European curling was not limited, however, to the forums of its political institutions; his style was very much "hands-on". Organizers and players alike are indebted to him, in particular, for countless hours spent on the ice in an umpiring capacity at our championships and other competitions.

On a personal level, Ainslie was, in more senses than one, a rotund presence... a description that would, no doubt, elicit his endearing smile. As Bob Cowan appositely observes, he was "one of the great characters of the sport". One could always expect honest opinions from this principled gentleman, habitually expressed directly, if not bluntly, unencumbered by linguistic flourish; one could also expect a mischievous sense of humour! European curling is the poorer for Ainslie's loss, as indeed so too are all those of its devotees who were proud to consider him their friend. The European Curling Federation extends heartfelt condolences to his family.