Jamie Sinclair took sole possession of first place with an 8-7 win over Cory Christensen’s team Monday afternoon at the 2019 National Championships at Wings Event Center. Sinclair and teammates Sarah Anderson (Minneapolis, Minn.), Taylor Anderson (Minneapolis, Minn.) and Monica Walker (St. Paul, Minn.) are now 3-0 in the seven-game women’s round robin.

“I think we just keep playing our game,” Walker said. “Our goal is to be at the top of the round robin at the end. We just have to do business as usual and keep playing our game.”

Stephanie Senneker improved to 2-1 to place her team in a four-way tie for second place behind Team Sinclair after getting past Ann Podoll’s team, 9-4. Fifteen stones were in play when Podoll went to throw the final stone of the ninth end. The only hope to score was to be successful with a very difficult in-off shot in hopes of getting out of the end with a point. The result was a stolen point for Team Senneker and the win.

“The main thing for us is to just keep doing what we’re doing and keep executing shots,” Senneker said. “We want to execute a little bit better and focus on our stones, focus on what we’re doing and not what the other team is doing. The main thing is we can only control what we’re doing and make the best of it.”

Nina Roth’s team got back in the win column with a 9-3 victory over Kim Rhyme’s rink while Annmarie Dubberstein’s team won its second straight as they defeated Ariel Traxler, 9-3.

John Shuster (Superior, Wis.) and teammates Chris Plys (Duluth, Minn.), Matt Hamilton (McFarland, Wis.) and John Landsteiner (Duluth, Minn.) took down Rich Ruohonen’s rink, 8-3, in the battle of the two undefeated teams last night to improve to 5-0. “There wasn’t really added pressure, we just haven’t played those guys this year, I don’t think,” Plys said about the matchup.

“We just wanted to make sure we played a strong game and let them know we’re ready for this week.”

Continued on Page 3
Skipping debut no problem for Sinnett

Experience gained is invaluable for junior boys

By Colton Wood, Daily Pebble Staff Writer

Skip Chase Sinnett doesn’t feel any pressure. Despite playing against curlers he grew up watching on TV, the 20-year-old Massachusetts native is treating the 2019 USA Curling National Championships as if it is just another tournament.

“It’s definitely cool to be playing people that you see on TV or online all the time, but, really, it’s just the same idea,” said Sinnett, who is the skip for Team Sinnett. “You go into it just thinking it’s another game. You just play your game, have fun with it and do your best.”

Sinnett is competing in his first men’s Nationals, but the pressure that may come with competing against his idols for the first time is absent from Sinnett’s mind.

“Going into it, it’s a really cool experience because you’re playing against the top teams in the country,” he said. “It’s not just junior teams; you don’t have a target on your back. It’s more so when you’re playing here. "

Sinnett’s season thus far has been impressive. The four-man team won two Junior World Curling Tour events, made the playoffs at the St. Paul Cash Spiel and placed fourth at Junior Nationals this season, along with notching an undefeated 3-0 mark at the Men’s Challenge Round to qualify for nationals in Kalamazoo, Mich.

“It was super fun. We pretty much got the luck of the draw (at the Men’s Challenge Round), but we still earned our way in,” lead Eli Clawson said. “I’m super excited for this event. I hope we can improve ourselves and do well this week.”

Although Sinnett feels comfortable at Nationals, his previous experience in combating the pressure of the playoffs at Junior Nationals, Sinnett said, will help him in Kalamazoo.

“I think the pressure of playoffs (in Junior Nationals), and being in the playoffs against other teams that are capable of winning as well,” Sinnett said, “helps me over here because the men’s teams are definitely a higher caliber than the junior teams in general, so you need to kind of bring that playoff mindset to every game when you’re playing here.”

Clawson, along with Sinnett, is making his men’s Nationals debut this year, marking the first time the 18-year-old has competed in an arena in his curling career.

“It’s super exciting,” Clawson said. “I played several of the teams here before, but it’s a different experience playing them at such a high-level championship because typically when we play them, they’re not at their best, but here, all the teams are at their best.”

Team Sinnett is an underdog to make the podium, which gives Sinnett the comfort of not having to deal with lofty expectations. “I think, for us, there’s no pressure on us, which is perfect because that’s typically the best environment we play in,” Clawson said. “We got no pressure, no expectations.”

Shuster, Sinclair undefeated

Team Shuster is a perfect 5-0 with four games remaining in the round robin to determine the playoff contenders.

“They’re a really good team. So the only way we’re going to beat this team is giving yourself a chance and some better rock placement going in,” Pyrs said.

Ruohonen’s squad drops to 3-1 and into a tie for second place with Todd Birr’s team, which secured another victory tonight when they scored in the extra end to defeat Chase Sinnett’s rink.

In women’s competition this afternoon, Jamie Sinclair took sole possession of first place with an 8-7 win over Cory Christensen’s team. Sinclair and teammates Sarah Anderson (Minneapolis), Taylor Anderson (Minneapolis, Minn.) and Monica Walker (St. Paul, Minn.) are now 3-0 in the seven-game round robin.

“I think we just keep playing our game,” Walker said. “Our goal is to be at the top of the round robin at the end. We just have to do business as usual and keep playing our game.”

Eighteen-year-old Sam Strouse, the youngest skip in the field, earned his first men’s national championship win when his junior team defeated Jed Brundidge’s squad, 7-6. Steven Birklid’s team bounced back from a loss earlier in the day as they handed Mark Fenner’s team its third straight loss. Scott Dunnam’s team snapped its three-game losing skid with a 6-4 victory over Brandon Corbett.

// STANDINGS & RESULTS

**WOMEN’S STANDINGS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamie Sinclair (Manotick, Ontario)</td>
<td>3-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cory Christensen (Duluth, Minn.)</td>
<td>2-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Dubberstein (Portage, Wis.)</td>
<td>2-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina Roth (McFarland, Wis.)</td>
<td>2-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Senneker (Port Huron, Mich.)</td>
<td>2-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Podoll (Fargo, N.D.)</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kim Rhyme (Minneapolis, Minn.)</td>
<td>0-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ariel Traxler (Fairbanks, Alaska)</td>
<td>0-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**2 P.M. WOMEN’S RESULTS:**

Roth 10, Ryhme 3

Senneker 9, Podolli 4

Dubberstein 9, Traxler 3

Sinclair 8, Christensen 7

**MEN’S STANDINGS:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Record</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Shuster (Superior, Wis.)</td>
<td>5-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Todd Birr (Ham Lake, Minn.)</td>
<td>4-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich Ruohonen (Brooklyn Park, Minn.)</td>
<td>4-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven Birklid (Seattle)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Corbett (Hamilton, Ontario)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Dunnam (Dresher, Pa.)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark Fenner (Bemidji, Minn.)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chase Sinnett (Medfield, Mass.)</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jed Brundidge (West St. Paul, Minn.)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam Strouse (Midland, Mich.)</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**9 A.M. MEN’S RESULTS:**

Birr 8, Strouse 3

Sinnett 8, Fenner 6

Shuster 9, Birklid 5

Ruohonen 5, Corbett 2

Brundidge 10, Dunnam 6

**7 P.M. MEN’S RESULTS:**

Dunnam 6, Corbett 4

Shuster 8, Ruohonen 3

Stouse 7, Brundidge 6

Birr 6, Sinnett 5 (EE)

Birklid 8, Fenner 6

Young Chase Sinnett and his team are 2-3 in the round robin.

Photo by Rich Harmer

FROM PAGE 1: SHUSTER, SINCLAIR UNDEFEATED

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