

Burned Rocks

Every curler has burned or will burn a stone at some point (a burned stone is when a stone is touched while in motion by the throwing team). How a curler chooses to handle the situation is the important part. There is nothing more frustrating than watching your opposition burn a stone and say nothing. If you happen to burn a stone, upsetting as it may be, you have broken a rule and it is your ethical duty to say something.

Burning a stone can mean touching it with your brush, touching it with your foot, or even accidentally spitting your gum onto it or dropping your lip gloss in its path. Curling is all about ethical behaviour, if you know you or your equipment has touched the stone you need to speak up. You should also speak up if you see your sweeping partner touch the stone. Ask them about it then follow the rules.

If you are unfamiliar with the rules about a touched moving stone the concept is fairly simple. If you, your equipment, or belongings come in contact with the stone anywhere between the tee-line at the delivering end or the hogline at the playing end the stone should be removed from play immediately.

If you, your equipment or your belongings come in contact with the stone after the playing end hogline you should speak up about it right away but allow the shot to play out. The non-offending team is then allowed to decide which of the following they'd like to do. They can remove the burned stone and put everything back the way it was, they can leave everything as is after the burned stone comes to rest, or they can place all stones, within reason, where they think they would have come to rest had the moving stone not been touched.

It's no fun to be the person who burns a stone. Nobody is ever proud of this mishap. However, if you violate a rule and don't speak out about your mistake you are acting in an unethical and rule-breaking manner. Yes, maybe nobody noticed but you need to think about what you would want your opposition to do. In all likelihood you want your opposition to follow the rules. This means you need to do the same.