

Curling



By Lynita Delaney: The Junior Athletic Development Director for the United States Curling Association (USCA). Delaney has been involved with junior curling coaching and instruction for 20 years, coaching at the junior nationals 5 times where two of the teams have finished in the final four, three times.

“One of my students has curled in the Olympics and another was voted “all world skip” at Junior Worlds in 2000. I have also organized and instructed at several USA curling camps and coaching clinics. Curling is a game of precision, where a small variation in the delivery of the stone can make the difference between a world-level competitor and an inconsistent mid-level performer.”

The similarity of the team member’s deliveries is very important in reducing the complexity for the skip when calling shots. Because of this, and for overall team performance improvement, the USCA purchased the Dartfish software so the national coaches could become familiar with the software and develop uses for the sport. This year our team used the Dartfish program in three ways:

- > Video analysis for individual players
- > Evaluating consistency between players
- > Tagging games and recalling highlights for team meetings

■ Use of Dartfish

“In curling we’ve used the **ANALYZER**, **TAGGING**, and **SIMULCAM™** tools of Dartfish. During pre-season summer camps we use the **ANALYZER** and **SIMULCAM™** portions of the software frequently.”

Video Analysis

VIDEO ANALYSIS is an integral part of technical development of the curlers and the Dartfish software has proven to be an invaluable addition to the training aids.

“The Dartfish software accompanied me from coast to coast during 2005. It was beneficial for me to be able to tape the athlete’s deliveries, point out problem areas and leave the video clips on CD’s for the coaches that work with the athletes after I’ve gone.”

The individual athlete’s delivery or sweeping technique is taped and imported into a clip. In the analyzer, the horizontal lines are used to study the curler’s shoulder position, while the vertical lines help the student visualize the line of delivery.

The **VIDEO ANALYSIS** on Dartfish is sometimes accompanied by a string line used on the ice, or a laser that indicates unwanted stone movement during the delivery. The ability to slow the delivery down and stop the video clip at strategic spots allows the athlete and coach to break the delivery down to spot assets or problems that need to be addressed.



Side-by-Side Comparison

SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON of all team members allows the coach and team to look at the release points and amount of rotation for all positions. The value of this tool is especially important to a curling team, as a consistent release point and amount of rock rotation can make the difference between winning or losing at nationals or worlds. The **BLEND FEATURE** in the analyzer allows us to evaluate the similarity in the athlete’s in turn and out turn. A consistent delivery for both turns can help minimize technical errors. **SIMULCAM™** provides comparison of the sound deliveries of the athlete to the problem shots.



Tagging

TAGGING is used during summer camps to highlight and tag strategy lessons while the high performance junior curlers play games during camp. The video clips can be shown to all campers using the projector, so it serves as an educational tool for the entire camp. During the season the **TAGGING FEATURE** of the **TEAMPRO** is very valuable to the curling team. Since the national or world-level games are 10 ends in length (3 hours) the tagging feature of Dartfish can save a tremendous amount of time for the coaching staff. By highlighting shots and events that need to be reviewed in the post-game meeting, those shots and events can be recalled easily for viewing. The use of this feature

is a learning tool, but it also serves as a motivational aid between games. ***“The 'highlights' include what we like to refer to as 'million dollar' shots.”***

The **TAGGING FEATURE** also allows the coaching staff to assign the percentages and record the performance of the athletes on various types of shots. This allows the coach to find the shots that are causing the athlete problems and also to find the “high percentage” shots that assist the team in choosing shots on the ice.

“After the season I plan on using the Dartfish program to develop training DVDs for the USCA. Dartfish allows me to manipulate the clips to maximize the lesson, slowing the motion so that even the most inexperienced coaches or instructors can learn from the DVD. The Dartfish analyzer will also be used to add comments, markings and comparisons for the DVD. Through this first year of use Dartfish has proven to be very valuable. I expect during the next summer and curling season, new uses will be realized for the curling athletes in the USA.”

