

The Utica Knee Slide Delivery... What the ?**##@@

Before I begin to explain what the Utica Knee slide entails, let me first remind everyone of the following rule regarding the delivery of a stone as per the Canadian Curling Association's latest publication:

“The delivery of a stone by the right hand shall be initiated from the hack located to the left of the centre line. The delivery of a stone by the left hand shall be initiated from the hack located to the right of the centre line.”

Although seemingly unconventional, the Utica Knee slide is a perfectly acceptable and legal method of delivering a curling rock. It was created and pioneered by an engineer/curling enthusiast from Utica who wanted to develop an alternative means of sliding out from the hack for individuals that were experiencing unilateral knee problems, specifically the left knee for right-handed curlers and the right knee for left-handed curlers.

As a curling instructor, I was eager to learn more about this approach and travelled to Utica several years ago and received first-hand instruction from the inventor of this technique. He also, kindly provided me with a couple of “modified” knee sliders that I could use for demonstration purposes back in Kingston.

The intent of the ‘Utica Knee Slide Delivery’ is to remove the weight bearing aspect during the forward slide and transfer it to the other ‘unaffected’ knee.

Equipment:

For right handed curlers, the left foot is equipped with a gripper and the right knee wears the modified slider. The right curling shoe does not require and should not use a slider.



Figure # 1 on the following page, depicts the initial stance or set-up in the hack for a right-handed curler. Although it is entirely possible to perform this slide with a broom, a crutch/stabilizer appears to be the much preferred device.

The initial stance in the hack consists of the following steps:

- *The stabilizer is held in the left hand*
- *The **left** foot is placed in the **left** hack*
- *The **right** foot is positioned slightly behind and **between** the two hacks*
- *The rock is held in the right hand*
- *The right knee and rock should be aligned with the target*



Figure 1

The next two images illustrate the forward slide segment of the Utica Knee Slide delivery:

- After hip elevation, the left foot pushes out of the left hack and the left leg is extended. Simultaneously, the right knee descends onto the ice surface, sliding forward with the right leg tucked under the thigh and the right foot flat on the ice.
- As you move forward, the right knee should be directly behind the rock, sliding towards the broom.



Although it is sometimes the case where curlers may opt to wear a knee pad/slider during a **normal** slide delivery, the placement of the knee slider and position in the hack for the type of delivery described in this article, may seem counterintuitive. PLEASE , do not attempt to correct or admonish the curler if they are using the Utica Knee Slide delivery, it is legal and perfectly acceptable .

From the warm side of the glass Denis Faubert