

Atlantic Beaverspiel 2008 branded a huge success

By CWO Leonard Smythe, 3 ASG Engineer Branch RSM

The Annual Atlantic Beaverspiel was held at the Gage Golf and Curling Club from January 24 to 27, 2008. Following the event, there was nothing but praise and thanks for the wonderful time had by all.

Beaverspiel has been a tradition for Canadian Military Engineer units for many years. Records of winning teams and existing trophies go back to 1976. Originally, the event was to emulate the granddaddy of all Engineer spiels: the Pigspiel formally held each February at CFB Petawawa and open to Military Engineer units from across Canada and Europe. A similar spiel was held annually in Chilliwack, British Columbia and was attended mostly by units west of Ontario.

As with many *esprit de corps* initiatives from days gone by, the event lost momentum and fell by the wayside in 1999.

In 2006, the Spiel was revived and injected with new life and vigour. The initiative became a great success with 28 teams entered by the time the first rock was thrown. When the organizing committee met they decided that rather than move the Spiel from base to base annually as had been the tradition, participants would meet at Base Gagetown, making it the permanent home of Beaverspiel.



Col Ken Chadder throws the first stone to open the Atlantic Beaverspiel at Gage Golf and Curling Club.

With the launch of Task Force 01/07, the number of teams entered last year was minimal with only 19 teams registered. However, it did not take away from the spirit of the games and those that did partake had a wonderful time. Teams from Halifax, Greenwood and Moncton all took part.

This year's event was well attended with 28 teams entered with the majority from Base Gagetown, including CFSME, 4 ESR and the Engineer Branch teams. Only two out-of-town teams made the trip - both from 14 Wing Greenwood - as the most other units had previous commitments such as pre-deployment training or scheduled unit training which took priority.

Events like this are not made possible without the hard work of dedicated volunteers and an excellent organizing committee. Thanks are extended to those who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make it all possible. In particular, organizers would like to thank Sobeys Oromocto as Beaverspiel's major sponsor for providing food and drink throughout while entering their own team to take part in the fun. Donations from RE/MAX, the CFSME Unit fund and the Canadian Military Engineer Association also helped make the event a tremendous success.

Following last year's Spiel, the uncertainty of being able to secure an ideal venue loomed large. However, the Gage Golf and Curling Club came through with flying colours with ideal ice conditions and a superb support staff. The renovations and new ice at Gage was a dream come true for curlers. Everyone is looking forward to making next year's Beaverspiel just as memorable!

Chimo!