

Reading the Ice

Learning how to 'read the ice' can take considerable time and experience. One approach that can be helpful in this regard is to establish in your mind's eye the general profile of the ice sheet you are playing on.

1) **Level Ice:**



While no sheet is perfectly level, the predominant characteristic of this type of ice is that all shots with similar weight, whether directed towards the centre of the sheet or towards the sides, will have a very similar amount of curl.

2) **Peaked Ice:**



The centre of the sheet is actually somewhat higher than the sides. Shots directed towards the centre of the sheet will normally stay relatively straight, while shots towards the sides of the sheet will most often curl quite significantly.

3) **Dished Ice:**



The centre of the sheet is somewhat lower than the sides. Shots directed towards the centre of the sheet will actually curl quite significantly, while shots directed towards the sides of the sheet will normally stay relatively straight.

4) **Slanted Ice:**



One side of the sheet is noticeably higher than the other side. A stone moving from the higher side of the sheet to the lower side of the sheet will normally curl a great deal, while shots that are moving in the other direction will stay very straight, or could even fall back, depending on the severity of the slant.

5) **Combination Ice:**



This sheet features a mixture of two or more of the above-mentioned basic profiles. The one depicted above is a relative common one where the centre of the sheet is essentially *Dished*, and the outer portions are both somewhat *Slanted* away from the centre.

Recognizing a sheet's prevailing contours can be very helpful in making those often critical line calls. Establishing a basic topographical map early on in the game can be the difference between missing or making the shot.

From the warm side of glass - Denis Faubert