

1981 & 1982 BOYS' CURLING TEAMS

Head Coaches: Doug Bogue and Bill Swift

Team Members: John Kampen, Dan Jensen, Mike Gustafson, Dave Violette, Mike Bennett, Mike Clemmons

The 1980-81 Portage High School boys curling team returned five members from a team 2nd at State the prior season. Coach Doug Bogue had that year's team set on winning a State Championship.

The team was made up of John Kampen (lead), Dan Jensen (2nd), Mike Gustafson (3rd), Dave Violette (Skip) and Mike Bennett (alt.). They dominated the season winning a second straight league championship, tournament and their regional.

The State Tournament was held in Portage for the first time. This team rose to the occasion, going undefeated in a round-robin tournament. They clinched the '80-'81 State Championship with the last 2 wins over Lodi and Medford.

The '81-82 season started with a coaching change, as Coach Bogue retired on top. Bill Swift then stepped in to coach this accomplished team. John Kampen, was lost to graduation. Mike Bennett was promoted to lead and Junior Mike Clemmons became the alternate. They breezed through league play winning a 3rd straight title. After placing 1st in regional play they headed to State in Madison. At State they beat the other 7 teams, the championship match was an extra end playoff against conference rival Lodi.

Portage won, becoming Wisconsin's first back-to-back boys State Curling Champions. It would set a level of excellence expectation for future Portage teams starting with a 3-peat at State the following year [and six State Championships since the '81-82 season.](#)

They returned home to a hero's welcome and a glowing editorial from the Portage Daily Register stating, "...they are more than just the best group of high school curlers in the state. They represented Portage. They represented us. They were head strong Portage young men who were trained in their field and could work together as a team under the guided direction of a obviously skilled coach."

Recently Lead Mike Bennett said, "We played for each other, our families and PHS". Skip Dave Violette added, "I'm glad Portage is so supportive of such a positive game." Second Dan Jensen summed it up stating, "As

juniors we clicked and knew we had something special. We set our goal to win it all. We learned it wasn't as easy as we thought, but found a way. As seniors we were better and more confident and would not accept anything less than a championship. Coaches Doug and Swifty fit our team perfectly. They were there as needed for advice and encouragement. Their knowledge and support were invaluable to us."