



Unusual Oval Curling Stone

£750



REF: 31524

Height: 16 cm (6.3")

Width: 40 cm (15.7")

Depth: 30 cm (11.8")

Weight: 40 kg

Description

Unusual Early Single-Soled Channel Curling Stone.

A rare 19th Century example of an early single-soled channel curling stone, also known as a "channel stane". Crafted from a rough boulder, this primitive curling stone features a forged iron hoop handle, permanently fixed with lead into holes bored into the top - a traditional early method of attachment.

These early channel stones were collected from river or stream channels and represent the "Boulder Age" of curling, following the handle-less stones known as "loofies." Each stone's individuality was sufficient for ownership, making initials or markings unnecessary. The rough, unrefined nature of these stones, along with their variety in size and weight, gives them a distinctly unusual and historic character.

This stone retains a wonderful rustic charm, with a coarse, natural surface showing traces of moss, lichen, and algae, and evidence of hard encounters over its long life - including a small section missing at the rear (see images). It weighs approximately 40 kg, with a height of 23 cm including the handle.

An extraordinary collector's piece, prized both for its historical significance and its striking, decorative appeal. These early stones were not just sporting equipment - they were cherished objects, sometimes even given names to reflect their characteristics or owners.

The exact origins of curling are unclear but it is known to have a long history in Scotland, and it was through Scottish immigrants that the game of curling spread to other parts of the world. Early curling was an outdoor sport that was played on frozen lochs and ponds. Because of the unpredictable weather artificial curling rinks were being made to make a little frost go a long way. Concrete rinks were flooded with small amounts of water so they would freeze solid after a night of frost, thus having a rink to play on when the frozen lochs or ponds were unsafe. The first Curling Clubs were formed in Scotland as were the first rules to standardize curling and its equipment. The Grand Caledonian Curling Club was founded in Edinburgh in 1838, they formally adopted these new rules and became the sport's governing body. They heavily supported the use of round granite stones and rather than eight players each throwing a single stone it changed to a team of four players using two matched stones each. Four years later, in 1843, Her Majesty Queen Victoria so fascinated by the game demonstrated on the polished floor of the ballroom of Scone Palace near Perth she granted the Club the title of Royal Caledonian Curling Club. Curling was firmly established in Canada by the Scots with The Royal Montreal Curling Club being established in 1807, the oldest sports club still active in North America.