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## **Curler likes an SUV with room for the brooms**



Alberta's Cheryl Bernard says she's a reformed speeder: 'I came close to losing my licence for speeding. So I really had to slow down. I started to know the police personally'

PETRINA GENTILE

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### **Cheryl Bernard**

**Profession:** Curler and professional speaker

**Age:** 44

**Hometown:** Grand Prairie, Alta.

**Notable achievements:** 2010 Olympic Silver medalist; 2010 Grey Power Players Championships – Champion; 2009 Canada Cup Semi-finalist; 2009 Capital One Cup – 2nd place; 2009 Alberta Provincial Women's Curling – Champion

**Upcoming:** TSN Skins Curling Game in Toronto, Jan. 21-23; The Continental Cup of Curling – Jan. 13-17 in St. Albert, Alta.; Scott Tournament of Hearts Canadians, Feb. 19-27, Charlottetown, 2011 World Women’s Curling, March 19-27, Denmark. An updated version of her book, *Between the Sheets – Creating Curling Champions*, comes out in February



Curler Cheryl Bernard.

She’s won a silver medal in curling at the 2010 Winter Olympics, but Cheryl Bernard, the skip of Team Bernard, isn’t one to rest on her laurels and still trains hard.

To get to practice and tournaments, she drives a 2011 Jeep Grand Cherokee SUV – it’s part of a sponsorship deal with a local dealership in Alberta.

**Is there anything special about the Jeep?**

They decaled it all up with our team logo and it was donated to me for the team use for the next three years.

It’s funny to drive – I have to drive a lot better because everybody knows who you are and who to complain to. It’s a little disconcerting.

Even sitting at lights, people will lean over and wave. It’s funny, but nice.

So far, I haven’t had anybody say anything nasty. I’ll probably slow down because they’ll know who to send the tickets to pretty quickly.



Curler Cheryl Bernard's 2011 Jeep Grand Cherokee .

### **Do you like speed?**

I was an insurance broker for 13 years. I had my own insurance agency and I came close to losing my licence for speeding. So I really had to slow down. I started to know the police personally.

I got a ticket about a month ago driving back from Red Deer. I hit Calgary and I was still doing pretty good speed at 8 in the morning on Stoney Trail and got pulled over. A \$211 ticket!

The guy asked me, "Why were you going so fast?" I don't even have an answer for that. 'Cause it's early in the morning and I need a coffee.

I have been let off a few times – the Mounties seem to be more into curling than the city police. A couple of times I've been pulled over by the Mounties and they're like, "Hey, congratulations on the curling! Slow down." And they leave. But if you're speeding, you probably should get a ticket.

### **What else do you own?**

I have a 2006 Lexus RX350, which I bought. It's in the garage. Always an SUV for me because it's the only thing curling brooms will fit in."

### **What does a Jeep say about you?**

Tomboy, 'cause that's what I am. I'm into sports.

I like it because it's more truck – you can go almost anywhere. In Calgary you need to have 4WD and it's a go-anywhere, do-anything vehicle.

And you can load the thing up with your curling team, suitcases for four women, which is crazy, and all our curling supplies and we can go for a week of curling in this, which is awesome!

### **What was your first car?**

A 1979 Malibu Classic four-door. It was probably \$2,200-\$2,500 bucks, which was a lot then.

I loved that vehicle. I thought it was the sportiest thing ever. Now I look back and I laugh. It was neat. I went to Pick Your Part Auto and got cool chrome tires for it. I had a boyfriend at the time paint it with super metallic black paint! It was perfect for 1979.

I wanted something sporty and fun so I ended up trading it in for not a lot of money and got an RX-7. Then I drove a sports car for a while. That was the only two cars I ever owned. I've owned SUVs ever since.

### **What other SUVs have you owned?**

A Ford Explorer, a BMW X5 and the Lexus.

I had a lot of problems with my X5. I bought it brand new and I was really disappointed with it. I had a bunch of electrical issues: problem, after problem, after problem from the day I got it. Within a week I had an electrical problem and then the doors wouldn't unlock, then the lights went off in the dash system and then only the back doors would lock and the front doors wouldn't. There was always an issue. I sold it and I will never buy another BMW.

The Lexus has been fabulous. I wasn't sure going from the Lexus to the Jeep, but so far I haven't been disappointed. The Lexus is still an SUV, which is nice. It was on the luxury side – it was a spoil-yourself vehicle – it's more of a sports car than an SUV.

### **Do you take a lot of road trips?**

I drove down to Phoenix last year. I'm going to drive this vehicle down to San Diego – we have a place there.

We're going to go for a month this summer to San Diego. I'm wondering what the Americans will think of a vehicle decal'd with curlers on the side of it? It'll get a few stares.

I love going to Banff and going into the mountains and the winding roads – I love driving that. I can't stand driving to Medicine Hat and Edmonton cause it's flat and boring and nothing to see.

I live in my vehicle. It's full of workout wear, it's full of curling gear, and it's full of my dog gear.

My dog comes everywhere with me so I've always got a dog in the passenger seat. He loves it. He looks right at home.

**What do you listen to when driving?**

I'll listen to books on tape – sports psychology books.

George Thorogood is my big driving guy. I know all the words so I sing along to that. I love Garth Brooks – he's great to drive with. I'll even listen to Il Divo and opera.

**Any embarrassing moments?**

I sideswiped a guy once with two young kids in (my) vehicle, which was pretty embarrassing.

They were both talking and I'm changing lanes and listening to them and didn't shoulder check and went right into the car.

And these two kill themselves laughing – it wasn't at high speeds so nobody was hurt. They're laughing and I'm serious. Two kids to witness this isn't the best thing you want. That was with the BMW X5 – that thing wasn't very lucky for me.”

**What's your dream car?**

Both my husband and I love Maseratis, but I wouldn't want it as my main vehicle.

I'd sure love to have a Maserati down in San Diego. That might be the goal – the roads are great and there's no snow. A Maserati would be awesome. They're gorgeous cars.