

# World's Longest Hockey Game ends after 241 hours

Game in Sherwood Park raises \$870,000 - and counting - for Cross Cancer Institute

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Play continues during the World's Longest Hockey Game east of Edmonton, AB on Sunday, Feb. 13, 2011.

**Photograph by:** John Lucas , The Journal

STRATHCONA COUNTY — After 241 consecutive hours and more than 4,000 goals, the World's Longest Hockey Game came to an end Monday afternoon east of Sherwood Park, Alberta.

"You think of warm things to get through it," said James McCormack, 47, who played in the game for the third time.

McCormack was one of forty players — 39 men and one woman — who battled fatigue, numbness, injury and fluctuating temperatures in an effort to raise \$1 million for the Cross Cancer Institute. The money will go toward the purchase of a new linear accelerator used in radiation treatment.

It was the third time Edmonton's Todd Lutz laced up his skates for the charity event. Despite sustaining a back injury which forced him to pop a few muscle relaxants, Lutz again enjoyed the camaraderie and the 'warmer' temperatures.

"There were some cases of frostbite and blisters, but the guys were sticking together more this time. It was competitive out there, but when the whistle blew guys were checking up on each other," Lutz said.

"It was in the -50s C three years ago so that was difficult. The -30s this year were cold enough."

At the game's conclusion it was announced that more than \$870,000 has been raised, including donations from Lebanon, Australia, New Zealand and the United States. But Brent Saik, who hosted the game at his property nicknamed Saiker's Acres, said that somehow the original goal will be met.

"We're not apologizing because we didn't hit a million. There's still things that we haven't counted," Saik said. "There's a number of things that are still coming, so we're going to be very, very close and if we are \$50,000 off I do apologize to the people that have to wait for this machine, but as soon as we can, we will get that \$50,000."

"If we're a little short, then you'll see my mug in the paper again trying to raise some money doing something to get that \$1 million."

This was the fourth time the optometrist has put on the charitable event.

The inaugural game was played in 2003 in honour of Saik's father, Terry, who died of cancer in 1994. The event raised \$150,000 for the Cross Cancer and the money was used to buy a gene analyzer used in pediatric cancer research.

Saik's wife, Susan, died in June 2003 after losing her battle with non-Hodgkins lymphoma so another game was played in her honour in 2005. That year \$350,000 was raised and the third edition of the game, in 2008, raised \$558,468 for the cancer institute.

Daryl Silzer is the Alberta Cancer Foundation's director of annual giving and is so appreciative of the players and the efforts they made to aid cancer research.

"They know playing is hard, but they also know fighting cancer is harder," Silzer said.

Saik says he will continue raising money for cancer research until a cure is found and the linear accelerator is sure to help that day be sooner rather than later.

"I've always promised that as soon as that machine goes in it will save lives," Saik said.

The optometrist also said he has bigger things in store for future editions of the game.

"This event will get bigger, I promise. And it will raise more money, I promise."

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