

# World's longest hockey game heating up

Players upbeat, despite warm temps turning the ice into a slushy mess

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Published: Monday, February 14, 2011



Despite exhaustion and deteriorating ice conditions, players soldier on during the World's Longest Hockey Game on Sunday.

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

Three days into the World's Longest Hockey Game the big story is the weather, but despite the warm temperatures, players are still finding strength to keep their legs moving and their eyes open.

That includes Jenelle Trenchuk who is the only woman participating in the game. It's the first time the 31-year-old optometrist, who is engaged to event organizer and fellow optometrist Brent Saik, has laced up her skates and played in the charity event.

"This is the biggest thing I have ever done, and the boys keep feeding me the puck," Trenchuk said.

Like many of players, Trenchuk has been affected by cancer. Her grandmother and a close cousin both died from the disease. And although the ice conditions have been difficult, Trenchuk said it has been enjoyable so far.

"I don't think you would want it any easier," she said.

Les Hennig echoed Trenchuk's words and said the slushy ice has made it feel like skating in a sandbox.

"This isn't a sprint, it's a marathon," Hennig said.

The Andrew native played in the game three years ago and is doing so this year in memory of his father.

The popular event would not be possible without the support of the more than 800 volunteers, including Zamboni and Olympian driver Brad Frunchak.

He has volunteered each of the four years the game has been played (2003, 2005, 2008 and 2011), but said this is the slushiest it's been this early.

"Saturday morning around 10 a.m. the ice was really bad and players were exhausted after their shifts," Frunchak said. "It's much better today and the players are finding it easier to skate and glide through the ice."

Volunteers are also pitching in off the ice. Justin Barbour, CFO of Stawnichy's Meat Processors, could be found next to a grill barbecuing burgers all weekend. He said he was thrilled to be part of the game.

"It's a huge undertaking, but to see everyone come together for one cause is great," Barbour said.

By the time the final whistle blows on Feb. 21 the players hope to have raised \$1 million so that a linear accelerator -- used in radiation treatment -- can be purchased for the Cross Cancer Institute.

As of 4 p.m. Sunday more than \$340,000 had been raised.

Donations can be made at <http://albertacancer.ca/worldslongesthockeygame>

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