

NHL Ball Tournament Hits it Out of the Park for JoeAnna's House

KELOWNA, BC – Josh Gorges and Blake Comeau have a lot to smile about. After a weekend of slo-pitch with their friends, family and members of the community, an astounding **\$212,000 was raised for JoeAnna's House**.

Along with presenting sponsor, Raymond James, the pro-hockey players hosted the second annual HOMEBASE Charity Slo-Pitch June 28 and 29 in Kelowna. Upwards of twenty current and former NHL players were on hand, including Carey Price, Shea Weber, Brendan Gallagher and recent Stanley Cup winner, Brayden Schenn.



Blake Comeau (left) and Josh Gorges (right)

The inaugural tournament which took place in 2018 raised \$117,000, an impressive feat considering the relatively new fundraising campaign to build JoeAnna's House. Now one year later, nine months into the build project and less than six months from an opening date, a gift over \$200k will go a long way to keeping the doors open.

"This home is built by donations from across the interior of BC, and it will need constant community support to keep the lights on and the doors open," explains Doug Rankmore, CEO of the KGH Foundation. "I'm willing to bet this event alone will be one of the largest contributors and we couldn't be more grateful. Everything Josh and Blake have done for JoeAnna's House, along with all the sponsors, teams, volunteers and people who bought tickets to the Friday night all-star match – my hat's off to you."

The two-day affair, which featured an NHL All-Star Match Friday evening at Elks Stadium and tournament play the next day at Mission Sports Fields, was a culmination of unique expertise and teamwork, thanks to all of the event sponsors, dozens of volunteers, 18 co-ed teams, and lastly, the NHL players, all of whom put on quite a show. From Shea Weber's commanding win of the home run derby (4+ home runs hit) to country singer Aaron Pritchett and Carey Price's festive rendition of 'Take Me Out to the Ball Game' in the seventh inning stretch, the level of fun and humour was evident and it was a joy to watch.

Indeed, the road towards opening JoeAnna's House has some new pavement thanks to the weekend's slo-pitch success. The 20-bedroom home away from home for out-of-town families is set to open by the end of 2019.

The KGH Foundation is an independent, volunteer-driven charitable organization committed to enhancing the delivery of healthcare to the patients of Kelowna General Hospital and its associated facilities.

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