

NHLPA GOALS & DREAMS 10 IN 10 TOUR UNDERWAY

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The National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA) Goals & Dreams fund has kicked off its 10-year anniversary celebration in high fashion, with a 10-day, 10-country tour where they will continue to do what they have for the past decade: give children a chance to play hockey. Ornskoldsvik, Sweden marked the place where the celebratory tour kicked off on Friday, November 13th, as NHLPA Goals & Dreams equipment donations made on day one of the tour to Ornsköldsviks Hockeyklubb (50 sets of hockey equipment) and Jarveds IF (25 sets) helped set a fantastic tone for what will be an incredible trip.

Since its inception in 1999, more than 40,000 children have benefited from donations made by the NHLPA Goals & Dreams program. Thanks to these donations by NHLPA members, the reach of Goals & Dreams has been extremely profound. The largest grassroots hockey program of its kind, NHLPA Goals & Dreams has allowed NHLPA members the opportunity to give back and provide children all around the world with the joy of feeling their skate blades gliding across fresh ice or bulging the twine of a net with a wrist shot.

The "10 countries in 10 days" tour is not only a celebration of the great work that NHLPA Goals & Dreams has accomplished on behalf of the members of the NHLPA over the past decade, but could be an indication of the positive work that lies ahead as the program looks to the future. In visiting "10 countries in 10 days", the tour crew – which consists of Devin Smith, NHLPA Goals & Dreams chairman, Matt Langen, NHLPA Goals & Dreams manager, Rob Zamuner and P.J. Stock, NHLPA Goals & Dreams ambassadors and former NHL players – will donate 360 sets of hockey equipment to local grassroots hockey programs, valued at approximately \$180,000.

The tour will see the group making stops in Sweden, Finland, Russia, Latvia, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bosnia, Germany, and the United States, before wrapping up in Toronto, Canada on November 22nd. Along the way, they will be joined by numerous former players who are eager and excited to play a direct role in giving back to the grassroots hockey programs in their native lands. Players such as Jon Sim, Pavel Bure, Jyrki Lumme, and Esa Tikkanen, will help with the donations and planning the NHLPA Goals & Dreams events in their home countries. 15-year NHL veteran and 2002-03 Lester B. Pearson Award recipient, Markus Naslund welcomed the crew at their first stop, his hometown of Ornskoldsvik, Sweden. Naslund was involved in the planning of the trip from the early stages and commented on how thrilled he was to be a part of such a wonderful endeavor.

"I've had the pleasure over the years of being able to get involved with the NHLPA Goals & Dreams fund and to have a tour like this is a real symbol of all the good that has

been done,” Naslund said. “To see the kids today with their equipment and the smiles on their faces makes you realize how worthwhile it is.”

Swedish hockey legend Peter Forsberg also met up with the NHLPA Goals & Dreams crew in Ornskoldsvik, and he talked at length about how important hockey is to the city and people of that city, “It means kind of everything here, it’s what we do here. It’s a hockey town, everyone goes to the games, everyone talks hockey. We were very fortunate to grow up here, it’s been very good to us.”

With the tour now underway, Devin, Matt, Rob and P.J. have a long, but interesting and rewarding road ahead of them. Along the way, they will be spreading the message of inclusion and opportunity to all children who wish to play this great game and showing the world, once again, the character and dedication to their sport that all NHLPA members possess.

“Ten years has gone by very quickly, but I couldn’t be more proud of what the players have accomplished through their initiative during this time, and they truly realize the impact that their giving back has on young people around the world,” said Devin Smith, NHLPA Goals & Dreams chairman. “For the players, this has, and always will be, about the children, and helping to give them an opportunity that they may not have otherwise had. That’s what NHLPA Goals & Dreams is all about.”

To see video, browse pictures, read daily blog updates and get up-to-date information on the NHLPA Goals & Dreams “10 countries in 10 days” tour, please visit the tour website at: <http://www.nhlpa.com/10in10>. You can also follow the tour on Twitter @nhlpanewmedia.