

# Craig Gowans Memorial Fund wins Voluntary Fundraising Group of the Year award



The Craig Gowans Memorial Fund (Sick Kids Friends Foundation) won the prestigious Voluntary Fundraising Group of the Year award last night at a Glasgow Hotel.

It's been a successful year for the charity who officially become Guinness World Record Holders, smashing the record for the Longest Marathon Playing Football in aid of the Sick Kids Friends Foundation in July when a group of enthusiastic football fans completed a 105 hour-long football match at Ainslie Park which boasted an astounding final score of 774 – 707.

The game, hosted in memory of the late Falkirk defender Craig Gowans, who tragically died exactly ten years previously, originally hoped to raise £37,000 for the SKFF – inspired by Craig's professional number at Falkirk, number 37 however over double that figure was raised.

The seventeen year-old was only two weeks into his professional contract with the Bairns when the tragedy occurred. As well as being a talented footballer, Craig was a straight A pupil and talented artist at Stewart's-Melville College, where he won the School's Athletic Championship. He also had an unconditional offer to study Architecture at Edinburgh College of Art, but chose a career in football.



The money raised will be used by the Sick Kids Friends Foundation to fund enhancements to the new Sick Kids hospital

at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh at Little France, specifically a state-of-the-art Snoezelen room in Craig's name. The space will be a calming room with multi-sensory equipment providing a relaxing and stimulating space for children with sensory impairments.

Ex-Hibs' and Scotland boss, Alex McLeish attended the game along with current Scottish Cup holding manager, John Hughes who was the Falkirk manager at the time of Craig's death. Former team-mates Scott Arfield and Thomas Scobbie were also there to cheer the players on.

Kerry MacKay from the Scottish Fundraising Conference Committee said: 'Fundraisers and volunteers are the face and backbone of our charities – they donate their time; champion our causes; inspire and encourage others; and ultimately increase philanthropic income. Their commitment and drive deserves not only to be acknowledged, but celebrated. The Scottish Fundraising Awards showcase the most inspiring stories whilst giving a fantastic opportunity to publicly thank and salute our awesome fundraisers'.

The Scottish Fundraising Conference and Fundraising Awards are held annually in the autumn.

The other groups shortlisted for the award were Shimmer and Sparkle Committee, Scottish Spina Bifida Association and Ballater Charitable Chiels and Mrs Lindsay Barclay, The University of Edinburgh Euan MacDonald Centre for Motor Neurone Disease Research and local charitable causes