This page was exported from - The Auroran
Export date: Thu Mar 28 10:54:08 2024 / +0000 GMT

Byfield ?humbled? by OHL Rookie honours



By Jake Courtepatte

A familiar face
around the Aurora rinks has been lauded as the top first-year player in the Ontario Hockey League.

Former York-Simcoe
Express captain Quinton Byfield was named on Thursday as the OHL's Rookie of the Year, earning the Emms Family Award for the 2018-19 season.

?It's super
humbling,? said Byfield. ?There's a lot of good rookies this year that could have won it. I think a lot of them deserved it as well. I couldn't have done it by myself and owe a lot to my coaches who put trust in me, gave me every opportunity to succeed, and put me in every situation.

He called his
chemistry with his first-year teammates, both on and off the ice, ?unbelievable.?

?We had a very
special group, we're super tight, and that helped us on the ice and really helped me too.?

The Newmarket native,
tabbed as a consensus first overall pick before even the midpoint of the 2017-18 season, was named the winner of the Jack Ferguson Trophy last April as the top choice by the Sudbury Wolves.

The six-foot-four,
200 lb. centreman gained a reputation among the minor AAA circles as the right combination of speed and skill, captaining the Minor Midget Express to an OHL

Cup in March of 2018 while leading the team in scoring with 92 points.

The former St.
Maximilian Kolbe student added twelve points in the Express' playoff run, cementing his position atop the OHL's most wanted list.

Byfield excelled
immediately in his jump to the major junior ranks, posting 29 goals and 32 assists to lead Sudbury in scoring. As a sixteen-year old, he lit the lamp more than any other Wolves rookie since 1997.

His Wolves were swept
in the second round of the OHL playoffs by the Ottawa 67s, though Byfield prefers to look back at the positives and support he received in his rookie season.

?My billet family, since
day one, welcomed me into their family and they supported me along the way,? said Byfield. ?To my mom, dad, sister, Oma, they all believed in me, supported me, and sacrificed everything for me just so I could go play hockey. This is just really special for me and I'm really honoured.?

In a press release,
Wolves head coach Cory Stillman, a former Rookie of the Year himself, added Byfield has done ?everything for us? since joining the squad.

?He's an extremely
talented player and is a treat to come to the rink and watch every night?what makes Quinton special, to me, is how hard he plays in all areas of the game. He plays on the power play and on the penalty kill. He plays in the last minute if we're up a goal or if we're down a goal. I think the biggest thing with Quinton is that he's only going to get better.?

Byfield was also named to the OHL's All-Rookie
team, and will be eligible for the NHL's 2020 draft.