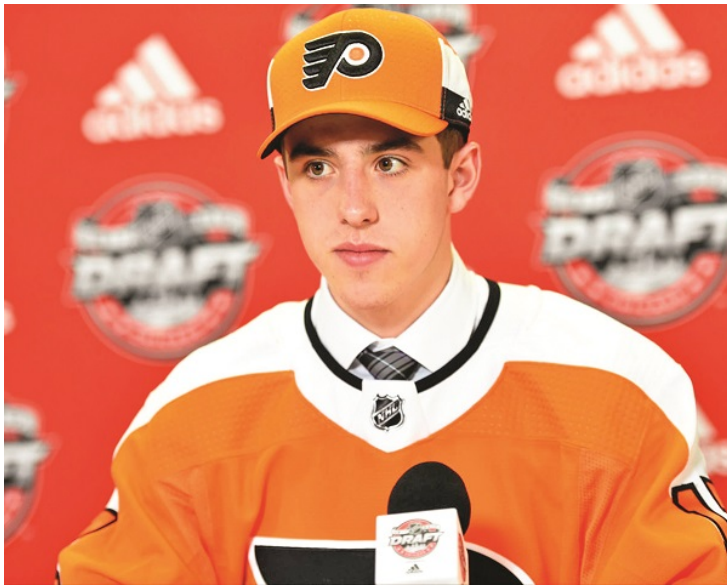


Frost poised for chance at World Junior squad



By Jake Courtepatte

At the age of nineteen, Morgan Frost feels he is prepared to make his debut on the IIHF World Junior Championship stage. And why wouldn't he? The Aurora native currently leads the Ontario Hockey League scoring race with 55 points through the first 29 games of the season, leading the Soo Greyhounds to a 17-7-4-1 record. He was named the OHL Player of the Week in the final week of November, and has already seen time representing the red and white on Team OHL at the 2018 CIBC Canada-Russia Series. So, it comes as no surprise Frost was one of the 34 names announced Monday by Hockey Canada to open camp for the prestigious 2019 Under-20 tournament.

‘Everyone grows up admiring, dreaming of play in this tournament,’ Frost said from Sault Ste. Marie, home of the Greyhounds.

‘It’s a balance. You want to make the jump to the NHL as quickly as possible, but to have this opportunity is super special. I’d love to represent this team.’

The centreman was drafted 27th overall by the Philadelphia Flyers in the 2017 NHL Entry Draft, picked in the shadows on Nolan Patrick, the teenager picked second overall in the same draft who spent all of last season with the NHL club.

Yet Frost is no second fiddle: playing at almost a point-per-game pace in the OHL prior to his draft, the newly-drafted Frost upped his offensive game immensely in the 2017-18 season, putting up 112 points in 67 games. He has amassed a whopping 256 points in his OHL career, playing at a 1.12 points per game pace.

Frost is joined at camp by two teammates from the Soo, in Peterborough’s Barrett Hayton and Godfrey’s Matthew Vilalta.

He watched from home last January when two of his former teammates, Taylor Raddysh and Boris Katchouk, brought home the gold medal. He told Sportsnet’s Mark Spector the two were some of his best friends on the team.

‘I just tried to learn as much as I could, and they shared how special it was, and just what a great feeling it was to win a gold medal,’ he told Spector. ‘I’ve just got to chase that feeling. Hopefully, I can do the same thing.’

This year’s World Junior Hockey Championship will be split between Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia, with Canada first seeing action against Denmark on Boxing Day.

The players are battling for a total of 23 final roster spots, among them forward Alex Formenton, ex-Aurora Tiger who was on the gold medal winning squad last January.

Aurora’s Robert Thomas was notably left off of the camp roster, as he is currently in the NHL with the St. Louis Blues. The Blues would have up until December 19 to decide whether to loan Thomas to Hockey Canada.