

Aurora Tigers? Assistant Captain Jack Rispin commits to NCAA Lake Forest College Foresters



Aurora Tigers' Assistant Captain and veteran defender Jack Rispin committed to the NCAA Division 3 Lake Forest College Foresters last Wednesday.

The commitment to the Illinois-based Foresters was confirmed by Tigers' General Manager and Assistant Coach James Thomson who complimented Rispin's potential for post-secondary success.

“Jack's an incredibly brilliant kid regarding both his schooling and athletics. He is so well-rounded individually. As a leader for us, first and foremost, he's earned everything he's received with the Tigers. We believed in Jack and he grew as a leader; his play and attitude were the reasons he was so respected in the room.”

In addition to his dedication to academics and his leadership on and off the ice, General Manager Thomson believes Rispin has the right stuff for NCAA hockey.

“Jack's biggest upside is his skating; he's such a graceful skater. He won't be behind the NCAA pace. Jack's taken his lumps at the Junior level, he figured things out, and he's done the work. He showed up every day and he's teachable. He's going to earn his spot with the Foresters, he might have to wait his turn, but he's going to earn his ice time. The departure of a number of seniors from Lake Forest College's defense corps will be a huge advantage for Jack.”

The exemplary student-athlete, who “fell in love with hockey when I played rep with the Tyke Tigers in Aurora,” cited education as the principal reason for committing to Lake Forest College.

“My dad, mom, and I took a tour of the campus in January as part of a family mini-vacation. I had two years of Junior Hockey eligibility left, but Lake Forest College offered me a great scholarship. We were impressed with the super small campus. The rink and the gym are really nice. The dorm rooms and campus are nice, too; they're in the Chicago neighborhood where they filmed the Home Alone movies. There was lots of community feeling when we visited and we liked the focus on education.”

The veteran Tigers' defenseman also noted that the 10-team Northern Collegiate Hockey Association is “a strong conference and one of the best hockey leagues in the Midwest.”

Rispin, who attended St. Andrew's College for five years and accrued a 4.0 GPA when he graduated in June 2024, noted that Lake Forest College is "very academically-oriented and there are so many great course options available. I want my education to open doors to other places."

The lifelong resident of Innisfil discussed his goals as a student-athlete at Lake Forest: "I plan to earn a four-year Business degree with a focus on Economics. I want to maintain my GPA. I've always been a hard worker in the classroom. I'm excited about playing for the Foresters and I want to be a regular so I'm going to do my best to stay in the lineup. I have an opportunity to play for Lake Forest with five senior defensemen graduating this year."

Rispin expressed his gratitude toward the Aurora Tigers for helping him achieve his post-secondary goal of playing NCAA hockey.

"The most important part was the Tigers gave me the opportunity to play and develop. They gave me a chance to play more and I'm thankful for my coaches and teammates over the last two seasons. It was also awesome that the coaching staff believed in me to make me an Assistant Captain this year and to be part of the team's leadership group. It was great to mentor the younger players. We had a very tight dressing room, despite the challenging season. We wanted to teach the rookies not to get too high or too low. It was important for us to maintain our composure."

The on-ice leader pointed to a big late-season victory in 2025 as the highlight of his Tigers' career.

"Most definitely, it was when we beat JRC at Ray Twinney in Newmarket. We pulled out that win because Matt Humphries played so great in net for us. He was promoted to the OHL the next day. There was lots of high spirits in the dressing room and the old rink was filled with lots of supporters in the stands."

Jack Rispin's multiple connections to Aurora through Tyke Rep Hockey, attending SAC for five years, and playing two years for the OJHL Tigers makes him a local role model for kids in Town.

When asked what advice he would give Aurora kids about achieving their post-secondary goals, the Tigers' stalwart defender suggested "that they don't get too high or too low during their minor hockey career. Don't get too emotional about being placed on the fourth line or in a lower pairing. Even if you get scratched, don't get down and keep working hard. Stay confident and stay strong and confident with the puck."

Rispin will report to the Lake Forest College Foresters in mid-August to begin his NCAA hockey career.

By Jim Stewart