

Aurora's Thomas named captain of OHL Knights



By Jake Courtepatte

The honours keep rolling in for Robert Thomas.

For the Aurora native, the 2017 calendar year will be one to remember, earning both the titles of top St. Louis Blues prospect and London Knights captain.

The OHL club announced Thomas as the next to wear the 'C' last week, in Thomas' third year with the major junior Knights. "It makes me pretty speechless," said the 18-year old centreman. "Coming in it was a goal of mine, looking at the captains that they've had over the last bunch of years, and how special of players they were, it's a big honour."

Thomas follows in the footsteps of some of the game's most talented young players. Toronto Maple Leaf Mitch Marner shared the captaincy two years prior with Arizona Coyote Christian Dvorak, while Dvorak's Coyote teammate Max Domi had the honour before that.

Having last donned the 'C' with the Bantam York-Simcoe Express, Thomas turned heads as an assistant captain in his Minor Midget year with the Express, impressing the Knights to draft him in the second round of the OHL Selection Draft in 2015.

"I've always tried to be a leader on the team."

With 35 points in just 22 games this year, Thomas has played at well over a point-per-game clip for his past two seasons.

His selection as captain came not at the hands of the coach, as is tradition in hockey circles, but by his peers, namely his teammates.

Thomas said it "definitely means a lot more."

"Knowing you have the respect of your teammates, and they see you as a leader, it means a lot."

As for his play on the ice, everything is business as usual for Thomas.

"It doesn't change much," he said. "I've always tried to show people the path that the people before me showed me, and help out the young guys. It doesn't really change much, it just puts more responsibility on me."

He was drafted in the first round, 20th overall, by the St. Louis Blues at this year's NHL Entry Draft.