

German Junior Hockey Powerhouse Jungadler Mannheim takes over Aurora's ACC on September 1

The Aurora Tigers announced that the 25th Anniversary edition of the JT Prospects will be facing off against Jungadler Mannheim from Germany as part of the Tigers' 2023-24 OJHL Opening Week festivities.

Jim Thomson, Governor of the Aurora Tigers, made the "Big announcement from the JT Prospects. We are honoured to play Germany's top Junior A team Mannheim Jungadler on September 1 at 1 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre. Tickets are available at the Box Office on the day of the game. Check out the Alumni from this historic team."

Jungadler Mannheim has produced its fair share of NHLers, many of whom were first round draft picks.

The hockey club's most famous graduate is Leon Draisaitl. The high-scoring forward was drafted third overall by the Edmonton Oilers in 2014.

Often paired with Connor McDavid, the generational talent from Newmarket, Draisaitl gives the Oilers a one-two scoring punch.

The native of Cologne, Germany has tallied 306 goals and 438 assists for 744 points over his nine seasons with Edmonton. In 49 playoff games, Draisaitl has 31 goals and 46 assists for 77 points. He was named the NHL's MVP in 2019-20 when he accrued 110 points in 71 games.

Another of the club's most notable graduates is former NHL player Dennis Seidenberg, who played 859 regular season games with Philadelphia, Phoenix, Carolina, Florida, Boston, and the New York Islanders.

The steady defenseman, who scored 44 goals and added 207 assists over parts of eighteen seasons, helped the Bruins win a Stanley Cup in 2011.

Seidenberg also won a Calder Cup with the Flyers' AHL affiliate in 2005. He represented Germany at the Olympics, World Championships, the World Cup, the World Junior Championships, and the World U18 Championships.

Jochen Hecht scored 186 goals and 277 assists in 833 NHL games with St. Louis, Edmonton, and Buffalo.

The veteran centre played ten seasons for the Sabres and served as their Captain. Hecht has been an assistant coach for the Adler Mannheim professional team since March 2022.

A first-round pick of the San Jose Sharks, Marcel Goc was claimed 20th overall in 2001. Goc, a centre who played for San Jose, Nashville, Florida, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis, tallied 75 goals and 113 assists over his 636-game NHL career that spanned 12 seasons.

Another first-round pick from Jungadler Mannheim is high-scoring defenseman Moritz Seider who was selected sixth overall by the Detroit Red Wings in the 2019 Entry Draft.

Seider tallied fifty points in his first season in the NHL and captured the Calder Trophy as Rookie of the Year in 2022.

He was the first Red Wing to win the Calder since acrobatic goalie Roger Crozier in 1964-65.

Seider also captained Germany in the 2020 IIHF World Junior Championship where he was named a top three player in the tournament. He earned six assists in seven games in the international showcase tournament.

The 6'4" rearguard has scored 12 goals and 80 assists in 164 games over his two seasons so far in the Motor City.

Yet another NHL first rounder who skated with the top German Junior Club is Tim Stutzle who was drafted third overall by the Ottawa Senators in 2020. In his three-year career, Stutzle has scored 73 goals and 104 assists in 210 games for the Sens.

2022-23 was a break-out season for Stutzle as he fired 39 goals and 51 assists for 90 points to create hope for hockey fans in the nation's capital.

Aurorans are cordially-invited to get a sneak preview of the next generation of burgeoning NHL stars on Germany's most powerful junior franchise when Jungadler Mannheim appears at the ACC on September 1 to take on the JT Prospects.

The Prospects have been playing in tournaments and competing in a league in Newmarket over the course of the summer to prepare for the upcoming hockey season.

The Aurora Tigers open their 56-game OJHL season officially on Friday, September 8 when the Stouffville Spirit roll into the ACC for a 7.30 p.m. puck drop.

By Jim Stewart