

Mantenuto and Board look to represent Tigers at international level



By Jake Courtepatte

Of the 41 players vying for a chance to represent Canada East at the World Junior A Challenge, two are looking to temporarily replace their black and yellow with red and white.

Forwards Drake Board and Daniel Mantenuto, alternate captain and captain of the Aurora Tigers respectively, are in Etobicoke this week for Team Canada East Selection Camp. The roster will represent five of the CJHL's eastern Junior A leagues, with a whopping twenty players hailing from the Ontario Junior Hockey League (OJHL).

Board's position in the camp is something special: he is one of only three returnees from the 2014 Canada East roster, and the solo returning representative of the OJHL.

In his third year with the Tigers, the 19-year old has solidified himself as an elite goal scorer in the Junior A league. His 14 goals and 20 assists this season leads the team in both categories, while his scrappy play in the corners makes him seem much taller than his 5'7".

While Mantenuto may be new to the international stage, his play is extremely similar. At 5'9", the new captain of the Tigers is a well-balanced forward with eleven goals and 14 assists on the year.

"These are 41 players hungry to wear the Team Canada jersey on home ice in Cobourg and Whitby, and we're expecting a competitive camp to get to the final 22," said head coach Jason Clarke, who cuts his teeth with Carleton Place of the CCHL. "As a staff we're looking forward to this experience, and these five days in Etobicoke are only the beginning."

Friday represents the unofficial opening of the tournament at the Wellington Community Centre, home of the OJHL's Wellington Dukes. Team Canada East will take on the United States at 7 p.m.

Tickets can still be purchased at www.hockeycanada.ca.

Canada East is joined by Canada West, the United States, Russia, Switzerland, and Czech Republic in the tournament. Historically, Canadian teams have been very successful, as seven of the nine gold medal games in the tournament's history have featured at least one Canadian team.

Two "red versus white" games are scheduled for Thursday at the MasterCard Centre, the official practice rink of the Toronto Maple Leafs, before the Canada East rosters are finalized.