

Saints hockey's Hillis to suit up for Team Canada



By Jake Courtepatte

At just sixteen years of age, Cameron Hillis is hitting marks most Canadians can only dream of.

The St. Andrew's College Saints forward was one of the 66 selected for one of three Team Canada rosters in the Under-17 World Hockey Challenge, set to kick off next week in Sault Ste. Marie.

Following a weeklong development camp in late July that saw 111 players looking to make the roster, what sets Hillis apart from the crowd is his status as the only player outside of junior hockey selected.

?We are all very proud of Cameron,? said David Manning, Coach of the Varsity Saints Hockey team. ?He is an excellent citizen, student, and athlete and acts as a role model for our younger students. He is a great ambassador for everything we hold important as a school and hockey program.?

Hillis heard his name called by the Youngstown Phantoms of the USHL in May, taken in the fourth round and 38th overall, where Aurora's Cameron Morrison debuted as the league's top rookie scorer last season. Hillis was drafted for a similar goal-scoring role, having put up 146 points, including 101 assists in a centre role with the York-Simcoe Express last year.

In seven games with the Saints program in 2015-16, he put up a goal and an assist.

Hillis was also drafted by the Guelph Storm in the second round of the OHL draft in April of last year.

Canada will dress three teams in the upcoming championship, split between Canada Red, Canada Black, and Canada White. They will face challengers from Finland, Russia, Sweden, the United States, and the Czech Republic in a round robin format.

Held every year in Canada and sponsored by Hockey Canada, Canada White was the most recent winner in 2015 when they beat Russia in Dawson Creek, British Columbia.

The championship coming up later this month will be the first time Hillis pulls on the red and white, having spent the last few seasons splitting time between the triple-A York-Simcoe Express and the U14 and U16 Saints hockey programs.

The all-around athlete, who has been at St. Andrew's since Grade Eight, has also played under-16 soccer, junior varsity lacrosse, and placed second in the school in cross-country.

But with a bright future in hockey, the sixteen-year old centre also recently signed a commitment to dress for Providence College of the NCAA's D1 in two seasons.

A club that won the national championship just two years ago, the Friars are consistently ranked among the top ten teams in American college hockey.