

CDS athlete commits to OHL Ice Dogs

By Jake Courtepatte

Last Thursday night, 17--year-old Christian Mitri left the Meridian Centre ice in Niagara as the star of a major junior hockey camp



Mitri racked up two goals and an assist in the final "team black vs. team white" scrimmage of the pre-season for the Niagara Ice Dogs, a major junior team that reached the OHL finals in 2012. For his efforts, the rookie was named first star of the game. It's a big step for the Grade 12 student, who split his time last season between the AAA Vaughan Kings and the Country Day School Cyclones. He was added to the Ice Dogs roster as a free agent in late August.

The 5'10", 180-pound native of Brampton has been playing high-level hockey since he was four years old. He started playing house league when he was three, moving up the ranks to AAA through organizations in Mississauga, Markham, and eventually Toronto. While his club teams may be scouted much more than at his varsity games, Mitri has enjoyed his time on the Cyclones roster. "It's a different kind of fun because you are with your friends," said Mitri. "You aren't going there for an hour before just to focus, instead you can just joke around and relax."

His athletic involvement at school doesn't stop there - in previous years, Mitri has been a member of the track and field team, and found success playing rugby as well.

He credits CDS's "High Performance Phys-ed Program" with being able to balance both his studies and his athletics. The program, designed to help student athletes find time to compete outside of school, has been utilized by figure skating champion Elvis Stojko, NHLer Mike Cammalleri, and national soccer star Adriana Leon, just to name a few.

"Most days I'm not home until 8 or 9 o'clock at night and doing homework that late isn't the greatest because I'm ready for bed. (The program) helps a lot, having that extra time the following morning at school helps me finish what I couldn't the night before. Teachers are also understanding of my situation."

The program helps students customize their class schedules specific to their needs to be competitive at provincial and national levels. Set to graduate from CDS after this school year, Mitri will be able to put all of his effort into earning a permanent spot on an OHL roster.

The Ice Dogs kicked off their regular season on Tuesday against the Oshawa Generals.