

## King City's Mete earns spot on Team Canada roster

By Jake Courtepatte

After realizing one of his hockey dreams this past October, donning an NHL sweater for the first time, Victor Mete is now two-for-two in 2017 after being named to Team Canada's World Junior roster on Friday.

The talented defenceman was one of 22 names left on the list after a grueling week-long selection camp, and should play a key role on the blue line when Canada looks to start on the path back to gold come Boxing Day.

The product of Country Day School was cut from the team at last year's camp, and will look to this year's tournament as a form of redemption.

"I was kind of upset getting cut from last year's camp," said Mete. "Now I have the opportunity to put that behind me and look ahead, go day-by-day, and do the best I can."

Mete is certainly no stranger to the big stage. He played in front of an average of just under 9,000 fans per night with the OHL's Knights, while a packed Bell Centre greets him each time he takes the ice in Montreal this season, after being drafted by the Habs in this summer's Entry Draft.

He is one of two players with NHL experience on Team Canada, along with ex-Aurora Tiger Alex Formenton, who had a one-game stint with the Ottawa Senators to start the season.

Yet, the IIHF World Junior Championship is a stage like no other for the teenagers. An iconic yearly event for hockey fans across the nation, last year's final between Canada and the USA brought in over 11 million viewers in Canada alone, averaging 4.2 million at any given time.

In all, 17.2 million individual Canadians tuned into the eleven-day tournament.

Yet for Mete, it is just another game, though one he has been looking forward to his whole life.

"Growing up, I've always wanted to play in the World Juniors, it's always something I'm watching around Christmas. It's a really special moment."

Calling this year's roster a "really strong" team, he and the other 21 athletes to don the maple leaf will be looking to rebound from a heartbreaking shootout loss to Team USA in last year's gold medal game.

"I think we're really good defensively and offensively, I think once we kind of find ourselves, our identity, we'll be a really good team heading into the tournament."

Canada officially opens the tournament on Boxing Day against Team Finland.