

Mete helps Canada to top of Group A at World Juniors

By Jake Courtepatte

Hockey fans across the nation were given quite a scare on Monday, when Victor Mete failed to practice with Team Canada on their day off at the World Junior Hockey Championship.

Rumours began to swirl around the much-hyped tournament and the Montreal Canadiens' defenceman, a former King City resident and student at Country Day School.

Mete left Canada's final round robin game, an 8-0 drubbing of Team Denmark, in the third period, and was seen limping after the game.

With head coach Dominique Ducharme's announcement of Victor Mete's return to the team for Tuesday's game against Switzerland (results not available at press time), comes a sigh of relief, and goes to show the impact Mete has had on Team Canada.

His first assist came in the first period of Canada's first game, a win over Team Finland. A tic-tac-toe play along with Jonah Gadjovich and Drake Batherson made the score 3-1 at the time, a game that ended 4-2.

"We had a pretty strong game," said Mete. "We took it to them in the first period, set the tone, and came out with the win. We have a lot of great skaters on this team, so if we can use our speed to our advantage, we will."

"It could have been a lot more than a 4-2 game, I think."

He continued his point streak into the game the next day, a 6-0 win over Team Slovakia, setting up Jordan Kyrrou in the second period.

Held off the scoresheet in a 4-3 shootout loss to Team USA on Dec. 30, a game held in front of close to 45,000 fans at New Era Field in Buffalo, Mete started the final round robin game against Denmark before being pulled for precautionary reasons.

Coach Ducharme said the injury actually occurred in the outdoor game against the United States, and pulled Mete to give him extra time to recover before the playoff rounds.

"We want him to be 100-percent, and felt he needed an extra day," said Ducharme. "That's it."

The tournament wraps up on Friday with the medal rounds.