

Nobleton player crowned World Junior champ last week]

By Robert Belardi

As Dylan Guenther slotted home the game-winning goal in overtime against the Czech Republic last week, it wasn't solely a victory for Team Canada but it was also a big victory for Nobleton and King Township.

Guenther's third point of the night that sent the entire arena and the country into pandemonium also meant that young 18-year-old centre Adam Fantilli from Nobleton would get hands on the illustrious prize for the first time in his young career.

Fantilli, who is a centreman for the University of Michigan, has been making headlines throughout the tournament. Fantilli is a highly touted prospect and is being projected to be drafted top-five in the upcoming 2023 NHL Entry Draft.

Throughout the World Junior Hockey championships, Fantilli recorded two goals and three assists in five games. At 6-foot-2, Fantilli is one of the best skaters in his class and has the ability to power through defenceman. Throughout his time in Moncton and in Halifax, it was evident this was so.

A product of the Toronto Jr. Canadiens since the 2019/2020 season, Fantilli has been developing in the United States. That year, Fantilli made the move to the Top Gun/NE Prep 18U AAA team and then moved to Kimball Union Academy in the USHS-Prep league.

Later in the year, Fantilli transferred to the Chicago Steel in the USHL and made an instant impact. In his first year with the team, Fantilli recorded 36 points in 49 games. In his second season, Fantilli recorded 74 points in 54 games.

Having competed with Team Canada U18 throughout that time, this past year, Fantilli committed to the University of Michigan and has been a stud in the NCAA. Currently he has 26 points in 16 games and is looking to continue that momentum in the league this year.

Despite all of the talk surrounding Connor Bedard (and rightfully so) there are many pundits who believe Fantilli will be drafted right behind him. So, keep an eye out on the Nobleton boy.

His game continues to improve and by the summer, he should be taken by an NHL franchise.

As for Team Canada, their 3-2 victory over the Czech Republic secured their second consecutive world junior title in a row.

In the finals, Guenther led the way with two goals and one assist on the night. Captain Shane Wright also got on the score sheet as well.