

Hornets alum Nate Windle commits to Royal Military College Paladins

By **Jim Stewart**

Aurora resident and Stouffville Spirit defenseman Nate Windle confirmed his commitment to the OUA Royal Military College Paladins on Friday afternoon.

Windle, who played two seasons with the powerhouse Spirit, explained his decision to commit to RMC's hockey program in Kingston, ON: "I chose the Paladins' ice hockey program because they are providing me with an amazing opportunity to continue my hockey career as well as get an amazing education."

The Honor Roll graduate of St. Maximilian Kolbe Catholic High School is coming off a memorable season with Stouffville.

Windle was one of 14 graduating players honored in February at a centre ice ceremony during the Spirit's final home game.

His highlight of 2025-26 was based on the team's historic accomplishments.

"My highlight in the final year in Stouffville was definitely putting up the best season record in franchise history. It feels amazing knowing that I was a part of Stouffville hockey history."

Windle helped the Spirit accrue a franchise-best 40-12-2-0 record during the regular season and provided the second-place squad with a steady blue line presence.

The RMC-bound defender will take that combination of offensive punch and defensive prowess with him to Kingston in September.

Windle outlined his objectives as an OUA hockey player and prospective Business Major at the venerable military academy.

"The goals I have being a student-athlete are to maintain a very good average as well as being dialed into hockey all year long. The main goal is being able to balance both at once."

In addition to striking a balance between his athletic life and academic life at the 150-year-old school, the long-time Aurora resident is excited about moving down the road to Kingston: "I'm looking forward to experiencing a new city. It allows me a change of scenery and adds a little more excitement."

Windle experienced his fair share of excitement in his final season with Stouffville.

In 52 games, the mobile defender tallied five goals and fifteen assists for the OJHL East Division powerhouse, but his favorite individual moment came at the expense of the high-flying, first-place Trenton Golden Hawks.

"I would say my personal highlight from the season goal-wise would be scoring against Trenton. It feels really good to score against a team that we have a rivalry with. There's something about scoring against rivals that feels really good."

Prior to playing for the Spirit, Windle refined his hockey skills with the Alliston Hornets.

He described the importance of his one season with Alliston in the Provincial Junior Hockey League: "The season with the Hornets helped me get to the next level because I was able to play a lot and develop into a stronger player. The coaching staff gave me lots of chances and allowed me to try things I wanted to do."

Before he played Junior C hockey in Alliston, Windle was proud to don an Aurora Tigers jersey for his entire pre-Junior rep hockey

career. He reflected with fondness about his best memories as a hometown hockey player: "The most memorable moment playing as an Aurora Tiger was creating friendships that will last a lifetime. If we're talking hockey, I would say winning at Lake Placid—it was the best team moment in my 12 years as an Aurora Tiger."

The 12-year Tiger and three-year defender with 'Junior C' Alliston and 'Junior A' Stouffville is aware of his role in the community as a mentor to younger players.

Windle encouraged young Aurorans to work hard and keep the faith on their hockey journey: "The biggest advice I could give to anyone is to give it everything you have and always continue to move forward. No matter what anyone says to you-- all that matters is the effort you put in. The rest will come."

After making history with the Stouffville Spirit in his final OJHL season, Windle will be experiencing an historic occasion when he arrives in Kingston in September.

The Royal Military College of Canada will be in the midst of celebrating the 150th anniversary of its first class of cadets—"The Old Eighteen"—who began their studies at the military academy on June 1, 1876.