

Local player resurging Team Canada in IIHF Worlds

By Robert Belardi

When Team Canada entered the IIHF World Championships with a roster filled with names such as Adam Henrique, Maxime Comtois and Darcy Kuemper, you wouldn't have been at fault for not expecting much. Let alone with the NHL Playoffs currently underway with a whole lot of this group, with Gerard Gallant at the helm.

But on the first day of the tournament Canadians felt the tremor beneath their feet.

The country shook when Team Canada fell to the host nation Latvia for the first time in history 2-0. Subsequent to this loss, Canada fell 5-1 to the USA and then 3-1 to Germany.

When the fourth game came against Norway, Canada needed to change its batteries ? and cue the energizer from Bolton, ON: Andrew Mangiapane.

The 25-year-old Calgary Flames forward scored 22 seconds into the game leading Canada to a 4-2 victory.

Since Mangiapane has come into the fold, our nation's hockey club has been rejuvenated, and during a time where Canada has faced elimination.

With Mangiapane on the ice, Canada also went on to defeat Kazakhstan 4-2 and smashed Italy 7-1 to bring the record to 3-3.

Winnipeg Jets 10th overall pick in the 2020 NHL Entry Draft Cole Perfetti, and even San Jose Sharks defenceman and King City native Mario Ferraro, have also stepped up their game with Mangiapane in the lineup.

Both have been seeing power play time and have continued to make an impact in the tournament.

On Tuesday, Canada's bout against Finland will have already determined if the team makes it past the preliminary stage in the tournament. The hope for Canada is if they can knock off a Finnish side that had entered this game undefeated (5-0).

Canada also entered their game against Finland tied for fourth place in the group with nine points with Germany and one point behind Kazakhstan.

In Mangiapane's debut with Canada he has recorded seven points (4 G, 3 A) in three games played.

Also, in his debut with Team Canada, Mario Ferraro has posted one assist in the tournament.

Both players, just came off unsuccessful seasons with their NHL clubs. Both the Flames and the Sharks missed out on the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Hopefully they can help propel Canada into the knockout stage of the tournament and experience a somewhat playoff-like atmosphere of their own.