

Tigers? Morrison named OJHL Rookie of the Year



By **Jake Courtepatte**

Cameron Morrison was just one of a handful of Aurora Tigers to earn some hardware after a stellar regular season for the Junior A team.

The Ontario Junior Hockey League (OJHL) announced last week that Morrison was the recipient of the league's Rookie-of-the-Year Award, a title bestowed upon the player deemed most efficient in their first year of competition.

‘It’s definitely an honour,’ said Morrison. ‘We had a great season, so to get recognized for it feels really good.’

The youngest player to earn the award since 2008, the 195-pound, six-foot-three forward made an immediate splash in a league dotted with incoming talent. Scoring in his first game in a Tigers uniform, he never looked back, leading the team in goals with 31 and adding 22 assists.

He proved his worth as a clutch player by notching seven game-winners, tied for second in the OJHL.

As a minor-midget player with the York-Simcoe Express, scouts from across Ontario had their eyes on the young prospect in the 2013-14 season. His 43 points in an Express uniform almost doubled his second-closest teammate's production.

Despite the hype behind the large-framed Morrison, he said he was unsure what role he would play when he entered the junior hockey ranks.

‘I just wanted to develop as a player. Wherever I fit on the team, I would be happy. But [head coach James Richmond] gave me a chance to prove who I am on the ice.’

Working solo with Richmond throughout the year on his skating, Morrison was happy to see his ice time improve consistently throughout the season.

‘Better play meant more ice time, and more ice time meant better play.’

As any artist looking to hone their craft, the work is never done for the Tigers and Morrison. After an early exit in the second-round of the OJHL playoffs in seven games to the Kingston Voyageurs, Morrison said he prefers to look at the positives and accomplishments the team had throughout the season.

‘With all the awards that were given out to us this season, it’s pretty clear that we were a great team.’

Morrison's veteran teammate Eric Williams was named the OJHL Defenceman-of-the-Year, after an almost point-a-game season. He heads to Northeastern University in Boston in September.

Behind the bench, Richmond was named the Coach of the Year for the second straight year.

With the OJHL Championship series still to be scheduled, it's the start of a long off-season for the Tigers. For Morrison, he knows this time can be valuable to improve upon his very few weaknesses.

"I want to work on my skating more," said Morrison. "JR's a great skating coach, so getting on the ice with him should help me come back next year both stronger and faster."

Morrison has a verbal commitment to join the NCAA Division I Notre Dame Fighting Irish in 2017.