

Paul Bryog.

BARRETT, R. J.

# 'It's going to be a fun journey': RJ Barrett getting

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Anyone on the path RJ Barrett is on right now would understandably be excited for the next few months ahead.

The Mississauga teenager will take the next step toward NBA stardom next season when he joins Duke University, one of the NCAA's most iconic NCAA programs. While that would be enough to get anyone excited, Barrett is keeping his progression in check and reminds everyone that first things' first.

"First, I've got to graduate high school," Barrett said prior to playing in the Signature All Canadian Showcase at the Hershey Centre on Monday, April 23.

"You can't get too ahead of yourself, or else you'll get lost and other people will take your spot," Coach Kevin Boyle at Montverde Academy says "Be where you be, just be in the moment and take it one step at a time."

When details of the Signature All Canadian Showcase were revealed in late March, Barrett was thought of as the headline player, while his Montverde teammate, point guard Andrew Nembhard, was held in high regard too.

HN April 26, 2018

The showcase featured 24 of the best high school basketball players from Canada. Most of them play in the United States, such as Barrett and Nembhard with Florida-based powerhouse Montverde. Given how rarely he gets to play in Canada, Barrett considered his homecoming a blessing.

"I'm so happy they were able to pull this off and have this game," said Barrett, winner of many

awards this season, most notably the Gatorade National Player of the Year.

"It's my last high school game after such a great high school career and it's right in my hometown."

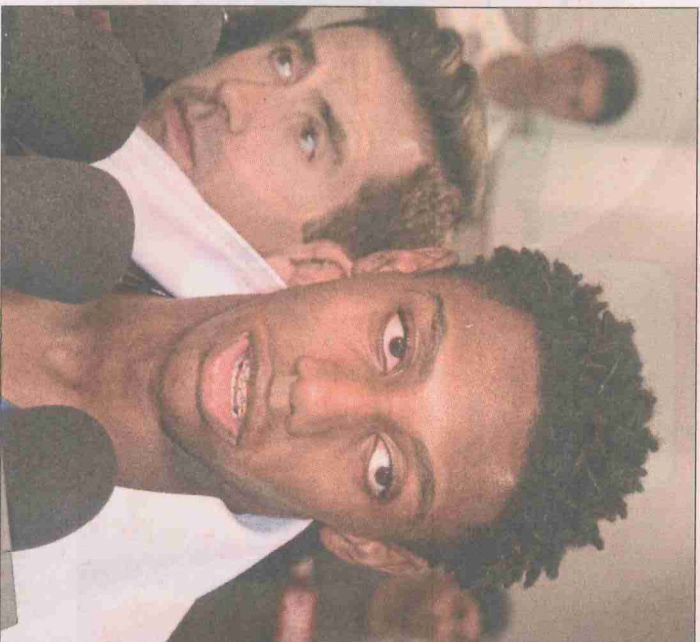
This season, Barrett led Montverde to an undefeated season and the Geico National Championship, earning tournament MVP honours in the process.

For next year, Barrett

is eager to join incoming Duke freshmen Zion Williamson, Cam Reddish and Tre Jones to form what's said to be the best freshman class in the

NCAA.

Barrett has been in contact with those who reached out to



Byron Johnson/Metroland

RJ Barrett was the headline player in the Signature All Canadian Showcase on Monday, April 23 at the Hershey Centre in his hometown of Mississauga.