

***THREE THINGS: Jets come close, but lose 2-1 in shootout
Perfetti scored the lone goal for the Jets who have points in seven of last eight***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Anton Lundell scored the shootout winner as the Florida Panthers beat the Winnipeg Jets 2-1 at Canada Life Centre. Josh Morrissey had a chance to win the game in overtime as his wrist shot beat Daniil Tarasov but not the iron. Cole Perfetti scored the only goal for the Jets who have points in seven of their last eight games (5-1-2). Connor Hellebuyck made 19 saves for Winnipeg who will close out this homestand on Saturday when they host the Detroit Red Wings.

PATIENCE, PATIENCE

After two periods where not much happened between the Jets and Panthers as the defending champs play a patient game where as Cole Perfetti described it “they want to lull you to sleep”. The two teams only combined for 23 shots and the Panthers took a 1-0 lead at 18:23 when Sam Bennett snapped a quick shot past Connor Hellebuyck. Outside of that goal, the Jets defended just as well as the Panthers.

“Pretty good job tonight. That’s a very simple team. They don’t take too many risks in their game. And, I thought we did a good job in our neutral zone, just kind of, only giving them that chip in and dump in play,” said Connor.

“Not a lot of plays to be made when we’re three above them, and everybody kind of beat their man back up the ice.”

THIRD PERIOD WAS MUCH BETTER

Florida continued to make things challenging for Winnipeg in terms of creating offence. But with both Matthew Tkachuk and Adam Lowry in the penalty box, the two teams were playing 4-on-4 and Jonathan Toews made a brilliant couple of plays. First, the veteran centre stole the puck Uvis Balinskis and then sent a seeing eye pass to Cole Perfetti who walked around Daniil Tarasov and scored on the backhand.

“I don’t know. I couldn’t see through who it was,” said Perfetti.

“And all of a sudden, the puck was on my stick. And it’s a pretty good pass. So, yeah, I didn’t really have to move for that one.”

FIRST WIN IN WINNIPEG FOR MAURICE

Since Paul Maurice became head coach of the Panthers, he had been unable to win at Canada Life Centre. Maurice was 0-3 in Winnipeg and his Panthers had been outscored 19-9 in those three games before tonight.

“Every four years we like to mix in a win here.” said Maurice.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/florida-panthers-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-january-22-2026>

***Tarasov helps Panthers edge Jets in shootout
Tkachuk gets 1st point of season for Florida; Winnipeg has lost 3 of 4***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Daniil Tarasov made 17 saves and stopped both of the attempts he faced in the shootout for the Florida Panthers, who defeated the Winnipeg Jets 2-1 at Canada Life Centre on Thursday.

"It's a huge [road win], especially after the tough nights at home," Tarasov said. "It's a huge win and we're starting this road trip the right way. It kind of boosts our confidence for the rest of this trip.

"It was kind of a tough game for both goalies, not a lot of action. The guys battled a lot. For my side, I was just trying to keep it simple, trying (not to) give a lot of rebounds."

Sam Bennett scored in regulation for the Panthers (26-20-3), who were coming off a 4-1 loss at home to the San Jose Sharks on Monday but have won four of six. Anton Lundell and Sam Reinhart scored in the shootout.

"Now, I don't know if the defense was that good, but offensively there wasn't a whole lot to be had either way," Florida coach Paul Maurice said. "I'll speak for our team, we'd like to move the puck quite a bit better than we moved it tonight. But on the road -- and we've had three of our last five we were really happy with, two we were just really distraught with. So, a little bit of normalcy and a game where not a lot happened, we'll take. Daniil Tarasov, that's the mark. Can you make the one save, right? The save he made back door (on Mark Scheifele in the third period), just an incredible save, and then great in the shootout."

Cole Perfetti scored for the Jets (20-23-7), who have lost three of four (1-1-2). Connor Hellebuyck made 19 saves.

"Both teams played hard and played heavy," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "At the end of the day, we had the (scoring) chances at 11-10 and it was 6-6 after two periods. There wasn't a whole lot of wide open. You had to battle for every piece of your ice, and we expected that against that team. I liked the way in the third period ... we poured back and put some heat on them and got (ourselves) into overtime."

Bennett gave the Panthers a 1-0 lead at 18:49 of the second period. After winning an offensive zone face-off, Bennett glided to the top edge of the left circle, where he took a pass from Matthew Tkachuk and scored with a one-timer over Hellebuyck's glove.

"It was a set play that worked," Bennett said. "Both wingers came in and helped win the draw, and then [Tkachuk] came around and found me in the middle. It was a great pass by him."

It was the first point of the season for Tkachuk, who was playing in just his second game after missing the first 47 following surgery to repair a torn adductor muscle and sports hernia on Aug. 22.

"It's not easy to jump back in after seven months off the ice," Bennett said. "So, he's looked great, and I think the more we play together the more we're going to just keep building the chemistry that we have had for so long."

Perfetti tied it 1-1 at 5:24 of the third period. Jonathan Toews stole the puck from Uvis Balinskis in the offensive zone and found a cutting Perfetti, who moved the puck to his backhand and slid a shot past the left pad of Tarasov, who was moving the other way.

"I thought we played a better third period, took it to them a little more," Perfetti said. "They play a hard style to play against with the high flips and the swarming. It's not easy to play against and it's not necessarily the most entertaining game, and I think they want to lull you to sleep. And I thought the first two periods we kind of got caught in that little trap game kind of thing. And then in the third, I thought we took it to them a little more. We got pucks behind the 'D' and were able to establish a little bit more pressure. It was a better third."

Canadian Press

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/article/panthers-coach-maurice-finally-gets-win-over-former-team-in-winnipeg/>

Panthers coach Maurice finally gets win over former team in Winnipeg

By The Canadian Press

WINNIPEG — It took a long time, but Paul Maurice finally got something he was looking for in Winnipeg.

The Florida Panthers head coach watched as Anton Lundell and Sam Reinhart both beat Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck in a shootout to lift his team to a 2-1 victory on Thursday.

"Every four years we like to mix in a win here," Maurice said with a smile.

The Panthers had lost the previous three games at Canada Life Centre under Maurice, who coached the Jets from January 2014 until stepping down in December 2021 because he thought the team needed "a new voice."

He took the Florida job the following June and is coming off back-to-back Stanley Cup victories.

When his team arrived for the latest visit, Maurice got to watch his daughter, Sydney, coach a Manitoba high school women's hockey game on Wednesday. Her St. Mary's Academy Flames lost 3-2 in overtime to the Vincent Massey Collegiate Trojans.

With the Panthers-Jets game a low-shot affair with not a lot of action, Maurice was told a reporter in the press box had quipped that maybe he saw more game action in his daughter's match.

"There was more offence in that one," Maurice said with a laugh. "Yeah, but 2-1 filthy is good for us."

Sam Bennett scored in regulation for the Panthers (26-20-3), who are 4-2-0 in their last six games.

Lundell, who beat Hellebuyck through the five hole, was asked about his confidence in the shooting contest. He said he watched a lot of players on YouTube since he was a kid.

"I watched, actually, (Jets veteran forward) Jonathan Toews a lot," Lundell said. "Many other guys, but I also watch a lot of shootouts and that's something I kind of take pride in and I want to be good at them."

There was no scoring in the first period and few shots in the second, but Bennett scored his 18th of the season with a one-timer at 18:49 on Florida's 13th shot of the game.

Matthew Tkachuk set up Bennett's goal, giving him his first point of the season in his second game back from adductor muscle surgery in August.

Toews was the catalyst for Winnipeg's tying goal. The veteran stole the puck from Uvis Balinskis in Florida's end and sent it to Cole Perfetti going to the front of the net, who used a backhand to beat Daniil Tarasov at 5:38.

"They play a hard style of play against with the high flips and the swarming," Perfetti said. "It's not easy to play against and it's not necessarily the most entertaining game."

"And I think they want to lull you to sleep. I thought the first two periods we kind of got caught in that little trap game kind of thing. And then in the third, I thought we took it to them a little more. Got pucks behind the (defence) and were able to establish a little bit more pressure. It was a better third."

Tarasov made 17 saves in Florida's first game of a three-game road trip against Central Division opponents.

"It was kind of like a tough game. For both goalies, not a lot of action," Tarasov said. "I was just trying to keep it simple, trying like don't give a lot of rebounds when I got the shots."

Hellebuyck stopped 19 shots and the Jets (20-23-7) have picked up points in seven of their last eight games (5-1-2).

Winnipeg has lost seven in a row in extra time, five in overtime and two in a shootout. The last win was Nov. 15 in a shootout against the Calgary Flames. The last victory in overtime was Oct. 28 against Minnesota.

"We had some opportunities, we had some really good looks there," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said. "Obviously, Josh (Morrissey in overtime) off the crossbar and a couple of others."

Winnipeg shooters Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele came up empty in the shootout.

"It was a pretty tight checking game, and kind of stuck with it," Connor said. "And, unfortunately, didn't get the two points."

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/>

Sawyer: Panthers vs. Jets 'was just an absolute chess match' (VIDEO)

It's not often a game with just two goals scored can be considered thrilling, but Kevin Sawyer joins Dan Robertson to explain why that could describe the Panthers victory.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11628489/winnipeg-jets-fall-to-panthers-2-1-in-a-shootout/>

Winnipeg Jets fall to Panthers 2-1 in a shootout

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

The Winnipeg Jets are at a point in the standings where they need as many wins as they can get to stay afloat in the wild card race.

They're certainly a bit of a long shot as it is, and it didn't help their cause that they only picked up a single point Thursday night in a 2-1 shootout loss at home against the two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Florida Panthers.

It was a tight checking, scoreless game for the first 38 minutes. But after the Panthers took the lead late in the second period, the game opened up enough for the Jets to tie it five minutes into the third before missing on both chances in the shootout.

"I think both teams played hard, played heavy," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "We had the chances at 11-10. It was 6-6 after two periods. There wasn't a whole lot of wide-open offence. You had to battle for every kinda piece of your ice and expected that against that team. And I liked the way in the third period we got down, but at the end of the day we poured back and put some heat on them and get ourselves into overtime."

It was the third game in four days for the Jets, while the Panthers hadn't played since Monday.

The Jets now have at least a point in their last six straight home games and in seven out of eight overall.

Former Jets head coach Paul Maurice won for the first time in Winnipeg as a member of the visitors after losing in his first three trips back.

More than a dozen college basketball players charged over rigged games: prosecutors Cole Perfetti scored the Jets only goal for his first marker in the last nine games.

"I thought we played a better third period," Perfetti said. "Took it to them a little more. They play a hard style to play against with the high flips and the swarming. It's not easy to play against and it's not necessarily the most entertaining game. And I think they want to lull you to sleep, and I thought for the first two periods we kinda got caught in that little trap game kinda thing."

“And then in the third, I thought we took it to them a little more, got pucks behind their ‘D’ and was able to establish a little bit more pressure.”

Winnipeg has lost their last seven games that have gone to overtime and haven’t won in OT since way back on Oct. 28.

The Jets have also now gone three straight games without scoring a goal at 5-on-5.

“These are tight games,” said Arniel. “That’s not a club that’s gonna hand you any freebees. I thought we had some great looks though. Again, traffic, bodies, I’ve said before, at this time of year it’s those greasy goals and we got to get back to scoring a few of those.”

Mark Scheifele got the first great chance of the night after a turnover in the Florida zone. He collected the loose puck and skated in alone on Daniil Tarasov but whiffed on a shot attempt.

Not long after, A.J. Greer got free for a partial breakaway on Connor Hellebuyck but the Winnipeg netminder turned him aside.

The Jets got the game’s first power play with 6:12 to go in the first when Evan Rodrigues was called for tripping but just 40 seconds later, Alex Iafallo was called for hooking to nullify the opportunity.

Neither team found the back of the net in the first with Florida outshooting the Jets 6-5.

The Jets had a slight edge in chances and zone time during a mostly uneventful second period before Florida gave Winnipeg its second power play chance of the night with 5:28 on the clock.

But the Jets never really got set up and failed to register a shot during the two-minute minor.

Florida finally broke the ice with 1:11 to go in the second. After the Jets iced the puck, the Panthers got the puck off a scramble draw with Matthew Tkachuk gaining control before finding Sam Bennett in the slot. He fired a one-timer that beat Hellebuyck high over his left shoulder for his 18th of the season.

The Panthers outshot the Jets 7-5 in the second for a two-period edge of 13-10.

The teams played some 4-on-4 hockey early in the third with Tkachuk in the box for roughing and Adam Lowry off for interference, and right before they were about to return to the ice, the Jets leveled the score.

Jonathan Toews made an awesome play to pickpocket Uvis Balinskis before sliding the puck to a wide open Perfetti in front of the net. He tucked it past Tarasov, who had no chance on the play, to make it 1-1 with his fourth goal of the season.

Winnipeg had a couple good chances to take the lead with just over eight minutes left but Kyle Connor whiffed on a rebound in the slot moments before Scheifele had an open net but couldn’t get much on a backhand, allowing Tarasov to stick out the pad to take the chance away.

The Jets outshot the Panthers 7-4 in the third, but the score remained tied 1-1 at the end of regulation.

Both teams had some good looks in OT with Josh Morrissey getting the best chance as he ripped a shot off the crossbar from the high slot.

Aaron Ekblad was also denied in close by Hellebuyck but neither team found the back of the net, so a shootout was required.

Connor was first to shoot for Winnipeg but was denied while Anton Lundell beat Hellebuyck five-hole on Florida's first attempt.

Up next for the Jets was Scheifele, who tried to beat Tarasov high over the glove but missed the net.

That meant Sam Reinhart could win it for Florida and he did, ripping a shot past Hellebuyck to end the game before handful of plastic rats were thrown onto the ice by some Panthers fans in attendance.

Florida finished the game with a 20-18 edge in shots, meaning that Hellebuyck stopped 19 shots in the loss.

Winnipeg will wrap up this three-game homestand Saturday evening against Detroit. The puck will drop shortly after 6 p.m. with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB beginning at 4 p.m.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11634555/analysis-winnipeg-jets-playoff-chances-50-game-mark/>

ANALYSIS: Winnipeg Jets' playoff chances fading at 50-game mark

By John Shannon CJOB

Thursday night's battle between the Winnipeg Jets and Florida Panthers would have been one of the first games I would have circled when the 2025-26 schedule came out in early July. Stanley Cup champion versus Presidents' Trophy winner. Paul Maurice returns to town. It should have been an epic night.

But as the game started, both teams were out of the playoffs. Both teams are struggling to create a winning culture.

In fact, Thursday night against the Panthers — a 2-1 shootout loss — could have been the Jets' season in microcosm. The first half of the game was slow and plodding, and there just wasn't enough time in the last 25 minutes to play with any level of urgency to get two points.

It was just another night with a one-goal game and a loser point.

This long schedule has 82 games for every team in the NHL. The Jets have now played 50 games of their schedule. Which means there just might be six games left in the season.

Wait, you say! That math doesn't work. Fifty games plus six games does not equal 82. And in pure arithmetic, you'd be right. But in hockey, there's a chance you might be wrong.

You see, when this team and the rest of the NHL take the break for the Olympic Winter Games or scuba diving in Cancun, there is a feeling that you just might know if your season is over. Six points out of a playoff spot could easily turn into double digits if you are unable to win enough.

What is enough? It might just be that they have to win a minimum of four of those six not to lose ground. And even if they do, it is a daunting task. Getting to the playoffs might be impossible.

Detroit, New Jersey, Tampa, Florida, Dallas, Montreal. That's the challenge. And right now it feels like Murder's Row of the '27 Yankees. Every one of those teams has a better record than the Jets. And every one has a need for two points in the standings. And with just two home games of the six before the break, the Jets have done a good job of painting themselves into a deep, deep corner.

So you see, 50 plus six might not equal 82, but it might just add up to a season ending early.

Winnipeg Sun

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/perfetti-helps-jets-rescue-a-point-against-the-panthers/article_f92cacb1-cb9c-4e32-a3c5-04ea707e29c5.html

Perfetti helps Jets rescue a point against the Panthers

By Gordon Anderson

The result failed to satisfy, and so did the overall entertainment value.

Anton Lundell and Sam Reinhart scored in the shootout, and the Jets lost 2-1 to the Florida Panthers at Canada Life Centre on Thursday night.

Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor failed to score for the Jets in the shootout.

The Jets trailed 1-0 heading for the final frame, but Cole Perfetti rescued a point when he scored his fourth of the season at 5:24.

"They play a hard style of play against, with the high flips and the swarming," Perfetti said. "It's not easy to play against and it's not necessarily the most entertaining game."

"Both teams played hard and played heavy," Jets head coach Scott Arniel added. "... There wasn't a whole lot of wide-open."

Jonathan Toews created the goal when he took the puck from Uvis Balinskis and passed the puck to Perfetti, who was going to the net unmarked.

"All of a sudden, the puck was on my stick," Perfetti said. "And it's a pretty good pass. I didn't really have to move for that one."

The point earned, while it wasn't two, flew in the face of the numbers established by both teams over the course of the season.

The Jets are now 1-17-2 when trailing after 40 minutes of action. The Panthers improved to 17-0-1 when leading after two periods of play.

"You have to battle for every piece of your ice against that team," Arniel said. "I liked the way, in the third period, that we got down, but at the end of the day, we poured back and put some heat on them and got (ourselves) into overtime."

Shots in the third were 7-5 for Winnipeg. Both teams were credited with one high danger chance in the final 20. Overall, shots were 20-18 for the Jets. Overall, chances favoures the home team 17-14.

Prior to the shootout Josh Morrissey had a chance to win the game, but his shot banged off the crossbar. He is one point away from equaling Dustin Byfuglien's franchise record in regular-season points scored by a defenceman with 415.

The shootout setback extends the team's extra session losing streak to seven consecutive games. They have lost five overtime games and two shootouts, dating back to a shootout loss to the Montreal Canadiens on Dec. 3. The club has an overtime win against the Minnesota Wild, and a shootout win over the Calgary Flames.

Coming into the game, the Panthers had the highest win percentage in one-goal games at .813 with a 13-0-3 record. The Jets were last in the league at 6-11-6, which equals a .251 conversion rate.

Despite the loss, the Jets (20-23-7) have now picked up at least one point in seven of their last eight games. The only blemish was a 2-0 road loss to the Chicago Blackhawks on Monday night.

Connor Hellebuyck (12-13-6) turned aside 19 of 20 shots. Hellebuyck has lost six overtime and shootout games combined.

Sam Bennet scored for the Panthers (26-20-3) in regulation. Daniil Tarasov (7-6-2) stopped 17 of 18 shots for the win.

The Jets host the Detroit Red Wings on Saturday night.

Ice Chips

Isaak Phillips, Gustav Nyquist and Danny Zhilkin were scratched.

Looking for a pick me up

With very little to cheer about, the home team accumulating just five shots in the first period, with one high danger chance created, the most 'exciting' moment occurred during an official's timeout at 8:58.

Jets public address announcer Jay Richardson introduced the Winnipeg players who are scheduled to make an appearance at the Jets and Montreal Canadiens alumni game in October at the downtown rink.

The largest cheer, by far, was for former defenceman Dustin Byfuglien.

In that same vein, Jets captain Adam Lowry is also excited to see 'Big Buff' and his teammates put on a deke and dangle show against Les Habitants.

"It will be a lot of fun to see those guys snap (the puck) around," Lowry said prior to game time. "A few of them could probably still play, if they put their mind to it. It's going to be awesome just to see guys that I started my career with come back and get recognized by the fans. It' will be a great weekend with the outdoor game, and it's gonna be a lot of fun."

Unofficially, Chris Thorburn received the second loudest applause from the 14, 106 in attendance.

Left wanting

Even with Perfetti's third period goal at 5:24, the Jets have scored the fewest third-period goals in the league with 42.

"I don't have the exact answer on it," Arniel said. "It's not that we're trying on purpose to change our style of play in the third period. It's just something that we've talked about, trying to do a better job with. There was a fragile stage where we were afraid to make a mistake. And then when you do that, you're on your heels, and the opposition is coming at you. We've talked about it, we've looked at it. I just think, for us, that's last week's news."

Until it wasn't and became Thursday night's news as well.

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/byfuglien-s-surprise-maurice-s-extremes-and-wheeler-s-faith/article_57c156e2-2e3b-446a-bb4e-b2f4ef71da4e.html

Byfuglien's surprise, Maurice's extremes and Wheeler's faith

By Paul Friesen

At least one member of the Winnipeg Jets wasn't the least bit surprised to hear the Tuesday news that Dustin Byfuglien will return to the city for next fall's Heritage Classic.

It turns out defenceman Josh Morrissey was tipped off in advance.

Byfuglien was in Chicago on the weekend, taking part in a Blackhawks Stanley Cup reunion, and crossed paths with Morrissey when the Jets flew there for Monday's game.

Morrissey says his old teammate played in the 'Hawks reunion game and still skates regularly, which may surprise those who assumed the only stick the big man has held in his hands the last seven years would have been a fishing rod.

"Yeah, he's still playing," Morrissey said after the Jets win over St. Louis on Tuesday. "I think he said once a week."

Earlier Tuesday, former Jets captain Blake Wheeler had said it wasn't difficult at all to convince Byfuglien to attend the Heritage Classic.

Morrissey revealed No. 33 has already been planning for it.

"He's got some special skates," No. 44 said. "Obviously, the Jets fans know I'm not going to give that away, but he got some special skates done up for it. He's excited. And I'm excited to see them all. It's crazy how time flies, and it'll be great to have him back.

"I know the fans will really love having him back."

Joining the all-time fan favourite and Wheeler on the alumni roster are Andrew Ladd, Bryan Little, Paul Stastny, Mathieu Perreault and Chris Thorburn, with more names to come.

They'll take on a Montreal Canadiens alumni team at the downtown rink, Oct. 24, leaving the stadium spectacle for the current NHL squads the next day.

"It will be great to see a lot of those guys coming back into town for it," Mark Scheifele said. "A lot of guys you haven't seen in a while. That'll be really fun."

Hard to believe Scheifele played with all of the above early in a career that's already in Year 13.

"It ages me for sure," the 32-year-old said.

Maurice's challenge

A nod to the Jets' more recent past arrived in town late Wednesday.

Coach Paul Maurice will guide the back-to-back Stanley Cup champion Florida Panthers against the Jets on Thursday.

Like the Jets, Florida (25-20-3, 53 points) hasn't lived up to expectations this season, although they're not quite as far down the ladder in the East as Winnipeg is in the West.

They've also been on more of a roller-coaster of late, their last five games including three wins, a 9-1 loss in Carolina and, most recently, a 4-1, home-ice defeat at the hands of San Jose.

"Get off the extremes," is how Maurice put it to reporters in Florida before hopping a plane to his old stomping grounds.

"I do look forward to it," the former Jets coach said. "There's great memories in that place. So it's a fun trip. I don't know if we've ever won in there. But other than the final score, it's been good."

He's right. In three previous trips as Panthers coach, Maurice's squad is 0-3 in Winnipeg, losing 5-2 his first year, 6-4 his second and 6-3 last season.

"I know for a fact it hasn't gone very well in there," he said. "Today's a new day."

The Panthers have suffered some big losses off the ice, too, of late.

Forward Brad Marchand remains day-to-day with an injury and is doubtful for Thursday's game, while an injury to defenceman Seth Jones has cost him his spot on the U.S. Olympic team.

Wheeler: Don't give up on Jets

Maurice's captain with the Jets was Wheeler, of course.

Asked on Tuesday about his former team's plummet this year, Wheeler trod carefully.

"Still the same core from the team that won a Presidents' Trophy last year and was contending for a Stanley Cup," he began. "I played with a majority of those guys that make up the core of the team and I have a ton of belief in them. This league's tough. The games that go your way a year ago, maybe they're one-goal games and you get on a good stretch and get momentum, all those good things that go into having a successful season. If it goes the other way it can snowball just as easily."

That it has, the Jets looking down at just two teams in the Western Conference, although that's two better than it was before their current surge of five wins in their last seven games.

"It's probably not what anybody has expected," Wheeler said. "But there's a lot of reasons to still be optimistic about the group."

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/22/jets-fall-in-shootout-to-panthers>

Jets fall in shootout to Panthers

By: Mike McIntyre

The Winnipeg Jets sure don't like working overtime this season.

A 2-1 shootout loss to the Florida Panthers on Thursday night at Canada Life Centre marked the club's seventh straight setback in a game decided beyond regulation.

That's a pile of potential points left on the table — a major problem for a team sitting below the Western Conference playoff line. It's also a puzzling development for a group that has feasted in extra time in recent years.

"At the end of the day, especially where we are in the standings, we have to end that game right there," said an obviously frustrated Jets coach Scott Arniel.

Anton Lundell and Sam Reinhart both beat Connor Hellebuyck in the shootout, while Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele came up empty on their attempts.

Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey had a golden chance to win it during three-on-three overtime — and tie former teammate Dustin Byfuglien for the franchise record in points by a defenceman — but rang his shot off the crossbar.

Sam Bennett (18:49 of the second period) and Cole Perfetti (5:24 of the third period) traded goals in regulation.

If you're a glass-half-full type, the Jets have now picked up points in seven of their last eight games (5-1-2), trimming what was once an 11-point gap to six in the race for the final wild-card spot.

They're slowly chipping away, but time is becoming a factor as Winnipeg hits the 50-game mark with a 20-23-7 record.

Florida arrived just as desperate. The Panthers improved to 26-20-3, leaving them five points back of the final Eastern Conference playoff spot.

"We've just got to bury, find a way," said Connor.

"That's a very simple team. They don't take too many risks in their game. And, I thought we did a good job in our neutral zone, only giving them that chip in and dump in play. Not a lot of plays to be made when we're three above them, and everybody kind of beat their man back up the ice. We did a good job of that."

Clocking out early

Nine of Winnipeg's 50 games so far have now been knotted up after 60 minutes of play.

The Jets are just 2-7-0. Winnipeg beat the Minnesota Wild in overtime back on Oct. 28, then downed the Calgary Flames in a shootout on Nov 15.

Ah, the good old days.

Seven straight losses have followed, with five coming in overtime and now two in a shootout.

What gives?

"Whatever. I am not sure," said Arniel.

Perhaps the Jets haven't adjusted the way some of their rivals are when it comes to overtime strategy?

"I think the whole league is defending a little differently," he continued.

"If you look back, it was a track meet, it was trade chances and then somebody would get a two-on-one and they'd miss and it would go the other way, you're not seeing that as much now. You're seeing more of guys are staying tight and not giving a lot of space to work. I don't think there's the same open ice as we've seen previously."

The mighty have fallen

Imagine trying to explain to a new fan of the game that the two teams that hit the ice Thursday represent the reigning Presidents Trophy winners and the two-time defending Stanley Cup champions.

Both appear to be shells of their recent selves.

Injuries haven't helped, especially on the Florida side where key forwards such as Aleksander Barkov and Brad Marchand and defencemen Seth Jones and Dmitry Kulikov are currently sidelined. The Jets are without a trio of blue-liners in Neal Pionk, Colin Miller and Haydn Fleury.

Throw in the NHL's compressed schedule due to the upcoming Olympic break and you get a lot of hockey these days which isn't exactly a scintillating product.

"There wasn't a whole lot of wide-open. You had to battle for every piece of your ice and I expected that against that team," said Arniel.

"I liked the way, in the third period, that we got down, but at the end of the day, we poured back and put some heat on them and got (ourselves) into overtime."

The first 40 minutes between the Jets and Panthers might just cure insomnia, with not a lot happening at either end. High-danger chances tracked by Natural Stat Trick were 5-4 in favour of the Jets — and just 1-0 in the middle frame.

Business picked up a bit in the third, including a bit of spice as Matthew Tkachuk — playing just his second game of the year — got under the skin of several Jets players with some questionable antics, including a punch to the face of Morrissey.

Tkachuk — who got his first point of the year by setting up Bennett — and Jets captain Adam Lowry then got into it early in the third, resulting in offsetting minors which freed up some ice for Winnipeg to score their only goal.

Jonathan Toews picked the pocket of Panthers defenceman Uvis Balinskis and fed Perfetti, who made a slick deke for just his fourth goal of the year.

But that was it for the Jets, who have now gone three straight games without scoring a five-on-five goal.

“I thought we played a better third period. Took it to them a little more,” said Perfetti.

“They play a hard style of play against with the high flips and the swarming. It’s not easy to play against and it’s not necessarily the most entertaining game. And I think they want to lull you to sleep. And I thought the first two periods we kind of got caught in that little trap game kind of thing.”

The wait is over

Paul Maurice won plenty of games inside Canada Life Centre as he coached the Jets for parts of nine seasons. But you have to go all the way back to December 2021 to find his last one in this building — until now.

Maurice’s Panthers had been 0-for-3 in their annual visit to Winnipeg.

“Every four years we like to mix in a win here,” he cracked following the victory.

“I thought from a defensive structure point of view both teams were kind of right on. Now I don’t know if the defence was that good, but offensively there wasn’t a whole lot to be had either way.”

We won’t have to wait long for the return engagement – Florida hosts Winnipeg next Saturday afternoon in Sunrise.

Key play

Reinhart’s shootout snipe settled this one.

Three stars

1. FLA C Sam Bennett: 1 goal
2. WPG LW Cole Perfetti: 1 goal
3. FLA G Daniil Tarasov: 17 saves

Extra! Extra!

The Jets made a trio of lineup changes from Tuesday’s 3-1 victory over St. Louis.

Hellebuyck was back in net after Eric Comrie made a spot start. He stopped 19 of 20 shots he faced in regulation and the shootout. Defenceman Elias Salomonsson returned from a two-game illness absence, replacing Isaak Phillips. And forward Cole Koepke took the spot of Gustav Nyquist.

Daniil Tarasov got the call for Florida and turned aside 17 of 18 pucks.

Winnipeg went 0-for-2 on the power play, while Florida went 0-for-1.

A crowd of 14,106 took in the game

The Jets now prepare to close out the homestand by hosting the Detroit Red Wings on Saturday night.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/22/returning-to-the-peg-always-special-for-maurice>

***Returning to the 'Peg always special for Maurice
Former Jets bench boss fondly reminisces time spent with club***

By: Ken Wiebe

During a lifetime of hockey experiences, Paul Maurice rarely runs into something he either hasn't seen before or simply stops him in his tracks.

But after touching down to the deep freeze that all Manitobans are currently experiencing, the former head coach of the Winnipeg Jets hustled over to Hockey For All Centre to witness something that gave him great joy.

Behind the bench of the St. Mary's Academy Flames stood his daughter, Sydney, who is a coach with the Manitoba Women's High School Hockey League team that is tied for top spot in the Division 1-2 West standings.

Coming back to the place where he resurrected his NHL coaching career is always special for Maurice, but adding a proud dad moment was something that had him bursting with pride and grinning from ear to ear.

"Oh, all of it," said Maurice, when asked what he enjoyed most about returning to Canada Life Centre before his Florida Panthers faced the Jets on Thursday night. "There are just little flashes of memories."

What followed was Maurice's description of what he got to personally experience on Wednesday, when timing was everything and the schedules lined up for him to get to see his daughter in action.

Watching the game was special in its own way, but it was the interaction that followed the final buzzer that Maurice relished even more.

"She coached a game (Wednesday) night, so there was a little special joy there for me," said Maurice. "To watch her standing behind the bench. And then stand there after an overtime loss,

wondering what kind of mood she was going to be in. That's the first time I've ever waited for a coach to come out, wondering what kind of mood they were going to be in. It was awesome. Truly."

As someone who has suffered through overtime losses plenty of times during his multiple decades as a coach, Maurice wondered how long it might take for Sydney to emerge from the dressing room.

The irony was not lost on Maurice, knowing how many times he'd kept others waiting for him as he decompressed after a crushing defeat or even an exhilarating victory.

"First of all, how long is this going to take? I think about how many hours my wife has waited for me," said Maurice. "To see what kind of mood she's in and then (during) the drive to her place, she was talking about the game and God, it was like looking in a mirror.

"She was (talking about) shift changes she missed and things that she missed. She's talking about all of the things she could have changed and then how happy she was about how her girls have played. I had a great night. It was fun."

You know what they say about the apple often not falling far from the tree.

Who handles overtime losses better, father or daughter?

"Oh, she's way more solid than I am. But, honest to God, the words coming out of her mouth I've said in my own head a thousand times," said Maurice. "Anyway, I was actually really impressed with how aware she was of what happened on the game from the bench and the details that she would change.

"I'm not sure she's ready for a life of it (coaching). I think she should stick to teaching, it's a little calmer."

In the midst of the dog days of a bumpy season that somehow has the Panthers below the playoff line in the Eastern Conference, having the opportunity to see a friendly face — and enjoy a nice meal and visit together — would have been welcome for Maurice.

After capturing back-to-back Stanley Cups and making three straight Cup final appearances, expectations were once again sky high for Maurice and the Panthers coming into this season. But, it can be hard to maintain that level when you've played into June in each of the past three years.

Especially when the lengthy laundry list of injured players includes captain Aleksander Barkov, who has yet to appear in a game this season.

And while winger Matthew Tkachuk just returned to the lineup after missing the first 47 games of the campaign, Brad Marchand has been on the shelf for the past seven games, so let's just say the Panthers are still working on rounding into form.

"Those are factors, not excuses for us. They're just factors," said Maurice. "When you lose one or two guys, you can still demand and expect your team to look close to a certain way. But it's been six to eight (injured) players the entire year, so you're not going to look the same way. We have had to make some adjustments, which is painful for us. We don't want to change that core

identity and style of play. We just look different. Most of the men that we have out of our lineup are big men, so we don't forecheck (the same). We don't look the same.

"Losses are harder because you get used to winning and you crave it. When it doesn't happen for you, there's a frustration that you have to watch (out for). Our guys have handled it exceptionally well."

And when you've been to the top of the mountain on two separate occasions, there's a belief instilled that is unwavering.

"Our analytics are better than our record," said Maurice. "So we just believe that if we stay in the fight long enough, that we can do it. All we've got to do is make the playoffs. We never had home-ice advantage in any of our rounds, we've just got to get there. But getting there in the East right now is a task."

The Panthers believe in themselves and they've bought into what the guy behind the bench has been selling since he arrived on the scene in 2022.

"He's always got a knack of knowing what to say at any given time," said Panthers forward Sam Reinhart. "I always look back to his first few days of training camp when he came in. If you blanked out on video the last couple of years, but you watched the first three days of training camp, you would know how we play and that's a testament to how well he gets his message across."

No conversation with Maurice would be complete without some talk of the good old days, when he stood behind the Jets' bench for more than eight seasons and helped guide them to their highest playoff heights.

When the rosters for the 2026 Heritage Classic alumni game were relayed to him, Maurice went on the offensive.

"Did they get a hold of Buff?" Maurice asked. "Really. Is he coming?"

When told that Byfuglien had committed to participating, Maurice pulled out one of his patented one-liners.

"He's training for that game, I know it," he said.

Maurice spent a few more minutes reminiscing about the outdoor games he was a part of with the Jets, fondly remembering the overtime goal from Bryan Little against the Calgary Flames in Regina in 2019.

The bench boss also reflected on the outdoor game in 2016 against the Edmonton Oilers that included so many of the Smythe Division stars from both teams taking part in the alumni game and how it stirred up so many memories of the 1980s.

"There were so many great players out there that we all grew up with," said Maurice. "And I thought that game kind of felt like maybe a gift to Mark Chipman for bringing the team back, and then to have a full building. It was kind of like 'the team is back' in so many ways."

The Hockey News

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/players/nhl-insider-luke-schenn-trade-could-happen-soon>

NHL Insider: Luke Schenn Trade Could Happen Soon

By Jake Tye

The Winnipeg Jets are expected to be active ahead of the NHL trade deadline, according to insider reports, with at least one move potentially coming sooner than expected.

Much of the speculation has centered on defenseman Luke Schenn, who is playing on an expiring contract and could be moved as the deadline approaches. The 36 year old has reportedly attracted interest from teams such as the Toronto Maple Leafs and Edmonton Oilers as contenders look to add experience and depth on the blue line.

Schenn has not played a major role for Winnipeg this season, averaging 13:54 of ice time per game. With the Jets carrying a deep group of defensemen, several reports have suggested a change of scenery could be imminent for the Saskatoon native.

The market for depth defensemen has become more competitive following the trade of Rasmus Andersson to the Vegas Golden Knights. As teams continue searching for reliable options, Schenn is expected to draw attention despite not being considered a headline name. His experience and physical style remain appealing to teams preparing for a playoff run.

TSN insider Chris Johnston confirmed that interest in Schenn is real and indicated that a deal could happen in the near future.

"They have a lot of defensemen and it's pretty clear that Luke Schenn is one of the pieces they're dangling, he's another player I could see dealt relatively near term," Johnston said.

Schenn has adjusted his game in recent seasons to remain effective as a veteran depth option. Last season, he played for the Nashville Predators before being traded to the Pittsburgh Penguins along with forward Tommy Novak in a deal that brought Michael Bunting and a fourth round pick to Nashville. Schenn was later flipped to the Jets last March in exchange for a second and fourth round pick.

With that transaction occurring less than a year ago, there is believed to still be a market for Schenn. Winnipeg could look to recoup a mid round draft pick, potentially a fourth round selection, from a team such as Toronto, which has been dealing with injuries on defense.

For the Jets, moving an expiring asset for future value would be preferable to losing Schenn for nothing. The decision now falls to general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff as Winnipeg weighs its options and determines whether the team remains in a position to contend for a playoff spot while navigating the trade deadline.