

***THREE THINGS: Lowry scores GWG as Jets win third straight
Mark Scheifele recorded his 500th career assist in Jets 5-4 win over the Islanders***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets won their third straight game beating the New York Islanders 5-4 at Canada Life Centre. Adam Lowry scored the game winning goal and added an assist, Mark Scheifele (2A) and Kyle Connor (1G,1A) also had multi-point efforts. Connor Hellebuyck won his second consecutive start, the Jets will head out on the road Thursday when they visit the Minnesota Wild.

GOING TO THE NET

The Jets have been doing a better job at going to the net lately and that's exactly what Kyle Connor did on the opening goal of the night. Connor lifted the stick of Matthew Barzal and put the puck behind Ilya Sorokin at 4:20 of the first.

Winnipeg went up 2-0 at 5:41 of the second, Josh Morrissey grabbed a loose puck in front of Sorokin and sent a seeing eye shot through a bunch of bodies and past the Islander netminder.

Another instance of good things happening when you go to the net happened during a Jets power play, Gabriel Vilardi's shot hit Jonathan Toews at the far post and Toews shoveled in the puck for a 3-0 Jets lead.

"It's important. You know, when there's times you're maybe struggling to create offence, keeping it simple, getting pucks to the net with bodies, getting traffic – you do that over and over again, you're not only going to create momentum, you're going to get some bounces go your way," said Dylan DeMelo.

"We had some pucks obviously bounce. That's how goals are scored, around the paint and in the slot. We did a good job there with that."

WILD SECOND PERIOD INCLUDES SCHEIFELE'S 500th CAREER ASSIST

After the Toews goal, the Islanders would score three goals in a span of 2:41, Anthony Duclair (7:40), Emil Heineman (on a penalty shot at 8:58) and Kyle MacLean (10:21). To the Jets credit, they fought back and took the lead when Mark Scheifele passed to Dylan DeMelo at the point and his shot found its way through traffic. Scheifele's second assist of the night gave him 500 career assists and he became the second player in franchise history to reach that milestone joining Blake Wheeler (550).

Adam Lowry would score the eventual game winning goal as he redirected a Neal Pionk point shot with 20 seconds left in the middle frame.

SUCCESSFUL HOME STAND

The Jets began a very important homestand with an overtime setback to Vegas and a loss to the Oilers. They turned a corner with a 5-1 win over the Los Angeles Kings and back-to-back one goal victories over New Jersey and the Islanders. Winnipeg now has points in four of its five games.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/new-york-islanders-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-january-13-2026>

***Connor, Lowry each has 2 points, Jets recover to defeat Islanders
Scheifele gets 2 assists for Winnipeg, which wins 3rd straight; New York has point streak
end at 4***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Kyle Connor and Adam Lowry each had a goal and an assist, and the Winnipeg Jets recovered for a 5-4 win against the New York Islanders at Canada Life Centre on Tuesday.

"We knew we were going to get some offensive time if we got through that neutral zone, and I thought we did a pretty good job with it," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "A lot of chances, we attacked the net. Again, opportunities from shots and screens and rebounds, those types of things. I like the fact we are doing it consistently."

Jonathan Toews, Josh Morrissey and Dylan DeMelo scored for the Jets (18-22-5), who have won three in a row and finished 3-1-1 on a five-game homestand. Mark Scheifele had two assists, and Connor Hellebuyck made 23 saves.

"We were playing well," Scheifele said. "Obviously, getting up 3-0, but then giving it right back, it [stunk], but the response after that was awesome by everyone. A win's a win."

Emile Heineman had a goal and an assist, and Anthony Duclair, Kyle MacLean and Matthew Schaefer scored for the Islanders (25-16-5), whose four-game point streak ended (3-0-1). Ilya Sorokin made 17 saves.

"We weren't able to hold that tie for the time being and get out of that second period," MacLean said. "But I think it was good that we clawed back after that three-goal deficit."

Connor gave the Jets a 1-0 lead at 4:20 of the first period. He lifted the stick of New York forward Mathew Barzal to get the rebound of Alex Iafallo's initial point shot and slid the puck past Sorokin from in front.

"You've got to have confidence in those (one-goal) games," Scheifele said. "You can't just sit back and expect the time to just run out. You've got to keep pushing and doing the things that got you to that point. I thought we did a good job of that tonight."

Morrissey made it 2-0 at 5:41 of the second period with a wrist shot from between the circles through traffic.

"We know what we did prior to the last three games (0-7-4 in previous 11 games), and we are making some hay in the last three and that is what is most important," Arniel said. "Just keep grinding and finding a way to get points. It is going to take this, even more of it, going into a tough building next in Minnesota (on Thursday)... Earlier on we didn't get the results we were after, but the last three have certainly been a lot better."

Toews pushed the lead to 3-0 just 42 seconds later while on a power play at 6:23. Gabriel Vilardi's shot from the left face-off circle hit off Toews and dropped in the crease, where he swiped it over the goal line for his third goal in as many games.

"Tonight got away from us a little bit there in the second (period), but a good response," DeMelo said. "We were able to get the lead, we made it a little interesting at the end there, but we did a good job in the third overall of not giving them many looks."

The Islanders scored three goals in a span of 2:41 to get back into the game.

Duclair cut the deficit to 3-1 at 7:40. Anders Lee backhanded a pass to Duclair in the right circle and he scored with a wrist shot to the short side that squeaked through Hellebuyck.

"After they went up three, we put in three pretty quick," Lee said. "And then they responded to us. I thought that going into the third period tonight it was going to be one of those games where we find a way, and we just got within one with not enough time. We ran out of time a little bit."

Heineman brought New York to within 3-2 when he scored on a penalty shot at 8:58, lifting a backhand over the left pad of Hellebuyck.

"I mean, I thought that we had some really good chances," Islanders coach Patrick Roy said. "Penalty shot, (and) right after a great shot by [MacLean]... So, it was probably the kind of night that there was a lot of traffic and it was challenging for the goalies."

MacLean tied it 3-3 at 10:21, snapping Casey Cizikas' pass from behind the net over Hellebuyck's blocker from the slot.

"[MacLean] scored a nice goal, had a great chance right before that," Roy said. "That line (MacLean, Cizikas, and Marc Gatcomb) played really well. I love the energy that they bring to the team, and they have an identity and they play with it."

DeMelo put Winnipeg back up 4-3 at 12:23. Scheifele dug the puck out of the right corner and fed it to DeMelo, who used Nino Niederreiter as a screen to beat Sorokin with a long-distance wrist shot. The Islanders challenged for goaltender interference, but an official video review confirmed the goal. Scheifele's assist was his 500th in the NHL.

Scheifele appeared to make it 5-3 with a power-play goal at 18:18, but officials ruled he hit the puck into the net with his left hand.

"Defensively, we have to be better, there's no question about it," Lee said. "We know that in this room. It wasn't our best tonight. You put in (four) goals and it's not enough to get a point. We made some mistakes on the back-end tonight as a group, and we can fix that."

Lowry did put the Jets up 5-3 at 19:40 when he tipped Neal Pionk's shot from the left point past Sorokin.

"We were pretty lively on the bench," DeMelo said. "Even when they scored to make it 3-1, 3-2, we were like 'OK, let's just go back at them and be on our toes,' because if you're just going to sit back in this League, you're just going to give the other team momentum. I thought our bench was really good, guys were positive and encouraging each other. At the end of the day,

whatever happens, you've got to bury it. Put it in the past and move on and got to win your next shift."

Schaefer sent a wrist shot from the blue line that deflected in off Pionk at 19:14 of the third period for the 5-4 final.

"It felt like the game we expected tonight," Lee said. "I think we knew that this Winnipeg team is much better than where they are right now and can easily put a big push in. So, we had a big task at hand, and I think their skill was evident tonight. And more than anything, they worked for their goals tonight and that was a big difference."

NOTES: Scheifele is the second player to record 500 assists with the Jets/Thrashers franchise, following Blake Wheeler (550). ... Scheifele has six points (two goals, four assists) in his past four games. ... Winnipeg forward Cole Perfetti assisted on Morrissey's goal to extend his point streak to three games (five assists). ... Schaefer scored his 13th goal of 2025-26, which is the most by a rookie defenseman in a season since Shayne Gostisbehere (17 in 2015-16).

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-happy-to-see-coach-rick-bowness-back-in-nhl-with-columbus>

***Jets happy to see 'lifer coach' Bowness back in NHL with Blue Jackets
70-year-old spent 2 seasons with Winnipeg, was Jack Adams finalist in 2023-24***

By Nicholas J. Cotsonika

Rick Bowness' nickname is "Bones." But now that the Columbus Blue Jackets have lured him out of retirement, Winnipeg Jets coach Scott Arniel has another idea.

"I guess change his nickname to 'The Fixer,'" Arniel said.

Columbus hired Bowness on Monday to replace Dean Evason and will reevaluate after the season. The 70-year-old had retired after his second season as Winnipeg's coach on May 6, 2024, because he and his wife, Judy, had health issues.

"We've talked here the last little bit," Arniel said. "He was pretty surprised when he got the call. I think everybody's surprised, certainly about what happened there. Yeah, we chatted about it. He asked me my opinion, and certainly the biggest thing for him, he just talked about his health, how good he feels, how good Judy feels. They've just felt that they got away and got healthy. He's a lifer. He's a lifer coach."

Bowness has spent 2,726 games as an assistant, associate or head coach, an NHL record, including 802 games as a head coach, guiding seven teams to a combined record of 309-408-37 with 48 ties.

He helped the Jets go 52-24-6 in 2023-24 and was a finalist for the Jack Adams Award, which is awarded to the NHL coach of the year. He missed 11 games after his wife had a seizure and four more due to a minor medical procedure that season.

"Obviously, I know how much he loves the game, and he's been a fixture in the NHL for so long," Jets defenseman Josh Morrissey said. "I really enjoyed having him as a coach. It was nice to hear that he was feeling really good and he's in a position where he feels he can come

back and coach with this opportunity. So, I'm excited for him, but first and foremost, I'm happy that he's in a great spot."

Jets forward Vladislav Namestnikov is too.

"He loves hockey, he's a great guy and I guess he couldn't stay away from hockey for too long," he said. "I'm happy he's back, and he's going to do a good job in Columbus."

Bowness was working for TNT and talked to Arniel often.

"He was working for the media, so I thought he was looking for inside scoops," Arniel said. "But no, that's why I'm not overly surprised that he's going into Columbus. He's been doing some TV, but he's been watching games all the time and critiquing things."

The Blue Jackets (19-19-7) are last in the Eastern Conference -- seven points behind the Buffalo Sabres, Washington Capitals and Boston Bruins, who are tied for the second wild card in the East -- entering their game against the Calgary Flames at Nationwide Arena in Columbus on Tuesday (7 p.m. ET; FDSNOH, SNW).

Bowness said the immediate issues are the goals against, shots against, penalty kill, slot chances against and rush chances against.

"No matter where he's been, his mindset has always been about defending first, and that's an area people have been talking about with Columbus needing to improve on," Arniel said. "Whatever their situation is, I'm not overly concerned. We have our own stuff we're working on here, but at the end of the day, he's the fixer. He'll go in, and he'll find some things that need to be improved on, and he'll go at them hard."

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2026/01/14/winnipeg-jets-new-york-islanders-game-win-story/>

Confidence, Wins Return as Jets Shake Off the 'Fragile' Label

By Jim Bender, The Canadian Press

During their 11-game losing streak, even opposing coaches called the Winnipeg Jets fragile.

Blowing leads usually sunk them because of that shaky mindset.

But they are different now. The Jets rebounded from blowing a three-goal lead to post a 5-4 victory over the New York Islanders before 14,114 witnesses at Canada Life Centre on Tuesday night.

"Tentative, afraid to make plays because we were afraid that maybe something bad would happen," said Jets coach Scott Arniel. "Now, you are seeing each and every line going out there with confidence, making plays and spending time in the offensive zone with that confidence."

Winnipeg had taken a 3-0 lead on goals by Kyle Connor, Josh Morrissey and Jonathan Toews. But the Islanders scored three goals in a span of 2:41 in the second period to tie the game 3-3.

The Jets, however, took a 5-3 lead into the third period on goals by Dylan DeMelo and Adam Lowry, who scored the eventual winner with 20 seconds left in the middle frame.

“At the end of the day, we got back to what we had to do,” Arniel said. “Obviously, that was a big goal at the end (of the second) for us as we had traffic again, a shot from the top, and those are the things you want to continue to do, and we did it.”

Arniel was asked what that kind of game does for his blood pressure.

“I have had a lot of good practice over the last month,” he said with a wide smile.

All five Winnipeg goals came off of long, screened shots.

“A bit of a roller-coaster, for sure,” DeMelo said. “Feeling good and they pop in a couple pretty quick and then, ‘Oh-oh, here we go.’ But we settled in and we just said, ‘Let’s go after them again and get back to what we were doing (to build the lead) — to get on the forecheck.’

“And that’s exactly what happened on that goal. It was a great forecheck, a great battle, we win it. (Mark Scheifele) gets it and makes a great play through the guy, there’s traffic at the net front and that got us going. We just had to get back to the basics and get back to how we were playing when we got that lead and just go after them. We did a good job of answering that.”

Most importantly, the players stayed positive on the bench.

“Even when they scored to make it 3-1, 3-2, we were like, ‘OK, let’s just go back at them and be on our toes’ because, if you’re just going to sit back in this league, you’re just going to give the other team momentum,” DeMelo said. “At the end of the day, whatever happens you’ve got to bury it, put it in the past and move on and go win your next shift.”

The Jets finished their five-game homestand with a 3-1-1 record.

“It feels good,” DeMelo said. “We did a lot of good things. Tonight got away from us a little bit there in the second (period), but a good response. We were able to get the lead, we made it a little interesting at the end there, but we did a good job in the third overall, of not giving them many looks until the six-on-five. Good to finish it off.

“Now we’ve got to take that act on the road. We’ve got a huge game against Minnesota coming up (Thursday).”

Matthew Schaefer scored with 45 seconds left and Islanders goalie Ilya Sorokin pulled to make the score 5-4.

“We were playing well,” said Scheifele, who had two assists. “Obviously, getting up 3-0, but then giving it right back. It sucked, but the response after that was awesome by everyone. A win’s a win.”

Islanders captain Anders Lee was frustrated with the way New York lost after bouncing back.

“I thought we had a good response after they went up three,” he said. “We put in three pretty quick. But then, they responded to us. Defensively, we have to be better. It wasn’t our best tonight.”

With his second assist, Scheifele recorded his 500th career helper.

“That is special, obviously,” Arniel said. “He has been around a long time and he has been extremely consistent over his career. You guys have seen him certainly evolve from the young player he was when he first came here and now, he is a veteran guy who is an elite player. He scores and he makes plays. That is a great number to be at.”

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/13/jets-make-it-three-in-a-row>

Jets make it three in a row Struggling squad suddenly making some noise

By: Mike McIntyre

Turns out some home cooking sprinkled with a dose of desperation was just what the Winnipeg Jets needed.

A 5-4 victory over the New York Islanders on Tuesday night was the club's third straight at Canada Life Centre, showing there's still some fight left in a team many had written off for dead.

“We are making some hay in the last three and that is what is most important. Just keep grinding and finding a way to get points,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel.

This one was a back-and-forth affair filled with momentum swings, with the Jets building a 3-0 lead, watching it evaporate in rapid fashion, jumping back out in front and then hanging on for dear life in the waning seconds.

“Obviously getting up 3-0, but then giving it right back, it sucked,” said Jets centre Mark Scheifele. “But the response after that was awesome by everyone. A win's a win.”

Indeed, they don't ask how, just how many. And Winnipeg needs to keep stacking them up if they are to get back in the playoff race, especially after an 11-game winless streak sunk them to the bottom of the NHL standings.

“We have played some good games here, earlier on we didn't get the results we were after, but the last three have certainly been a lot better,” said Arniel.

The Jets are now 18-22-5 overall and within seven points of a playoff spot with 37 regular-season games remaining. The odds of a full recovery remain long, but they at least have a pulse. The Islanders, who arrived in town on a hot streak, fall to 25-16-5.

Red light special

Go figure that a team that couldn't seem to buy a goal prior to this five-game homestand has suddenly started to fill the net with frequency.

Winnipeg scored 20 goals over the span, an average of four per outing. Plenty of ice cold players are heating up, and it couldn't come at a better time.

"It means a lot," said Arniel.

"Now, every line is dangerous and it makes it tough for the opposition, as they just can't zero in on (Mark) Scheifele's line. You can see guys making plays now, feeling more confident with the puck and when you do that you play more of a puck possession game."

On this night, five different players lit the lamp, while 12 of the 18 skaters recorded at least a point.

Kyle Connor got the offensive party started 4:20 into the game, burying a rebound for his 22nd of the season, which puts him in a tie for the team lead with linemate Scheifele.

Canadian Olympian Josh Morrissey made it 2-0 early in the second period when his seeing-eye wrister through traffic beat Islanders goaltender Ilya Sorokin.

Next up was Jonathan Toews, who continued his second-half resurgence by scoring for a third straight game. This one came on the power play 42 seconds after Morrissey's tally and had the Jets in cruise control. Toews now has seven points (3G, 4A) over his last 10 games, all since the Christmas break.

However, the visitors struck three times in a span of 2:41 to tie it up, showing the Jets were still dealing with some fragility despite consecutive wins over the Los Angeles Kings and New Jersey Devils.

Back came Winnipeg, this time for good.

Defenceman Dylan DeMelo scored in eerily similar fashion to his blue-line partner, Morrissey, as his shot from just inside the point beat a screened Sorokin. It came with some controversy. The Islanders felt like Sorokin had been interfered with and challenged the play, but video review quickly upheld the call on the ice as a good goal.

"I don't get goals that often so, when I get them, they feel pretty good," said DeMelo, who is now up to three on the year. "I do like obviously setting guys up. A nice assist looks good. It's a team game so it's nice to pitch in that way."

Jets captain Adam Lowry then finished things off with 20 seconds left in the middle frame, tipping a Neal Pionk point shot. His fourth of the season proved to be the game-winner.

"At the end of the day we got back to what we had to do," said Arniel. "Obviously, that was a big goal at the end for us as we had traffic again, a shot from the top, and those are the things you want to continue to do, and we did it."

Lowry and Connor had assists to go with their goals, while Scheifele hit the 500-assist mark for his career with a pair of helpers.

"His overall game, I feel like he's playing the best hockey of his career," DeMelo said of Scheifele, who was snubbed by Team Canada but remains on the stand-by list in case of injury.

"Both ends of the ice, he's doing a great job. He does so much for our group offensively and defensively as well, he does such a good job anticipating plays and ending plays. He's got a great stick, a great feel for the game, and obviously the chemistry he has with KC and how

many goals they score together. He'll say he's a passer first, but he's got a great shot. To see him work on his craft, not a surprise he's got this many assists and he's going to keep going strong."

What the Helly?

Connor Hellebuyck just hasn't looked like his same dominant self in recent games.

The numbers reflect it, too, with 19 goals against (3.80 GAA) and a .880 save percentage in his last five outings.

In fact, since his return from injury in mid-December, the reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner has given up at least three goals in nine of his 13 starts.

He's been beaten 39 times in that span (three per game) and posted a .882 save percentage.

Those are very un-Hellebuyck-like numbers. Sure, the play in front of him has a lot to do with it, but he would likely be the first to admit he can be a lot better, too.

Hellebuyck will tell you he should stop every puck that comes his way, but we'd suggest he'd probably want three of the four Islanders goals back. Overall, he stopped 23 of 27 shots he faced.

Kids these days

Matthew Schaefer is something else. The first-overall pick in the 2025 draft has taken the NHL by storm, and Tuesday was the first chance for local hockey fans to see him up-close.

The 18-year-old had a rough start to his game. In the first period, he was in some pain after accidentally being hit by Morrissey, who never saw him. Schaefer was slow to get up and eventually left the ice to go to the dressing room, returning several minutes later.

In the second period, he was felled by a slapshot and spent more than a minute stuck in his own zone, hobbling around on one leg. Fortunately no real damage was done and he recovered.

Schaefer then brought the Islanders within a goal when he beat Hellebuyck with 46 seconds left in the third period and Sorokin pulled for an extra attacker. He now has 30 points (13G, 17A) in 46 regular-season games, which are jaw-dropping numbers for a player of his age and experience. He's also averaging nearly 24 minutes per game.

"Everyone has started to hear about him as the year has progressed and I've tried to watch a bunch of their games throughout the season. He's a special player," Morrissey said before the game. "What he's doing as an 18-year-old defenceman is remarkable. He's so dynamic all over the ice. He's going to be a great player for a long time. To think he's only 18, it's pretty scary."

Schaefer is likely going to run away with the Calder Trophy for top rookie, and he might even garner some Norris Trophy votes at this rate.

The key play

Lowry's goal late in the second period restored some breathing room for the Jets and proved to be the game-winner.

THREE STARS:

1. WPG C Adam Lowry: 1 goal, 1 assist
2. NYI LW Emil Heineman: 1 goal, 1 assist
3. WPG LW Kyle Connor: 1 goal, 1 assist

EXTRA, EXTRA: Winnipeg went 1-for-3 on the power play, while New York went 0-for-1.

Heineman's goal came on a penalty shot, after he was impeded by Luke Schenn while on a breakaway.

The Jets made one lineup change, with Schenn coming in for Colin Miller, who suffered a lower-body injury against the Devils. Forward Gustav Nyquist and defenceman Isaak Phillips were healthy scratches. Defenceman Haydn Fleury and forward Morgan Barron remain sidelined with injuries.

The Jets now head to St. Paul to face the Minnesota Wild on Thursday night.

"Now we've got to take that act on the road. We've got a huge game against Minnesota coming up," said DeMelo.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/13/bones-is-back>

Bones is back

Former Jets bench boss Bowness returns to NHL as Blue Jackets head coach

By: Ken Wiebe

Rick Bowness is a problem solver who oozes passion and has a penchant for bringing people together.

So when the former Winnipeg Jets head coach got a call from Don Waddell asking him if he'd have any interest in getting back behind an NHL bench, Bowness made the choice to come out of retirement yet again.

In joining the Columbus Blue Jackets and replacing Dean Evason in an unexpected announcement on Monday, you could say that Bowness is back where he belongs.

"Bones sees the game in a special way and he's got a special talent for connecting with his players and conveying that message," said Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey, who exchanged text messages with Bowness after the news became official. "I know how much he loves the game and he's been a fixture in the NHL for so long. I really enjoyed having him as a coach. It was nice to hear that he was feeling really good and he's in a position where he feels he can come back and coach with this opportunity.

"So, I'm excited for him. But first and foremost, I'm happy that he's in a great spot."

When Bowness spoke at his introductory news conference after the morning skate on Tuesday, he reiterated that the health of both himself and his wife Judy had improved significantly since he decided to leave the Jets following the 2023-24 season.

"When you have health issues, it kind of puts things in perspective," Bowness told reporters in Columbus. "Without the health issues, I would not have stepped down. The passion is still there, but we had to overcome some issues. That opened the door again. We got our health back to where we needed it to be.

"The break is over."

When Bowness arrived on the scene in the summer of 2023, the Jets had just missed the playoffs and the team was in a tough spot. Paul Maurice stepped away from the Jets in December and the final several months of the season revealed some issues that needed addressing.

"Without the health issues, I would not have stepped down. The passion is still there, but we had to overcome some issues. That opened the door again. We got our health back to where we needed it to be."

Bowness was lauded for his ability to help change the culture and help the Jets back to being a tight-knit group.

"He knows what he's doing. He's been around for so long. They have a younger core, so he's going to come in and do a wonderful job," said Jets forward Vladislav Namestnikov. "He was here for a while and brought the guys closer together. He changed the culture a little bit. That's what Bones does. He did that in Dallas as well. So, maybe they brought him in to do that in Columbus as well. Wherever he is, he does a wonderful job and I'm just happy that he's back."

Evason did a great job under incredibly challenging circumstances last season after the tragic death of star player Johnny Gaudreau and nearly guided the Blue Jackets into the Stanley Cup playoffs, finishing two points behind the Montreal Canadiens in the chase for the second wild card berth in the Eastern Conference.

But this season hasn't gone as smoothly, with the Blue Jackets sitting below the playoff line and embroiled in a battle for last place in the East.

Enter Bowness, who is signed through the end of the season before the Blue Jackets reassess things at that point.

"He was pretty surprised when he got the call. I think everybody's surprised, certainly about what happened there," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "He's a lifer. He's a lifer coach. And an opportunity to step in and help a group — I guess change his nickname to The Fixer. He just felt really comfortable in his health and where both him and Judy are at and just decided to take another shot at it."

Since Bowness' departure, he and Arniel have kept in regular contact.

"I don't know if we've missed a month in the last two years where we haven't chatted, whether I'm calling him or he's calling me," said Arniel. "He's telling me about his golf game. He'll phone about something he sees, two other teams playing. He was working for the media, so I thought he was looking for inside scoops. But no, that's why I'm not overly surprised that he's going into Columbus.

“He’s been doing some TV, but he’s watching games all the time and critiquing things. He’s a close friend. So that’s something we’ve done prior to even us working together. We’re always in constant communication.”

That ability to communicate is something the Blue Jackets are counting on, to help get things turned around with a team that’s underachieving and has seen some young and talented players plateau in terms of their development.

Although Bowness’ teams are known for having a strict commitment to defensive structure, several members of the Jets were also able to post career years offensively.

“You guys know him. No matter where he’s been, his mindset has always been about defending first and that’s an area people have been talking about with Columbus needing to improve on,” said Arniel. “He’ll go in and he’ll find some things that need to be improved on and he’ll go at them hard.”

“Wherever he is, he does a wonderful job and I’m just happy that he’s back.”

Bowness has been quick to identify a few of the issues the Blue Jackets will need to sort through to move in an upward trajectory.

“I look at the goals against, the shots against, the penalty kill, the slot chances against, the rush chances against. There’s the issue and those issues will take you right out of the playoffs,” said Bowness, 70.

“This isn’t the 80’s, man. You don’t score your way into the playoffs. You defend your way into the playoffs and you get your offence from good, solid team defence. But that’s team defence, with everyone committed. We’re just going to try to get everyone to buy in more defensively. Are there some structural changes we can make? Absolutely. And we’re going to make them.”

Bowness took over from Jim Montgomery with the Dallas Stars in December of 2019, but the circumstances were different as he was promoted from within the coaching staff, not as a voice from the outside.

However, the Stars reached the Stanley Cup final that spring, losing in six games to the Tampa Bay Lightning.

“The difference there, in Dallas we were playing well, so we were going to keep doing what we were doing,” said Bowness. “This team (the Blue Jackets) is not playing well. It’s not only the X and O changes, it’s the nastiness, it’s the heart and soul. That has to change.

“Listen, their responsibility as pro athletes is to show up ready to work, ready to compete. We’ll give you the structure to win, but the rest is on you.”

Winnipeg Sun

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/confidence-grows-jets-edge-isles-5-4-for-3rd-straight-win/article_3a5099bf-3898-441b-8d5b-83f8616d7fdf.html

'Confidence' grows, Jets edge Isles 5-4 for 3rd straight win

By Gordon Anderson

Over the last couple of weeks, the Jets have had plenty of opportunities to practice defending one-goal leads.

Adam Lowry netted the game winner late in the second period as the Jets earned a 5-4 victory over the New York Islanders at Canada Life Centre on Tuesday night.

"You've got to have confidence in those (one-goal) games," Mark Scheifele said. "You can't just sit back and expect the time to just run out. You've got to keep pushing and doing the things that got you to that point. I thought we did a good job of that tonight."

Scheifele recorded his 500th assist on Dylan DeMelo's second-period goal.

Lowry's fourth goal of the season at 19:40 of the second period gave the Jets a 5-3 lead heading for the final 20 minutes.

With Ilya Sorokin on the bench for the visitors, Matthew Schafer's long-range shot found the top half of the net with 46 seconds remaining in the game, but the Jets held serve for their third consecutive win and second one-goal win in as many games.

The Isles outshot the Jet 12-2 in the third period, but head coach Scott Arniel was more concerned with the quality of the chances and not the quantity.

"A little trouble hitting the open net ...but at the end of the day we are doing a better job of recognizing, again tonight we did a good job, like we did the other night in the third period where we didn't give much," Arniel said. "They got some stuff on the 6-on-5 at the end, but I liked how we stayed over the top of people and pushed things to the outside."

According to Natura Stat Trick, the visitors generated one high danger chance in the third period and nine for the game. The Jets generated 10 high danger chances through 60 minutes.

Kyle Connor, Josh Morrissey and Jonathan Toews also scored for the Jets. Connor Hellebuyck stopped 23 of 27 shots in the win. The Jets finished off their five-game home stand with a 3-1-1 record.

Anthony Duclair, Emil Heineman, Kyle MacLean and Matthew Schaefer scored for the Islanders. New York falls to 6-11-4 when they outshoot the opponent. They are 18-5-0 when they are outshot by the opponent. Sorokin stopped 17 of 22 shots for the loss.

The Jets are in Minnesota on Thursday night to face the Wild.

Ice Chips

Gustav Nyquist and Isaak Philips and Morgan Barron were scratched.

Injury updates

On Monday, the Jets placed defenceman Colin Miller on injured reserve, retroactive to Jan. 11. Miller was hurt during the first period of Sunday's game against the New Jersey Devils. The injury is in the lower body somewhere. Miller came out for a skate prior to the start of the second period but turned around and headed down the runway to the dressing room. His last shift ended at 16:41 of the first period.

"We're day to day (with Miller)," Arniel said prior to game time. "He's not available for the next three games. We'll just kind of see where we are, he's got to get some feel at the end of the week here, see what he needs to do and what more needs to be done."

Haydn Fleury continues to recover from that frightening spill against the Vegas Golden Knights on Jan. 6. Fleury fell inside the Jets zone and crashed into the end boards during first period action. He broke his nose on the play and suffered neck and back soreness. He left the ice on a stretcher and was taken to the hospital.

"Fleury hasn't even touched the ice," Arniel said. "That's still the next step."

Letting it slide

After the Jets built a 3-0 lead, the Islanders responded with three goals in 2:41 when Duclair, Heineman and MacLean scored.

Duclair's goal was one Hellebuyck might want back as the shot from a bad angle squeezed through the Jets goalie at 7:40. Heineman scored on a penalty shot 78 seconds later, and Maclean found the top half of the net at 10:21 after Neal Pionk lost possession of the puck behind the goal line.

"That was a bit of a roller coaster, for sure," DeMelo said. "(We were) feeling good and they pop in a couple quick and then 'oh, oh, here we go.' But we settled in and we just said. 'let's go after them again and get back to what we were doing (to build the lead)'."

"Obviously getting up 3-0, but then giving it right back," Scheifele said. "It sucked, but the response after that was awesome by everyone. A win's a win."

Lucky number seven

The Jets have scored the opening goal in seven consecutive games. Connor got the party started at 4:20 of the first period when he converted on a rebound from a Scheifele shot from the slot. Connor shook off the check of Matthew Barzal prior to the grabbing the rebound. The marker was his 22nd of the season. The Jets are 16-7-3 when they score first.

Seven goals were scored in the second period with one called off as Scheifele bumped the puck into the net with his left hand during a Jets powerplay.

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/jets-shocked-thrilled-to-see-bowness-back-in-nhl/article_6376230d-54af-4543-9749-4d1d3a303222.html

Jets shocked, thrilled, to see Bowness back in NHL

By Paul Friesen

Adam Lowry was at the vet with his ailing dog on Monday when he got the text from his former head coach.

Rick Bowness had sent text messages to his former captain and assistants Mark Scheifele and Josh Morrissey, giving them a heads-up that he was coming out of retirement.

"I was surprised, with him getting into TV and seemingly very content in retirement," Lowry told The Winnipeg Sun on Tuesday. "We were super excited for him to get back in the game. For someone that's spent the majority of their life in hockey, you could still see the passion when he was talking on the panel. You could still see the desire for it."

Less than two years after he called it quits with the Jets, at the time making no bones about it being the end of his career, "Bones" is back with the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Turning 71 later this month, he'll try to turn around a team that's mired in last place in the NHL's Eastern Conference, not exactly a soft landing spot after 20 months of R & R.

"I was shocked," Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said, having believed, like most, that Bowness had ridden off into the sunset for good. "I'm sure he's watching a ton of hockey. I definitely didn't have that on my bingo card, though. Good for him. Great for the Columbus Blue Jackets organization. You don't want to see anybody get fired. But they're bringing in an amazing person, one of the best guys in the game.

"I'm sure he'll do a great job there."

DeMelo, Lowry, Morrissey, Vlad Namestnikov – everybody asked about Bowness on Tuesday couldn't say enough nice things about him.

"He's a salt-of-the-earth guy," is how DeMelo put it. "Amazing person. Fantastic coach. I just loved his relationship with guys. He was fair, he was honest. The type of guy to put his arm around you after he reams you out and tells you you're going to be great tonight. That stuff was awesome to have. He obviously changed a lot of things for us here in the right way, and built a real solid foundation for us."

Bowness took over the Jets after they'd missed the playoffs in a tumultuous 2021-22 campaign during which Paul Maurice left the team, leaving Lowry's dad, Dave, in charge.

It remains the Jets only non-playoff season over the last eight.

Bowness immediately bumped Winnipeg's win total from 39 to 46, then to 52 in his second year.

The first-round playoff exits were messy, but he left his mark, taking the captain's 'C' from Blake Wheeler, eventually stitching it onto Lowry, and putting in place the foundation DeMelo mentioned, getting even Scheifele to buy into playing both ways.

But instilling a defence-first approach on the ice was only part of Bowness's success. His off-the-ice interactions with players put some real meat on those bones, something he continues to this day.

Wishing his old captain well in his return from hip surgery early this season wasn't even the most recent exchange between the two.

"I had Bones reaching out to me during the losing streak, asking if I needed to vent or needed support," Lowry said. "Unbelievably caring, kind, compassionate. He really puts the player first. He really makes sure that things away from the rink are going well. When he asks you questions, you know that he genuinely cares."

That relationship carries over onto the ice.

"He creates his feeling that you're going to accomplish your goals, but it has to be together," Lowry said. "Everyone's valued, everyone's important, regardless of what you make, regardless of your point totals, time on ice and things like that. He really does a great job of building the team."

Safe to say that togetherness has served the Jets well in what's been a trying season. Had their bond been weak, they'd have splintered into a dozen fragments by now.

"A lot of the things he instilled in us those years are still with our team," Morrissey said.

"He was here for a while and brought the guys closer together," Namestnikov added. "He changed the culture... that's what Bones does. He did that in Dallas, as well. Maybe they brought him in to do that in Columbus as well."

Namestnikov has played under Bowness with three teams: the Jets, Dallas and Tampa Bay.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel played under him in Winnipeg back in the 1980s, then worked with him as his assistant before taking over the head job two years ago.

"He's a lifer. A lifer coach," Arniel said. "And an opportunity to step in and help a group – I guess change his nickname to The Fixer."

Columbus becomes Bowness's 10th NHL team. He's been the head man for eight of them. Nobody can top his 2,726 games behind a bench.

Some health concerns behind him and his wife, Judy, Bowness delivered the same message in Columbus on Tuesday that he says he delivered to players in Winnipeg when he came out of retirement the first time to take the Jets job.

"I'm not looking for a job after this," he said. "I'm coming in here and I'm going to do and I'm going to say whatever has to be done. I'm not a 30-year-old coach worrying about my career. I'm at the end of my career. And it'll be the same approach here."

It worked with the Jets.

"He's going to go in and do a great job," Lowry said. "Like he did when he was here."

https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/jets-players-revisit-heated-bowness-evason-exchange/article_e803c58e-78ab-4af9-bc40-c53da80ab0d1.html

Jets players revisit heated Bowness-Evason exchange

By Paul Friesen

They remember the moment well, because it's not every day your head coach is being challenged to a fight.

"We all know the clip," Winnipeg Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said on Tuesday. "We all know what happened there. I think those two respect each other, at the end of the day. Two guys that I'm sure went at it in their time, when they played. When you see coaches get into it a little bit there, you chuckle."

It was April, 2023, when then-Minnesota coach Dean Evason and then-Jets boss Rick Bowness got into a heated, verbal altercation that had Evason waving Bowness over to settle things the old-fashioned way.

Bowness was livid that Evason had sent tough guy Ryan Reaves onto the ice to fight his captain, Adam Lowry, in the last minute of a game that meant nothing to the Wild – they were out of the playoffs, while the Jets were in.

The exchange took on new meaning when Bowness took the fired Evason's job as head coach in Columbus on Monday.

"I was in the room," Lowry recalled. "I had just fought Reaves. But I do remember the videos after."

Like DeMelo, Lowry wasn't taking any glee in the coaching change.

"You never want to see someone lose their job so someone else gets an opportunity. But that's just the nature of the beast."

Evason, from Flin Flon, Man., actually remained cool during the exchange, simply waving Bowness over. It was the Jets' boss who was hot.

"You wonder what it would be like if they got their hands on each other," DeMelo joked.

https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/we-re-not-cursed-jets-have-some-confidence-again/article_5b287151-613f-41e3-89bd-e8917e1e5926.html

'We're not cursed': Jets have some confidence again

By Paul Friesen

An 11-game losing streak still fresh in their minds, the Winnipeg Jets will try to make it three wins in a row when they host the New York Islanders tonight.

Compared to their state of mind just four days ago, the Jets enter this game feeling like world-beaters.

“When you lose 11 in a row, obviously it's a shot at your confidence,” defenceman Dylan DeMelo told The Winnipeg Sun this morning. “And the way we lost a few of those games, we have the lead in the third period, we're up two goals, whatever it was, you're gripping it, for sure. Guys are feeling it. We were playing not to lose. You're tight and you're on your heels.

“It's (like) 'Don't hit the curb, don't hit the curb.' What are you going to do? You're going to hit the curb.”

For two straight games, the Jets have managed to avoid it, first in a 5-1 romp over the L.A. Kings, then a less-impressive 4-3 squeaker over New Jersey on Sunday.

If the former shed the weight of the world, the latter did something else.

“It's crazy how it goes,” captain Adam Lowry said. “To see one finally go your way, it's a big weight off your shoulder. I wouldn't say (Sunday's win) was one of our masterpieces, by any means. It was a bit of a sloppy game, especially the first two periods. To find a way to go ahead... it's almost a relief that we're not some cursed team that's never going to win one of these close games. You can build a little bit of confidence.”

In the Islanders, the Jets face a team that's 6-2-2 in their last 10 games, 25-15-5 overall, good for second place in their division, fifth in the Eastern Conference.

They're led offensively by Mathew Barzal's 36 points, but are without leading goal scorer Bo Horvat.

Defenceman Matthew Schaefer might be their biggest sensation. The 18-year-old has 12 goals, 17 assists, as a rookie.

“I'm excited to see Schaefer live,” Lowry said. “I missed the first game against him, and he's blossomed. To see a defenceman in their first year – generally it takes them a couple years to get comfortable and figure out the game. He's going to be a special player for a long time.”

Jets coach Scott Arniel calls Schaeffer “the real deal.”

“He's lugging big ice, he's playing against the other team's top lines, he's playing against heavy players,” Arniel said. “Teams are trying to (get him) off his game by being physical against him, and nothing seems to faze him.”

The Jets beat the Islanders 5-2 in their barn in the third game of the season.

These last two wins have improved their record to 17-22-5, still second-last in the Western Conference and nine points out of a wildcard playoff spot.

“We've got some guys that broke through some slumps, too,” DeMelo said, referring to teammates Jonathan Toews and Vlad Namestnikov, who broke lengthy goal droughts these last two games. “We're definitely feeling better than we were. We've got to keep going, though. We've got to bury all that, get ready for another game. Even though we've won two in a row, can't take a breath now.

“We've got a lot of ground to make up.”

The Jets will make one lineup change, inserting defenceman Luke Schenn for the injured Colin Miller.

Connor Hellebuyck, with a record of 10-12-4, a 2.70 goals-against-average and .901 saves percentage, gets the call in goal, while the Islanders counter with Ilya Sorokin, who's 14-10-2 with a 2.47 GAA and .915 saves percentage.

It's the last of a five-game home stand for Winnipeg. They visit Minnesota on Thursday, then return home to play Toronto on Saturday.

Associated Press

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/winnipeg/article/healthy-and-rested-rick-bowness-ready-for-next-challenge-as-blue-jackets-head-coach/>

Healthy and rested Rick Bowness ready for next challenge as Blue Jackets head coach

By The Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — Rick Bowness was enjoying time on his boat in Florida when he received a call from Don Waddell on Monday afternoon.

Bowness thought the call from the Columbus Blue Jackets president of hockey operations and general manager was about a player Bowness once coached.

It turned out to be something else — a head coaching offer.

Bowness was on the ice at Nationwide Arena on Tuesday morning, conducting practice after accepting Waddell's offer to take over as head coach. Bowness doesn't have much time to get acquainted with his new team as the Blue Jackets host the Calgary Flames on Tuesday night.

This move marks Bowness' return behind an NHL bench. He had retired in the spring of 2024, ending a two-year stint with the Winnipeg Jets. Bowness explained on Tuesday that he stepped down because of health issues he and his wife, Judy, were experiencing.

The 70-year-old hockey lifer has coached both iterations of the Jets, as well as Boston, Ottawa, the New York Islanders, Phoenix and Dallas. He took over the Stars during the 2019-20 season and led them to the Stanley Cup Final in the 2020 pandemic bubble.

Even though Bowness becomes the league's oldest head coach and turns 71 on Jan. 25, he says he is ready and rested for another opportunity.

“I feel a whole lot better. Judy's doing great, and so that opened the door again,” Bowness said. “I did want to coach again.”

Bowness replaces Dean Evason, who was in his second year and became the first NHL coach fired this season. Assistant coach Steve McCarthy was also fired.

Columbus is last in the East with a 19-19-7 record, seven points out of a playoff spot with 12 games until the Olympic break.

Last season, the Blue Jackets were the feel-good story, coming within two points of the final playoff spot after the death of star forward Johnny Gaudreau in August 2024. During that emotional year, Evason was a Coach of the Year candidate as he guided the team to a 23-point improvement.

“For us, a bit of a shock, a wake-up call that we can use and hopefully use in the right way,” team captain Boone Jenner said.

Bowness is the 14th coach in Columbus’ 25 seasons. He will try to get the Blue Jackets into the playoffs for the first time since 2019-20.

Waddell cited blowing a three-goal lead in a 5-4 overtime loss to Pittsburgh on Jan. 4 and a subsequent 1-3 road trip as reasons why he felt a change was needed.

“I have all the respect in the world for Dean and Steve. I think last year they did a tremendous job in very difficult situations, but again, I think our expectations this year were higher than what we’re achieving right now,” Waddell said. “I talked to some of the younger players and some of the leaders. They weren’t, by any means, bashing the coach, but I could tell they were frustrated with how things were going. So it all came to a point over the weekend.”

Besides eliminating poor third periods, Bowness cited other defensive factors, including limiting odd-man rushes and shooting chances in the slot. Columbus also has the fourth-worst penalty-killing unit in the league.

“You don’t score your way into the playoffs. This isn’t the ’80s, man,” he said. “I’m going to say whatever has to be done. I’m not a 30-year-old coach worrying about my career. I’m at the end of my career. Anybody who’s worried about next year is taking the wrong approach on this whole thing.”

Sean Monahan, who played for Bowness in Winnipeg in 2023-24, said he was surprised by the move but that Bowness can bring structure to the team while being heavy on details.

“He can be hard on guys. He’s vocal. He’s fun to play for because he’s motivated to be out there to coach to get the two points every night, and I think he’s been through it all,” Monahan said. “He’s done it a long time, and he’s had a lot of success at it. So, you’ve got a lot of respect for a guy like that.”

TSN.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/sunday-overreactions-arniel-keefe-both-on-hot-seat/>

Jets overcome Islanders rally for third straight win (VIDEO)

The Jets gave up a 3-0 lead before holding on to win 5-4 over the Islanders. TSN's Dan Robertson and Kevin Sawyer have more on how the Jets pulled off third win in a row.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11612273/winnipeg-jets-outlast-islanders-5-4-for-third-straight-victory/>

Winnipeg Jets outlast Islanders 5-4 for third straight victory

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

After failing to find enough goals to win many games for close to two months, especially from depth players, the Winnipeg Jets are suddenly flush with offence.

Their latest outburst came in a 5-4 win over the visiting New York Islanders Tuesday night, giving the Jets their first three-game win streak in almost two and a half months.

The Jets wasted a three-goal lead as the Isles scored three times in less than three minutes in the second stanza, but the Jets took the lead back near the end of the frame and never relinquished it.

“Obviously getting up three-nothing and then kinda giving it right back obviously sucked,” said Jets forward Mark Scheifele. “But the response after that was awesome by everyone, so a win is a win.”

It was a wild second period with the two teams combining to score seven goals.

“A bit of a roller coaster for sure,” said Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo. “Feeling good and then they pop in a couple pretty quick and then it’s like oh, oh, here we go. But we settled in and we just said go after them again, get back to what we were doing and get on the forecheck and that’s exactly what happened on that goal.”

It’s their first three-game win streak since Nov. 1.

Jonathan Toews is heating up as he scored for the third straight game. DeMelo, Kyle Connor, Josh Morrissey, and Adam Lowry had the other Jets’ markers. Scheifele had a gloved in goal disallowed but recorded his 500th career assist in the win.

The Jets had lost their last 13 one-goal games before picking up back-to-back one goal victories.

The Jets have the scored the first goal in seven straight games now and are finally getting offensive contributions from up and down the lineup.

“It means a lot,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “Now every line is dangerous and makes it for the opposition as well. They just can’t sorta zero in just on Schife’s line and I think that you can see guys making plays now, feeling more confident with the puck. And when you do that, you play a more of a puck possession game.”

Winnipeg opened the scoring just 4:20 into the game thanks to their top line. They cycled the puck around the Islanders end before Scheifele sent a puck on goal from the point. It was touched en route to the net by Alex Iafallo and stopped by Ilya Sorokin but Connor won the race to the rebound and tucked it home for his 22nd of the season.

Right as Connor was scoring, Islanders rookie blueliner Matthew Schaefer took a stick to the midsection as he collided in the slot with Morrissey. He spent a minute or so down on the ice before getting up and initially went to the bench before heading to the locker room. He would return to the bench with 3:49 left in the first.

While he was absent, the Islanders got the first power play of the game thanks to a questionable hooking call on Morrissey. New York did nothing with it and Winnipeg entered the first intermission with a 1-0 lead.

The Jets outshot the Islanders 9-7 in the first.

Winnipeg extended their lead at the 5:41 mark of the second. After the second line carried the puck into the Islanders' end, Cole Perfetti tried to centre the puck to Gabriel Vilardi, which created a scramble in front of Sorokin. The puck eventually squirted out to Morrissey, who circled back to the slot, turned and fired a shot that eluded Sorokin for his eighth of the season.

Off the ensuing faceoff at centre ice, Scott Mayfield was called for tripping, sending the Jets to their first power play of the night and they took full advantage, thanks to a bit of a lucky break.

Connor sent a cross-ice pass to Vilardi for a one-timer. His shot deflected off an Islanders stick and into the body of Toews at the side of the net. The puck dropped straight down into the crease before Toews banged it home for his third goal in as many games.

Things appeared to be going swimmingly at this point for the Jets, but that was about to drastically change as the Islanders would score three times in 2:41 to draw even.

The first came after Ryan Pulock barely kept the puck in at the Winnipeg blue line but it was close enough that Winnipeg's forwards flew the zone. The puck went down low to Andres Lee, who spotted an open Anthony Duclair at the faceoff dot. He took a pass and whipped a shot that snuck through Connor Hellebuyck to get the Islanders on the board at the 7:40 mark.

Just over a minute later, Emil Heineman got free behind the Jets defence and took a stretch pass that sprung him on a breakaway. As he got a shot off that hit the crossbar, he was slashed by Luke Schenn, gifting Heineman a penalty shot.

He made no mistake, putting a nice shoulder fake on Hellebuyck before roofing a backhand to make it 3-2 at the 8:58 mark.

Then at the 10:21 mark, New York drew level thanks to another defensive breakdown by the Jets. Neal Pionk was stripped of the puck in the corner by Casey Cizikas, who took it behind the net before spotting a wide-open Kyle MacLean in the slot. MacLean held it for a split-second before snapping a shot past Hellebuyck.

But the Jets answered back just over two minutes later. Winnipeg won the puck out of a scrum in the corner of the Islanders' end before Scheifele found DeMelo at the point. His shot eluded Sorokin to make it 4-3 with his third of the season. Scheifele also picked up his 500th assist on the play.

Islanders head coach Patrick Roy unsuccessfully challenged the goal, thinking there was goaltender interference even though there really was no justification for the challenge.

He got away with it, though, as Winnipeg failed to score on the power play...legally. Scheifele batted a loose puck into the net with his glove, which was initially called a good goal but was waved off after a quick discussion between officials.

The Jets restored their two-goal lead with just 20 seconds left in the second when a Pionk point shot glanced off the body of Adam Lowry and past Sorokin, his fourth of the season that put the cherry on top of a chaotic period that featured a total of seven goals on 19 shots.

As wild as the second period was, things settled down in the third as neither team was able to generate a whole lot, though each goalie had to make one or two solid saves.

Sorokin left the ice for an extra attacker with just over three minutes left with the Islanders still down by two. Winnipeg had a couple chances to ice the game into the empty net but failed, leading to Schaefer beating Hellebuyck with a seeing-eye wrister with 45 seconds remaining.

But that's as close as the Islanders would get as the Jets closed the book on a third straight win, a span in which they have now scored 14 goals.

The Jets will now embark on a quick one-game road trip in Minnesota, facing the Wild Thursday night at 7 p.m. Pregame coverage on 680 CJOB will begin just after 5 p.m.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11612815/analysis-edmonds-winnipeg-jets-three-wins/>

ANALYSIS: Jets have new life, but lots of work yet to do

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

After three straight wins, the Winnipeg Jets have infused new life back into their season, but realistically, they're still quite a distance from completely turning the corner.

At this moment, the Jets are eight points out of a wild-card spot in the Western Conference. While another solid week might cut that deficit in half, it's still going to be 40 miles of hard road for the foreseeable future to maintain any sort of playoff relevance.

Sure, the coaching staff and players believe they're still capable of climbing out of the crater they landed in after two forgettable months of November and December.

In fact, head coach Scott Arniel told everyone what direction he's looking toward when he said on the weekend, "our mindset is catching the teams above us now."

But the Jets' situation is obscure and made even more opaque because of the quirkiness of the business schedule centred around the upcoming Olympics, the NHL roster freeze from Feb. 4 to 22 during the Winter Games, and then a trade deadline set for March 6.

In other words, it doesn't provide a lot of time for a team like Winnipeg to change from one plan to another depending on how the team has performed from week to week.

Which is why what you're likely to see is a roster that remains mostly intact, but with a healthy divesting of some veteran assets along the way.

After all, steering this thing in the middle to remain competitive while changing out some personnel is probably the best approach, rather than hoping for a miracle and for the team to completely turn the corner.

Because if we know two things for sure at this stage, they're that turning the corner completely may never come for Winnipeg this season, and secondly — and more importantly — hope is not a strategy.