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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-get-ot-winner-from-wagner>

***Three things - Jets get OT winner from Wagner
Wagner scores 1:17 into overtime to give Jets 3-2 win over Ottawa***

By Jamie Thomas

MONTREAL – Fabian Wagner scored 1:17 into overtime to give the Winnipeg Jets a 3-2 win over the Ottawa Senators at the Bell Centre Sunday night.

Alex Worthington made 36 saves for Winnipeg who finished the 2025 Prospect Showdown with a perfect 2-0 record. Ben Zloty and Jacob Julien scored the other goals for Winnipeg.

TIRED LEGS

The Jets did a great job considering the amount of energy they expended in the 4-3 win over Montreal on Saturday night. They were down a forward with Kieron Walton out with an upper body injury and managed to grind out an impressive victory. Ottawa provided a big challenge with 10 players on their roster who played pro hockey last season.

“I thought our systems were better tonight than they were last night. They had a lot of shots, but they were from the outside,” said head coach Mark Morrison.

“I think we didn’t give up a lot from the interior of the ice, we did have some chances in the third and got lucky in overtime.”

ANOTHER SOLID PERFORMANCE BETWEEN THE PIPES

Alex Worthington who signed a two-year contract with the Manitoba Moose this off-season got off to a great start making 36 saves for the Jets. Ottawa’s game plan was sending a lot of traffic in front of Worthington, and the 20-year-old was equal to the task. The former Oil King was quick to point out the work his defence did tonight to help him out.

“Yeah, Ottawa definitely plays a hard game, they play a great style of hockey and get bodies in front,” said Worthington.

“But our D were great all night long and made it easy for me to see the puck. Like I said, I was very thankful for our D, and it was fun.”

WAGNER OVERTIME WINNER

Fabian Wagner had a solid first season with the Moose in 2024-25, at one point he scored seven goals in five games. Tonight, in the first period, Fabian Wagner had a great chance to score and also set up another opportunity. The Swedish forward was

quiet until overtime when he picked up a Danny Zhilkin rebound and ended the game with a quick shot past Ottawa goaltender Lucas Beckman.

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-divincentiis-puts-on-a-show-at-bell-centre>

***Three things - DiVincentiis puts on a show at Bell Centre
DiVincentiis makes 38 saves and Zhilkin scores twice in 4-3 win over Canadiens
at Prospect Showdown***

By Jamie Thomas

MONTREAL – The Winnipeg Jets beat the Montreal Canadiens 4-3 tonight in their first game of the 2025 Prospect Showdown at the Bell Centre. Danny Zhilkin scored the game winning goal with 25 seconds left in the third period and Dominic DiVincentiis made 38 saves to lead the Jets. Winnipeg will face Ottawa tomorrow night at 6 pm CT and you can watch that game on winnipegjets.com.

DOM'S NIGHT

DiVincentiis was ready to go from the drop of the puck and made a bunch of highlight reel saves throughout the night and was the Jets best player.

"I've said that to everybody around here, I think the goalie was our best player," said Jets head coach Mark Morrison.

"He made some outstanding saves."

DiVincentiis was drafted by the Jets in the seventh round in 2022 at the Bell Centre and he made sure his return to Montreal was a memorable one in front of 20 thousand plus.

"The nerves and excitement were though the roof for us, but we really stepped into our game quickly," said DiVincentiis.

"The guys did a fantastic job tonight keeping that game tight."

ZHILKIN TAKES CARE OF BUSINESS

Like DiVincentiis, Danny Zhilkin was also drafted by Winnipeg in 2022. The Jets centreman helped the team overcome the loss of Kieron Walton in the first period, forcing them to play with just 11 forwards the rest of the night. On top of his game winner, Zhilkin scored Winnipeg's first goal on the power play in the second period and blocked a shot late in the game to preserve the win.

"It was unbelievable. There were guys blocking shots, all four lines were doing the things we were asked to do," said Zhilkin.

"It was unbelievable. One of the best games I've ever been a part of, that was a super fun experience."

ANOTHER PROVIDENCE GUY

Winnipeg has had great success finding players from Providence College over the years, Brandon Tanev and Parker Ford come to mind. It seems they might have found another gem in Chase Yoder. The 23-year-old just wrapped up his fifth campaign at Providence and signed with the Moose in the off-season. Yoder assisted on Zhilkin's game winning goal and back in the second period, tied the game at two with this effort.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/2025/09/14/jets-young-star-shines-brightly-in-montreal>

Jets young star shines brightly in Montreal Winnipeg's youth shows well in pair of wins in Montreal

By: Mike McIntyre

Have yourself a weekend, Danny Zhilkin.

The Winnipeg Jets prospect played a starring role in back-to-back victories over the young stars of the Montreal Canadiens and Ottawa Senators.

On Saturday night, Zhilkin scored twice — including the game-winner with just 25 seconds left in regulation — as the Jets rallied for a 4-3 triumph. On Sunday evening, the 22-year-old set up two goals, including Fabian Wagner's overtime dagger in a 3-2 win.

Safe to say, Zhilkin enjoyed his return to the Bell Centre — the very arena where he was drafted in the third round (77th overall) in 2022.

“Super awesome. Full circle moment,” is how Zhilkin described it during a chat with the club's social media squad. “You know, I had my whole family here for the draft. Just to come back here and pay in front of 20,000 plus fans was a great experience, for sure.”

Zhilkin, who was born in Russia but primarily raised in Canada, has endured a tough start to his professional career following three seasons in the Ontario Hockey League with Guelph and Kitchener. Injuries have limited him to just 97 games over his first two years with the Manitoba Moose, producing only 17 points (5G, 12A).

Development is rarely a straight line, and the speedy centre's performance at the Prospect Challenge suggests brighter days may be ahead.

“Just to come back here and pay in front of 20,000 plus fans was a great experience, for sure.”

“He came here in great shape, spent the summer working really hard, and it paid off,” said Moose coach Mark Morrison, who guided the kids into battle against the Habs and Senators.

“We’re seeing what we’re going to see from Danny.”

Wagner, also drafted in Montreal in 2022, was thrilled to add another highlight from the building to his memory bank.

“It was a great pass by (Zhilkin),” said the Swedish forward, who had 13 points (8G, 5A) in 50 games as a rookie with the Moose last year. “You always want to win. We had a really good compete level and that’s why we won this game.”

Zhilkin, who also made a key shot block in the dying seconds to help preserve Saturday’s win, wasn’t the only standout. Several of his teammates boosted their stock with strong showings. Here’s a look:

Masked men: Goaltender Domenic DiVincentiis was brilliant against Montreal, stopping 38 of 41 shots. The ice was often tilted toward him, but the 21-year-old — another member of the 2022 draft class — stood tall. After a strong rookie pro season that began in the ECHL and ended in the AHL, he’ll look to build on that with the Moose.

“The man of the match,” is how Morrison described him.

Not to be outdone was 20-year-old undrafted rookie Alex Worthington, signed by the Moose this summer after finishing his WHL career with Edmonton. He turned aside 36 of 38 shots on Sunday against Ottawa. With DiVincentiis and Thomas Milic likely manning the Moose net, Worthington may start in the ECHL but certainly made a strong first impression.

“I felt really good. The guys were great, and it was a great group effort,” said Worthington.

Colby Barlow: The 18th-overall pick in 2023 was noticeable in both games, scoring once and adding an assist against Montreal, then making a slick bank pass that led to defenceman Ben Zloty’s highlight-reel goal against Ottawa.

Barlow, 20, was close to an even bigger offensive output — a goal was called back against Montreal for a high stick, and he later rang one off the post against Ottawa.

There’s no question the talent is there, as proven by the strong finish to his junior career last spring when he piled up 33 points (14G, 19A) in 21 playoff games with Oshawa.

Nikita Chibrikov: The plucky Russian forward, who suffered a season-ending knee injury last January, worked off some rust and reminded everyone why he’s an intriguing prospect. The speed, skill and grit are evident.

Chibrikov had a scare Sunday when he was leveled from behind by an Ottawa player, crashing awkwardly into the boards. Teammate Elias Salomonsson immediately jumped in to defend him. Chibrikov quickly shook it off, then fired a shot that Jacob Julien tipped home on the ensuing power play.

Brayden Yager and Elias Salomonsson: Nothing flashy, but Winnipeg's top forward prospect and top defence prospect were solid at both ends. Each recorded a secondary assist. Both are likely headed for AHL seasoning this fall, but their futures remain bright.

Chase Yoder: The Jets have found success signing free agents out of Providence College — see Brandon Tanev and Parker Ford. Could Yoder make it a hat trick? The 23-year-old forward, signed to an AHL deal this summer, scored a highlight-reel goal against Montreal and added an assist. He nearly scored again against Ottawa, ringing one off the post.

At 5-foot-11 and 185 pounds, Yoder isn't the biggest, but he brings a relentless motor.

Extra, Extra: Kieron Walton was injured against Montreal after a heavy hit and missed the rest of the weekend. With only 12 forwards on the trip, Winnipeg had to play with 11 against Ottawa. Walton's undrafted twin brother, Conor, stepped in as a seventh defenceman. He had been invited as a free agent.

Jacob Cloutier, an 18-year-old forward and seventh-round pick this past summer, chipped in two assists against Montreal.

In total, 14 players from this mini-tournament will move on to Jets main camp starting Thursday: DiVincentiis and Worthington in goal; Salomonsson and Eddison Engle on the back end; and Zhilkin, Wagner, Barlow, Chibrikov, Yager, Julien, Cloutier, Walton, Kevin He and Owen Martin up front.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/09/11/excited-to-get-back-out-there>

Jets mailbag: The state of the Jets heading into the season Your September Jets questions answered

By: Mike McIntyre Ken Wiebe

The boys are back in town, and the Winnipeg Jets are set to launch another season — the 15th of the 2.0 era — with training camp opening this week.

Excitement and expectations are running high after last year's banner run: a division title, a conference crown, and a Presidents' Trophy, capped by the unforgettable Manitoba Miracle in Round 1 of the playoffs.

So, how do they follow that up? We're about to find out.

As you'd expect, this month's mailbag is packed with questions about the road ahead — from key storylines to roster battles that will shape the weeks to come.

Free Press hockey writers Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe are here with the answers.

1. For a team intent on contending in their window of the next three years, one could view this offseason as a disappointment and step back roster wise with questions still lingering down centre ice. What do you project the points total for this roster by seasons end? TERRAG

MCINTYRE: While a second-round playoff exit was obviously disappointing, there was no five-alarm fire that needed to be snuffed out this summer. The Jets still have a very solid foundation to build on, so minor tweaking as opposed to a major overhaul was the prudent move.

Plus, the team still has ample cap space to potentially weaponize at or near the trade deadline to fill holes.

I don't expect a 15-1-0 start to the 2025-26 campaign, nor do I envision a second-straight Presidents' Trophy. And you know what? That's just fine. As Florida and Edmonton showed last season — both finished third in their divisions before stepping on the gas in the playoffs — this really is a marathon, not a sprint.

I see the Jets still finishing second in the Central with 101 points, behind only the Dallas Stars and just ahead of the Colorado Avalanche. The ultimate test, of course, will come after that.

WIEBE: The Jets lost some key cogs, there's no argument here, but this roster still looks like a legitimate contender to me.

The Jets have the reigning Hart Trophy and Vezina Trophy winner in Connor Hellebuyck and having a workhorse goalie is a critical part of being a contender. During the past three seasons, the Jets made big strides when it comes to their commitment to team defence. That's another essential part of teams that have success, not only in the regular season but during the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Kyle Connor is coming off a 97-point season, Mark Scheifele had the highest point total of his career (87) and defenceman Josh Morrissey was fourth in Norris Trophy balloting.

The Jets are a four-line team with ample depth and they had the most efficient power play in the NHL last season. Further improvements are required to the penalty kill and the Jets have got some cap space to augment the roster as well.

Yes, the Jets' core group has dealt with plenty of playoff disappointments, but they've taken important strides, with the biggest ones still to come.

As for questions down the middle, Jonathan Toews figures to be one of the answers and with Lowry progressing nicely after off-season hip surgery, centre could end up being a position of strength for the Jets.

Winnipeg should finish in the top three in the Central Division once again, jockeying for position with both the Stars and Avalanche. Like Mike, I see the Jets finishing with north of 100 points again. Let's say 106.

2a What percentage do you have KC signing in Winnipeg? NELLY

2b. What is your percentage likelihood that Kyle Connor will re-sign with the Jets and what do you envision the offer will need to be to get his autograph on a contract with the Jets? CRAIG

MCINTYRE: Ahh, the multi-million dollar question(s).

I'm confident Connor re-ups with the team that brought him into the NHL, and I'd be surprised if business doesn't get completed before the start of the regular-season on Oct. 9. However, should that not occur, then I give everyone permission to start to worry.

Connor got back in town this weekend and I'd think talks should heat up now between his camp and general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff over the next few weeks.

As for what kind of number he might be looking for, there's no doubt it's going to be in the double-digits. What I wonder is if Connor is looking for something shorter-term — think three or four years — which would allow him to still cash in on another big-money extension down the road, when the salary cap is expected to jump even higher. That kind of deal would also line him up with several of Winnipeg's other core players. My prediction? 4 years, \$10.5 million AAV.

3a. Regarding Captain Serious. For you, what is the minimum he needs to do in order for his return to be considered a success? Play 50 games? Score 20 goals? An intangible? As a partial fan, my fear is it was a mistake to sign him factoring in age and health. I'm happy to be wrong though. STEVE

3b. How many games do Jets give Toews to figure it out? 30-40? MATT

WIEBE: When speaking to reporters on Thursday, Toews conceded there is some rust to shake off after a two-year absence but he's feeling strong on his feet and his legs are allowing him to get around the ice pretty well, all things considered. He also expects to get better and better as the season moves along.

It won't take Toews 30 or 40 games to figure it out. He's put in the work and is determined to make an impact. He's also clearly enjoying being back in the NHL environment and his smarts and skill set should allow him to be a contributor.

As for what he needs to do to be considered a success? When you consider the health challenges he's endured, making it back to playing in the NHL is a success in and of itself. But Toews isn't embarking on this comeback just to be on the ice again, he's back to try to help the Jets take the next step as an organization. When you look at his will to win and how he's wired, load management is a foreign concept to Toews. Look for him to play 75-to-80 games, provided his body allows him too.

As for points and projections, Toews often sacrificed personal production for the betterment of his team. Two-way play has always been the priority, but he's also someone who might score 20 goals and be north of 50 points — which would be steady production for a second-line centre. Toews' leadership and intangibles have always been an important part of what he brings to the rink. His value will come both on and off the ice. Toews' signing has generated plenty of buzz around the league and there are a lot of people around the hockey world rooting for him. Jets players are excited to have him in the fold and Toews emphasized he's here to earn the respect of his new teammates. Signing him was not a mistake. It was a smart move.

4. How do the Jets move forward with an even more successful campaign when one of their leading scorers left while (more importantly) their best goalie appears to not be able to handle the pressure of the playoffs? GUS

MCINTYRE: While it's true the Jets don't have a player like Nikolaj Ehlers to step in and immediately replace the guy known as "Fly," I'm not overly concerned about the state of the offence.

Whether it's increased production from young players like Gabe Vilardi, Cole Perfetti and Morgan Barron or contributions from veteran free agents additions like Jonathan Toews, Gustav Nyquist and Tanner Pearson, there should be enough of a scoring-by-committee to remain competitive.

The power play will obviously require some tweaks without Ehlers, but if they find a way to keep that clicking at a high rate than all should be well.

As for Connor Hellebuyck, he took a big step in the second round against Dallas last spring. He was solid on the road and outstanding at home, with a pair of shutouts, and there's enough there to build on. Time will ultimately tell, of course.

5. Which Jet/Moose players are in their "must have a breakout season" this year? IMHO, Brad Lambert is tops but I'm curious to know your list. JOE

WIEBE: Must is a relative term and breakout season is often a moving target as well.

Last season, both Cole Perfetti and Dylan Samberg had what I would call a breakout season. With Perfetti firmly establishing himself as a second-line winger who chipped in both at even-strength and on the power play. Samberg clearly showed he was ready for second-pairing and top penalty-killing minutes and also chipped in more offensively, despite missing considerable time with a fractured foot after blocking a Steven Stamkos one-timer in November.

After the departure of Nikolaj Ehlers, another step forward for Perfetti would help alleviate some of the lost offensive production. Nobody is expecting Perfetti to do it on his own, but if he's promoted to the top power play unit and continues his development, a jump from 50 to 65 or 70 points isn't out of the question while delivering his first 20-goal campaign.

As for Lambert, it's a critical year for his development, whether he spends more time with the Jets or Moose. Given how much speed left the Jets this off-season (Ehlers, Mason Appleton, Brandon Tanev, Rasmus Kupari), Lambert is someone with explosiveness. Can he show he's ready for prime time? If he does, it's most likely to be on the wing and not at centre.

Not sure it falls into "must have" territory, but Morgan Barron remains someone who could hit 15 goals if he moves from fourth line to third line duty — given the power forward elements he brings to the game.

Nikita Chibrikov is the other forward prospect who appears to be knocking on the door, so taking the next step is important for him. Chibrikov has shown well in his small sample size with the Jets (three goals, four points in five NHL games), but he's coming off a knee injury that cost him nearly half a season and is facing plenty of competition on the winger depth chart.

6. Assuming full player health from all forwards, who would you project to be on the fourth line? CRAIG

MCINTYRE: There are myriad options, but here's my best guess once captain Adam Lowry is back and assuming no other injuries: Vlad Namestnikov between Alex Iafallo and one of Cole Koepke or Tanner Pearson. (This would allow for a third line of Lowry, Nino Niederreiter and Morgan Barron, who will likely start the season as the 4C with Namestnikov moving up to 3C).

WIEBE: I see a plethora of permutations and combinations available, some of which will get a test drive during the exhibition season. Given Lowry's status, there could be some fluidity early in the season. As Mike mentions, Barron is a strong candidate for an enhanced role on the third line when Lowry returns — unless Arniel wants him to play in the middle full-time. Vladislav Namestnikov is about to move into Alex Iafallo territory, as someone who could be on the second line one day and the fourth line on the next and also be an option to be on the checking line. For the season opener, look for Barron at

centre between Koepke and Pearson — my sleeper for the fourth line is Samuel Fagemo. Parker Ford could also work himself into the mix here.

7. Kieron Walton seems to be a very pleasant surprise for the Jets. I see he has a twin brother who is undrafted but invited to the rookie showcase. Do you think there is a second big win potentially here? Or is he just filling a spot on the roster.
@elcoito.bsky.social

MCINTYRE: Folks down at the Hockey For All Centre this past week were not seeing double.

There was indeed a grand total of 12 feet, 11 inches of Walton on the ice — 6-6 Kieron, drafted in the sixth round by the Jets in 2024, and undrafted Conor, who stands 6-5 and was a free agent invite to the rookie showcase.

Both players are expected to head back to junior this fall — Kieron, a forward, will play one final year with Sudbury, looking to build off a monster season in which he had 92 points (38G, 54A) in 66 games. Conor, a defenceman, will return to Windsor, where he had 13 points (3G, 10A) in 65 games last year.

For that reason, I wouldn't expect the Jets (or any other team) to offer him a contract just yet, but something at the end of next year — whether it's an NHL deal or maybe an AHL contract — wouldn't be out of the question. At this point, Conor (and a handful of others) are simply getting a look by the organization for some valuable information they might use down the road.

8. Kevin He and Kieron Walton are two Jets prospects that had great seasons in the Canadian Hockey League. What are their NHL player comparables and likely future spots? BUBBA B

WIEBE: He and Walton look like two later-rounders who have quickly worked their way into bright future territory.

He is an explosive skater with finishing ability and turned heads at training camp last fall with his speed and willingness to finish checks. It's still pretty early in the evaluation process, though He looks like someone who could work his way into a middle-six role in the not-too-distant future. Before we move along, we're talking about after He gets some professional experience skating with the Moose next season and potentially for part of the one after that. He is expected to go back to junior for another OHL season and could be a candidate to eclipse 40 goals for the first time after producing 21, 31 and 36 goals during his first three seasons with the Niagara Ice Dogs.

The biggest thing that stands out about Walton — aside from his size, as he's listed at 6-6 and 216 pounds — is that he jumped from 18 goals and 43 points in his draft year to 38 goals and 92 points last season. What kind of jump can he expect in his fourth OHL season? If he threatens 50 goals and/or 100 points, it only adds to the intrigue of Walton

as a prospect as he prepares to turn pro next fall. Walton is skilled for a big man and made a four-game cameo with the Moose last spring. He can play centre or wing, so that should enhance his chances of being a full-time NHLer. We'll need to see how he adapts to the pro game as he continues his development before predicting whether he can be a middle-six or bottom-six player.

As for comparables, it's too early and I haven't seen these two guys play enough live yet to provide one that is suitable.

9. Of all the last few year's picks, who has to go back to junior, who can potentially play on the Moose? @golferwpg.bsky.social

MCINTYRE: There are three young prospects slated to turn pro this fall and join the Jets organization — forwards Brayden Yager, Colby Barlow and Jacob Julien. I'd expect the trio to begin the year with the Manitoba Moose, getting their feet wet at that level and, hopefully, work themselves into potential call-up situations as the season progresses.

All other recent picks are in the camp of either needing to crack the NHL roster or have to be sent back to junior — forwards Owen Martin (2025), Jacob Cloutier (2025) and Kevin He (2024) and defenceman Edison Engle (2025).

Other recent picks such as Sascha Boumedienne (2025, college), Viktor Klingsell (2025, Europe), Alfons Freij (2024, Europe) Markus Loponen (2024, unsigned), Zach Nehring (2023, college) and Garrett Brown (2022, college) are in the pipeline but won't be in camp this year.

10. I sense people are sleeping a bit on the offseason signing of Samuel Fagemo. Is he perhaps going to be ahead of Brad Lambert and Nikita Chibrikov on the call up depth chart? @aavcocup.bsky.social

WIEBE: Some people might be sleeping on the signing of Fagemo, but it was viewed as an important depth signing by both Mike and myself.

Fagemo might only have 21 NHL games (three goals, one assist) on his resume, but there's certainly potential for this player to be more than just a top-line American Hockey League player. He was claimed off waivers by the Nashville Predators during the 2023-24 season, so he's attracted the attention of pro scouts and amateur scouts previously, as someone chosen in the second round (50th overall) by the Los Angeles Kings in 2019. He's been highly productive in the AHL, including a 43-goal, 62-point campaign with the Ontario Reign in 50 games two seasons ago.

Watching him in person last week, Fagemo moves well and can shoot the puck. Coming up in the Kings' system means he should be a determined, two-way player as well.

As for where he fits on the depth chart, that will depend on what impression he leaves on Jets head coach Scott Arniel and company during the coming weeks. There could certainly be a scenario where he could be called up ahead of Lambert and/or Chibrikov, but it's important to remember that adding Fagemo was also done with the idea of helping Lambert and Chibrikov get better. They might even be linemates with the Moose, since Fagemo can play both wings. The Jets don't have a lot of right-handed shots at forward on the organizational depth chart, so Fagemo brings additional value in that regard. I see NHL games with the Jets in Fagemo's future.

11. The Jets have not inducted anyone in to their Hall of Fame for a couple of seasons now. Do you think they will this season? And if so who would be the logical choices?

KELLY

MCINTYRE: As we enter the 15th season of the 2.0 era, I wonder if the time has arrived to start looking in the not-so-distant past.

What about a trifecta celebrating three Atlanta originals — Dustin Byfuglien, Bryan Little and Blake Wheeler? All made massive contributions on and off the ice in numerous ways, and honouring them would be a bit of a full-circle moment, don't you think?

Plus, the roof might come off Canada Life Centre if they can convince "Big Buff" to put down his fishing rod for a few days and come back up to the place where he's still beloved to get his rightful moment in the spotlight.

12. How important is it for the Manitoba Moose to have a deep Calder Cup run this season? And is Coach Mark Morrisson's job on the line now with Bob Nardella in the fold? JOE

WIEBE: Thanks to a number of important depth signings and quality prospects entering the pipeline, the Moose are well-positioned to be much improved from the group that missed the playoffs last season and struggled to score goals.

There are a number of factors that go into both having a successful regular season to get into the playoffs and then a lengthy post-season run after that. Waivers will be the first factor to monitor in early October, as the Jets have a couple of blue-liners that could attract interest, depending on injuries. The Jets have improved their depth in the crease with the addition of Winnipegger Isaak Poultier to the pair of Dom DiVincenzi and Thomas Milic and they figure to be much better up front as well, with guys like Fagemo, Phil Di Giuseppe, Walker Duehr potentially joining other experienced depth players like Jaret Anderson-Dolan and Mason Shaw in the organization.

The Jets heavily invested in providing some insulation for some of those young players like Elias Salomonsson on defence and the likes of Brayden Yager, Colby Barlow and Jacob Julien up front. The fortunes of the Moose could also be impacted by how many NHL games are played by Brad Lambert and Nikita Chibrikov. As for Morrison, I don't see the seat being remotely warm for him. Nardella brings ample coaching experience

and figures to be running the defence. He wasn't necessarily brought in to be the successor.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/09/12/best-of-the-next-set-to-battle-for-the-jets>

Best of the next set to battle for the Jets

Prospect He excited to play Showcase at rink that inspired him

By: Ken Wiebe

There was a time not long ago when Kevin He found himself sitting in the seats at the Bell Centre, cheering on the bleu, blanc et rouge, dreams of one day playing in the NHL dancing through his mind.

Prospect Showcase in Montreal

Winnipeg Jets schedule

- Saturday vs. Montreal Canadiens, 6 p.m. CT, Bell Centre
- Sunday vs. Ottawa Senators, 6 p.m. CT, Bell Centre

The Winnipeg Jets forward prospect isn't quite ready to make that dream a reality, though he is among the group of players that are expected to suit up on Saturday night against the Montreal Canadiens prospects before a sold out crowd in the same arena that inspired him.

"We've got a pretty cool opportunity to play back in Montreal. I grew up there for six years, so I have a lot of friends and a few family members coming down too," He said earlier this week. "I started playing hockey in Montreal. I remember going to Habs games with my dad, too, so it will be pretty cool.

"It brings back good memories, but we've got to put our best foot forward going into Saturday."

The Jets will also face the Ottawa Senators on Sunday night (also at 6 p.m. CT) to round out the prospect showcase that replaces the Young Stars Classic in Penticton, B.C., that Winnipeg routinely participated in.

Those six years that He spent in Montreal were formative ones — and were where his passion for hockey was ingrained.

"A lot of cold nights at the ODR (outdoor rink) with my buddies," He recalled. "Playing pick up shinny when I was growing up. It was a pretty tight-knit community. Everybody knew everyone."

He was one of the most pleasant surprises at Jets' training camp last fall, showing extremely well after the organization chose him in the fourth round (109th overall) of the 2024 NHL draft.

Being able to get into some game action with the prospects allowed He to build some positive momentum going into training camp last fall and he's hoping to do the same this time around.

The speedy winger is coming off an outstanding season in the Ontario Hockey League with the Niagara IceDogs, one that saw him produce career highs in goals (36), assists (39) and points (75) in games.

He was leading the OHL in scoring for a chunk of the season and ended up finishing 25th overall before adding five points in five playoff games.

Given the rules in the current collective bargaining agreement, He isn't one of the players eligible to play for the Manitoba Moose in the American Hockey League.

It's either make the Jets or be returned for one final season of junior hockey.

He recognizes there aren't a lot of open spots on the Jets' roster, but that doesn't mean he isn't trying to turn some heads and make things interesting during the coming weeks.

"Make it hard on (management and coaches). Something of that sort," said He. "I just know that I've got to go out there and work for it. Nothing is going to be handed to me. I've really just got to put my best foot forward."

He, who was born in China but raised in Montreal and Toronto, wasn't among the players invited to attend the Team Canada world junior evaluation camp, but he would love to put himself in position to compete for a job on that team come December.

"Yes. 100 per cent," said He. "That would be a huge goal of mine."

There are some other interesting storylines to monitor during the weekend, including Nikita Chibrikov's first game action since suffering a season-ending knee injury in January.

There are a number of other prospects getting ready to turn pro this season, including forwards Colby Barlow (first round, 2023), Brayden Yager (first round, 2023) and Jacob Julien (fifth round, 2023).

It will also be a fun weekend for the Walton family, as Jets draft pick Kieron Walton will be joined on the ice by his twin brother Conor.

Kieron was chosen by the Jets in the sixth round of the 2024 NHL draft, but had a breakout season with the Sudbury Wolves in the OHL, delivering 38 goals, 54 assists in 92 points in 66 games to finish ninth in OHL scoring.

Conor is a big blue-liner who plays for the Windsor Spitfires in the OHL and he's one of the invitees for the rookie camp and showcase.

The two brothers played four games together with the Wolves during the 2022-23 campaign before Conor was traded in the summer of 2023.

Roster

Goalies

35 Alex Worthington

50 Dominic DiVincentiis

Defence

51 Kaleb Hartmann

57 Elias Salomonsson

74 Edison Engle

80 Graham Sward

82 Ben Zloty

84 Seth Fryer

92 Reese Hamilton

94 Conor Walton

Forwards

29 Brayden Yager

46 Kevin He

49 Colby Barlow

53 Danny Zhilkin

58 Fabian Wagner

67 Jacob Julien

72 Owen Martin

76 Kieron Walton

79 Jacob Cloutier

85 Reggie Newman

88 Chase Yoder

90 Nikita Chibrikov

Speaking of defence, a lot of eyes will be on top defence prospect Elias Salomonsson, who flourished in his first season playing in North America.

Salomonsson, chosen in the second round of the 2022 NHL draft, is getting close to pushing for full-time NHL duty — though he's likely going to require some additional seasoning given the veterans on the right side that are ahead of him on the organizational depth chart.

Despite suffering an upper-body injury, Salomonsson was chosen to take part in the AHL All-Star Classic and finished with five goals and 27 points in 53 games for the Moose — fully embracing the role of a top-pairing blue-liner.

“The way the Moose were structured, or the way the Moose were built, it just happened to be that he ended up to be our number one defenceman right away, number one power-play guy,” said Moose head coach Mark Morrison, who will be running the Jets bench this weekend.

“He got a lot of ice time. He handled it really well. Got better. He got injured and he came back like he was never injured. But I think the amount of ice time and amount of positions that he got put in helped him.

“He ended up to be the most improved player on our team, for sure. And his trajectory just keeps going up, so we’ll see where he goes.”

Fellow blue-liner Edison Engle (chosen by the Jets in the sixth round of the 2025 NHL draft) is another D-man to watch, given his outstanding skating ability.

Jets goalie prospect Dom DiVincentiis, who is ready for his second pro season, is likely to be between the pipes for Saturday’s game against the Canadiens prospects.

Morrison is eager to see how the group is able to absorb the systems while also letting their skill set shine through.

He will be looking for one thing above all else once the puck drops.

“There’s a lot of things thrown at them right away,” said Morrison. “For me it’s just wanting them to compete in battles, on loose pucks, on races to pucks, net-front battles. They can do that.

“We know they’re going to make some mistakes, we’re not going to be yelling at them. We just want them to compete.”

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11417283/winnipeg-rhinestone-artists-work-makes-it-to-the-big-stage/>

Winnipeg rhinestone artist’s work makes it to the big stage

By Teagan Rasche Global News

A normal Winnipeg Jets jersey gets transformed into a sparkling piece of wearable art on Ainsley Dubowec’s kitchen table.

"You look at it and it looks daunting but it's therapeutic for me. I just throw on a show or music or podcast and just zone out," Dubowec said.

Dubowec is a psychiatric nurse during the day and, in her spare time, the artist behind the bedazzled jerseys.

"The front logo of the Jets jersey takes about 12 hours," Dubowec said.

The Winnipegger has always had a love for hockey, music and art. One of her first creations two years ago was a pivotal moment that led her to where she is now.

"I made Shania Twain a pair of sunglasses that she wore on stage," Dubowec said.

Since then, her rhinestone work has grown into a business called Ains Bling, where she bedazzles various items and takes custom orders. Dubowec said she hopes her business keeps growing into a sparkling future.


This year, she really saw her work shine.

"The first Jets jersey I made was for Nikki Glaser, the comedian, when she came to perform here earlier this year. The Jets posted that, and True North reached out, and I got to make a jersey for Tate McRae and some sunglasses for Katy Perry," Dubowec said. "It's so cool. I'm just in my house making them, and then they're on the stage."

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11425101/analysis-winnipeg-jets-questions-pre-season/>

ANALYSIS: Questions abound ahead of Winnipeg Jets' season

By Kelly Moore Global News

ANALYSIS: Questions abound ahead of Winnipeg Jets' season -   in full screen

The Winnipeg Jets open training camp later this week at Hockey For All Centre.

Here's a look at a few of the reasons this fall's preparation for the regular season could be one of the most interesting yet in the 2.0 version of the franchise.

Is there a Jets fan not intrigued about how Jonathan Toews looks while taking the first of many steps towards making an NHL comeback? And the absence of captain Adam Lowry — recovering from hip surgery in late May — only adds to that storyline.

How will Winnipeg absorb the departure of Nikolaj Ehlers?

Depending on who you talk to, “the Dashing Dane” will be irreplaceable. And the addition of Gustav Nyquist won’t even come close to helping the Jets tread water, let alone become a better team.

Now, Nyquist scored 23 goals and had 75 points riding shotgun on Nashville’s No. 1 line two seasons ago, before falling off a cliff last year.

The classy Swede doesn’t have to be as good as he was in 2023-24. But I also don’t think it’s a reach to suggest he’s capable of returning to being the consistent 40- to 50-point scorer he has been for much of his NHL career.

Will it be Morgan Barron or Vlad Namestnikov who starts the season holding down the fort at third-line centre until Lowry returns?

Can one of Brad Lambert, Nikita Chibrikov or Parker Ford force their way into the NHL forward group ahead of the likes of Tanner Pearson, Cole Koepke or David Gustafsson?

Can one of Logan Stanley, Ville Heinola or Elias Salomonsson forge ahead of Colin Miller on the defensive depth chart?

And in the case of Stanley and Heinola, what happens if they don’t? Will general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff risk losing them on the waiver wire, like in 2022, when Jonathan Kovacevic was grabbed by Montreal? Or late January of 2024, when Minnesota was happy to take Declan Chisholm off the Jets’ hands?

Oh, and what about Kyle Connor headlining the list of 10 Winnipeg players going into a contract year — 11 if you include Heinola?

NHL pre-seasons can often be less than compelling. But that will, or at least should, not be the case in Winnipeg this month.

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/09/15/jets-embracing-offseason-change-highlighted-by-addition-of-toews/>

Jets embracing offseason change, highlighted by addition of Toews (VIDEO)

The Jets had a wildly successful regular season but their dreams were squashed in the playoffs after losing in the second round to the Stars. Josh Morrissey and Connor Hellebuyck spoke about the optimism of the new season, building on what they achieved last campaign and the addition of Jonathan Toews.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6626787/2025/09/15/winnipeg-jets-training-camp-2025-battles/>

Winnipeg Jets training camp 2025: The 5 biggest battles to watch

By Murat Ates

The Winnipeg Jets begin their season with a Presidents' Trophy and a second-round playoff exit in their rear-view mirror.

The Jets released their 55-player roster this week, along with their training camp schedule, which starts on the ice on Thursday at 9:30 a.m. at hockey for all centre. Winnipeg hosts Minnesota and Edmonton in exhibition games on Sunday and Tuesday at Canada Life Centre.

This is a breakdown of the Jets roster and the five biggest training camp battles to watch for, from Jonathan Toews' arrival, Morgan Barron's opportunity at centre, the odds of various prospects making the team, the most likely outcome on defence, who hits waivers and more.

Forwards (31)

Kyle Connor

Mark Scheifele

Gabriel Vilardi

Cole Perfetti

Jonathan Toews

Alex Iafallo

Nino Niederreiter

Vladislav Namestnikov

Gustav Nyquist

Morgan Barron

David Gustafsson

Cole Koepke

Tanner Pearson

Depth options

Injured

Top prospects

Walker Duehr

Adam Lowry

Brayden Yager

Phil Di Giuseppe

Brad Lambert

Jaret Anderson-Dolan

Nikita Chibrikov

Parker Ford

Colby Barlow

Samuel Fagemo

Roster locks: Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabriel Vilardi, Jonathan Toews, Cole Perfetti, Adam Lowry, Nino Niederreiter, Gustav Nyquist, Alex Iafallo, Vladislav Namestnikov, Morgan Barron

Vying for spots: David Gustafsson, Tanner Pearson, Cole Koepke, Walker Duehr, Phil Di Giuseppe, Jaret Anderson-Dolan, Brad Lambert, Nikita Chibrikov, Parker Ford, Samuel Fagemo, Mason Shaw, Fabian Wagner, Danny Zhilkin, Brayden Yager, Jacob Julien, Colby Barlow, Kieron Walton, Kevin He, Owen Martin, Jacob Cloutier

Battle No. 1: Toews vs. Father Time (and good health)

Jonathan Toews' return to the NHL has elicited all kinds of hot takes, from promises of Jets glory to certainty that he's washed up at this stage of his career. If Toews can return from missing multiple seasons and perform as an effective middle-six centre, the Jets are a playoff bound team with a three-time Cup champion playing a leadership role during their postseason run. If not ... well, the range of possibilities is wide.

One of the most insightful opinions about Toews' comeback comes from Toews himself, in conversation with Sara Orlesky.

"The game is evolving, so even just getting back to where I was a handful of years ago ... I'm going to have to grow and improve from there, too," he told Orlesky.

There is wisdom in Toews' mindset: Stand still in the NHL and you get passed. Toews' last great season was 2019-20 — the year he turned 32 — and the 37-year-old is smart to think he needs to get to a higher level than the one he hit at the end of his Blackhawks career. The game is getting faster, offence continues to increase, and an older, slower, thoroughly committed two-way player like Toews will have his work cut out for him to excel at 200-foot hockey.

If Toews can't add enough to support Mark Scheifele and Adam Lowry down the middle, Winnipeg will have to go shopping for another 2C all over again.

Battle No. 2: Gustafsson, Barron and Namestnikov vs. two centre jobs

Scott Arniel will have to adapt to life without Lowry (and without Mason Appleton, who signed in Detroit). This creates opportunities in Winnipeg's bottom six — primarily at centre.

Vladislav Namestnikov could start the season as Winnipeg's second-line centre all over again, playing between Cole Perfetti and one of Alex Iafallo or Gustav Nyquist in an attempt to recreate Namestnikov's secondary scoring line from last season. The Jets weren't keen to run Namestnikov in defensive-zone faceoff situations, though, owing to poor faceoff numbers, and it's possible Toews plays so well that Namestnikov gets bumped down the lineup.

Morgan Barron moved from left wing to centre towards the end of last season, ending his playoffs between Brandon Tanev and Alex Iafallo. Kevin Cheveldayoff was impressed by Barron's performance to the point of singling it out during Jets exit interviews last spring. There's even a chance Barron gets Lowry's shutdown assignment until Lowry returns from hip surgery at the end of October or early November. Barron's faceoff numbers (52.1 percent) were stronger than Namestnikov's (46.2 percent) last season and that discrepancy could earn Barron a push.

David Gustafsson tends to get forgotten in these discussions, given he played only 36 games last season, but he's also a 50 percent faceoff man — and he's been positively flying at the Jets' informal pre-camp skates. If Winnipeg's second-round pick from 2018 is going to win an NHL job and never let it go, this would be the season to do it.

There are plenty of other wrinkles in Winnipeg's bottom six. I think Cole Koepke has the edge on Tanner Pearson to win a fourth-line job, but that's far from guaranteed. Meanwhile, the Jets are loaded with players who could play big roles for the Moose or steal NHL minutes — Walker Duehr, Phil Di Giuseppe, Jaret Anderson-Dolan and Parker Ford all played NHL games last year — while Brad Lambert and Nikita Chibrikov will fight to make NHL names for themselves, too.

Defence (18)

Josh Morrissey

Dylan DeMelo

Dylan Samberg

Neal Pionk

Haydn Fleury

Luke Schenn

Logan Stanley

Colin Miller

Depth options

Top prospects

Ville Heinola

Elias Salomonsson

Kale Clague

Alfons Freij

Tyrel Bauer

Isaak Phillips

Roster locks: Josh Morrissey, Neal Pionk, Dylan DeMelo, Dylan Samberg

Vying for spots: Luke Schenn, Haydn Fleury, Logan Stanley, Colin Miller, Ville Heinola, Elias Salomonsson, Isaak Phillips, Kale Clague, Ashton Sautner, Tyrel Bauer, Dawson Barteaux, Dylan Anhorn, Ethan Frisch, Edison Engle

Battle No. 3: Who belongs on Winnipeg's third pair?

Assuming the Jets carry 13 forwards and two goaltenders, there is a maximum of eight NHL jobs available on defence. The first four will belong to Josh Morrissey, Neal Pionk, Dylan DeMelo and Dylan Samberg. After that, it's up to a series of battles at camp.

Sort last season's defence corps by average ice time and Winnipeg's third pair belongs to Haydn Fleury and Luke Schenn. Look at Winnipeg's lineup in Game 5 and Game 6 against Dallas and it's the same story. This would appear to give the fleet-footed Fleury and veteran Schenn the inside track to win the final two spots on Winnipeg's playing roster, but that's not set in stone.

Logan Stanley and Colin Miller played the next biggest workload last season. Stanley drops the gloves but doesn't defend as well as the veterans he's up against, while Miller sometimes looks like the best of the entire bottom-four group but is prone to blind passes in the defensive zone. He hasn't been able to win a bigger share of minutes, despite contributing more offence and boasting a booming shot.

It seems unlikely Elias Salomonsson (or Ville Heinola, for that matter) can play their way into this group.

Battle No. 4: Winnipeg's logjam vs. the waiver wire

All of Fleury, Schenn, Stanley, Miller, Heinola, Kale Clague, Isaak Phillips and Tyrel Bauer require waivers to be sent to the Moose. If everybody stays healthy, then there's only four jobs available for the lot of them — and, again, this assumes top prospect Salomonsson is assigned directly to Manitoba regardless of the quality of his camp.

This gives Winnipeg some big decisions to make. Heinola, 24, has impressed at previous training camps but fractured his ankle to hurt his 2023-24 season, then suffered an infection in that same ankle, derailing his start to last year.

Given how seldom the Jets played Heinola, even after his return to health, he appears to be starting from a lot further back than Stanley, Miller and the other veterans fighting for jobs. That said, it's not a guarantee Heinola would be claimed by another team like Declan Chisholm and Johnathan Kovacevic, nor is it a guarantee that Winnipeg makes it through camp and preseason 100 percent healthy.

Goaltending (6)

Connor Hellebuyck

Eric Comrie

Top prospects

Dom DiVincentiis

Thomas Milic

Isaac Poulter

Alex Worthington

Roster locks: Connor Hellebuyck, Eric Comrie

Vying for spots: Isaac Poulter, Thomas Milic, Domenic DiVincentiis, Alex Worthington

Battle No. 5: Manitoba vs. Norfolk — who gets enough starts?

Winnipeg has four good young goaltenders fighting for jobs in the AHL and ECHL, including two of its own draft picks. Thomas Milic, 22, and Dom DiVincentiis, 21, have already split duties at the AHL and ECHL levels, but last year they were insulated by veterans Kaapo Kahkonen and Chris Driedger. This year, they'll need to fend off a challenge from 24-year-old, Winnipeg-born Isaac Poulter, who put up an .898 save percentage in 36 AHL games for Utica last season.

Alex Worthington, 20, wrapped up a three-year WHL career with the Edmonton Oil Kings and will try to challenge the older goalies for minor-league playing time.

It will be fascinating to see which of Milic, DiVincentiis and Poulter can win starts at the AHL level and who must be sent to the ECHL to get substantial playing time.

DiVincentiis had the best AHL numbers last season, but Milic started for Norfolk in the ECHL playoffs. Poulter is the oldest and has been dominant at the ECHL level; he should be able to challenge Winnipeg's prospects for playing time. If recency matters, DiVincentiis was spectacular for Winnipeg at the prospects showdown in Montreal.

At the top of Winnipeg's depth chart, Connor Hellebuyck's battle will be to replicate his regular-season excellence in the playoffs. Workload could be an issue; he's expected to play the majority of games for the Jets and to represent Team USA at the 2026 Olympics.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6628342/2025/09/15/connor-hellebuyck-nhl-vezina-hart-olympics-playoffs/>

Connor Hellebuyck on a dream season, a nightmare ending and moving forward in 2025-26

By Michael Russo

LAS VEGAS — After becoming the fourth goaltender in the modern era to win the Hart Trophy, after winning his second Vezina Trophy in a row and third in six years, after being one save away from lifting the United States to the 4 Nations Face-Off trophy, Connor Hellebuyck and Winnipeg Jets fans are anxious to see what he has in store for an encore.

The U.S. will be one of the favorites to win a gold medal in the 2026 Milano Cortina Olympics, and with his usual bluntness, coach Bill Guerin said last month the Americans “have to win” gold for the first time since 1980. But first things first: Hellebuyck's big focus will be playing for a Jets team that won the Presidents' Trophy last season.

He wants to help the franchise take the next step and vie for the Stanley Cup.

"I think of (last) season as a huge success," Hellebuyck said at last week's NHL Media Tour. "We built our game so strong towards the end. I think the same group of guys will just continue to build that same game, put the same expectations on each other. And when you kind of look back at what we've been doing over the last couple of years, you just see a huge improvement and a lot more consistency in our game. Personally, I'm a part of that in building consistency within our system."

"And then we got in the playoffs, and it didn't go perfect for me, but I had some stuff going on. You battle through it, you learn from it, and unless you win the Cup, it's a failure. So doesn't matter how far you make it, you're always looking for what's going to get you to the next step. And that's where we are now."

The 32-year-old is well aware that until he exorcises his playoff demons, the narrative will be that there's a tale of two Hellebuycks — the one that stars in the regular season and the one that falters in the postseason.

Last year in the regular season, Hellebuyck led the NHL with 47 wins, eight shutouts and a 2.00 goals-against average with a .925 save percentage. In late January, he told Jets backup Eric Comrie it felt like he couldn't lose, and he was almost right. From early December to not long after the 4 Nations, Hellebuyck went on a 21-2-3 run with a 1.87 goals-against average and .928 save percentage.

"When something like that happens, you kind of sit back and say, 'This is a special season. This is something special going on,'" Hellebuyck said.

But in the playoffs, even though the Jets ousted the Blues in the first round thanks to a miracle Game 7 ending, Hellebuyck went 6-7 with a 3.08 goals-against average and .866 save percentage. He went 0-6 on the road with a 5.06 goals-against average and .809 save percentage and was pulled three times in the St. Louis series with a .758 save percentage in those three games.

Like he did after the season, Hellebuyck pinned the latest struggles on little tweaks he made to his game and suddenly wasn't comfortable exactly where he was in his crease. He felt he was off on his angles and where his posts were.

"I thought maybe I could add something here, tweak something there, and that's typical stuff you do during the regular season, too," said Hellebuyck, who is 8-15 in his past 23 playoff decisions with a 3.60 goals-against average and .870 save percentage. "But once I did that, I didn't like it. I didn't like the look of the game. I thought I was out of what makes me ... me."

He said that if you look at the big picture and take out the few bad games that ruin his statistics, it "felt like I had a couple playoffs. It's just those big losses are going to make everything else seem so much worse."

The reality is, as much as Sergei Bobrovsky has struggled in the playoffs, there was a time when the narrative for the likely future Hall of Famer was that he couldn't win when it mattered either. That's no longer the case after consecutive Stanley Cup championships. One successful playoff run can change everything.

"I think I know going through it more and more and more, I just view playoffs as such a team game, like no one individual can get the spotlight or the shun — and that's not just a goaltender, that's everyone on the team," Hellebuyck said. "Maybe you have a goal scorer that's not scoring. That's not on him. It's on your full team because playoffs are just so tight, and everyone's trying so hard. And you get big performances out of people some nights, and some nights you just get consistent performances.

"Like it takes an entire team to win a Cup. And now that I've gone through it a couple times, I see it more and more and more where it doesn't matter about one guy having a good run. You need all 20. One guy's not going to get you there."

And when the pressure was on during the 4 Nations, Hellebuyck performed admirably and didn't crumble on the big stage. He went 2-1 with a 1.59 goals-against average and .932 save percentage. Connor McDavid won the title for Canada after a defensive breakdown left him alone in the slot to beat Hellebuyck.

While it feels the starting job in the Olympics will be Hellebuyck's to lose, he isn't looking too far ahead. Hellebuyck also feels that whichever goaltender is playing well close to the tournament will get the No. 1 spot for the Americans. His competition is likely Dallas' Jake Oettinger and Boston's Jeremy Swayman, although Seattle's Joey Daccord was also invited to last month's U.S. Olympic orientation camp. Technically, one doesn't necessarily need to get invited to the camp to be put on the roster later this year.

"It's always a competition," he said. "If I go and have a horrible start this season, well, then I don't deserve to be in the net. They're gonna put whoever's gonna give them the best chance to win in that net. All I gotta do is go play my game the way I know how, and bring that consistent game. And I feel like when I'm confident and play my best, I belong in (the) net.

"Those guys are excellent goalies, and they could easily push me out. They could have an awesome start of the year, but I can't worry about what they're doing. I want them to play their best. I want them to be the best. Makes the league better, makes the team better. I just got (to) worry about myself and put my best foot forward."

Hellebuyck had an interesting view of the 4 Nations Face-Off from a goalie's standpoint. Remember, the speed of the game was second to none.

"I went into it thinking this game was going to be so much faster, and it is, but everyone on your side is also so much faster," he said. "So it ended up feeling like it was actually slowing down a little bit. Things are kind of more what you see is what you get. And for me, that plays really well into my game and reading what's going to happen. You can

see things develop, and the speed was a lot of fun. The guys around me were just always exactly where I expect them, and they always had my back. And it was kind of easier.

“I mean, harder to the point where all these elite players can definitely score at any given moment. And they all have amazing shots, so you can’t give them too many holes. But when you have your guys all keeping them outside and allowing you to see things so perfectly, it kind of makes your job a little bit easier even though they can have that elite (skill) that come out at any moment.”

The Americans’ defensive pairs may change with Quinn Hughes healthy, but it felt like the United States found a formidable shutdown pair with Jaccob Slavin and Brock Faber.

“Those two guys were like, they have my back no matter what,” Hellebuyck said. “(Slavin) bailed me out on a couple rebounds, and Faber, I felt like I just put the puck on his tape every single time without even having to look. He was just always in the right spot. When you have that kind of expectations around you, it just makes the game so much easier because when you see them out there, you know they’re going to be there.

“They got my back. That was a really good pairing. And I feel like those two are just elite players.”

But first things first.

Hellebuyck wants to use training camp to build his game again. He knows his process and wants to concentrate solely on the Jets, not what’s ahead in Milan. Last year’s regular season was a dream that ended with a third Vezina Trophy and his partner, Comrie, surprising him with the Hart.

Hellebuyck has always used the Jennings and Vezina Trophies as goals. He never envisioned having a chance to win the Hart until that conversation with Comrie around midseason last year.

“I like to live day by day and don’t want to get ahead of myself or don’t want to worry about the past,” he said. “But those moments, I was excited for the road that I was on.”