

## WinnipegJets.com

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-come-close-but-fall-in-ot-to-leafs>

### ***THREE THINGS: Jets come close, but fall in OT to Leafs Iafallo, Connor and Niederreiter score for the Jets who have points in five straight (4-0-1)***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Max Domi scored at 3:08 of overtime to give the Toronto Maple Leafs a 4-3 win over the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre. The Jets four game win streak comes to an end, but they now have points in five straight (4-0-1). Alex Iafallo, Kyle Connor and Nino Niederreiter scored for the Jets, Connor Hellebuyck made 33 saves. Winnipeg will travel to Chicago to face the Blackhawks on Monday as Jonathan Toews makes his first visit to Chicago since his last game as a Hawk.

#### ***SCORING FIRST A TRADITION***

One thing you can count on since the start of the new year is that the Jets will score the game's first goal. They continued the trend on Saturday night in the second period just over two minutes in, Logan Stanley held the puck in at the blueline, fired a shot that was tipped by Alex Iafallo and past Dennis Hildeby for the 1-0 lead. Winnipeg has scored first in nine straight games which is a franchise record, and they have the second longest streak in the NHL this season (Minnesota 12 games).

#### ***JETS CAN'T HOLD ON TO TWO GOAL LEAD***

The Jets went up 2-0 on a highlight reel effort from Kyle Connor as he walked out of the corner and sent a perfect shot under the crossbar for his 23rd of the season.

23 seconds after that, Auston Matthews was left alone in the slot and he beat Connor Hellebuyck to cut in to the Jets lead at 9:22. The Jets carried a 2-1 lead into third period and early into the final frame, Nino Niederreiter scored his first goal since November 29 as he converted on a rebound in front of Hildeby to make it 3-1.

However, the Leafs tied the game in the third with goals from Oliver Ekman-Larsson (5:58) and Bobby McMann (15:27).

"We've just got to find a way to close those games (out). Obviously, we tried our best to block shots and make sure (Hellebuyck) sees most of the pucks. We've just got to continue playing more aggressive," said Niederreiter.

"Don't be afraid of making mistakes and don't try to defend something when we don't have to – that's something we have to learn."

#### ***SO CLOSE***

It looked like the Jets had the go-ahead goal late in the game when Jonathan Toews grabbed a Mark Scheifele rebound and his shot beat Hildeby but not the goal post. The game went to overtime and that's where Domi converted on a 2-on-1 rush thanks to a nice pass from Matthews.

I mean, I don't think there's any time for frustration right now. Obviously, we're hunting and trying to climb back into things, and we need to get points every night, preferably two," said Josh Morrissey.

"But, with the schedule up until the Olympic break, it's just about trying to find ways to, obviously get wins, and find ways to get points and keep climbing. It's a tall task, but we believe in the way we've been playing, really since the break."

## **NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/toronto-maple-leafs-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-january-17-2026>

### ***Domi scores in OT, Maple Leafs rally past Jets Gets winner at 3:08 after McMann ties game with 4:27 remaining in 3rd period***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Max Domi scored at 3:08 of overtime, and the Toronto Maple Leafs rallied from a two-goal, third-period deficit for a 4-3 win against the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre on Saturday.

"We found a way to regroup," said Domi, who also had an assist. "I think that just shows the character in this locker room. We stuck together and played for each other, and then you saw that, that's how good teams find ways to win. You've got to give credit to Winnipeg, they played a great game tonight. But we found a way to stick with them and get the huge two points we needed."

Auston Matthews skated into the offensive zone on a 2-on-1 and fed a pass to Domi, who lifted a wrist shot over the stick of a sprawling Connor Hellebuyck for the game-winner.

"I was just waiting, just trying to wait and see what the 'D' wanted to do," Matthews said. "He kind of came at me, and I just tried to flip it over to Domi and he did the rest. A really nice play to break up that puck by [Oliver Ekman-Larsson] to break up that play and get us down there on that odd-man rush."

Ekman-Larsson had a goal and two assists, Bobby McMann and Matthews scored, and Morgan Rielly had two assists for the Maple Leafs (24-16-8), who have points in 12 of 13 (9-1-3). Dennis Hildeby made 27 saves.

"[Hildeby] was unreal," McMann said. "A couple scramble saves, desperation. He was no quit tonight. He was all over it. Really nice to see from him, and he's consistently giving us a chance to win games here."

Kyle Connor, Alex Lafallo, and Nino Niederreiter scored for the Jets (19-22-6), who had a four-game winning streak end. Vladislav Namestnikov had two assists, and Hellebuyck made 33 saves.

"It is exactly what we have to do, we have to continue to find ways but also find ways to get that second point," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "At the end of the day, when you are trying to catch teams above you, you have to do it every night, there has got to be points... That is a game we should have finished off."

Ekman-Larsson made it 3-2 at 5:58 of the third period when he took a cross-ice pass from Nicholas Robertson and buried a snap shot far side from the left face-off circle.

"[Ekman-Larsson] does it all for us every night," Matthews said. "He kills, he runs the power play. He plays big minutes, he plays against top lines. He had a huge night for us. I was glad to see that goal, and then that sifter that Bobby [McMann] tipped, and then like I said, breaking up that fourth one to give us an opportunity to go down on an odd-man rush. He was unbelievable tonight."

McMann tied it 3-3 at 15:33 of the third when he redirected Ekman-Larsson's point shot through traffic.

"I thought (Winnipeg) had a lot of chances in the first," Ekman-Larsson said. "We kind of stuck with it and battled through and got some looks there at the end. It's a really good team effort on that one."

Iafallo put the Jets up 1-0 at 2:23 of the second period when he tipped a point shot from Logan Stanley from the edge of the left face-off circle.

"We know that they're a big heavy team," Toronto coach Craig Berube said. "They do a really good job of tipping pucks and getting into a battle around the net. But I thought our guys competed extremely hard tonight."

Connor pushed the lead to 2-0 at 8:59. He skated the puck out of the right corner and roofed it over the left shoulder of Hildeby on the near side.

"We've just got to find a way to close those games (out)," Niederreiter said. "Obviously, we tried our best to block shots and make sure [Hellebuyck] sees most of the pucks. We've just got to continue playing more aggressive, don't be afraid of making mistakes and don't try to defend something when we don't have to. That's something we have to learn."

Matthews cut the deficit to 2-1 just 23 seconds later at 9:22. Domi collected the puck behind the net and fed a pass into the slot to Matthews, who beat Hellebuyck on the blocker side.

"He was good all game," Berube said of Matthews. "He was skating and attacking all game. He had his legs, and that line was really good for us. But it was a good team effort. I thought everybody contributed and did a good job tonight."

Domi said, "Every guy in this locker room believes [Matthews] is one of the best players in the world, we know that. He's leading the ship, he's our captain and he's our best player, so he's laying it on the line every night and leading the way."

Niederreiter extended it to 3-1 2:28 into the third. Luke Schenn's slap shot from the blue line deflected off Namestnikov and rebounded off Hildeby in front, where Niederreiter then swiped the puck in for his first goal in 22 games.

"Everything is a lot harder when you lose hockey games," Niederreiter said. "That's the worst part about when you're in a slump and you don't score goals and you lose also. That makes things a lot more difficult. Lately, we've been winning hockey games, so that makes things

easier on yourself to not worry too much about it. So it definitely makes things easier, but at the same time, it's definitely mentally challenging."

Winnipeg forward Jonathan Toews hit the post and crossbar when batting a rebound in the slot with 1:51 remaining in the third.

"I liked a lot of what we did, the compete level was there," Jets defenseman Josh Morrissey said. "We had some looks, I thought, to make it, maybe get four on board for us at different points. I felt like we were maybe a little bit sitting back in the third at points in time. So obviously you want to keep attacking and not let them get into their offensive game. But just little things, like I said, we hit a post on that power play at the end. I mean, that's a difference maker, little things like that. So we did a lot of good things. It just would have been nice to find a way to get two (points)."

**NOTES:** The Maple Leafs recorded their seventh third-period comeback win of the season, the second-most in the NHL this season behind the Golden Knights (eight). They also became the seventh team to rally from a third-period multigoal deficit to win multiple times this season. Ekman-Larsson has six points (one goal, five assists) in his past four games. ... Matthews has six points (three goals, three assists) in his past five games.

<https://www.nhl.com/news/jonathan-toews-anticipates-very-emotional-return-to-chicago>

### ***Toews anticipates 'very emotional' return to Chicago with Jets***

By Tracey Myers

CHICAGO -- Jonathan Toews circled the date as soon as the Winnipeg Jets forward found out when they'd been visiting the Chicago Blackhawks.

The 37-year-old is expecting plenty of emotions in his first game at United Center on Monday (8:30 p.m. ET; CHSN, TSN3, TVAS) since April 13, 2023. The Blackhawks chose not to re-sign Toews, who was limited to 124 games after Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome kept him out of the entire 2020-21 season and from Feb. 21-April 1, 2023, when he was dealing with the effects of long COVID-19.

"It's almost like I was happy it was later in the season just because I want to play well and I feel I've been building my game," Toews told NHL.com. "There's a little bit of nerves there with the thought of that game coming up pretty soon, so it'll be very emotional."

"Obviously, I really want to go out there and play well and do my best, but those ones are always tough to focus on the task at hand with a lot going on around you."

Toews was paramount in the Blackhawks' return to prominence. The No. 3 pick in the 2006 NHL Draft, he had 883 points (372 goals, 511 assists) in 1,067 career games with them. Toews helped Chicago win the Stanley Cup in 2010, 2013 and 2015 and was named the Conn Smythe Trophy winner, awarded to the most valuable player of the Stanley Cup Playoffs, in 2010 when he had 29 points (seven goals, 22 assists) in 22 postseason games.

Named one of the 100 Greatest NHL Players in 2017 as part of the League's centennial celebration, Toews became an unrestricted free agent on July 1, 2023. He did not sign with another team but also never officially announced his retirement from hockey.

Toews enters the game Monday with 18 points (seven goals, 11 assists) in 47 games, including nine points (four goals, five assists) in his past 12. He had a goal in four straight games before being held without a point in a 4-3 overtime loss to the Toronto Maple Leafs on Saturday.

"He's well deserving of the memories he's created throughout those years, a special player, great teammate," said Anaheim Ducks coach Joel Quenneville, who coached the Blackhawks from 2009-18. "I look back at how fortunate I was to be a part of that team and coaching some great players. And then we have 'Taser' who was one of the all-time great leaders of the sport, and I was just fortunate to be the beneficiary, where he did a lot of stuff that you don't see around the game, whether it's captains or players, of handling situations. He was just a great pro."

Patrick Kane, Toews' teammate here from 2007-23, expects Monday to be "incredible." Kane would know; the forward returned to Chicago with the Detroit Red Wings on Feb. 25, 2024, and scored on a breakaway in overtime for a 3-2 victory.

"I mean, you never really know what the reception's going to be like and how it's going to feel in the moment," Kane said. "You can take guesses and kind of think about what it's going to be like. I remember I did three or four different laps, and they were still cheering, and I'm sure it'll be the same for him, maybe even more so, right?"

"Obviously, he meant so much to the franchise and the teams that won, and just being the captain for so long (2008-23)."

There have been plenty of roster changes in Chicago since Toews' departure. Of those remaining from his time here, defenseman Connor Murphy, who's been with the Blackhawks since 2017, played the most with him. They remain good friends, and Murphy said Toews' connection to the city is something special.

"He's the one guy that, when I was out with him in public in Chicago, I've never seen such a reaction," Murphy said. "It's not just that people are fans. They'll come up to him and give a heartfelt, 'Thank you for making my life better' sort of reaction."

"Some people you get the reaction, 'Hey I'm a big fan, you're a great player.' With him, you can see he's connected with people in the way of what he's done for them, whether it's in the community or his game or leadership-wise and what they've brought success to that it's made people's lives feel more fulfilled. It shows the impact hockey can have and a guy who lives up to the hype as an idol can make on people."

Former forward Patrick Sharp, who played 10 seasons here with Toews and also won three Stanley Cup championships, is expecting Toews to experience a return similar to Kane's.

"Because in all moments and the stories I have of Toews, the one that stands out the most is that every time there was a big game, if it was meaningful in the standings, meaningful playoff games, in the middle of a series, maybe just on [Hockey Night in Canada], whatever it was, Jonathan would always come through in the most clutch of times for us," Sharp said. So, to see him play at the United Center, I know [the crowd] will stand and cheer for as long as Jonny will stand at center ice.

"I expect the Hawks to have a lot of cool videos to cue up to remind everyone of his greatness and yeah, I'm just sure he'll do something at a clutch moment."

Toews has moved on with his career, but the memories will certainly come flooding back on Monday.

"I think it'll be a pretty cool moment for me," he said. "Again, just being able to have a moment to kind of recognize what the game of hockey does for people in Chicago and what it meant for the city ... you make a lot of sacrifices in your life and you kind of put a lot of things on the back burner, but the payoff is incredible to be able to be a part of championship teams that bring such an energy and inspiration to the city."

"I'm looking forward to going back there, playing that [game] and kind of reliving those moments."

### **Canadian Press**

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2026/01/17/winnipeg-jets-toronto-maple-leads-game-overtime-loss/>

#### ***Domi Scores in OT as Leafs Rally to Snap Jets' Win Streak with 4-3 Win***

By Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

When the Toronto Maple Leafs arrived in Winnipeg Friday night, the temperature was cold but a sight warmed them up.

Leafs fans greeted them at the team hotel, followed up by plenty of fans cheering for them at Canada Life Centre on Saturday.

The out-of-town foes rewarded them with a 4-3 overtime victory over the Winnipeg Jets.

"It's unreal. We've got the best fans in the world and it's not even close," said Leafs forward Max Domi. "It's great to see their support on the road, even around the hotel and stuff."

"(Friday) night, we got in and it was freezing cold and pitch black and we had like, I don't know, 100 fans waiting for us. I think that just speaks volumes to the support we have. We're very lucky and we embrace it for sure."

Domi provided the game-winner, scoring at 3:08 of overtime on a two-on-one with Auston Matthews.

How confident was the Winnipeg-born Domi that Matthews was going to pass the puck to him?

"Pretty confident," Domi said. "Almost as confident as me giving it back to him, but then I had to shoot it."

Domi had an open side of the net and fired the puck over the stick of sprawling goalie Connor Hellebuyck.

Domi also picked up an assist, Matthews scored his 24th goal of the season and Oliver Ekman-Larsson had a goal and two assists. Bobby McMan also scored for the Leafs (24-16-8) and Morgan Rielly added two helpers.

Dennis Hildeby stopped 27 shots for Toronto, which ended a four-game road trip going 2-1-1.

Winnipeg has lost its last four home games against Toronto, with the previous victory on Dec. 5, 2021.

Ekman-Larsson appreciated the cheers from Leafs fans, many clad in the Ontario team's jerseys.

"It's great coming here," he said. "Obviously, a lot of Leafs fans and a loud building. It was a good test for us at the end of the road trip."

The loss halted Winnipeg's win streak at four games.

Alex Lafallo, Kyle Connor and Nino Niederreiter scored for the Jets (19-22-6) in front of their fifth sellout of the season and Hellebuyck made 33 saves.

The Jets held a 3-1 lead early in the third period, but McMan's 15th goal of the season tied it up with 4:27 remaining in regulation when he tipped in an Ekman-Larsson shot through traffic.

"All the way through, the crowd was pretty loud today," McMan said. "Had a few Leafs fans here, that was nice, just kind of feeding off that energy."

Winnipeg went on the power play with 3:13 remaining in regulation because of a Matthew Knies' penalty for high-sticking. A shot by Jonathan Toews hit the crossbar and stayed out.

The Jets had a 2-0 lead with Connor's goal at 8:59 of the second period, but Matthews scored 23 seconds later.

He was booed by some Jets fans, who often target the opposition's best player.

"I don't mind it," Matthews said. "I mean, they're not booing for no reason. I don't know, you just take it as it is and you just have fun with it."

Leafs head coach Craig Berube said Matthews had a strong game.

"He was skating and attacking all game. He had his legs, and that line was really good for us," he said. "But it was a good team effort. I thought everybody contributed and did a good job tonight."

Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey, who was the lone defender on Domi's goal, enjoyed the atmosphere — even with the pro-Leafs fans.

"Every time the Leafs are in town, it's always a rowdy atmosphere," Morrissey said. "Obviously, their fans travel really well, so it was a fun game."

Niederreiter snapped a 21-game goal drought with his seventh marker of the season that made it 3-1 at 2:28 of the third period.

"It felt good to get on the board, but at the same time, you wish you could have won that game. That would have made it even better," he said.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel liked picking up a point with the loss, but wanted two.

"It still kind of rubs me the wrong way," he said. "At the end of the day we have to find a way. We had that one and we should have finished it, find a way to finish it, that is part of our jobs."

He was disappointed Winnipeg's two-goal lead evaporated.

"That's what we talk about, trying to find a way to finish that game off," Morrissey said. "But disappointing. We managed to get a point and we try to keep going."

## **TSN.ca**

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

***Button: Matthews rising to the occasion, taking control ... nothing is slowing him down (VIDEO)***

What has changed for Auston Matthews and the Maple Leafs over their last 13 games? TSN Director of Scouting Craig Button joins Jermain Franklin.

## **Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/theyre-not-boeing-for-no-reason-maple-leafs-auston-matthews-savours-spoiler-role/>

***'They're not booing for no reason': Maple Leafs' Auston Matthews savours spoiler role***

By Luke Fox

WINNIPEG — Auston Matthews is feeling like that guy again.

And the group confidence coming off the Toronto Maple Leafs' most important and thrilling road trip of the season depended on it.

Not only did the captain pump his team on the board with a trademark curl-and-whip wrister and kickstart a dramatic comeback, finish plus-2, and win 62 per cent of his draws, he also teed up linemate Max Domi for the overtime winner on enemy ice Saturday.

No wonder the Winnipeg Jets fans hurled their distaste at the dangerous Matthews each time the puck touched his blade inside Canada Life Centre.

"I mean, they're not booing for no reason," Matthews smiled, following a 4-3 thriller in favour of road team.

When your finishing moves are executed according to plan, you're happy to play heel.

“I mean, a lot of times it’s fun,” Matthews added. “Especially when you end up on the right side of it, like tonight.”

What a night.

The Jets and Leafs have about as lively a rivalry as any two teams that only meet twice a season. They’ve both stumbled off divisional titles and are playing their best hockey with the realization that once assumed playoff spots are in doubt.

Even more vocal and voluminous than when they booed Mitch Marner in Las Vegas two night ago, Leafs Nation gobbled up nearly half of the seats in Manitoba.

A discernible “Go! Jeafts! Go!” chant would ring out as the action elevated. All seven goals were celebrated in the stands.

“It was just a really intense game because the crowd — they’re definitely involved in that game,” Bobby McMann said. “Momentum both ways, you could feel it. And I think the energy was a little bit higher, the pace a little bit higher.”

Play hard, and they’ll love you.

“Oh, it’s unreal. I mean, we got the best fans in the world, and it’s not even close,” Domi enthused. “Even around the hotel and stuff. I mean, last night we got in late, but it was freezing cold and pitch black, and we had, like, 100 fans waiting for us.

“That just speaks volumes to the support we have — and we’re very lucky.”

The players and fans in both shades of blue brought heat inside the barn on an evening where the wind chill had Portage Avenue feeling like  $-26^{\circ}\text{C}$  by the time Domi froze the clock like an inhale to the lungs and slammed Matthews’ OT pass into a gaping net behind Connor Hellebuyck.

The captain is on a necessary heater, ripping 10 goals and adding seven assists over his past 11 games.

And as clips of his heavy-legged backcheck during his man Jack Eichel’s OT winner two nights ago in Vegas made the rounds, Matthews needed to deliver a jolt like this.

“He’s been big-time, leading by example, doing all the little things,” said linemate McMann, who tied the game on a high tip in the 56th minute. “You don’t get those points and those goals without winning battles, being competitive, wanting to win games first and foremost.”

Domi drove to the point: “He’s leading the ship.”

The ship had been tilting slightly.

A stinker in Utah, multiple blown leads in Vegas, then down two-zip in the Peg... a road trip that began with a knockout in Colorado could have ended poorly for Toronto.

Instead, head coach Craig Berube declared a “character win” led by 34.

"He was skating and attacking all game. He had his legs, and that line was really good for us tonight," Berube said. "But, you know, it was a good team effort. I thought everybody contributed and did a good job."

The Maple Leafs and Matthews' season have mirrored each other, much like Saturday night.

A slow start.

A troublesome hole.

Followed by bright signs of life, of fight.

"Just battled, competed for the full 60 minutes. I don't think we ever got down when we were down throughout the game. I just thought, period after period, we built our game and got better as the game went on," Matthews said.

"This is a tough road trip. Playing some good teams, a lot of travel. This is a tough building to play in here, especially at the end of a road trip. And it's just nice to collect these points, get on the good side of it, and be able to go back home feeling good about ourselves."

After Matthews delivered, after he spoke, and after he gave general manager Brad Treliving a subtle fist-bump in the bowels of the Jets' rink, he fetched a bottle of San Pellegrino and looked up at television set.

A couple teammates joined to look on.

The Ottawa Senators and Montreal Canadiens were knotted in an OT thriller of their own, two rivals ahead in the standings. Three more points sprinkled onto a standings board Matthews is trying to drag his team north.

As Cole Caufield pounded the winner, Matthews' eyes fixed to the screen, emotionless but curious.

After a couple of replays, Matthews turned and walked away, his head high.

More work to do.

#### *Fox's Fast Five*

- Oliver Ekman-Larsson's stat line: one goal, two assists, three points, plus-4 rating, 25:10.

"He does it all for us every night. He kills, runs a power play, plays big minutes, plays against top lines. And he had a huge night for us," Matthews gushes.

"Obviously, (his) goal, then the sifter there that Bobby tipped, and then breaking up that play (in overtime) to give us an opportunity to go down on an odd-man rush. I mean, he was unbelievable tonight for us."

• A fine bounce-back effort by goaltender Dennis Hildeby, outduelling the reigning Hart champ. The towering Swede was hard on himself after surrendering six in Salt Lake City but hung tough with flurries of action in his crease.

"He's building more and more confidence and understanding the league a lot better," Berube says.

The Jets also rang so many posts and crossbars that the goal judge was fooled enough to light the lamp on one and the broadcast's score bug flashed GOAL on another.

"We got some good bounces, for sure," Matthews acknowledges. "But, I mean, Beastie, he takes up a lot of net, so I don't know if there's a whole lot to shoot at."

Domi smiles: "Post is a goalie's best friend. I don't know if that's luck. That's just good positioning, right?"

- Simon Benoit (day to day) missed a second straight game with his upper-body injury. Philippe Myers was a dash-2 while skating a team-low 9:18. He was stapled to the bench once the game got tight late. Defensive depth is a concern.

William Nylander (lower body) did not play and is unlikely to suit up Monday versus Minnesota.

"I don't know how long it's going to be," Berube says.

- Does Berube want Jake McCabe to guard the back door or attack shooter Kyle Connor on this broken play?

"We turn that one over; we got to make a stronger play. But there's two elite players coming on you there. So, I think he did the right thing, taking the back door. And the goalie handled the shot," Berube explains.

"It's a tough play."

- Could the Leafs benefit from adding Treliving draft pick Rasmus Andersson?

No doubt, but the acquisition cost is high.

The Boston Bruins, now deadlocked with Toronto for fifth place in the Atlantic, have permission to speak with Andersson.

Could be a harmful development for the Leafs in the divisional arms race.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/17/ot-loss-to-leafs-self-inflicted-says-jets-head-coach>

#### ***OT loss to Leafs 'self inflicted,' says Jets head coach***

By: Mike McIntyre

The Winnipeg Jets can't afford many missteps if they hope to claw their way back into the playoff race. Which is why a 4-3 overtime loss to the Toronto Maple Leafs on Saturday night represents a significant stumble — one that is likely to leave a mark.

Winnipeg led 3-1 with more than 14 minutes remaining in regulation and appeared well on its way to a fifth straight victory. But three straight goals by the visitors, including the game-winner by Max Domi during the three-on-three session, snatched away a potentially valuable point in the standings.

“Self-inflicted,” is how Jets head coach Scott Arniel described the collapse.

They were caught up on the rush on an Oliver Ekman-Larsson goal that cut the lead to 3-2 at 5:58 of the final frame. They lost a defensive zone faceoff that quickly ended up in the back of the net on the Bobby McMan goal that tied it at 15:33. And then they made a turnover that led to a 2-on-1 rush and the dagger at 3:08 of overtime.

“At the end of the day, this is a game we should have finished off,” said Arniel.

“That is part of our jobs, those moments that count in games, whether that is the start of the third period where you give up a rush goal or it is a face-off play, whatever it might be, those are moments that we have to handle a little bit better.”

The Jets did have a golden chance to win it late in regulation, but Jonathan Toews — looking to score for a fifth straight game — hit the crossbar with 2:38 remaining while Winnipeg enjoyed a power play. They rang iron on multiple earlier occasions as well, inches from putting the game away.

“We had some looks to maybe get four on the board for us at different points,” said defenceman Josh Morrissey.

There was a dreaded sense of *déjà vu* to this one for Winnipeg. Flash back to New Year’s Day in Toronto, when the Jets held a 4-1 lead late in the second period, only to fall 6-5 in regulation. If Arniel’s crew ultimately miss the playoffs, their two meetings with the Maple Leafs may well be remembered as pivotal moments.

The Jets have collected points in five straight outings (4-0-1) and are 19-22-6 overall. That had them seven points out of the final Western Conference wildcard spot with 35 games remaining and six teams to leap-frog. The gap could grow to eight points if one of Nashville or Los Angeles won their late games Saturday.

Toronto continues its second-half resurgence, now 9-1-3 in the past 13 games to improve to 24-16-8 overall.

The game was played in front of a sold-out crowd, with plenty of Toronto fans trading chants and cheers with the Winnipeg faithful.

“Every time the Leafs are in town, it’s always a rowdy atmosphere,” said Morrissey. “Obviously, their fans travel really well. So, it was a fun game. There’s been some fun ones in this building through the years.”

*The cold front is over*

It had been 21 long games and counting since the guy known as El Nino lit the lamp, a drought that dates all the way to Nov. 29 in Nashville.

A lot has happened to Nino Niederreiter since then — including celebrating his 1,000th game in December and being a healthy scratch for the first time in his career earlier this month.

It looked like the scoring slump might have ended early in the second period when Logan Stanley's shot was tipped on the way into the back of the net to give the Jets a 1-0 lead. Niederreiter was given credit by the officials and announced in the arena.

But a few moments later, an official change was made: Alex Iafallo got credit. Turns out he was the only one to get a stick on it.

However, that close call was a sign of things to come.

Niederreiter finally shed the monkey off his back 2:28 into the third period scoring a no-doubter off a rebound to put the Jets up 3-1. The veteran Swiss skater looked skyward during his celebration as if to say "thank you" to the hockey gods.

"You haven't put up any points or goals in numerous games, so it felt good to get on the board," he said. "But at the same time, you wish you could have won that game. That would have made it even better."

#### *Under the hood*

This was a game of momentum swings, both with the eye test and also based on underlying numbers.

According to Natural Stat Trick, the Jets took it to the Maple Leafs in the first period, with a 6-0 advantage in high-danger chances through 20 minutes. And yet, the score remained 0-0, with Toronto goaltender Dennis Hildeby a big reason why.

The middle frame was a 50-50 affair — not to mention a form of pond hockey — with plenty of wide-open, back-and-forth play and an 11-10 edge in high-dangers for the Jets, who had grabbed a 2-1 lead at that point.

Toronto then seized control for the remaining 23:08, with a 12-6 advantage in high-dangers which ultimately led to a 3-1 showing on the scoreboard for that stretch.

"I felt like we were maybe a little bit sitting back in the third at points in time," said Morrissey.

"Obviously you want to keep attacking and not let them get into their offensive game. We did a lot of good things. It just would have been nice to find a way to get two."

At the end of the game, high dangers finished 23-22 for Winnipeg, while expected goals — which take the quality of chances and other shot metrics into account — were 5.74 to 3.75 for the Jets.

That says Hildeby stopped 2.74 goals above expectations, while Hellebuyck was a minus 0.25.

Translation: The team with the better goaltending performance skated away with the victory. Hellebuyck stopped 33 of 37 shots, while Hildeby turned aside 27 of 30.

"Obviously, we tried our best to block shots and make sure (Hellebuyck) sees most of the pucks. We've just got to continue playing more aggressive," said Niederreiter.

"Don't be afraid of making mistakes and don't try to defend something when we don't have to – that's something we have to learn."

*Key play*

Max Domi's overtime goal was the dagger.

*Three stars*

1. TOR D Oliver Ekman-Larsson: 1 goal, 2 assists
2. TOR C Max Domi: 1 goal, 1 assist
3. WPG RW Nino Niederreiter: 1 goal

*Extra! Extra!*

The Jets have scored the first goal of the game in nine straight outings, which is a franchise record. Yet they've found a way to win only four of those, which is certainly a sore spot.

Kyle Connor's goal near the midway mark of the second period, which put the Jets ahead 2-0, puts him in a tie for the team lead with Scheifele at 23.

Just 23 seconds later, Toronto's top scorer, Auston Matthews, buried his 24th of the year. He had four goals in two games against Winnipeg this season.

Winnipeg went 0-for-3 on the power play, while Toronto went 0-for-2.

Winnipeg has just one win in its last nine games against Toronto (1-6-2) dating back to 2021.

Forwards Gustav Nyquist and Danny Zhilkin and defenceman Isaak Phillips were the healthy scratches. Blue-liners Neal Pionk, Haydn Fleury and Colin Miller are all sidelined with injuries and considered week-to-week. Arniel said Miller underwent a surgical procedure on his knee earlier this week.

The Jets will fly to Chicago on Sunday to prepare to face the Blackhawks on Monday night inside United Center. It should be an emotional one, with Toews returning to face the only other franchise he's known for the first time.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/16/sniping-stanley-makes-case-for-extension>

***Sniping Stanley makes case for extension***

***Jets' power defenceman finds his groove in career-best season***

By: Ken Wiebe

Logan Stanley, prime extension candidate or the key to recouping lost draft capital?

To suggest the Winnipeg Jets are coming to a crossroads with the 18th overall pick of the 2016 NHL draft is entirely accurate.

A decision isn't necessarily imminent, but it's not as far away as you might think.

And while the benefits and the consequences of this upcoming decision are already being hotly-debated on various social media platforms, you can be sure that determining Stanley's future was among the topics discussed by Jets' management at scouting meetings that recently wrapped up.

Stanley is one of eight pending unrestricted free agents on the NHL roster and he's having the best season of his six-year career, which includes eight goals — the most recent a booming slapper that beat Jesper Wallstedt in Thursday's 6-2 victory over the Minnesota Wild — 15 points, 91 penalty minutes and a right hand to the face of Ottawa Senators captain Brady Tkachuk that resulted in a one-game suspension for roughing.

Chalk it all up and the Jets are left to get locked in on determining whether Stanley is simply riding a red-hot shooting percentage to blow away his career-high in goals (which was one previously) or that he's finally figuring things out at the NHL level and entering his prime.

Complicating matters somewhat is that a report by Chris Johnston in The Athletic speculated that Stanley could be in line for a deal that could reach five years and up to US\$25 million if he reaches unrestricted free agency on July 1.

Whether Stanley ends up getting four years at US\$4 million or US\$5 million for five, what's apparent is that he's put himself in position to receive a significant raise.

And he's going to get it, whether that's here or elsewhere.

For as much public discourse is out there and the numerous opinions shared over the years, Stanley is still a relative unicorn, given his six-foot-seven, 231-pound frame.

This isn't about comparisons to Boston Bruins legend and 2025 Hockey Hall of Fame inductee Zdeno Chara, as he's basically one of one and not a standard anyone his size or otherwise should be held to.

But even Chara needed somewhere in the neighbourhood of 200-plus NHL games before he started growing into a dominant force.

This is not to suggest Stanley is on the verge of becoming a dominant force, but he brings certain elements to a defence corps that will make him attractive to every team in the NHL, either in the coming weeks or months depending on how things play out.

It's easy to envision any number of contenders lining up for an opportunity to make a deal for Stanley prior to the NHL trade deadline on Mar. 6 and his US\$1.25 million annual average value makes him even more attractive.

But what will the offers for him actually be like?

As a point of reference, Luke Schenn fetched a second and fourth round pick from the Jets last March.

Obviously, Schenn brought championship pedigree Stanley doesn't have, but Stanley's offensive production is considerably higher this season.

If the Jets are unable to fully get themselves back in the playoff race during the 10 games leading into the Olympic break, a number of things could be on the table in terms of how personnel is handled prior to — and after — the NHL trade deadline.

Figuring out how much the Jets are willing to commit to Stanley being part of the future is going to be a priority and it's easy to understand why.

For a franchise that has been short on homegrown draft and development stories since 2017, extending Stanley makes sense on a number of levels, especially when you consider the Jets are planning to be competitive again next fall due to the age of the core group.

The process of becoming a full-time NHLer took longer than either Stanley or the Jets thought it would, even though it was clear when the Jets traded up to get him in 2016 that he was a longer-range project and needed time to grow into his body and round out his game.

Injuries were also a factor at various points after he turned pro, but Stanley is showing a level of comfort that hasn't been this high until now.

"I have seen that shot and this year we have seen it a lot more," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said after Thursday's game. "He has got so much confidence right now. He is feeling it. Great for him."

"He has got so much confidence right now. He is feeling it. Great for him."

Jets centre Mark Scheifele made the bold proclamation on Thursday that he believed Stanley had this type of offensive ability in him for a long time.

By extending Stanley, the Jets left side will basically be taken care of through the next two seasons, as Josh Morrissey and Dylan Samberg can become unrestricted free agents on July 1 of 2028 (if extensions are not completed before then).

Yes, the Jets have two left-handed shooting defence prospects in 2025 first-rounder Sascha Boumedienne and 2024 second-rounder Alfons Freij — who recently helped Sweden capture the World Junior Hockey Championship in Minnesota.

The earliest either one of those players is probably going to challenge for a full-time NHL roster spot is 2027-28, so while it's a consideration, a longer-term deal for Stanley wouldn't necessarily mean that the path for either player is blocked, at least not for an extended period of time.

Stanley will turn 28 in May and, after making close to the league minimum for the better part of his pro career, he will be looking to cash in on his career year.

Don't expect a hometown discount, even if he's growing into a fan favourite and has had fans chanting his name at various points this season.

That response certainly beats the boos that occasionally were directed his way over the years, but those days seem like a long time ago.

The same goes for the trade request that wasn't granted in 2023, when Stanley was struggling to get regular playing time and still finding his way.

That's also in the past.

Stanley is taking on more responsibility, both at even strength and the penalty kill with a trio of blue-liners out of the lineup and considered week-to-week.

In Thursday's game, Stanley took 24 shifts for just over 18 minutes of ice time.

While there's still room for improvement on the defensive side of the game, he's using his body and stick more effectively and trying to improve that element as well.

Now, if Stanley is dead set on testing the open market and not willing to come to terms on a deal with the Jets prior to the NHL trade deadline, the organization essentially will have no choice but to move on from him and try to bring back the strongest package out there.

That's a potential outcome neither Stanley or the fan base is all that interested in thinking about right now. But that doesn't mean it's something that's fully on the back burner either.

A decision is looming and it could have far-reaching ramifications.

### **Winnipeg Sun**

[https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/winnipeg-jets-fall-4-3-in-overtime-to-the-maple-leads/article\\_d4eb0f35-6b21-4809-af93-3525dbed4f7b.html](https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/winnipeg-jets-fall-4-3-in-overtime-to-the-maple-leads/article_d4eb0f35-6b21-4809-af93-3525dbed4f7b.html)

#### ***Winnipeg Jets fall 4-3 in overtime to the Maple Leafs***

By Gordon Anderson

And the winning streak is no longer a going concern, but a point is a point.

The Jets saw their four-game winning streak end when Max Domi scored the game-winning goal in overtime as the Maple Leafs won 4-3 at Canada Life Centre on Saturday night.

"We didn't get the result that we wanted, but we definitely did some good things," Jets winger Nino Niederreiter said.

Domi took a cross-ice pass from Auston Matthews and shot the puck into the top half of the net at 3:08 with Connor Hellebuyck lunging across the crease from his left to right. Matthews also scored in regulation.

Seconds before the goal, Josh Morrissey turned the puck over as the Toronto blue line, sending Matthews and Domi the other way on the odd-man rush.

Prior to overtime, the Jets had a powerplay when Matthew Knies was whistled for high-sticking at 16:47.

Jonathan Toews had the best chance to win it in regulation, but he smacked a rebound off the crossbar-goal post connection over the glove hand of Dennis Hildeby with 2:38 remaining in the game. Toews' four-game goal streak was snapped in the loss.

Niederreiter scored his first goal in 22 games when he staked the Jets to a 3-1 lead at 2:28 of the third period. The goal was his first marker since a two-goal performance against the Nashville Predators on Nov. 29.

“(When) you haven’t put up any points or goals in numerous games, it felt good to get on the board,” Niederreiter said. “But at the same time, you wish you could have won that game. That would have made it even better.”

But goals by Oliver Ekman-Larsson and Bobby McMan sent the game to the extra session.

Like the game between the teams on New Years Day, a Toronto 6-5 victory, the Jets held multiple leads but couldn’t land the plane on the runway in either game. They lost a three-goal lead in Toronto, and squandered a 2-0 second-period advantage, and a 3-1 third-period lead on Saturday.

Alex Iafallo and Kyle Connor also scored for the Jets (19-22-6). Hellebuyck (12-12-5) stopped 33 of 37 shots. The last time the Jets beat the Leafs at home was December of 2021.

The Jets collected nine of a possible ten points on the home stand. The Jets are in Chicago on Monday night in the Toews homecoming game.

Again, there are regrets about what could have been, about dropping another point in a tightly compacted race for the final wild card spot in the Western Conference.

“We have to continue to find ways, but also find ways to get that second point,” head coach Scott Arniel said.

The only time the Jets won an overtime game occurred on Oct. 28, in a 4-3 win over the Minnesota Wild. The Jets beat the Flames 4-3 in a shootout on Nov. 15. They have now lost six consecutive extra session games since the win over the Flames.

Ekman-Larsson had a three-point night for the Maple Leafs (24-16-8). The Leafs won both games in the season series.

Hildeby (5-6-4) stopped 27 of 30 shots. Hildeby entered the previous game against the Jets late in the second period after Joseph Woll got the yank. Hildeby stopped 21 of 22 shots to earn the win that night.

#### *Ice Chips*

Isaak Philips, Gustav Nyquist and Danny Zhilkin were scratched.

Colin Miller hurt himself on Jan. 11 against the New Jersey Devils. His final shift ended at 16:41 of the first period.

“(Miller) had surgery last week,” Arniel said prior to game time. “A little bit like Connor (Hellebuyck’s). He’s week-to-week.”

Hellebuyck had arthroscopic knee surgery back in November.

*The streak continues*

Iafallo opened the scoring with an even-strength goal at 2:23 of the second period when he deflected a Logan Stanley shot from the slot down and past the right pad of Hildeby for his ninth goal of the season. Prior to the shot, Stanley managed to keep the puck in at the blue line on a close play, and then firing his shot towards the net. The goal was originally credited to Niederreiter but was changed soon after.