

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-give-up-4-goals-in-first-lose-to-oilers-6-2>

Homestand creeping into must-win territory Jets need to play fast, crisper to stop standings free fall

By: Ken Wiebe

We live in a society where there is a tendency to overreact when it comes to placing an unrealistic — and often inflated — value on certain moments on the sporting landscape. In a world where hot takes are far too frequent, the throwing out of terms like “must-win” games taking place when more than half a season remains is far too commonplace.

But when it comes to the next two weeks for the Winnipeg Jets, it’s not a wild stretch to suggest they could be season defining.

Things haven’t exactly been going smoothly for the Jets of late, as they’ve gone from sporting a 9-3 record out of the gate — one that had them in hot pursuit of the Colorado Avalanche for first overall in the NHL — to limping home to open a pivotal four-game homestand with a record barely over the .500 mark at 14-13-1.

The Avalanche went into Monday’s action with a 19-point lead over the Jets in the chase for top spot.

As the Dallas Stars stroll into Canada Life Centre on Tuesday, they’ve built a 16-point cushion on the Jets, who have just five wins during their past 16 games.

Although we realize there are no free spots on the bingo card in this age of parity, the Jets haven’t earned a win against a team that is currently over the playoff line since Nov. 1 — and that one came against Sidney Crosby and the Pittsburgh Penguins.

We get it.

You can only play the teams on the schedule, but the degree of difficulty is about to rise dramatically here for the Jets during this next stretch.

After Tuesday, there will be three tough Eastern Conference clubs — the Boston Bruins, Washington Capitals and Ottawa Senators (who slipped below the playoff line but have consistently been above it for a good chunk of the opening third of the campaign).

That’s followed by a three-game road trip against Central Division opponents: the St. Louis Blues, league-leading Avalanche and the Utah Mammoth.

What’s clear is this: while the Jets remain very much in the mix of the wild-card chase in the Western Conference, another tough stretch here would leave them in a precarious position.

This isn’t about looking into the crystal ball and wondering what record the Jets can deliver before coming back to work to face the Minnesota Wild on Dec. 27, it’s about identifying a pathway to the consistent play that has been nothing more than a figment of the Jets’ imagination to this stage of the season.

Some of the challenges the Jets have faced are well-documented, but finding solutions is the only thing that matters to them at this stage.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel is going with another turn of the blender in his search for complementary offence, this time moving Gabriel Vilardi off the top line to try him with captain Adam Lowry and Nino Niederreiter.

That moves Alex Iafallo back onto the top trio with Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor, Vladislav Namestnikov between Cole Perfetti and Tanner Pearson and Morgan Barron anchoring the fourth line with Jonathan Toews and Cole Koepke, who has two goals and three points over his past two games.

“Obviously, changes have been made and that’s just how it goes,” said Iafallo, who has past experience skating with Scheifele and Connor when Vilardi was injured. “It’s a roller coaster sometimes.”

At this point, it doesn’t matter where the offence is going to come from, the Jets need to spread the wealth to become a more dangerous team to defend against.

“I’m just trying to spark some people, spark some lines, spark some consistency, on the offensive side of things,” said Arniel. “Just trying to find something that works here.”

Although he hasn’t gone to the nuclear option of breaking up Scheifele and Connor yet to try and drive their own lines, it’s obvious the Jets need more from a whole host of players.

The stat lines don’t lie and there are just too many individuals underperforming in the middle-six right now.

If that doesn’t change quickly, the Jets will have no choice but to try and address the shortage of speed and scoring via trade — even though general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff told the Free Press in an interview recently that the answers have to come from within.

Cheveldayoff is a patient person — he’s shown that throughout his 15-season tenure with the organization — and he’s not going to make an irrational trade that could have lasting consequences for the future just to say he made a move, but given the expectations this group has, it’s something that might have to be done for the sake of course correction.

Not just for the future, but also for the present.

In the meantime, the Jets can’t wait around for the cavalry either.

Sure, there’s an outside chance Connor Hellebuyck (who was back on the ice for the first time since arthroscopic surgery on his knee last month) could return to action in late December if things continue to progress, but the Jets need to do a far better job in front of their masked men.

Multiple times during the past week, the Jets hung Eric Comrie out to dry in the first period of games.

In one of them, against the Montreal Canadiens, Comrie did enough to awaken from its collective slumber and helped them earn a point in a shootout loss.

In two others, Comrie was mercy pulled after just 20 minutes of work.

Comrie is set to make his 10th start in 11 games on Tuesday against the Stars and the main task for the Jets is to clean up some of the mistakes that have been far too commonplace this season no matter who is tending goal.

Whether that's the breakdowns in coverage or the reluctance to adhere to the structure, the Jets are having as much difficulty playing without the puck as they are in terms of generating ancillary offence when they're on the attack.

The Jets aren't playing fast enough to play their aggressive system in three zones that was such a well-oiled machine last season.

Finding a way to play faster and execute more crisply is at the top of the Jets' to-do list.

"Confidence is a funny word. At the end of the day, you get hesitant when you don't have it, you slow down when you don't have it, and you think too much when you don't have it," said Arniel. "And I think when you're feeling good about it, you're very instinctive, you're very reactive, and you're very quick about what you do."

"When you start to think too much and you start waiting to see if something's going to happen, you're late to the party."

That's been happening far too much for the Jets to date and if they don't turn the tables soon, the path to the post-season party is going to be even more difficult than it already is.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/12/08/thrilled-to-dom-in-ate-the-net>

***Thrilled to Dom-in-ate the net
Jets call up DiVincentiis to play in The Show***

By: Ken Wiebe

Domenic DiVincentiis emerged from the coach's office on Sunday night with some unexpected news that required further attention.

The Manitoba Moose goaltender had just been told by head coach Mark Morrison that his services were required elsewhere.

You're going to The Show.

They are the words every prospect is waiting to hear, the stuff dreams are made of.

On Monday morning, DiVincentiis was officially recalled by the Winnipeg Jets as Thomas Milic was returned to the Moose after making three appearances, including one start.

After he was one of the last players off the ice, DiVincentiis shed his chest protector and threw on a bright red Jets hoodie and faced his first media scrum as an NHL player.

"I got goose bumps," said DiVincentiis, asked what it was like to hear the recall news. "I immediately called my parents and grandparents and shared the news with them. To be able to share that with them was pretty surreal. It was pretty unbelievable and super exciting."

The unadulterated enthusiasm was prevalent during a question and answer session that lasted for nearly five minutes, which is understandable when you dig into the road to this moment.

Chosen by the Jets in the seventh round (207th overall) of the 2022 NHL draft, DiVincentiis went back to the North Bay Battalion of the Ontario Hockey League and had a tremendous season — one that earned him Goalie of the Year honours in the OHL.

But during the following season, DiVincentiis saw his game dip dramatically and he went from being a shoo-in to be on Canada's world junior team in 2024 to not getting invited to the final evaluation camp.

That development was devastating for DiVincentiis, but he tried to use it as a learning lesson as he finished off his junior career and prepared to make the jump to pro hockey.

DiVincentiis split his rookie season between the Moose and the Norfolk Admirals of the ECHL, where he played 20 games.

"I'm just trying to get better every single day. Ultimately, I've waited for this moment to be called up and, now that I'm here, I've just got to continue getting better every day and wait for my opportunity."

Prior to the injury to Connor Hellebuyck, DiVincentiis had been sharing the crease with Milic.

DiVincentiis is 6-7 with a 2.49 goals-against average and .915 save percentage with one shutout in 13 games with the Moose this season.

DiVincentiis was excited for his friend and goalie partner to get his first taste of NHL action, but it also reinforced how close he was to reaching his own goal.

"Absolutely. We're competing every day down there, so when you see a good buddy of yours get called up, you're super pumped for him and excited for him to get going," said DiVincentiis. "Ultimately, yeah, (his own NHL debut) could be right around the corner. I don't know when it's going to come. But my job is to be ready every single night and just take it day-by-day."

The appreciation for the highs and lows of the journey were on display on Monday afternoon.

"My parents and grandparents and all my family have helped me tremendously to get here. The money and everything they've done," said DiVincentiis. "To be able to share (the news) with them, I know my dad is already on the way here. I'm super excited to see him and be able to share this moment with him."

"I would say the sacrifice and continuing to believe in myself that one day this could be a possibility and (now) it's right around the corner."

There will be another thrill on the horizon for DiVincentiis, as Jets head coach Scott Arniel revealed that he would be getting his first NHL action at some point in the near future.

“On that, yes, probably,” said Arniel. “This has kind of been the plan. We have two young goaltenders. We were going to get the two of them here. I want them around (goalie coach Wade Flaherty). I want them to go through these practice days. I want them to see our shooters. I want them to be around our group.

“These are two young goaltenders that are all part of the process of building. As we know, it’s a very, very tough position to play. And this is really about getting opportunity and experience. We know (Hellebuyck is) coming (back relatively soon). So, it gives us an opportunity to see what we do have. It allows them to kind of build their brand, build their game for the future.”

DiVincentiis isn’t sure how long he’ll be with the big club, but he plans to soak in every bit of the experience.

“I’m just trying to get better every single day. Ultimately, I’ve waited for this moment to be called up and, now that I’m here, I’ve just got to continue getting better every day and wait for my opportunity,” said DiVincentiis. “Never will I stop getting those goose bumps being in the NHL.”

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/friesen-jets-grapple-with-foreign-feeling-of-losing>

FRIESEN: Jets grapple with foreign feeling of losing

By Paul Friesen

Even the best job in the world has some lousy days. When those start piling up, you have what the Winnipeg Jets are dealing with.

“Winning’s fun. It’s contagious,” defenceman Dylan DeMelo was saying on Monday. “Losing can also be contagious... if you allow it to be.”

With just five wins in their last 16 games, the condition is spreading.

Sitting down with DeMelo at his locker after practice provided an up-close and personal lesson in the struggle to not get mired in it.

DeMelo sees it as a choice. You can hang your head and look down at the muck you’re in, or look out at where you want to go and what you need to do to get there.

“I’ve been on good teams, I’ve been on teams that weren’t so good,” the 11-year-vet said. “If you’re having a hard time coming to the rink, you’re not having fun, then you’ve got to look in the mirror. What are you here for? Obviously you’re here to win. We’re trying to win a Stanley Cup. But we all fell in love with the sport of hockey, first.”

That outdoor rink with friends growing up, that first goal in youth hockey – those moments were the spark. Losing games didn’t extinguish it back then.

A seventh loss in the Jets’ last nine games, Saturday’s disheartening, 6-2 effort in Edmonton, is threatening to.

"That's not how I want to remember the best years of my life," DeMelo continued. "Guys are having sleepless nights because they're ticked off about a loss. I know I am. The Edmonton game leaves a bad taste in our mouths... we're mad. We're not thrilled where we are. But we still have a lot of track here. Fall in love with the process... and just be better. That's how I'm trying to live my life.

"It's a lot more fun looking at it in that lens than looking at it the other way."

Easier said than done, of course. Especially when this is new territory.

Not used to losing

It's been nine years since the Jets have had this paltry a point total through 28 games. DeMelo wasn't even in Winnipeg at that time.

Neither was forward Gabe Vilardi.

"I've never gone through something like this in my years, especially here," Vilardi, a third-year Jet, said. "We've only ever won, it seems like. So it is a little foreign. It's weird. It's not a good feeling, constantly looking in the mirror and trying to figure out how can you be better each day."

Vilardi sees the bright side inherent to the job: There's a chance to redeem themselves on Tuesday against Dallas, another chance after that, and then another.

"Eventually you run out of time," the 26-year-old acknowledged. "But we're not at that point, yet."

Coming into the year, Vilardi decided one of the things he could do better was bring more intensity to practice.

Monday's appeared to need it.

The man running it, though, says barking at his team isn't the answer right now.

Scott Arniel says he began the day by showing some 10 video clips that were "extremely negative," but it was all positivity and encouragement after that.

"When you are struggling and you are down and you are thinking negative thoughts, a lot of that stuff goes into your legs, it goes into your brain, it goes into your hands," the head coach said. "Honestly, we've been trying hard to do that, try to stay upbeat as possible. And it's hard to do when you're not winning hockey games. But... it helps you. You don't want to dislike your job and having to go to work every day.

"If I come in with that kind of grumpy, negative thought, they're going to recognize it right away. But there's also times, and this is one of those, where we've got to build ourselves up."

For the 32-year-old DeMelo, that means getting excited about becoming a better player in practice, then getting excited to play a top team like Dallas on Tuesday.

Falling back in love with the process, even if it sometimes feels like it's betrayed you.

"We want to win"

"Even just talking to you, it's freeing saying that," DeMelo said. "It takes a weight off your shoulders of whatever burden you may feel. We want to win. There's nobody who wants to win more in this city than the Winnipeg Jets in this room."

DeMelo joined the Jets late in the 2019-20 season. They made the playoffs four of the next five seasons.

The one hiccup came the year Paul Maurice walked away from the bench, eventually replaced by Rick Bowness, then Arniel.

"Bones laid down the foundation, Arnie took it to another level," DeMelo said. "The message has been the same. And then we as a team have grasped that and taken it each year, level by level. We all understand what we need to do. It's going out and executing it. And that's on us in this room to figure it out.

"Our story's still unwritten for this year."

That's not quite right. It's being written as we speak.

The words, like the win total, a work in progress.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/we-miss-him-a-lot-nik-ehlers-departure-looms-large-as-jets-struggle>

'We miss him a lot': Nik Ehlers' departure looms large as Jets struggle

By Paul Friesen

You don't even need truth serum to get the Winnipeg Jets to admit they miss forward Nik Ehlers.

The speedy winger's free-agent departure to Carolina last summer seems to have hit this team harder than anybody thought it would.

"You'd be lying to say he didn't help a lot," forward Gabe Vilardi said on Monday. "He has the ability to create five-on-five at an extraordinary level that not many guys in the league do. He has the ability to take over a game, which is rare. Not many people in the world can do what he does.

"So obviously we miss him a lot. When he would bring that game where he would just take over."

Vilardi is quick to say that's no excuse, though, for what's been ailing his team.

After ranking in the top-10 in goal scoring the last two seasons, the Jets are currently tied for 16th, averaging three goals per game.

Their top line accounts for about half of it, as secondary scoring has all but dried up most nights.

"We have players in here," Vilardi said. "We're capable of winning, I believe. I don't know what the analytics say, I don't know what the media says. But I believe we do."

Vilardi (13 goals), Mark Scheifele (14) and Kyle Connor (15) are the only Jets to hit double digits in goals.

The next players, Nino Niederreiter and Vlad Namestnikov, have six each.

It's not like Ehlers has ripped it up in Carolina. He's up to six goals and 13 assists.

But he hit at least 20 in eight of his last nine seasons in Winnipeg.

"Nikky's not coming back to save us," Dylan DeMelo said. "So we've got to figure it out without him. We've been trying... guys are trying to figure out their own games, first and foremost. A lot of guys wish, maybe, they'd had a better start to the year. As a team, we wish we were in a better spot. But we are where we are.

"It's how we deal with it, the adversity we're facing, the inconsistency we're having."

DeMelo says Ehlers' departure is only one of the factors in the Jets' decline. Another is injuries.

"We miss him a lot. We miss Connor Hellebuyck right now," the defenceman said. "We missed Lowry, we missed Samberg at the beginning of the year. We missed Perfetti. There's different personnel, schedule – everything's different this year. We've got injuries this year that we didn't have last year.

"These aren't excuses, either. Just things that are true."

Break 'em up

Scott Arniel appears ready to break up that top line for Tuesday's home game against Dallas.

In Monday's practice the head coach had Vilardi skating on a second line with Adam Lowry and Niederreiter, while Alex Iafallo (four goals) was up with Scheifele and Connor.

The other two combos: Namestnikov between Cole Perfetti and Tanner Pearson, Morgan Barron with Jonathan Toews and Cole Koepke.

"I'm just trying, obviously, to spark some people, spark some lines, spark some consistency on the offensive side of things," Arniel said. "Just trying to find something that works, here."

The Jets have been held to two goals or less in five of their last eight games.

Crease move

The Jets have made a backup goalie swap, sending Thomas Milic down to the farm and calling up Domenic DiVincentiis.

Arniel says he plans a similar approach with DiVincentiis as he took with Milic, getting him his first taste of the NHL fairly quickly.

"As we know, it's a very, very tough position to play," the coach said. "And this is really about getting opportunity and experience. It gives us an opportunity to see what we have. It allows them to build their brand, build their game for the future."

Eric Comrie (6-6-1 record, 3.08 goals-against-average, .898 saves percentage) remains the No. 1 netminder for the foreseeable future, as Hellebuyck recovers from knee surgery.

<https://winnipegson.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-morrissey-grind-of-nhl-schedule-is-no-excuse-for-losing>

Jets' Morrissey: Grind of NHL schedule is no excuse for losing

By Gordon Anderson

The completion of 10 games in nearly three weeks ended in a resounding thud on Saturday for the Winnipeg Jets.

"I'm not putting the schedule on this (loss) as the whole league is going through this now because of the Olympics," Jets head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Edmonton after a 6-2 loss to the Oilers. "Everybody's having a tough part of the grind of the schedule."

The Jets played 10 games over a 19-day span, beginning on Nov. 18. The squad was 3-7-0 in those games and 1-4-1 on the road. The grind isn't over, as the club is scheduled to play seven games between Dec. 9 and Dec. 21, before a six-day holiday break between games.

"When you look at the schedule, the condensed season, everybody goes through it, and we have just gone through it with our version of it, I guess, in the last number of weeks," defenceman Josh Morrissey said.

Whether the Jets' loss on Saturday had anything to do with general fatigue, the top scorer from the back end wasn't having any of it.

Morrissey says good teams find a way to win games or, alternatively, grab points here or there when not at their best.

"Part of being a great team is handling (the) schedule," Morrissey said. "You might not feel your best, you might not be snapping it around like you do when you are on your 'A' game, but you have to find ways to stay in hockey games and push games to OT and get those greasy wins. I don't think that was something we have done a great job of lately."

The Jets have been to overtime on three occasions through 28 games, winning twice and losing once in a shootout. The Vegas Golden Knights, eight points ahead of the Jets in the Western Conference standings heading into league action on Sunday, have forced overtime a league-best 10 times in 27 games played. Vegas has lost eight of those extra-session games.

The value of overtime points can be succinctly pointed out with this stat: Winnipeg is 24th in points, but only five teams have more regulation wins than the Jets in the Penguins, Avalanche, Stars, Capitals and Lightning.

The Jets play host to the Dallas Stars on Tuesday. Entering play Sunday, the Stars were second in the Western Conference, 14 points ahead of the Jets. Dallas has the best road record in the league at 10-1-4. One of those road wins came against the Jets, a 5-4 victory in the season opener.

Mark Scheifele leads the Jets in points with 14 goals and 22 assists in 28 games played.

"It will be nice (to get some practice time)," Scheifele said. "It feels like we haven't been at home a whole lot in the last month and a half. It will be nice to just get the two days. Two days in between (games) is rare, especially in a year like this one. We (must use it) to our advantage."

Scheifele had a potential second-period goal against the Oilers called back due to offside. Scheifele also had a goal called back against the Buffalo Sabres on Friday night due to an offside call.

CBC Manitoba

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-heritage-classic-reaction-9.7006541>

NHL Heritage Classic's 2026 return to Winnipeg will be 'great for the city,' fans say Jets to battle Canadiens in outdoor hockey spectacle at Princess Auto Stadium on Oct. 25, 2026

By Lauren Scott · CBC News

The NHL's Heritage Classic is returning to Winnipeg next year and some local sports fans — including a former Jets goalie — say the outdoor hockey spectacle will draw a lot of positive attention to the city.

On Saturday, the league announced that Princess Auto Stadium will transform into an outdoor rink on Oct. 25, 2026, when the Winnipeg Jets take on the Montreal Canadiens in the next installment of the Tim Hortons NHL Heritage Classic.

Dan and Leanne Carlson said they attended the alumni game during the last hometown Heritage Classic back in 2016.

The Jets fell 3-0 to the Edmonton Oilers during that year's Heritage Classic main event. However, the alumni game saw former Jets players clinch a 6-5 victory over Oilers alumni.

Leanne Carlson said the outdoor game had a "really great atmosphere."

"I think it's great for the city," she said. "We've got great fans here and lots to do ... I think it would be a good way to really showcase what we have to offer."

Dan Carlson said they hope to attend the Heritage Classic at home again next year. And he expects many others will be tuning in from home too, as the Habs will "draw a lot of attention" to the Heritage Classic.

NHL's Heritage Classic heading to Winnipeg for face-off between Jets and Canadiens
"I think that it will get a lot more eyes on the TV for sure," he said.

When the Heritage Classic took over the city nearly a decade ago, it brought 11,000 visitors and about \$11.2 million in direct tourism spending, according to a 2016 report from Economic Development Winnipeg Inc.

Richard Martin said the Heritage Classic returning to Winnipeg is "a big deal."

"I think we get a bad rap for not being a place where people want to come and go to big events like this. I think we've proven them wrong with the recent Grey Cup and the playoff push last year with the Jets. It's good for the city," Martin said.

"It's nice that the league is recognizing that Winnipeg is a place for an event like this," he said.

Martin said he attended the Heritage Classic the last time it was in town. As a season ticket-holder with the Blue Bombers, he's hoping there will be package deals for Winnipeg football fans.

Former Jets goalie Joe Daley said the outdoor game is "good for Winnipeg" and will bring hockey fans together to watch Winnipeg take on Montreal.

"If it's the Habs that are coming in, there's no doubt that the building will be rocking," Daley said.

"I think it's a great matchup," he told CBC News on Saturday before the official announcement — but after the news leaked on social media on Thursday.

NHL announces outdoor game in Winnipeg with Jets vs. Canadiens — then deletes it
Daley said it's always great to watch and play outdoor hockey because it brings a great atmosphere and a sense of nostalgia for people who grew up skating outside.

"It brings the ice hockey event to reality instead of these multi-gazillion dollar stadiums they play in now. Being outdoors is fantastic," he said.

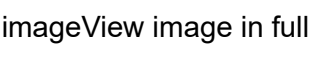
"That type of event is cherished by franchises, so I'm glad we're getting it again and hopefully it's a big benefit to our organization."

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11568106/analysis-moore-winnipeg-jets-continued-struggles/>

ANALYSIS: Jets continue to flounder one-third of the way into season

By Kelly Moore CJOB

ANALYSIS: Jets continue to flounder one-third of the way into season -  image in full screen

The Winnipeg Jets are now just past the one-third mark of the season after completing a hectic schedule of seven games in an 11-day span on the weekend.

The team didn't exactly distinguish themselves when they reached that exact juncture of the schedule.

Twenty-seven games and one period represent 33 per cent of an 82-game slate. And that opening 20 minutes in Edmonton produced a new level of embarrassment for the Jets — exceeding what was thought to be rock bottom just six days earlier in Buffalo... which surpassed the previous low on Black Friday in Carolina.

After that 5-1 loss to the Hurricanes, head coach Scott Arniel called out his troops for being no-shows and ruining the NHL debut of Thomas Milic.

Just 72 hours later, captain Adam Lowry had to call a players-only meeting because of a disgraceful showing versus the Sabres.

And then there was Saturday night at Rogers Place, when for the third time in six games, Winnipeg looked and played like an expansion squad full of confused strangers as opposed to a well-oiled and in-sync reigning Presidents' Trophy winner.

This from a team that entered into the season with the bold self-proclamation of Stanley Cup aspirations.

So, perhaps it's somewhat ironic the Jets will begin their latest "restoration" process tomorrow night, exactly two months to the day, versus the same team they performed so inconsistently against on opening night.

You might remember Scott Arniel saying after that Oct. 9, 5-4 loss to Dallas, that he felt his team played with a "pre-season" level of intensity.

The warning signs were there early. And 27 games later, there has been more regression than progression.

The one redeeming factor is the Jets are not alone when it comes to being consistently inconsistent. They have plenty of company.

Two months from now we'll be into the Olympic Break. Winnipeg should be so lucky if the status quo remains going into the final third of the season, where a two, three or perhaps four-game winning streak could still be the cure for what ails them.

<https://globalnews.ca/video/11569395/winnipeg-jets-spread-christmas-cheer-to-children/>

Winnipeg Jets spread Christmas cheer to children (VIDEO)

The Winnipeg Jets stopped by the city's Rehabilitation Centre for Children to spread some Christmas cheer. As Melissa Ridgen reports, the players say their annual visit is more than a gift for the kids.

CTV Winnipeg

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/winnipeg/article/a-day-that-we-look-forward-to-winnipeg-jets-visit-kids-at-rehab-centre-hospital/>

'A day that we look forward to': Winnipeg Jets visit kids at rehab centre, hospital

By Charles Lefebvre

The Winnipeg Jets took a moment away from the ice to meet some of their youngest fans on Monday.

Several members of the team visited kids receiving care at the Rehabilitation Centre for Children, which helps children with physical and developmental challenges.

Players, including Josh Morrissey, Connor Hellebuyck, Cole Perfetti, Vladislav Namestnikov and Mark Scheifele, signed autographs and posed for photos with kids and their families.

Morrissey said the visit is an annual event that the team enjoys.

"It's always a day that we look forward to, getting to interact with some kids and their families and spread some holiday cheer," he said.

Morrissey added being around the kids helps change his outlook.

"It's easy as a hockey player to get caught up in the wins and losses and the tough days of the NHL season," he said. "But I think when you come and get to interact with some kids and families that are oftentimes going through life-changing and very difficult situations and they have a smile on their face, they're optimistic, and they're just looking forward to the little things in life - I think that puts wins and losses into perspective."

Children's Rehabilitation Foundation executive director Jane Kidd-Hantscher said the kids look forward to the day just as much as the players do.

"It's such an uplifting moment for the kids to meet their hometown heroes," she said.

The Jets also paid a visit to the Winnipeg Children's Hospital on Monday.