

## **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/10/10/get-ourselves-reset>

### ***'Get ourselves reset'***

### ***Jets know what to improve after dropping season opener***

By: Ken Wiebe

The hiccups were bound to arrive: they were just a little more pronounced than Scott Arniel would have liked.

The head coach of the Winnipeg Jets wasn't thrilled with a good chunk of the season opening 5-4 loss to the Dallas Stars and he wasn't afraid to share that in his post-game media address.

After going through the process of breaking down the film, Arniel felt similarly — especially about the breakdowns in coverage and the inability to win as many one-on-one battles that are required to come out on top against a Central Division opponent and fellow Stanley Cup contender.

"Lots of teaching. They know there's some areas we need to improve on. Talked about it, looked at it. Get ourselves reset," Arniel said.

Game 2 of 82 goes Saturday afternoon at Canada Life Centre and the required improvements were easy for Arniel and the players to identify.

"It was loose, a little bit disconnected in the sense when we're a five-man unit, whether it's defending, on the rush or taking the rush against us, (we're) pretty tight," said Arniel. "The middle of the ice was kind of taken away (by the Stars). There were some big gaps in between their forwards and our D."

In falling behind the Stars 5-1, thanks to a three-goal outburst early in the third period, the Jets didn't resemble the stifling defensive team that captured the Jennings Trophy in consecutive seasons for allowing the fewest goals in the NHL.

This wasn't a matter of shoddy goaltending either and while Hellebuyck certainly wouldn't have been happy about allowing five goals in his season debut, he made some critical saves that prevented this from being a one-sided blowout and allowed his team to battle back to get within a shot of tying things.

"The execution and attention to detail and compete just wasn't there," said Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo. "It was a pre-season vibe and we know quite clearly it wasn't good enough. So, it is stuff that is easy for our group to clean up and we are looking forward to a better effort (on Saturday)."

That's another sign of the progress the Jets have made during the past several seasons.

Although the Jets were proud of their ability to show resilience and battle back — in part by scoring a pair of shorthanded goals — they didn't let the rally cloud the fact they didn't reach their high standard in a number of critical facets of the game.

They weren't leaning into excuses either, which has become another important piece of their identity.

Playing without the likes of defenceman Dylan Samberg or forwards Cole Perfetti and Adam Lowry meant the Jets didn't ice an optimal lineup — though a return to game action isn't imminent for any of those three players, so this group isn't about to sit around and wait for the cavalry to arrive.

Overcoming injuries is a prerequisite for any team that fancies itself on claiming one of the eight playoff spots available in each conference.

While it's going to take some time for some of the newcomers to find their way in the Jets system, those players were either brought in as free agents or were promoted from the minors because the coaching staff is confident in their ability to get up to speed quickly.

"Whether it is a face-off or the D-zone, O-zone or net-front battles, that is a big part of our identity and that is a big reason why we had a lot of success last year," said DeMelo. "It is very evident when our group is not dialed in with that — and it looked a lot like that (against Dallas).

"When we are on, it looks a lot more like it did last year. I don't want to keep talking about last year and all that stuff but we know the blueprint and we know we are really close to it."

Although the Jets won the special-teams battle 2-1 on Thursday, the power play was 0-for-4 and unable to cash in an opportunity late in the contest that could have forced overtime.

Both of the Jets goals on special teams came shorthanded, while the penalty kill was 4-for-5 and nearly survived a lengthy two-man disadvantage before allowing a goal just after the initial minor expired.

Aside from the seventh hat trick of Kyle Connor's career, one of the other bright spots for the Jets was an excellent individual effort from Morgan Barron that led to a shorthanded goal that sparked the three-goal rally.

Barron made a smart read to steal the puck and then beat Mikko Rantanen in a race up the ice, worked past Ilya Lyubushkin and then beat Jake Oettinger with a nifty move to the backhand.

"I kind of felt like there was some space, so I just tried to get my feet going," said Barron. "And then I felt like from there, obviously, it was kind of more reactionary. I didn't really have the space to get a shot off, and had half a step on those two guys. So yeah, I feel like that's kind of just trying to play with your instincts a little bit."

The highlight-reel marker was another snapshot of how Barron could work his way back to being a double-digit goal-scorer like he was in his first second season with the Jets (when he had 11 goals in 80 games).

"He's a power forward and that was a power forward move," said Arniel.

For Saturday's matchup with the Kings (who split their first two outings), Arniel has made a couple of tweaks to his middle-six forwards, flip-flopping Alex Iafallo and Gustav Nyquist.

That means Jonathan Toews will centre rookie Nikita Chibrikov and Iafallo, while Vladislav Namestnikov will be between Nino Niederreiter and Nyquist.

*ICE CHIPS:* The Jets organizational depth was fortified on Friday afternoon when forward David Gustafsson cleared waivers and was assigned to the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

Gustafsson, chosen by the Jets in the second round (60th overall) of the 2018 NHL draft, has six goals and 20 points in 149 NHL games. Much like defenceman Ville Heinola before him, Gustafsson has expressed a desire to get into more game action after missing a bunch of time either due to injuries or being a healthy scratch during the past few seasons.

"It's about making sure that you go down and you (earn) that ice time," said Arniel. "Going back to playing and being confident. You never know how things play out as the season moves forward."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/featured/2025/10/10/rad-tunes-and-fashion-decisions>

### ***Rad tunes and fashion decisions New season brings new game-day attire choices, goal songs***

By: Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe

As Morgan Barron prepared for Thursday's Winnipeg Jets season opener, a surprising thought crossed his mind.

“What should I wear?”

In the past, that decision was simple: suit and tie, no questions asked. It was the National Hockey League way — a long-standing dress code that left little room for interpretation.

But thanks to a new collective bargaining agreement struck this summer between the league and the union, players now have far more creative freedom when it comes to game-day attire.

Barron decided to go the more casual route, showing up in a dark long-sleeve sweater tucked into beige khakis. The 26-year-old Nova Scotia native could’ve been heading to the rink, a movie or a night out with friends.

“I don’t know, I’m not the most fashionable guy in the world,” Barron told the Free Press with a laugh. “I actually had a tough time with it. It’s almost easier when you wake up from your nap to just throw a suit on and not think about it.”

Barron wasn’t the only Jet to ditch the formal wear. Mark Scheifele looked ready for the golf course in a white polo and blue chinos, while goaltender Connor Hellebuyck sported a plain shirt under a jacket that wouldn’t have looked out of place on one of his frequent fishing trips.

“It was kind of all over the place,” Barron admitted of his teammates’ wardrobe choices. “For me, I just looked through my closet and tried to throw something together that looked nice. I was kind of indifferent about the change, but I guess it’s nice to be comfortable.”

Barron’s game looked plenty sharp — he scored a highlight-reel shorthanded goal in an eventual 5-4 loss to the Dallas Stars. And there was nothing sloppy about Scheifele, who picked up assists on all three of Kyle Connor’s tallies.

Connor went with something in between casual and formal, keeping the jacket and dress pants but ditching the tie — a look veteran defenceman Luke Schenn, now in his 18th NHL season, also opted for.

“I’m not really sure what to think, honestly. Part of me likes the tradition of the suit. All the guys that played before us wore one,” said Schenn. “I guess as long as guys are dressing respectful — this is the best league in the world and we’re professionals.”

Schenn figures teams will eventually develop their own internal standards. He pointed out that the St. Louis Blues — where his brother Brayden serves as captain — are sticking with suits for all home games.

“In here, we haven’t really talked about it at all yet,” he said. “I always remember growing up and watching Coach’s Corner with Don Cherry, and he’d always be talking about how good this guy looks in his nice suit.”

So what would Grapes think of the new relaxed dress code?

“He’d be disgusted,” Schenn said with a grin.

“Not that I’m one to judge on fashion. I mean, I’m from Saskatchewan, which pretty much sums it up.”

Both Schenn and Barron agree the biggest benefit will come on the road.

“I think it’ll be nice not to have to dress up as much when we travel. That can kind of be a pain in the butt,” Barron said. “I also think it gives guys a chance to express themselves a bit more, especially the ones who actually have good fashion sense.”

Schenn agrees — to a point.

“There are some good looks you can put together without a suit,” he said. “Some guys, though, are just pure lazy. Not that I’m one to judge on fashion. I mean, I’m from Saskatchewan, which pretty much sums it up.”

### *Music to your ears*

Let’s shift gears from fashion to music, because Rev Theory’s Hell Yeah might just become the unofficial anthem at the downtown rink this season.

It’s the official goal song of Connor, who looks ready to chase his career high of 47 goals. Every player on the roster has picked a personal tune that blasts every time they light the lamp.

And yes, for some reason, that includes both goaltenders.

Here’s the 2025-26 playlist:

G Eric Comrie: Sweet Caroline — Neil Diamond

D Dylan DeMelo: Thunderstruck — AC/DC

D Neal Pionk: Renegade — Styx

D Luke Schenn: No L’s — Forrest Frank

D Colin Miller: We Like To Party — Vengaboys

F Vlad Namestnikov: Danza Kuduro — Don Omar featuring Lucenzo

F Alex Iafallo: Go For A Soda — Kim Mitchell

F Gabe Vilardi: Macarena — Los Del Rio

F Gustav Nyquist: Waterloo — ABBA

F Adam Lowry: Espresso — Sabrina Carpenter

F Jonathan Toews: Money For Nothing — Dire Straits

D Haydn Fleury: It’s My Life — Bon Jovi

F Parker Ford: Your Love — The Outfield  
F Morgan Barron: Fly Away — Lenny Kravitz  
G Connor Hellebuyck: Same Old Song — Riley Green  
D Josh Morrissey: Magic In The Air — Magic System featuring Chawki  
F Cole Koepke: Everybody (Backstreet's Back) — Backstreet Boys  
D Dylan Samberg: Let's Go Crazy — Prince and The New Power Generation  
F Mark Scheifele: Shoot To Thrill — AC/DC  
F Nino Niederreiter: Disco Inferno — Syzz & Nora Van Elken  
D Logan Stanley: You Shook Me All Night Long — AC/DC  
F Tanner Pearson: Golden — Huntr/x  
F Kyle Connor: Hell Yeah — Rev Theory  
F Nikita Chibrikov: Rock You Like A Hurricane — Scorpions  
F Cole Perfetti: Jump Around — House of Pain  
F Brad Lambert: Brown Eyed Girl — Van Morrison

### *Welcome back*

Former Manitoba Moose sniper Jeff Malott is set to face the Jets for the second time when the Kings visit on Saturday afternoon.

Malott, who spent parts of four seasons with the Moose and made his NHL debut with the Jets against the Chicago Blackhawks in March of 2022, secured a spot on the Kings opening-day roster this fall.

"He's a great friend, one of those people who I'll always kind of cheer for, though (Saturday) maybe is the exception," said Barron, who played on a line with Malott during their NCAA careers with the Cornell Big Red.

"It's great to see him have the success he's having. And obviously it's been a long road and he's done it, done it the hard way. So, I'm really proud of him and excited to kind of get the opportunity to be out there with him again."

Malott signed a two-way deal as an unrestricted free agent with the Kings in July of 2024 and has since appeared in 15 NHL games. He suited up in the first two games this season and notched his first NHL goal on Wednesday against the Vegas Golden Knights.

"It was great," said Barron, when asked about Malott's milestone moment. "It wasn't as good as his first real one when that got called back there against Edmonton (last April). But yeah, just a smile lights up for me when I see him kind of score that goal, and it seems like he's carving out a good place in that lineup. So happy for him."

Malott — whose brother Mike is a UFC fighter — also caught the attention of the Colorado Avalanche earlier this week for his takedown of Josh Manson after a spirited tilt with the bruising defenceman.

### *The transition*

When the Dallas Stars replaced Pete DeBoer with Glen Gulutzan, they had a pretty good idea of what they were getting, but there's no doubt he's grown a great deal since getting his first NHL head coaching start with the organization from 2011 to 2013.

Gulutzan, who was born in The Pas but raised in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan, spent the previous seven seasons as an assistant coach with the Edmonton Oilers after two seasons as the bench boss of the Calgary Flames and three as an assistant with the Vancouver Canucks.

"Fourteen years adds up. Like any other business, any other thing you're involved in experience helps you" said Gulutzan, who advanced to consecutive Stanley Cup finals with the Oilers. "It scars you up a little bit and gives you experience to deal with all situations that come up."

Gulutzan, 54, has made a positive impression on a Stars team that advanced to the Western Conference final in each of the past three seasons and figures to be a Stanley Cup contender again this season.

"He came in not trying to re-invent the wheel because we've had such a good team and have had so much success. He's been awesome," said Stars forward Matt Duchene. "It's been a little bit different systematically on some things and we're all still getting to know each other. But so far, it's been great. Everyone has enjoyed his presence and what he's brought."

#### *The soft landing*

Former Jets forward Jack Roslovic has found himself an excellent landing spot with the Edmonton Oilers.

Although Roslovic probably regrets the multi-year deal with the Oilers he turned down in the summer, joining an Oilers team with Stanley Cup aspirations should provide him with a great opportunity to showcase his skillset on this one-year pact worth US\$1.5 million.

For an Oilers team looking to infuse some youth, Roslovic will bring some speed and is expected to deliver some secondary scoring.

He's battled issues with consistency over the years, but he still had 22 goals and 39 points with the Carolina Hurricanes last season — and those numbers could improve if he sees some time skating alongside the likes of Connor McDavid or Leon Draisaitl.

Roslovic, 28, was chosen 25th overall by the Jets in the 2015 NHL draft after Connor went 17th.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/is-there-more-room-in-the-offensive-tank-for-jets-forward-morgan-barron>

### ***Is there more room in the offensive tank for Jets forward Morgan Barron?***

By Gordon Anderson

Maybe there is more horsepower under the hood at the offensive end for Jets forward Morgan Barron.

After all, his third-period short-handed goal that kick-started a three-goal rally before the Jets lost 5-4 to the visiting Dallas Stars in their season opener on Thursday night, displayed all the elements of a sound offensive player.

"I feel like I have another level to give (on offence), given that I'm confident in my abilities to do that and something I want to keep building on," Barron said after the team's Friday morning skate downtown.

The Jets' fourth-line centre — with career highs of 11 goals and 21 points — notched a beauty marker at 9:53 of the third, blowing past Mikko Rantanen and fending off Justin Hryckowian, before beating keeper Jake Oettinger with a close-range backhand to the glove side.

"I felt like there was some space, and obviously there wasn't a lot of space in that game, up to that point,"

Barron said of the goal that cut the Stars' lead to 5-2. "I just tried to get my feet going. I felt more reactionary with Hryckowian coming out of the box, (I was trying) to keep the puck at the spot where nobody could get it."  
And what was Barron thinking as he rapidly closed the distance on the netminder?

"I felt like I didn't really have the space to get a shot off, and had half a step on those two guys," he said. "I feel like that's kind of just trying to play with your instincts a little bit."

"It was a great power move," Jets head coach Scott Arniel added. "He's a power forward and that was a power forward move."

"He is an absolute horse. There is no doubt about it," Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said of the 6-foot-4, 220-pound forward. "He is an absolute tank out there. When he gets going like that, with a full head of steam, I mean, he outskated two guys and that was a huge goal for us to give us a little bit of legs, give us some momentum."



Kyle Connor netted consecutive goals to complete his hat trick after the Barron tally, trimming the deficit to 5-4. The Jets had a golden opportunity to tie the game when Thomas Harley was whistled for a delay of game minor at 17:04.

“All the chatter in finding ‘another level’ on offence is pleasing to the ears of Arniel, but an increase in production for Barron can’t come at the expense of his defensive responsibilities. Arniel says Barron’s play slips when he chases results.

“I think he recognizes that if he goes out and thinks offence first, the other parts of his game may not be as good as they need to be,” Arniel said. “The part about him playing centre, too, this is kind of a fresh start coming out of training camp doing it, whereas last year he kind of got thrown in right in the middle of the fire. I liked a lot of what I saw, he’s doing lots of good things.”

“He does a lot of things that don’t show up on the stat sheet,” DeMelo said. “He is great on the forecheck and now that he is playing centre he is taking a lot of draws and being heavy up the middle, which, I think, is crucial in this league.”

Barron centred a line between newcomers Tanner Pearson and Cole Koepke, logging just 10:03 in ice time.

“We talked about it this summer, and last weekend when I met with him before the season,” Arniel said. “(If he does) the other things, those types of (offensive) results will come. (I need him to) be heavy on the forecheck, take pucks to the net, get to the net and (play strong) on the penalty kill.”

## **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6704216/2025/10/10/jonathan-toews-winnipeg-jets-2/>

### ***How Jonathan Toews’ encouraging performance could come to define the Jets’ season***

By Murat Ates

WINNIPEG — The pregame ovation for Jonathan Toews lasted so long that Haydn Fleury had to wait in the tunnel, biding his time before joining the Jets at centre ice.

It was as loud as the cheers reserved for franchise icons Connor Hellebuyck, Mark Scheifele, and Kyle Connor. As Toews skated onto the ice, ready to play his first NHL game since April 13, 2023, he was struck by the intensity of his emotions. It was the moment that he’d waited two years for and it had come in his hometown.

“A lot of energy. A lot of excitement. I’m just trying to contain myself there,” Toews said after the game.

Toews was a Chicago Blackhawks icon for 1,067 games prior to the health problems that took him away from hockey. He won three Stanley Cups, two Olympic gold medals, a Conn Smythe Trophy, and a World Cup of Hockey. It's clear Toews doesn't like for his health issues to dominate the conversation — he said on Thursday that he feels ready to be done talking about it — but it seems like he's someone who would not want to hog the spotlight in even the best of circumstances.

He would have been used to those spotlights in Chicago — used to being a franchise icon, used to being seen as “Captain Serious.” Toews made a storied career out of being the indispensable Blackhawk — the tone setter, the captain whose performance came to define his team.

On Thursday night, even though he'd warned us that he's going to need time to get back to his best, Toews' Game 1 performance served as the perfect symbol of the Jets' season.

Toews has been brutally honest about how long it could take to get his timing and conditioning back. His head coach, Scott Arniel, has pointed to the stretch run and playoffs as the time for Toews to make his mark. He might be Winnipeg's long-sought answer to questions about its centre depth, but even the best-case version of Toews' season involves growing pains.

Toews, 37, showed signs of rust and reasons for optimism in equal measure in the Jets' 5-4 loss to the Dallas Stars. He started slowly, as did most of his team. Toews is one of hockey's all-time great faceoff men, but he got beat cleanly on his first draw and then got kicked out of the dot on his second one. He's won 57.3 faceoffs in his career but Toews lost more than he won in his first game back.

“There's a lot of little things I can do better. Definitely trying to start the play with the puck off the face-offs — didn't really get that going for my line out there,” Toews said. “But other than that, there were some situations where the three of us created and had some chances, even on the power play as well. I was pretty close to making things happen, getting us on the board, so I think there are some positives I'm excited about.”

Toews got his legs under him as the game continued. Midway through the first, he picked up a puck in transition and fired a pass through the neutral zone intended for Gustav Nyquist. Nikita Chibrikov picked off the pass, realizing late that it was intended for his linemate, and ultimately derailing what would have been a clear break for Nyquist. Later on the same shift, Toews tracked down a Stars defender in a dangerous spot while forechecking, establishing great positioning, but couldn't ultimately win the puck back. It was one of so many plays wherein Toews was in the exact right spot, giving himself a chance to make an impact, but falling short.

The most obvious of these plays happened on a Jets entry about six minutes into the second period. Pionk led the rush and Nyquist dropped the puck for Chibrikov, who then

made a spectacular cross-ice pass to Toews cutting into the middle of the ice. Peak Toews would have buried that puck; this version shanked it wide.

"I thought I had high, far-side, and I think the puck just stood up on me a little bit and I ended up just rimming it around the glass," Toews said. "It was a tough one to pass up and miss the net on that one."

Toews spent his night on the precipice of great plays. His positioning was excellent; it seems possible that he'll be able to handle middle-six competition even though his line was outshot and outchanced in its first game. Toews' competitiveness was evident too: He won puck battles on the boards and in open ice, took a slashing penalty, gave the referees an earful, and was highly involved in the action whenever he was on the ice.

Put simply, Toews looks like he belongs. He was the least of Winnipeg's problems during a tough loss and it should be encouraging that he was that close to making an impact at this stage of his comeback.

The best-case version of the Jets depends on growing pains, too. Beyond Toews reclamation of his game, Winnipeg is enduring injuries to Cole Perfetti, Adam Lowry, and Dylan Samberg. On Thursday, Samberg's absence was the most evident of the three.

Fleury had a tough night, getting beaten on two of Dallas' goals and potentially deflecting a third past Hellebuyck. Fleury is a capable third-pairing or depth defender but struggles against elite competition. He's fast but doesn't read plays so well as to be a step ahead of the danger, big but not so physical, he stops opponents' cycle game by himself. The Jets were outscored 9-5 at five-on-five when he played with Neal Pionk last season and 2-0 against Dallas on Thursday.

But Fleury wasn't alone. Winnipeg gave up an uncharacteristically high number of scoring chances against Dallas, despite giving up the fewest goals in the NHL two seasons in a row. Logan Stanley and Luke Schenn struggled on the Jets' third pair, too — Winnipeg did not register an even-strength shot with Schenn on the ice. If Samberg were healthy, Fleury would likely be bumped down to the third pair, adding footspeed that it does not currently possess.

There's an argument to be made that the Jets' best play is to wait out Samberg's broken wrist (or to play Colin Miller, call up Elias Salomonsson, or make an early-season trade.) It's clear that Lowry and Perfetti will also help the team upon their respective returns.

Arniel didn't blame his personnel.

"We have capable people who are out there and playing," Arniel said. "If we're better with our structure and our details, we're not giving up those looks. They scored three goals off entries. That's not us. We don't give up those plays with a guy who's dead center in the middle of the ice getting chances."

It seems optimistic to think the Jets' current lineup can replicate the Jennings Trophy-winning performance of the past two seasons. Still, there's no clear-eyed evaluation of Winnipeg's ability after a single game played. Part of being honest about this Jets season is that they will be a bigger work in progress than we're used to. Arniel won't be able to set their lines and keep running them, like he largely did last season. It could be mid-November by the time Winnipeg's roster is complete — and well after that before Toews is at the top of his game.

The good news is that it looks like Toews is making progress. Take it from Kyle Connor, whose hat trick was Winnipeg's brightest spot of opening night.

"We've got to realize he's going to be growing every game," Connor said. "He showed spurts of it. He's such a cerebral player. He had a great chance in the second coming down there ... And he's the type of player that's kicking himself. He thinks he can bury all those. You see it, though, he's growing and not only on the ice, but in the locker room, he's a constant presence for us."

So whether he's comfortable with the idea or not, Toews' recovery is going to be a defining element to Winnipeg's story this season. The degree to which he finds his game could come to define it altogether.

Toews isn't worried about any of that, nor should he be.

"I'm just happy and grateful to be back at that point where I know I'm confident I can contribute to this team, put these last few years behind me, and just go enjoy this life once again."

### **CTV Winnipeg**

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/winnipeg/video/2025/10/10/winnipeg-jets-celebrating-15th-season-since-return/>

### ***Winnipeg Jets celebrating 15th season since return (VIDEO)***

CTV's Daniel Halmarson takes a special look at the Winnipeg Jets as they embark on their 15th season since returning to the city.