

## **WinnipegJets.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-winless-streak-reaches-nine>

### ***THREE THINGS: Jets winless streak reaches nine Lowry and Connor score for the Jets in 4-2 loss to the Senators***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets lost 4-2 to the Ottawa Senators at Canadian Tire Centre extending their winless streak to nine games (0-6-3). Adam Lowry and Kyle Connor scored for the Jets; Connor also had a multi-point night with an assist. Connor Hellebuyck made 23 saves for the Jets who fell to 15-21-4 on the season. Winnipeg will begin a five-game homestand on Tuesday when they host the Vegas Golden Knights.

#### ***BEGINNING THE RIGHT WAY***

As the Jets looked to bounce back from the loss in Toronto on Thursday night, it was during the penalty kill that they struck first. Kyle Connor sent a perfect indirect pass to Adam Lowry who grabbed the puck in full stride, skated in and beat Sens goaltender Leevi Merilainen through the legs. It was Lowry's 12th career shorthanded goal, and he tied Marian Hossa for the most shorties in franchise history.

#### ***PENALTY PROBLEMS***

Just over a minute after Lowry gave the Jets the lead, Dylan DeMelo was whistled for interference on Nick Cousins. The Jets killed off the majority of that penalty, but Thomas Chabot collected a pass from Brady Tkachuk and beat Connor Hellebuyck with just six seconds left on the DeMelo minor. In the second period with Ottawa leading 2-1, Logan Stanley was given a penalty for removing Tkachuk's helmet and another minor for roughing after punching the Sens captain. Winnipeg killed off the first minor, but Drake Batherson scored to give Ottawa their first two goal lead of the night.

"It just seems that's the way it's been going for the PK. We've done a good job for a minute 50 or a minute 45 and then they end up getting one or they get a look at the end of it," said DeMelo.

"So, that it's really frustrating, because those are big moments for our team. And I know all the guys in the PK take a lot of pride in it, and hasn't been going our way."

#### ***NOT GOING AWAY***

The score remained 3-1 until midway through the third period before the Jets pulled within one, DeMelo's point shot would hit the goal post, Kyle Connor was in the right spot and he tapped in his 19th of the season at 10:10.

Two minutes later, Lowry had a chance to tie it but his backhand attempt was turned aside by Merilainen. Claude Giroux restored Ottawa's two goal lead at 15:28.

"Yeah, I mean, finger pointing isn't going to help anybody," said DeMelo.

"It's not going to get us to where we want to go. It's not going to get us out of this. We all have a hand and where we are right now. No one's immune to this."

## NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-ottawa-senators-game-recap-january-3-2026>

### **Chabot scores twice, Senators hand Jets 9th straight loss Stutzle extends point streak to 12 for Ottawa; Connor has 2 points for Winnipeg**

By Callum Fraser

OTTAWA -- Thomas Chabot scored twice for the Ottawa Senators in a 4-2 win against the Winnipeg Jets at Canadian Tire Centre on Saturday.

"It's a big night for 'Chabby,'" Ottawa coach Travis Green said. "It's a rough game, tough game. It's not for the weak of heart. Chabby is known as an offensive player, but he's tough as nails, plays through a lot of pain. ... He's a warrior, that guy."

Claude Giroux and Drake Batherson each scored, and Leevi Merilainen made 21 saves for the Senators (20-15-5), who have won two straight after losing three in a row (0-2-1).

"It was a bit of an ugly game, I think, a lot of special teams and stuff like that," Batherson said. "But we found a way to win it. Leevi made some big stops at some big times. We'll take the win. It was a big game for us."

Kyle Connor had a goal and an assist, and Adam Lowry scored for the Jets (15-21-4), who lost 6-5 at the Toronto Maple Leafs on Thursday, and are 0-6-3 in their past nine. Connor Hellebuyck, who is 1-5-3 in his past nine starts since returning from a knee injury on Dec. 13, made 23 saves.

"That's an incomplete game," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "That's not 60 minutes. You can't win in this League, like I've mentioned before [if you don't] play 60 minutes. We've got to find a way, individually, each and every guy that has something to bring, and it has to come for 60 minutes. It can't come for partial periods."

Lowry gave the Jets a 1-0 lead with a short-handed goal at 12:08 of the first period. Connor knocked down a pass from Batherson and banked the puck off the boards to Lowry in the neutral zone, where he collected it and went forehand-backhand between Merilainen's pads on a breakaway.

"It's been tough," Jets defenseman Dylan DeMelo said. "There's been some things that are obviously self-inflicted, there's been some things out of our control. It just seems that everything is kind of going wrong at the same time right now."

Chabot tied it 1-1 with a power-play goal at 15:03, taking a Brady Tkachuk pass from below the goal line and burying a wrist shot from the high slot.

Chabot scored his second at 5:56 of the second period to make it 2-1 when he lifted a rebound from the left face-off circle over a sprawling Hellebuyck.

"I just think the whole second period was pretty lifeless," Lowry said.

Chabot needed “a few” stitches after taking a clearing attempt from Winnipeg forward Tanner Pearson to the face at 14:17. He returned for the third period with a bubble shield and finished with three blocks in 20:30 of ice time.

“Once I saw that, well, teeth is one thing, but that the jaw also wasn’t broken or anything, then, I mean, you’re good to go,” Chabot said.

Batherson extended the lead to 3-1 with a power-play goal at 15:50, using Shane Pinto as a screen and scoring with a wrist shot off a no-look pass from Tim Stutzle.

Stutzle’s assist extended his point streak to 12 games (19 points; eight goals, 11 assists).

The Jets cut the deficit to 3-2 at 10:10 of the third period. Demelo’s point shot rang off the crossbar and landed the stick of Connor, who tapped it into an open net.

“You’ve got to play games in this League, you can’t mail them in,” Arniel said. “You know what? I’m not going to let these guys quit and not come out and perform, but we need to do it [with] everybody for 60 minutes.”

Giroux handcuffed Hellebuyck with a wrist shot from just inside the right circle for the 4-2 final at 15:28.

“Every game’s a little different, but tonight, I think we played the way, our identity, we want it to be,” Giroux said. “We want to be a hard team to play. I think if we play like that most of the nights, we’re going to give ourselves a great chance to win.”

*NOTES:* Lowry’s 12th career short-handed goal tied him with Marian Hossa for the most in Jets/Thrashers history. ... Ottawa was 4-for-4 on the penalty kill and 2-for-5 on the power play. ... Merilainen posted his first save percentage of .900 or above since Nov. 24.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/03/struggling-jets-drop-ninth-straight-with-4-2-loss-to-senators>

#### ***Struggling Jets drop ninth straight with 4-2 loss to Senators***

By: Ken Wiebe

OTTAWA – This time, there was no multi-goal lead to try and protect.

No frantic finish or opportunity to tie the game late, even after momentarily pulling within a goal in the third period.

Patches of steady – and occasionally, even solid play? Sure.

But there was also a mostly lifeless second period from a team that needed to display more urgency over the course of the entire contest.

As the Winnipeg Jets lost 4-2 to the Ottawa Senators on Saturday night at Canada Tire Centre, an all-too familiar chorus emerged.

That's what happens when a team drops a ninth consecutive game and goes home empty-handed on this three-game road trip through the Eastern Conference, falling to 15-21-4 overall as they continue to sit in the basement of the NHL.

"This isn't one of those games where we look at and say that's the blueprint, if we keep going (like this), we can have success," said Jets captain Adam Lowry. "There's spurts of it, for sure.

"It seems like the same story, where there's a part of our game that falls short. We make one mistake and it tends to bleed into the rest of our game. I think that's pretty much it."

Instead of beginning the long and arduous climb out of the NHL basement, the Jets saw six potential points vanish into thin air, leaving them to ponder where they go from here in this season-long search for answers.

"After nine losses, it is frustrating, it is really frustrating," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "I am sure they are frustrated, the coaching staff is frustrated. You keep talking about learning lessons and you do things game to game and you hope that you build off one and into the next one and, like I mentioned before, you take one step forward and two steps back and that you can't do that in this league."

Arniel hit the nail on the head there.

For a veteran team that is the oldest in the NHL, the inability to find consistency – not even from game to game, but within the same game and from shift to shift – is mind-blowing when you consider the midway point of the season arrives on Tuesday when the Jets host the Vegas Golden Knights to open a five-game homestand.

"We have 42 games to go and it has already been a hard ride," Arniel conceded. "I still believe that if we ever get our complete 60-minute game together, we can go on a run. We're watching teams around the league going on runs and it is about putting that first one together and trying to build off it and go.

"You've got to play games in this league, you can't mail them in. We are not going to let these guys quit and not come out and perform."

That's the one thing about the Jets during this stretch of hockey, the mounting frustration hasn't led to any infighting or some of the other things that can infect a struggling bunch.

"I mean, finger pointing isn't going to help anybody," said Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo. "It's not going to get us to where we want to go. It's not going to get us out of this. We all have a hand in where we are right now. No one's immune to this. So it's going to take all of us to pull ourselves out of it."

"You start with your internal reflection and go from there and understand that we all can be better because you know exactly where we are because of how we've played."

Let's take another look at how this one played out in the nation's capital.

### *THE PUNCH*

Jets defenceman Logan Stanley caught Senators captain Brady Tkachuk with a hard – and unexpected – punch to the face during the second period.

Tkachuk and Stanley were involved in a wrestling match in front of the Senators bench and after things appeared to calm down, Stanley unloaded a right hand.

Tkachuk was understandably upset with the series of events and plenty of heated words for the Jets, likely threatening some form of retribution.

Stanley was dinged for a double minor, while Tkachuk was sent to the room with a 10-minute misconduct.

The Senators scored with 17 seconds left in the double minor and the power-play marker from Drake Batherson made it 3-1 and ended up being the game-winning goal.

On Sunday, the NHL Department of Player Safety held a phone hearing with Stanley and eventually announced that the Jets D-man had received a one-game suspension for roughing.

The video released by the NHL Department of Player Safety cited the fact Tkachuk kept his gloves on, wasn't expecting the exchange to escalate to a fight and was not poised to defend himself.

Stanley, who has seven goals and 13 points in 40 games this season, had not been fined or suspended previously in 242 NHL games.

He will be eligible to return to the Jets lineup on Thursday against the Edmonton Oilers.

### *LOWRY STRIKES*

The Jets got a short-lived lead after a beautiful backhand pass from Kyle Connor that caromed off the boards and sprung Lowry for a breakaway.

Lowry pulled away in the neutral zone from the back-checker and calmly made a move to the backhand and scored through the five-hole of Leevi Meralainen.

"It was a great play by him. A world class player makes a world class play," said Lowry. "The angle, the touch on it allowed me to get into stride. Fortunately that one found the back of the net. Like I said it was a good start but we weren't able to carry that forward."

It was the third goal of the season for Lowry and the fifth shorthanded marker of the campaign for the Jets.

For Lowry, it was the 12th shorthanded goal of his career, moving him into a tie with Marian Hossa for the franchise lead in that category.

### *NOT SO SPECIAL TEAMS*

After what was essentially a stretch of eight consecutive one-goal losses (though one was a two-goal defeat after an empty-net goal), the Jets lost by a pair of goals thanks to a late marker from Claude Giroux.

One of the areas the Jets fell short was on special teams, as the Senators notched a pair of goals with the man-advantage (finishing two-for-five), while the Jets went zero-for-four on the power play.

Both of the Senators power-play markers came late in the man-advantages, with six seconds remaining in one and 17 seconds in the other.

"It just seems that's the way it's been going for the PK," said DeMelo. "That's really frustrating, because those are big moments for our team. And I know all the guys in the PK take a lot of pride in it, and it hasn't been going our way. But we have to understand that there's some things that we've got to do better with. And to a man, obviously, as our whole team, we're in this for a reason, and we all need to obviously step it up here and try to get out of this funk."

#### ***THE KEY PLAY***

Batherson's wrister near the end of a penalty kill ended up being the back-breaker.

#### ***THE THREE STARS***

1. Tim Stutzle, Senators, Chipped in an assist and was the most noticeable player on the ice.
2. Thomas Chabot, Senators, Scored a pair of goals.
3. Drake Batherson, Senators, Supplied the game-winner.

#### ***EXTRA, EXTRA***

Connor Hellebuyck made his 23rd start of the season and finished with 23 saves. Hellebuyck has only posted a .900 save percentage once in his past six starts – and that was when he gave up two goals on 20 shots in the first game coming out of the holiday break against the Edmonton Oilers.

Hellebuyck remains the least of the Jets' concerns, but his recent play hasn't been up to his gold (or Vezina) standard. His save percentage has dipped to .905 while his goals-against average is now 2.58. For the sake of comparison, when Hellebuyck won the Hart Trophy and his third Vezina, he had eight shutouts to go with a 2.00 goals-against average and .925 save percentage. It's important to remember that the environment in front of Hellebuyck is vastly different, both when it comes to the volume and quality of shots he's been facing.

The Jets healthy scratches were defencemen Haydn Fleury and Luke Schenn and forward Gustav Nyquist.

Former Brandon Wheat Kings captain Ridly Greig got a promotion on Saturday to the Senators' top line with Tim Stutzle and Fabian Zetterlund and he chipped in an assist, giving him three goals and four points during his past five games.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/01/04/never-takinganything-like-that-for-granted-connor-pumped-for-4-nations-face-off>

### ***'Never taking anything like that for granted': Connor pumped for Olympics***

By: Ken Wiebe

OTTAWA – Kyle Connor has been looking forward to this second act for nearly a calendar year.

After missing out on the high-stakes championship final of the 4 Nations Face-Off, the Winnipeg Jets sniper is determined to be a difference-maker for Team USA at the Olympics in Italy next month.

Named to the team on Friday morning as part of an announcement on the Today Show, Connor spoke to reporters prior to Saturday's 4-2 loss to the Ottawa Senators about what it meant to get the call from general manager Bill Guerin.

"Yeah, it was cool. Never taking anything like that for granted," said Connor. "And there's nothing better than representing your country and playing for them and playing for something bigger than you."

"It's going to be exciting. We got a taste of it from the 4 Nations. And, obviously having a lot more countries being involved in the Olympics, and the hype behind it, and not being there for a while, I think there's gonna be a lot of buzz, a lot of media. And, players are equally as excited."

The Jets, who have dropped nine consecutive games (0-6-3), are back in action Tuesday against the Las Vegas Golden Knights as they open a five-game homestand.

Connor will be joined on the U.S. team by teammate Connor Hellebuyck, who will share the crease with Jake Oettinger and Jeremy Swayman.

"Really proud of those guys. Obviously, they both had the opportunity last year at 4 Nations," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "With KC, I hope they realize he's a goal scorer they need. At the same time, they've both earned it. Their play over the last few years, (Hellebuyck) with what he did last year and KC what he's again doing this year, it's special. They're both elite players in this game."

While Hellebuyck held the starting job for Team USA and was rock solid between the pipes for the gold medal game against Canada, Connor was made a healthy scratch for the final, a decision that led to plenty of second-guessing considering the overtime defeat.

By his own admission, Connor didn't get off to the start he'd hoped at the event and he was quickly dropped down the lineup after opening on the top line with Jack Eichel.

Limited to one assist in three games, Connor is eager for another chance to shine in best-on-best competition.

"It's just completely different tournaments," said Connor, who has 19 goals and 48 points in 40 games for the Jets this season. "So, it's just like any other game, you kind of learn from it, from what you have done. And as a player, there are certain areas that you're constantly working on in your game, whether it's regular season or in the 4 Nations."

"I don't think it necessarily changes the way that I play. There's a style of play that I like to play, and dictate the pace. And, play with lots of speed. And I don't think that really changes."

Arniel was impressed by how Connor took being scratched in stride and didn't let it affect his game when he returned to the Jets.

"He handled it about as professionally as he probably could," said Arniel. "He still wanted to make sure he was on the team this year, too, so you don't want to go out there throwing some things out there that maybe come back to haunt you."

"He knows what he can do. I think if you put him in that position, you put him in those situations, 99 percent of the time he's going to come out and do the right things. I think for him it's a little inspiration too, to go out in the Olympics here and be the best player he can be."

Having the opportunity to be part of the first Olympic men's competition involving NHL players since 2014 is something Connor relishes.

"It was definitely a big focal point for the players in the last CBA to go back to the Olympics, and we know how big of a stage that is, and what it does for the game," said Connor. "We want to get that chance to play against the best. A lot of these USA Hockey teammates, or Canadian teammates, you play with these guys growing up, and you go your separate ways a lot of times in the NHL."

"They bring that group back together and build a bond that's special. And not just this Olympics, but now, we've got a roadmap for years to come. This is kind of just a taste of what's going to come in the next 10 years."

Like many of his Jets' teammates, Connor remembers tuning in for the 2010 Olympics, where Zach Parise scored a late goal to send the game to overtime but Sidney Crosby ultimately delivered the Golden Goal.

"Obviously, I watched the 2010 Olympics there," said Connor. "And just overall, I'm just a fan of not just hockey, but the Olympics. And in general, all these athletes work so hard to be at the peak. And whatever sport it is, I've always found myself drawn to the TV when it comes around."

Connor will be part of a talented forward group that includes Eichel, Auston Matthews, Jack Hughes, Dylan Larkin and Brock Nelson, all of whom could serve as his centre.

Team USA should also benefit from having Quinn Hughes in the lineup after he was forced to sit out the 4 Nations Face-Off with an injury.

Goaltending also figures to be a strength, with Hellebuyck hoping to lead his team to a gold medal.

"It's kind of a mixture of everything," said Connor. "We've got a lot of pace, we've got big bodies, and we've got players that can handle different roles, it seems. And, I just think we created that special bond at 4 Nations, even though we didn't win. It's some of the most fun hockey that everybody was a part of. And hopefully, we're building on that. Four Nations was a year ago, but it also feels like it was yesterday."

“Everybody was pretty close knit and we built that bond. Overall, the team is just going to play with a lot of pace. You see on the back end too. A lot of the guys can skate and get up the ice, and so it’s kind of not one area.”

Connor also voiced support to longtime linemate Mark Scheifele, who wasn’t named to Canada’s 25-player roster.

“Well, we’re a family for a reason, and we’re obviously here to support him,” said Connor. “We think he’s one of the best players in the league — and it’s pretty crazy he didn’t get the call. Personally, I play with him every single night. I think he’s a Top 5 centre in this league. And he’s up there, Top 10 in points. So it’s unfortunate, but it doesn’t change any way that he plays. From what I saw, it almost motivates him.”

“At the same time, you deal with anything like you do in life, you support each other and obviously, everybody’s happy for Josh (Morrissey), Connor (Hellebuyck) and me, and you just kind of go about your business and keep going.”

### **Winnipeg Sun**

[https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/jets-grounded-for-the-9th-time-lose-4-2-to-the-senators/article\\_eb690a28-bfb1-4c17-a420-dc18453e6a21.html](https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/jets-grounded-for-the-9th-time-lose-4-2-to-the-senators/article_eb690a28-bfb1-4c17-a420-dc18453e6a21.html)

#### ***Jets grounded for the 9th time, lose 4-2 to the Senators***

By Gordon Anderson

Surely, this unprecedeted streak of futility for the Winnipeg Jets will come to an end.

The million-dollar question is when.

“It’s hard to say,” Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said after a 4-2 loss to the Ottawa Senators on Saturday night. “I mean, it’s been tough. There’s been some things obviously self-inflicted. There’s been some things out of our control. It just seems like everything is going wrong at the same time right now.”

The two-goal loss catapulted the Jets to their ninth consecutive loss (0-6-3). The current losing streak is the longest in the history of the contemporary Winnipeg franchise. Seven of the losses came by one goal, and two of the defeats came by two goals. Their last win was a 5-1 triumph over the Washington Capitals on Dec. 13.

“In this stretch, we’ve had some pretty good games where we didn’t necessarily get the outcomes we thought we deserved,” captain Adam Lowry said. Lowry scored his third of the season, a short-handed goal at 12:08 of the first period, staking the visitors to a 1-0 lead.

Trailing 3-1 to start the third period, Kyle Connor gave the Jets a burst of energy when he scored his 19th goal at 10:10, sweeping the puck into the empty net after DeMelo dinged the left post with a shot from near the point.

Claude Giroux re-established the two-goal margin at 15:25 as his shot squeezed through Connor Hellebuyck.

Hellebuyck took the loss, stopping 23 of 27 shots. Hellebuyck is 1-5-3 in his return from a knee injury and 0-5-3 during this winless streak.

Thomas Chabot scored twice for the Senators. Drake Batherson also scored for Ottawa.

Backup netminder Leevi Merilainen turned aside 21 shots for the victory. Senators starting goalie Linus Ullmark will be away from the team for an undetermined amount of time due to personal reasons. The Sens announced the news on Dec. 28, saying they will fully support their netminder.

During a media availability on Saturday, GM Steve Staios was asked if he had a timeline for Ullmark's return.

"No," Staios said. "We'll just leave it at that."

The Jets return home to host the Las Vegas Golden Knights on Tuesday night.

#### *Ice Chips*

Luke Schenn, Gustav Nyquist and Haydn Fleury were scratched.

#### *A slice of history*

Lowry claimed an outright share of some franchise history when his backhand snuck between the legs of Merilainen for a short-handed goal. The marker was Lowry's 12th career short-handed goal. Marian Hossa scored 12 short-handed goals when he played for the Atlanta Thrashers. Blake Wheeler scored 11, with both the Thrashers and Jets. Kyle Connor rounds out the top three with nine shorties.

The goal was the team's fifth shortie of the season, tying them with the Vancouver Canucks for fifth in the league.

#### *III-timed penalties*

After Lowry's goal, DeMelo was whistled for interference on Nick Cousins inside the Winnipeg zone. Six seconds before the minor was to end, Chabot found the back of the net for his second goal of the season at 15:03 of the first period. The DeMelo minor was the third consecutive penalty of the period as Alex Lafallo and Jonathan Toews were also assessed minors before DeMelo.

With the Jets trailing 2-1 in the second period, Logan Stanley was given a double minor after an altercation with Brady Tkachuk near the Ottawa bench. One minor was for tearing the helmet off the head of the Sens captain, the second one was for cracking Tkachuk in the face with a solid right hand. Tkachuk was given a 10-minute misconduct, setting up a four-minute powerplay for the home side. Seventeen seconds before the double minor was set to expire, Batherson wired his shot into the top half of the net at 15:50 for his 16th goal in his 37th game.

Prior to the start of the season, the Jets wanted their penalty kill in the top 10 rankings league wide. The PK came into the game against the Senators ranked 20th in the NHL, having allowed 26 goals in 124 opportunities, a 79 per cent efficiency rating. During this nine-game losing streak the penalty kill has allowed six goals in the last five games.

[https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/winnipeg\\_jets/jets-forward-kyle-connor-gets-the-call-from-team-usa/article\\_058b867f-adb1-4a19-98e9-7ef8919e0a60.html](https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/jets-forward-kyle-connor-gets-the-call-from-team-usa/article_058b867f-adb1-4a19-98e9-7ef8919e0a60.html)

## ***Jets forward Kyle Connor gets the call from Team USA***

By Gordon Anderson

Nearly a calendar year after representing the U.S. at the 4 Nations, Jets forward Kyle Connor will be winging his way to more international duty.

Jets forward Kyle Connor and coach Scott Arniel at practice

Jets winger Kyle Connor and head coach Scott Arniel. On Friday morning, Connor was among the 25 players selected to represent the U.S. at the Olympic Winter Games next month.

"You never take anything like that for granted, and there is nothing better than representing your country, playing for them and playing for something bigger than (yourself)," Connor told reporters in Ottawa on Saturday morning.

On Friday morning, Connor was among the 25 players selected to represent the U.S. at the Olympic Winter Games in Italy next month.

"I am proud of those guys," head coach Scott Arniel said of Connor and netminder Connor Hellebuyck. "With Connor, I hope they recognize that he is a goal scorer that they need. At the same time, they were going this year. They are both elite players and they are a big bonus for the U.S. team."

Hellebuyck was also selected for the team. Normally, the Jets do not make goalies available on game day. In this instance, nothing has changed, so Hellebuyck's thoughts on making the team were not made public.

In a previous interview with the media, Team USA general manager Bill Guerin noted that team chemistry at the 4 Nations was an important factor in the selection of the Olympic team.

The fact that 21 players going to the Winter Games competed at the 4 Nations lends credence to Guerin's thought process.

"The chemistry allowed the guys to play the way that they did," Guerin said. "The willingness to accept their role, willingness to do things that maybe on their NHL team they are not asked to do, like take a little bit less ice time or play a different role — all those things went into it. But the chemistry thing was one of the biggest factors."

However, Connor was collateral damage in the 'less ice time' or 'different role' vision the GM had for the team. The first-line winger was a healthy scratch for the championship game, as Canada beat the U.S. 3-2 on Connor McDavid's overtime goal.

Upon his return to Winnipeg following the event, Connor was diplomatic in his assessment of the situation.

"It was frustrating," Connor said at the time. "I felt I could have made an impact. Stuff like that happens, as it is such a short tournament. They went a different route."

Nearly one year removed, it appears the fences have been mended and the garden tended between the player and his national team.

"It is going to be exciting," Connor said. "We got a taste of (international hockey) at the 4 Nations, but having more countries involved at the Olympics, and being the Olympics with the hype behind it, there is going to be a lot of buzz. The players are equally as excited."

High-end players like Jason Robertson, Cole Caulfield, Adam Fox and Matthew Knies were left off the roster.

Connor seemed pleased with Guerin's assembly-line approach, adding major components to the squad while filling in around the margins with grit and beef.

"(The team) is a mixture of everything," Connor said. "We have got a lot of pace, we also have big bodies and players that can handle different roles. You can see it on the back end too, as a lot of these guys can skate and get up the ice. It is not just one area — everyone can fill roles. They did a good job of that."

### **Canadian Press**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/chabot-scores-twice-for-senators-who-hand-jets-their-ninth-straight-loss/>

#### ***Chabot scores twice for Senators who hand Jets their ninth straight loss***

By Canadian Press

The Winnipeg Jets dropped their ninth straight game on Saturday, falling 4-2 to the Ottawa Senators.

Drake Batherson's second-period goal proved to be the winner.

Thomas Chabot added a pair and Claude Giroux added an insurance marker. Leevi Merilainen, making his third straight start stopped 20 of 22 shots.

The Jets (15-21-4) losing streak (0-6-3) started at the hands of the Senators on Dec. 15. Winnipeg returns home 0-3-0 on its latest road trip.

Trailing 3-1 the Jets got within one midway through the third.

Dylan DeMelo's point shot hit the crossbar and Kyle Connor buried the rebound for his 19th, but Giroux beat Connor Hellebuyck, who made 23 saves, from in close late in the third.

Ottawa (20-15-5) jumped out to a 3-1 lead after 40 minutes.

Chabot scored his second of the game early in the second after grabbing a blocked shot and raising it over an outstretched Hellebuyck.

Logan Stanley earned the ire of Brady Tkachuk after the two tangled at the Jets bench and Stanley pulled Tkachuk's helmet off and sucker punched him.

Stanley took a double minor, while Tkachuk was assessed a 10-minute misconduct.

With 17 seconds remaining in the penalty Batherson converted on a nice feed from Tim Stutze, who extended his point streak to 12 games (eight goals, 11 assists).

The Senators lost Chabot late in the period when Tanner Pearson's clearing attempt caught the Senators defenceman in the face. Chabot immediately sprinted off the ice but did return for the third wearing a full bubble.

The teams exchanged first period goals.

Winnipeg opened the scoring with a short-handed goal. Adam Lowry broke in alone and went to his backhand and slid a puck under an outstretched Merilainen.

Ottawa responded three minutes later on the power play when Chabot took a Tkachuk pass at the top of the slot and fired a shot through traffic.

#### ***TAKEAWAYS***

Jets: The Jets got off to a strong start but failed to maintain momentum.

Senators: The Senators remained patient and took advantage of their opportunities.

#### ***KEY STAT***

Thomas Chabot had his first two-goal game since Feb. 22, 2022, giving him five career two-goal games.

#### ***KEY MOMENT***

Claude Giroux's third-period goal with 4:32 remaining was too much for Winnipeg to overcome.

#### ***UP NEXT***

Jets: Host the Vegas Golden Knights on Tuesday.

Senators: Host the Detroit Red Wings on Monday.

#### **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6938503/2026/01/03/senators-brady-tkachuk-logan-stanley-punch-misconduct/>

#### ***Senators outraged after Brady Tkachuk sucker punched by Logan Stanley, given misconduct***

By Julian McKenzie

OTTAWA — Ottawa Senators forward Brady Tkachuk is used to dishing out and taking punches in fights. On Saturday night, he was not only on the receiving end of a punch, but he drew the harsher penalty.

Tkachuk was given a 10-minute misconduct in the second period of Ottawa's 4-2 victory over the Winnipeg Jets for his role in a tussle with defenceman Logan Stanley. The American-born winger was bumped into his own bench by Stanley, only for Tkachuk to wrap his arms around

Stanley while trying to push him back and losing his helmet in the process. As both men pushed each other, Tkachuk held on to Stanley's stick as a linesman attempted to break them up.

Stanley then dropped his right glove and punched Tkachuk, dropping him to the ice.

Tkachuk skated away, seemingly favoring his right hand. The forward missed 20 games with a thumb injury earlier this season. As he skated toward the penalty box area, Tkachuk pointed at the Jets bench before yelling at Stanley, who was already in the penalty box. As an official led him away, Tkachuk continued barking at the Jets bench while being restrained. He eventually gathered his stick before whacking the boards and exiting the game.

Tkachuk was given a 10-minute misconduct penalty, while Stanley was given two minor penalties: one for roughing and another for removing Tkachuk's helmet. He was suspended by the NHL for one game after having a hearing on Sunday.

"I will probably choose my words wisely," Senators head coach Travis Green said. "If the refs had to do it again and call it again, they'd probably make a different call. You never like to see a guy get suckered in the face. It's unfortunate, we're lucky he came back. He's an All-Star player. I'm sure their team wouldn't be happy if (Kyle) Connor got suckered in the face and there was just a two-minute minor for roughing called."

"You hate seeing that," said teammate Thomas Chabot, who scored twice. "Because you guys all know Brady will stand in front of anybody and will do it on his own. But everybody hates seeing that. He can't fight. He's got the hand taped up, and you see that happen. We hate that. But just the way he reacted, it's great to see that. All he's worried about is winning and so are we."

Tkachuk eventually returned to the game in the third period and drew loud applause from the Canadian Tire Centre crowd. He finished the game with an assist in 14:18 of ice time in Ottawa's win, the team's second consecutive victory. The Jets, meanwhile, have lost nine consecutive games.

### **Ottawa Citizen**

<https://ottawacitizen.com/ottawa-senators/ottawa-senators-victory-winnipeg-jets>

***Thomas Chabot's two-goal effort leads Ottawa Senators to victory over Winnipeg Jets***

By Bruce Garrioch

The Ottawa Senators put the Winnipeg Jets in their place on Saturday night.

The Senators served notice that they mean business by picking up their second straight win with a 4-2 decision over the Jets in front of 16,672 at the Canadian Tire Centre.

Defenceman Thomas Chabot, who finished the game with a full visor after taking a puck in the face late in the second period, led Ottawa's attack with a two-goal effort, while Claude Giroux and Drake Batherson also chipped in with goals.

Giroux put the dagger in the Jets by beating Connor Hellebuyck with a shot with 3:35 left in the third period, restoring a two-goal lead. Chabot had a bunch of stitches in his chin, but no lost teeth and, most importantly, his jaw was intact.

"Once I saw the jaw wasn't broken, you're good to go," Chabot said. "My head was fine, and everything was good. It was just about getting some stitches and getting back out there."

Backup goalie Leevi Merilainen picked up his second straight win, and this one will be good for his confidence, but he also had help because the Senators played solidly in front of him.

The Jets have plunged to last place in the National Hockey League's overall standings. They were the league's best team midway through last regular season, but they've made a quick trip to the worst, going 1-6-3 in the past 10 contests and winless in nine straight.

The Jets refused to go quietly into the night against the Senators, though. Kyle Connor closed the gap to 3-2 with a goal at 10:10 of the third period, firing home a rebound in front after Dylan DeMelo's point shot hit the post.

"I feel like we played pretty solid and pretty consistent," said Giroux. "They had a push, but we did a good job of getting it done."

#### *Cheap shot on Tkachuk*

Senators captain Brady Tkachuk was livid late in the second period.

He can't fight because he's still recovering from a right thumb injury that required surgery, but he still got in a wrestling match with Logan Stanley near the Ottawa bench.

Tkachuk made it clear he couldn't fight, but Stanley gave him a sucker punch to the head. Tkachuk wasn't paying attention because one of the linemen had stepped in, trying to break the two up.

Somehow, Tkachuk was assessed a 10-minute misconduct, while Stanley only received two minor penalties. It was a ridiculous call. The NHL's department of player safety could take action against Stanley for his disgraceful decision.

Coach Travis Green wasn't pleased.

"I will probably choose my words wisely," Green said. "If the refs had to do it again and call it again, they'd probably make a different call. You never like to see a guy get suckered in the face. It's unfortunate, we're lucky he came back. He's an all-star player. I'm sure their team wouldn't be happy if (Kyle) Connor got suckered in the face and there was just a two-minute minor for roughing."

Tkachuk was unavailable to speak because he was getting treatment.

Batherson made the Jets pay for the double minors, though, scoring his 16th goal of the season on the power play at 15:50 of the second period for a 3-1 lead.

Chabot's second of the night at 5:46 of the second had put the Senators ahead 2-1. Great work by Nick Jensen down low allowed Chabot to pick up a rebound and beat Hellebuyck.

"You don't like to see that stuff happening," said Giroux. "I don't know if Stanley thought he was in a fight. I seriously don't know what to say."

#### *Switching gears*

After the incident in the second period, Tkachuk told his club to make the Jets pay by getting the win.

"I didn't really see until they showed it," said Batherson. "You never really want to see a play like that. Chucky wanted us to win the game, and that's what we did. It happens, but I definitely didn't like it."

In the first period because the teams combined for five power plays. A lot has been made of the Senators' penalty-killing struggles, but they killed off both opportunities the Jets had in the first 20 minutes.

The Senators were able to get three times lucky in the first period.

Chabot scored his first goal in 16 games when he fired a blast top shelf by Hellebuyck to tie the game 1-1 at 15:03.

That came on Ottawa's third power play of the period, and Chabot's stick broke on the shot, but it still had a lot of juice on it.

Jets captain Adam Lowry opened the scoring at 12:08 of the first period with his team shorthanded. He was able to get in behind Ottawa's defence, broke in alone and beat Merilainen with a backhanded shot.

That was the 24th time this season the Senators had allowed the opening goal.

#### *Net Victory*

The challenge for the Senators was to beat the best goalie in the world.

The Jets have struggled this season, but Hellebuyck has given his club a chance to win after missing a lengthy stretch. He came into this game with a 13-5-1 record in 19 career games against Ottawa along with a 2.32 goals-against average and a .921 save percentage.

He hasn't been able to get the job done since coming back from a knee injury, though.