

Four Jets in Milan for Olympics

Josh Morrissey and Canada open the Olympics against Czechia on Feb. 12

By Jamie Thomas

We are less than a week away from the return of NHLers to the Olympics as Slovakia and Finland will open the men's tournament on February 11. Here is a quick look at the four Jets that will represent their countries in Milan.

JOSH MORRISSEY D Canada

Canada Preliminary schedule

Feb. 12 vs. Czechia 9:40 am

Feb. 13 vs. Switzerland 2:10 pm

Feb. 15 vs. France 9:40 am

Morrissey just represented Canada at the 4 Nations Face-Off and was part of the team that won the tournament last February. The 30-year-old will be playing for Canada for the eighth time. The Canadians have won the last two gold medals (2010, 2014) when the NHL has sent their players to the Olympics.

"I think as a as a hockey player, and in our sport, obviously, grew up dreaming of playing the NHL, and subsequently, it'd be pretty darn cool to play in the Olympics and but unlike other sports, that's the ultimate goal. I never thought I'd have the chance to be an Olympian. So it's hard to put into words. And just having the chance to represent Canada and on any level, but let alone the Olympics, is, yeah, it's a dream come true."

NINO NIEDERREITER F Switzerland

Switzerland Preliminary schedule

Feb. 12 vs, France 5:10 am

Feb. 13 vs. Canada 2:10 pm

Feb. 15 vs. Czechia 5:10 am

This will be the second Olympic games for Niederreiter as he represented Switzerland back in 2014. The 33-year-old was the Swiss flag bearer at the opening ceremonies on Friday. Niederreiter has won four silver medals at the World Hockey Championships.

"Super excited about it, I mean obviously it's a huge honor having a chance to play for your country, and obviously we have a good team and looking forward to playing a good tournament."

KYLE CONNOR F United States

USA Preliminary schedule

Feb. 12 vs, Latvia 2:10 pm

Feb. 14 vs. Denmark 2:10 pm

Feb. 15 vs. Germany 2:10 pm

Connor will be making his Olympic debut and this will be his fourth time representing the United States at an international event (2014 U-18 World Championships, 2016 World Hockey Championships, 2025 4 Nations Face-Off). The United States won silver in 2010 in Vancouver and 2002 in Salt Lake.

"Being American, I'm extremely, extremely proud and obviously very gracious to be able to wear that sweater. It means a lot to me. And there's a rich history of US hockey players before me that have gone through it, and so it's a great honour, and I'm looking forward to the experience."

CONNOR HELLEBUYCK G United States

Like Connor, Hellebuyck is making his Olympic debut. Hellebuyck led the Americans to second place at the 4 Nations Face-Off last February, he had 1.59 goals against average and a .932 save percentage.

"Very confident with the way I've been playing and been making some good tweaks, and just like typical season stuff, just building my game, making it stronger as the season goes along. And, learning from little mistakes. But for the most part, I feel like I've seen the puck really well. My confidence has been high, and I've been playing my game."

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/team-usa-goalie-breakdown-for-milano-cortina-olympics>

Team USA goalie breakdown for Milano Cortina Olympics Hellebuyck of Jets expected to start over Oettinger of Stars, Swayman of Bruins

By Kevin Woodley

Goaltending will be an integral part of the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026. To provide insight into the strengths and weaknesses of each country's goalies, we have borrowed a project from the Stanley Cup Playoffs and charted goals against by some of the goaltenders we will see in this tournament. Doing so allows us to see what patterns emerge that might be targeted and what areas should be avoided.

First up, Team USA, which plays its first game of the tournament against Team Finland on Thursday (3:10 p.m. ET; Peacock, USA, CBC Gem, SN, CBC).

Connor Hellebuyck

It's a safe bet Hellebuyck will get first crack at the job for Team USA, especially after leading the Americans to the championship game of last season's 4 Nations Face-Off. Despite a down season statistically in 2025-26, including a .900 save percentage which is well below his .917 career average, the 32-year-old is coming off a season in which he won his third Vezina Trophy as the NHL's top goalie and the Hart Trophy as League MVP with the Winnipeg Jets. With that in mind, each of the 100 goals against Hellebuyck this season were tracked and this analysis focuses principally on him.

Hellebuyck USA goalie breakdown

High glove: This hasn't historically been an issue for Hellebuyck, who holds his glove high in a "fingers-up" position that typically dissuades shooters and allows him to take away that space efficiently. His past regular-season goal charts have typically been more balanced between the glove and blocker side, and his high-glove goal totals have been better than the 22.5 percent

average of the more than 8,500 goals tracked for this project since 2017. Clearly that isn't the case this season, and while these numbers don't represent a save percentage, the St. Louis Blues scored 11 goals on 15 high-glove shots in the Western Conference First Round against Hellebuyck last season, so it may be worth watching whether Olympic opponents target it on open looks.

East-west off the rush: Creating lateral plays across the middle of the ice is a good way to score on any goalie and was long considered especially important against Hellebuyck, who is regarded by many as the best in the NHL while facing straight-line attacks. Hellebuyck has improved his results on such plays each of the past two seasons, however, with 21 goals allowed so far this season, still slightly below the tracked average of 22.1 percent. But it's still the best was to attack off the rush, especially considering he only gave up two goals in the slot when a shooter held the puck compared to 13 when a pass was made before shooting; this is indicative of how much better a scoring chance is after making any goalie move laterally, and how great Hellebuyck is reading straight releases, even from close range with time and space.

Traffic and tips: Hellebuyck's incredible ability to read and anticipate plays and shots make it especially important to take away his sightlines. Screens were a primary factor on 18 percent of the goals scored on him this season, slightly above the 15.1 percent tracked average, but were a much bigger part of his past two Stanley Cup Playoff appearances, with 16 of 61 goals (26.2 percent) involving traffic.

Create chaos in front: Generating traffic isn't just about going to the net when a shot is coming. It can also make it harder to see and read passes and beat them to the next spot, all things Hellebuyck does while staying up on his skates as well as anyone. It also leads to more scrambles off pucks that hit legs, sticks and skates before making it to the goalie and Hellebuyck, whose side-to-side movements from his knees have more moving parts and slight delays because he has a slightly narrower butterfly than many of his peers. He has given up 22 goals on those types of scrambles this season, well above the tracked average of 14 percent, and close to the 21.3 percent he's allowed during the past two postseasons.

Left to right in tight: Hellebuyck plays a conservative depth that gives him a chance on even difficult lateral plays, especially with how patiently he holds his feet, gets spread or stretched out and leaves open nets, even on backdoor chances. So it's worth noting that of the 17 times it's led to a goal this season, 11 came when he was forced to move to his right, even if most of them were broken play bounces and rebounds.

Jake Oettinger

With Hellebuyck the likely starter, we limited the breakdown on Dallas Stars goalie Jake Oettinger to the past 50 goals given up this season, even though the 27-year-old has proven himself worthy of big moments with three straight trips to the Western Conference Final.

Jake Oettinger USA goalie breakdown

High-blocker: Like Hellebuyck's high-glove totals this season, the discrepancy in Oettinger's blocker totals don't match historical trends for a goalie this project has tracked in past playoffs. It also doesn't represent a save percentage but at 28 percent, it is well above the historical tracked average of 18.3 percent, and five of his seven clean-look goals were scored high on the blocker side. Oettinger's tendency to get low and wide in his pre-save stance can make it harder to catch up with shots to the blocker side compared to his glove, which he holds in a fingers-up position that allows him better access to high shots even when he gets low to the ice. That glove tendency plays a role in his high-glove goals (14 percent) being well below the 22.5 percent

tracked average and his low-glove goals being above (16 percent compared to the 10.9 average), making low-glove just over the pad a better bet on that side.

Early passing, quick shots: One-timers that make it harder for a goalie to get set are always a good idea and accounted for 16 percent of this sample for Oettinger, more than double the tracked average of 7.4 percent. The same thing goes for passes across the middle of the ice, which are at 29 percent compared to the tracked average of 22.1. Combining these trends, it's worth noting that a lot of those goals were on rush chances where passes were made higher in the zone rather than in tight, taking advantage of Oettinger's tendency to get out early and retreat with the rush by catching him with quick shots higher in the zone before he could fully cover off that extra space side-to-side that his depth created.

Low laterals, active rebounds: Attacking from below the bottom of the face-off circles gets Oettinger into that low stance that somewhat limits lateral mobility, and inconsistency in post-integration habits can lead to goals and second chances. However, rebounds will bounce harder and travel further off his Bauer pads.

Jeremy Swayman

Like Oettinger, we only tracked the past 50 goals against Swayman of the Boston Bruins, but after backstopping the U.S. to its first World Championship since 1933 during the offseason, there's no question the 27-year-old can step in as the starter.

Swayman USA goalie breakdown

Funnel pucks right: A lot of the goals tracked along the ice, outside of either skate, tend to be the result of backdoor tap-ins on low lateral passes, or rebounds and scrambles that strand a goalie and leave the net empty. Sometimes it happens more on one side than the other simply because of a team's defensive strengths and weaknesses, but the fact so many of those goals occurred to Swayman's right is noticeable. Even though seven were rebounds or broken plays, and four were tap-ins, his tendency to get stuck in his butterfly and reach with the stick on second chances to his right stood out as part of that. Every goalie has a direction in which they move better. For most, it's toward the glove. That appears to include Swayman on recoveries from his knees, so trying to generate second chances to that side could be beneficial.

Get bodies to the net: Swayman's ability to hold his edges and still generate lateral-push power even as he gets into a lower, wider stance has made him one of the NHL's top goalies when it comes to defending the increase in side-to-side attacks. His success against those types of dangerous plays has continued this season, which makes it even more important to try and create offense through chaos, with screens accounting for 20 percent of the tracked goals, well above the 15.1-percent average. Broken plays accounted for another 22 percent, also well above the 14-percent average. Swayman also holds his feet more on sharp-angle plays, which fuels great movement on low-high plays, but might make it worthwhile to shoot a puck to his feet from time to time from down near the goal line to keep him honest and create rebounds.

High from distance: Swayman has similarly exceptional results up high and maintains active forward hands even as he widens out and lowers into his save stance, but of the six clean-look goals from the perimeter (12 percent, well above the 3.7 percent average), four were scored up high.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11659205/analysis-winnipeg-jets-fans-still-care-olympics/>

ANALYSIS: Will Winnipeg Jets fans still care after the Olympics?

By Cameron Poitras CJOB

I've been wondering about something, and I'm not sure how it will actually turn out. I'm hopeful for one thing, but a piece of me truly believes another will happen. What's the saying, "Out of sight, out of mind"?

With hockey fans turning to the international events at the Olympics and the epic "You Remember Where You Were?!" moments that they present, the Winnipeg Jets, despite sending four players to the tournament, will, at least for a time, fade into the background — which I fear will be costly.

In years past, even last year, a long break was a welcome time to take a big breath — take it easy — and get ready for the high-pressure and heart-pounding stress and action that comes with late-season hockey and the Stanley Cup playoffs.

But that's a very unlikely result for the Jets this season. Sitting at 22-26-8 — a record that has them 11 points out of the post-season — I worry this distance away could be crushing for Winnipeg and the organization's bottom line.

When you're in the middle of the season — especially at the pace that it went, with a new game on the schedule at most a day or two away — regardless of wins or losses, it's difficult not to get into the rhythm of the season. You feel each beat and prepare for each up and down.

However, with the weather seemingly turning and spring on the horizon, a team that is sitting 28th of 32 teams is going to struggle to maintain even a shred of buzz in its final 26 games on the schedule, especially after the pending sell-off ahead of the March 6 trade deadline — now only five games away.

That reality hits home when you realize that the Jets have roughly one-quarter of all their home games remaining — 10 in March and three more in April. And so, to all those who have been calling for a "rebuild," well, this is the small cost of a small fraction of what that would actually bring, with this instead being a pending and much-needed retool of this roster.

So, cheer your Jets loud and proud. Because they're going to need it. Especially as things go quiet in the hushed advance toward summer.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/02/09/ready-to-do-anything-i-can-to-help>

'Ready to do anything I can to help' Jets' Connor determined to prove value he can bring to Team USA

By: Mike McIntyre

MILAN — You don't need to remind Winnipeg Jets forward Kyle Connor what happened the last time he was asked to wear the Stars and Stripes.

It was last February in Boston — the highly anticipated gold-medal showdown between the United States and Canada to cap off a wildly successful 4 Nations Face-Off — and Connor was relegated to press-box duty as a healthy scratch.

Talk about a gut punch.

Fast-forward one year, and Connor has once again been selected to represent his country, this time on an even bigger stage in the form of the Winter Olympics. Might there be a bit of lingering emotional baggage to go with the jet lag after touching down Sunday here in Milan?

"Not at all," he told the Free Press following his team's practice on Monday.

"You know, I learned from it. Hopefully grew from it. And I've learned about the decisions that were made and everything that was involved. I'm ready to do anything I can to help contribute to this team and hopefully help win the gold."

"I learned from it. Hopefully grew from it... I'm ready to do anything I can to help contribute to this team and hopefully help win the gold."

That type of approach is music to the ears of U.S. head coach Mike Sullivan — the same man who opted to park Connor, one of the league's best pure scorers, for a game his team went on to lose 3-2 in overtime. It was a decision that was frequently, and loudly, second-guessed.

"These roster decisions are difficult. There's an argument to have every player that we have here in the lineup. You could say the same for the 4 Nations experience," said Sullivan.

"Kyle handled it like a true pro and he's a great person. He made these teams for a reason — he's one of our nation's very best."

It would appear Sullivan isn't eager to repeat history. Connor is skating on a line with Detroit Red Wings centre Dylan Larkin and powerful Buffalo Sabres winger Tage Thompson, and that trio is likely to get a test run Thursday when the United States opens pool play against Latvia.

"This is a new experience and we've got a complement of players here that we're going to try to put in positions to set them up for success and ultimately the group up for success," said Sullivan. "And Kyle is one of those guys."

“Kyle handled it like a true pro and he’s a great person. He made these teams for a reason – he’s one of our nation’s very best.”

That line could do real damage. Connor (25 goals), Larkin (26) and Thompson (30) all rank among the NHL’s top snipers so far this season.

“Super excited. I’m going to make sure the coach knows what I can bring to the table,” said Connor.

“Larks up the middle, plays with a ton of speed, very responsible two-way forward. And obviously Tage we know what kind of player he is, what a shot he has. He’s got a long reach and body that can create space for anybody.

There’s no question Team USA is stacked. Consider the other combinations during Monday’s skate: Jack Eichel between Matthew and Brady Tkachuk; Auston Matthews with Matt Boldy and Jake Guentzel; Brock Nelson between Jack Hughes and J.T. Miller, with Vincent Trocheck and Clayton Keller rotating in.

The blue line may be even deeper, featuring a top projected top six of Quinn Hughes, Charlie McAvoy, Jacob Slavin, Brock Faber, Noah Hanifin and Zach Werenski.

And Connor is quick to point out goaltending may be the team’s biggest strength, with Jets teammate Connor Hellebuyck joined by Jake Oettinger and Jeremy Swayman.

“It gives you more confidence as a player and as a team knowing that they’re back there,” Connor said of the talented trio.

“They don’t over complicate things. Especially Helly, he’s so simple and controls the play. That just gives the whole team peace of mind.”

There has been plenty of speculation about who Sullivan will tab as his No. 1, and Monday’s practice may have offered a clue. Hellebuyck took the lion’s share of the work, occupying one net for the entire session while Swayman and Oettinger split time at the other end.

Should anything be read into that?

“Well that’s for you guys to decide,” Sullivan told the Free Press with a smirk. “You know, we’re just going to go about our business the way we do it.”

As for how the decision will ultimately be made?

“There’s lots of things that weigh into it. I’m not going to sit here and share the internal conversations we have and how we make lineup decisions,” said Sullivan.

“What I will tell you is that we feel regardless of which guy we put in, we have three elite goaltenders, all of which will give us an opportunity to win. That we know. We’ll do our best to make the best decisions for the team. That’s a discussion we have with our goaltenders, and that’s how we’ll go about it.”

Team USA will take Tuesday off before holding one final practice ahead of game action. They’ll also face Germany and Denmark in pool play. Connor would only run into Jets teammates Josh

Morrissey (Canada) or Nino Niederreiter (Switzerland) in the playoff round, as both teams play in pool Group A.

Connor will soon be joined in Milan by his wife, mother, stepdad and several friends from back home in Michigan. He's rooming with Clayton Keller in the athletes' village and soaking in what could be a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

"Just walking around with the other athletes and watching them, it's honestly a different feel than at the 4 Nations. We knew how big that was, but this is a whole other level in terms of the magnitude. The support of other countries and athletes all striving for the same thing. It adds that extra element. It's surreal," said Connor.

"There's a lot of things in this tournament experience that you'll look back on years down the road. I don't take that for granted. Obviously we're here with the goal to win the gold medal but there's other elements to being in the Olympics. You gotta be able to take it all in, have new experiences and conversations, make new friends."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/02/08/jets-getting-warmed-up-for-run-at-olympic-gold>

***Jets getting warmed up for run at Olympic gold
Niederreiter carries flag for Swiss, Hellebuyck intends to enjoy every second***

By: Mike McIntyre

MILAN — He was running on fumes after a mad dash from Manitoba to Milan. But Winnipeg Jets forward Nino Niederreiter said the exhaustion melted away the moment he carried the Swiss flag into the opening ceremonies of the Winter Olympics.

"It was definitely a dream come true," he told the Free Press on Sunday. "As a little boy, your biggest dream is playing in the Olympic games. And being able to go out there and carry the flag was definitely something you'll never forget and cherish forever."

Niederreiter, 33, learned on Wednesday that the incredible honour was coming his way, just a few hours before the Jets hosted the Montreal Canadiens at Canada Life Centre.

Cue the chaos, along with plenty of excitement.

"As soon as I got the phone call and knew I had a chance to be the flag-bearer, it was something where I knew I had to get there as quick as I can and make sure I was there in time to do that," said Niederreiter.

His plane touched down in Italy about seven hours before Friday night's event, held in front of 75,000 people at San Siro Stadium and televised to millions around the world.

Niederreiter — who along with the Jets is having a fairly miserable NHL season — was still sporting a massive smile Sunday afternoon as he took part in Switzerland's first practice at the new Milano Santagiulia Ice Hockey Arena, which itself was racing the clock to be ready to host the Games.

"The rink in general is fantastic. It looks beautiful," said Niederreiter.

"The ice, there's still work to be done, it seemed a little soft. But I mean obviously there's a lot of practices on the ice, so it's not easy to put the ice together. At the same time, it's going to be the same for everybody else. It's fun to be out there and it's going to be very manageable."

Asked to assess Switzerland's chances of making some noise in the tournament, Niederreiter delivered a saucy soundbite.

"The hope is big. We want to poke the bear. There's no question about that," he said.

"We know how strong Canada is going to be and the amount of talent they're going to have. But at the same time I don't think we have to hide at all. Play our game and go out there and have fun, that's the biggest thing."

Switzerland, Canada, Czechia and France make up Pool A and will meet during the round-robin portion of the tournament, which begins Wednesday. This is the second Olympics for Niederreiter, who also represented Switzerland at Sochi 2014 — the last time NHL players competed at the Games.

"Putting the jersey on gives me a great honour," said Niederreiter, who recently surpassed 1,000 regular season games in the NHL and marvelled at the way the sport has grown in his homeland.

"There's been a lot of great things. From the Olympics in 2014 until now, we're definitely a different group of guys. I think we did a great job over the years, but there's definitely a lot of work to be done."

This also figures to feel like a bit of a home Olympics for Niederreiter, whose offseason residence in Chur is roughly 220 kilometres from Milan. He'll have plenty of support in the stands, including his fiancée, mother, two sisters and extended family.

"It's definitely going to be a lot of Swiss support throughout the tournament, which is great to see. I'm looking forward to that," said Niederreiter.

Niederreiter will also have three Jets teammates turned rivals competing at the Games. A head-to-head meeting with Josh Morrissey's Team Canada is set for Friday — "looking forward to playing against him," Niederreiter said — while matchups with Connor Hellebuyck and Kyle Connor of Team USA could only come in the playoff round.

The Canadian and American teams held their first practices Sunday after arriving via charter only hours earlier. Morrissey skated on a defence pairing with Colton Parayko, reprising a look from last February's 4 Nations Face-Off.

Canada will hold three more skates before opening its tournament Thursday against Czechia. The biggest news of the day was no surprise: Sidney Crosby was named captain, with Connor McDavid and Cale Makar serving as alternates.

On the U.S. side, Connor took line rushes with Clayton Keller (Utah Mammoth) and Tage Thompson (Buffalo Sabres), while Hellebuyck split goaltending reps with Jeremy Swayman and Jake Oettinger.

"This tournament is going to be fun. Everyone is going to give it their all. Every second matters," said Hellebuyck.

"I'm going to enjoy every single day over here."

One of the major questions surrounding the Americans is who will start in goal when they open Pool C play Thursday against Latvia, followed by round-robin games against Germany and Denmark. Will Hellebuyck — the reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner — retain the spot he held at the 4 Nations, or has he been passed on the depth chart?

"The reality is we have three excellent goalies. They're all very capable. At the end of the day, performance will inevitably be the dictator," said head coach Mike Sullivan.

"In a tournament like this, it has to be. And so, we have an idea going in of how we want to go about it and how we want to approach it and we'll go from there. I do think that performance matters, and so that will be part of it as the tournament evolves."

Translation: stay tuned.

Hellebuyck hopes to build on his 4 Nations experience, which ended in heartbreak when McDavid scored the overtime winner against him in the final.

"I can understand the pace of play and the speed. I know what's expected with the way we play and what's expected around me. There's some good takeaways," he said.

Hellebuyck is also thrilled to share the Olympic experience with Connor, his longtime teammate and fellow Michigan product.

"It's awesome. Our families are so intertwined," he said. "I feel like I don't go more than a week without seeing him, especially living so close in the summer. I'm very grateful for the friendship we have and going through this experience together."

All NHL players were mandated to spend Sunday night in the athletes' village, meaning small, dorm-style accommodations. Beginning Monday, they have the option of relocating to a hotel if they choose.

The U.S. team has already decided to stay put, while discussions were still ongoing on the Canadian side.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/02/10/may-the-most-comfortable-country-win>

***May the most comfortable country win?
Canadian men's hockey team opts for hotel over athletes' village***

By: Mike McIntyre

MILAN — To dorm, or not to dorm? That has become a burning question here in Milan for a few dozen multimillionaire NHL players.

The two gold-medal favourites have taken drastically different approaches to their Olympic accommodations.

Let's start with the Team USA, which has gone all-in on the full Olympic experience. The U.S. has opted to stay in the athletes' village for the duration of the Games — meaning tiny, college-style rooms shared with teammates and plenty of mingling with athletes from other sports around the world.

It's a different story for the Canadians, who spent just one night in the village after arriving in Italy on Sunday before moving to a nearby hotel. The move was permitted under negotiations involving the players' union, the NHL and the International Olympic Committee.

May the most comfortable country win? We shall see.

Not surprisingly, this tale of two teams — and the obvious optics involved — has sparked plenty of discussion and debate.

According to U.S. head coach Mike Sullivan, the decision by his group was a no-brainer.

"We think that part of the experience is to immerse yourself in the whole Olympic experience, and the village is part of that," he said.

So far, so good, according to the American players.

"It's a really cool experience. It brings me back to what it's like in college."

"It's definitely different. I mean, I'm not going to say I hate the posh hotels; they're pretty nice, those ones that you go around North America and stay in," said forward Jack Eichel.

"But listen, it's a really cool experience. It brings me back to what it's like in college. You got a roommate who's two feet away from you in the same room and you're in a small little dorm, but I think it just brings the guys together. There's not a whole lot to do and spend time together, so we'll get to know each other pretty quickly."

Some don't need a whole lot of introduction. Matthew and Brady Tkachuk are channelling their childhood as they share a room. Only this time, mom and dad aren't around to tell them to keep it down and go to sleep.

"A lot of the athletes in there have actually really liked it. I try to get them to say their name and what sport they're with. I've met a lot of people that are really nice," said Matthew.

"It's a wild place and it's really just cool to see everything and you dream as a young kid playing in the Olympics, the Olympic Village, being around the other best athletes in the world. I honestly can't believe I'm a part of it."

The only problem? Brady's snoring, which Matthew said resulted in a couple of late-night "kidney punches." A small price to pay.

"It's just been absolutely incredible so far," he said.

“Trying to meet and say ‘hi’ to every American athlete that I’ve seen so far. I know a lot of them are competing and stuff, but we’ll try to meet the rest of them for sure. They’ve been amazing.”

Another brother combo, Quinn and Jack Hughes, are just down the hall. Others, like Winnipeg Jets forward Kyle Connor and Utah Mammoth winger Clayton Keller, are quickly getting to know each other while living together in tight quarters.

Over on the Canadian side, goaltender Logan Thompson told Sportsnet that shifting to a hotel isn’t meant to be an “insult.”

“We want to win gold, and we want to give ourselves the best opportunity to do so,” he said.

A cynic might ask whether that implies the U.S. team doesn’t want to win as much, given where it chooses to rest its head at night. All of the other countries — including Sweden and Finland, which are largely composed of NHL players — are also staying in the village.

Team USA captain Auston Matthews, who teammates say has become something of a celebrity in the village, said he wouldn’t want it any other way.

“You see athletes from all different sports, all different countries, different journeys,” he said.

“It’s a pretty intimate setting compared to what you’re kind of used to in your own respective sport. But it’s pretty cool just to be in this kind of setting. I’ve never seen or been in anything like this. It’s what kind of the Olympics is all about.”

“We want to win gold, and we want to give ourselves the best opportunity to do so.”

To be clear, the Canadians aren’t being antisocial. Their practice was cancelled Tuesday, and the team made good use of the day off by heading over to the Milano Speed Skating Stadium — even riding the subway rather than taking a charter bus.

It was a worthwhile trip, as they watched Canadians Kim Boutin, Courtney Sarault, William Dandjinou and Félix Roussel win silver in thrilling fashion in short track speed skating. A video of them collectively gasping at a near-crash quickly went viral on social media.

The team also plans periodic returns to the village, so they won’t be complete strangers. That’s a welcome development for Winnipegger Mark Stone, who told the Free Press he had a blast spending time in the athletes’ lounge Sunday chatting with speedskaters.

“I probably asked more questions talking to them in a 10-minute span than I’ve asked about hockey in the last 20 years,” he said.

The men’s hockey tournament officially begins Wednesday. Canada and the United States are in different pools and could only meet in the playoffs. Canada opens Thursday against Czechia, while the Team USA faces Latvia a few hours later.

Sportsnet.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/hellebuyck-talks-false-playoff-narratives-then-shows-off-his-passing-skills/>

Hellebuyck talks false playoff narratives, then shows off his passing skills (VIDEO)

Reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner Connor Hellebuyck gets on the couch with Colby Armstrong to discuss how he's impacted many lives by releasing his children's books on mental health, then feeds Army with some crisp passes up the middle.

Daily Faceoff

<https://www.dailyfaceoff.com/news/connor-hellebuyck-no-brainer-net-team-usa-united-states-olympics-goaltending-winnipeg-jets>

Connor Hellebuyck a no-brainer in net for USA

By Ryan Cuneo

While the Canadian crease seems to be an area of uncertainty heading into the men's hockey tournament at the Milano Cortina Winter Olympics, the United States should have no doubt about who their goaltender will be when it matters. The Winnipeg Jets' Connor Hellebuyck is arguably the best goaltender in the world, with three Vezina Trophies and even a Hart Trophy under his belt at the age of 32.

The Commerce, Michigan native has faced criticism for coming up short in the playoffs, sporting a sub-.900 save percentage in each of the last three postseasons. Some may worry that Hellebuyck's big-game scuffles could translate to the Olympics, but he was sterling in last year's 4 Nations Face-Off, putting up a .932 SV% and a 1.59 goals-against average in three starts. The United States has quality second and third goaltenders in the Dallas Stars' Jake Oettinger and the Boston Bruins' Jeremy Swayman, but Hellebuyck stands alone as the American starter.

On Tuesday's episode of Daily Faceoff LIVE, hosts Tyler Yaremchuk and former NHL goaltender Carter Hutton discussed why Hellebuyck should be the United States' undisputed number-one goaltender.

Tyler Yaremchuk: I think people are talking about a U.S.A. goalie situation and having a conversation that I don't think needs to be had. I think this is Connor Hellebuyck's crease the whole way.

Carter Hutton: I think it is, too. I've kind of stood by that for a while, and yes this year hasn't gone great for the Winnipeg Jets with Connor Hellebuyck missing time, but he's been rock solid for the last, I don't know how many years now. I remember playing against him, and it was like "We have to go up to Winnipeg, we're going to lose 2-1 or 1-0." He just doesn't make any mistakes. And then you pair that with what they have in front of him, I think that bodes well. I wouldn't be surprised if they see Oettinger for a game, if he gets out of a rhythm, but I think he would have to play very, very poorly to play himself out of the starter's crease.