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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/blog-toews-status-for-opening-night-still-unclear>

***BLOG - Toews status for opening night still unclear***

***Arniel: "We'll know tomorrow after practice what that lineup looks like for sure."***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG - Just a couple hours after the Winnipeg Jets announced their opening day roster for the 2025-26 campaign, the team was out on the ice at Canada Life Centre for practice.

As the skate went along, Jonathan Toews was between Gustav Nyquist and Nikita Chibrikov, which had Jets fans breathing a sigh of relief after it was shown that Toews was on non-roster injured reserve on the aforementioned opening day roster. The big question remains, will Toews play opening night against Dallas?

"So, want to be sure with JT, like I said, that's why it's day to day," said Scott Arniel.

"We'll know tomorrow after practice what that lineup looks like for sure."

Another veteran forward who is adapting a new system and linemates is Gustav Nyquist who is almost three weeks into being a Jet.

Yeah, It's been a great camp. I thought we've all worked out hard throughout here, nailing some things down in our system, and just trying to get used to that," said Nyquist.

"So, it's been a good camp. But kind of, I think everyone's ready to go here for Thursday, to get it started."

Injuries have given Nyquist a variety of people to mesh with and now with Cole Perfetti on injured reserve to start the season, the 36-year-old is working with youngster Nikita Chibrikov on the other wing.

"I mean, lots of speed, skill, It's been two practices, but you can see what he can bring offensively out there," said Nyquist.

"And now it's just a matter of trying to go out there and execute and find some chemistry between the three of us."

The Jets continued to work on special teams and without Perfetti changes have been made to the first power play unit as Alex Iafallo jumps into Perfetti's spot with Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabriel Vilardi and Josh Morrissey. A spot that Iafallo is more than capable of handling considering he's been there before.

"He's good at the bumper position. Excuse me, it's not the bumper, it's the pop position. Our power play coach will get mad at me. He's really good at getting over for support, being the outlet, high tips. Making himself available," said Arniel.

“He did that extremely well with that second unit at times last year. So, he’s real good at his details. It might change a little bit how much PK he gets. We’re going to start that way. We were really hoping that Fetts would be the guy, but it is what it is. We’ve got to move forward.”

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/blog-perfetti-week-to-week-chibrikov-big-opportunity>

### ***BLOG: Perfetti week-to-week, Chibrikov big opportunity***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The injuries continue to pile up for the Winnipeg Jets ahead of the 2025-26 regular season.

After a day off, the Jets were back on the ice for their first practice since their final preseason game which was a wild, 5-4 win in Calgary. Although the Jets came back and won in a shootout, they lost Dylan DeMelo and Cole Perfetti to injury.

DeMelo took part of practice as did Jonathan Toews, but Perfetti did not.

“Ankle injury. He’ll be out week-to-week,” said head coach Scott Arniel.

“So, not the best news that we wanted to get.”

Perfetti is coming off a breakout season that saw him register career highs in games (82), assists (32) and points (50). The 23-year-old was pencilled in on the second line with Gustav Nyquist and Jonathan Toews and was also stepping into Nikolaj Ehlers spot on the top power play.

“It’s hard, he’s upset about it. But he understands its early in the year here,” said Arniel.

“Get him back up and running. It’s frustrating to see what happened. Five seconds left (in the second period in Calgary). Just to go in and it was a simple play, he kind of got twisted.”

As per usual with injuries, the door opens for others to fill in. In this case, Nikita Chibrikov moves into Perfetti’s spot on the second line with Toews and Nyquist. Chibrikov just signed a two-year, extension with the Jets on Saturday with an AAV of \$885,000. The Russian forward is being rewarded for all the hard work that he put in over the summer to come back from a serious knee injury that he sustained last season with the Manitoba Moose

“Great for Chibby, real happy for him. Get some security there, obviously. One of the young prospects for us that has kind of got opportunities in the last couple of years here,” said Arniel.

“The big injury, that was a tough injury, missed a lot of hockey. Not just the injury, but the rehab itself was hard, very, very hard. I got a chance to talk to him just after his surgery, I know that management talked to him and made the point of how it was going to be tough and how he needed to work to make sure that he came back in good shape.”

Chibrikov touched on the amount of work that he had to put in give him a chance to make the Jets opening night roster.

"The first couple of months I spent six or seven hours per day at the rink and having conversation with Chevy and Arniel, 'yeah, you should have a big summer and come back (as this is) a big opportunity,'" said Chibrikov.

"I kept working every day and see what was going on and hear about (a contract) extension, it is really appreciated. It is the first step to moving forward with what is going on."

Chibrikov obviously got the message because he did everything that was asked of him and from the first game at the 2025 Prospect Showdown in Montreal to today, he has got stronger and more confident. So not only has he been rewarded with a new contract but a chance to play with a three-time Stanley Cup winner and Nyquist.

Arniel said that Chibrikov being on the Toews line wasn't a one-time only opportunity.

"We're going to see how it looks again on Tuesday," said Arniel.

"Obviously, he's had a good camp and with Cole not being there, we'll see it again probably in Tuesday's practice and make some decisions for leading up to Thursday."

Speaking of opening night, DeMelo will be there but will be a little quieter than usual after taking a stick to the neck on Friday night. Josh Morrissey was asked about feeling a sense of relief that the preseason is over after losing Dylan Samberg and now Cole Perfetti.

"So, guess next year we only have four (preseason) games, so maybe that decreases the odds. Hopefully, knock on wood," said Morrissey.

"But yeah, it's just what happens in hockey. And obviously, we've got lots of depth here, and guys that are gonna have to step up in some big absences to start the year."

The deadline for NHL teams to submit their final opening night rosters is Monday at 4 CT.

## **NHL.com**

[https://www.nhl.com/news/topic/season-previews/winnipeg-jets-season-preview-2025-26?utm\\_source=xdotcom&utm\\_medium=nhl\\_social&utm\\_campaign=media](https://www.nhl.com/news/topic/season-previews/winnipeg-jets-season-preview-2025-26?utm_source=xdotcom&utm_medium=nhl_social&utm_campaign=media)

### ***Jets season preview: Hope Toews NHL return helps spark Cup run Veteran forward adds championship pedigree; Ehlers departs in free agency***

By Derek Van Diest

The 2025-26 NHL regular season begins on Oct. 7. Leading up to the season opener, NHL.com is identifying six things to watch for each team. Today, the Winnipeg Jets.

Last season: 56-22-4, first place in Central Division, won Presidents' Trophy, lost in Western Conference Second Round

Coach: Scott Arniel (second season)

### ***Biggest challenge***

The Jets will be looking to make up for the offense lost by the departure of forward Nikolaj Ehlers to free agency and the hit to their defensive depth because of the injury to Dylan Samberg. The Winnipeg defenseman is out 6-to-8 weeks with a broken wrist sustained in a preseason game against the Calgary Flames on Sept. 27. Ehlers signed a six-year, \$51-million contract (\$8.5 million average annual value) with the Carolina Hurricanes on July 5. The 29-year-old had 63 points (24 goals, 39 assists) in 69 games last season and the Jets will be looking to make up the difference collectively. Winnipeg signed forwards Jonathan Toews, Gustav Nyquist, Tanner Pearson and Cole Koepke, who can all contribute offensively. Defenseman Logan Stanley will likely be asked to make up a bulk of Samberg's ice time to start the season. Samberg averaged 21:08 last season and was a team-best plus-34.

#### *How they make playoffs*

Winnipeg won the Presidents' Trophy last season, paced by a 15-1-0 start. With the majority of their roster back this season, the Jets are expected to again be one of the top teams in the Central Division. Winnipeg has a talented, veteran roster starting with goalie Connor Hellebuyck, who goes into the season having won the Hart Trophy as the League's most valuable player last season, and the Vezina Trophy as the best goalie for the third time (2025, 2024, 2020). If the Jets can avoid major injuries to their top players, they should qualify for the Stanley Cup Playoffs for the fourth consecutive season.

#### *Most intriguing addition*

Jonathan Toews is back in the NHL after a two-season hiatus because of health issues, signing a one-year contract with the Jets on July 1. The Winnipeg native, who won the Stanley Cup three times with the Chicago Blackhawks (2010, 2013, 2015), brings a championship pedigree to the Jets. How much the 37-year-old has in the tank remains to be seen, but Toews is still driven to win and that should rub off well on the rest of the roster in Winnipeg's quest for the Stanley Cup.

#### *Biggest potential surprise*

Gustav Nyquist had 75 points (23 goals, 52 assists) in 81 games with the Nashville Predators in 2023-24, and the Jets are hoping the 36-year-old forward can regain some of that scoring touch this season. Nyquist's production dropped last season with 21 points (nine goals, 12 assists) in 57 games with Nashville and seven points (two goals, five assists) in 22 games with the Minnesota Wild after being traded on March 1. Nyquist signed a one-year, \$3.25 million contract with the Jets on July 2, and has the potential to have another strong offensive season on a talented team.

#### *Ready to contribute*

After spending the majority of the past two seasons with Manitoba of the American Hockey League, forward Brad Lambert appears ready to make the jump to the NHL this season. The 21-year-old will inject youthful enthusiasm into a veteran lineup, and even if he doesn't find himself on the Opening Day roster, will likely be the first to be called up at some point this season and have an opportunity to make an impact.

#### *Fantasy sleeper with EDGE stats*

*Gustav Nyquist, F:* The five-time 20-goal-scorer is two seasons removed from having 75 points (23 goals, 52 assists) and 24 power-play points with the Nashville Predators (2023-24). Nyquist could compete for a top-six role with the Jets this season after Ehlers signed with Carolina. Per NHL EDGE stats, Nyquist finished in the 90th percentile among forwards in offensive zone time percentage (43.6) last season and ranked in the 85th percentile at his position in high-danger goals (14) in 2023-24. -- Chris Meaney

*Projected lineup*

Kyle Connor -- Mark Scheifele -- Gabriel Vilardi  
Cole Perfetti -- Jonathan Toews -- Gustav Nyquist  
Nino Niederreiter -- Vladislav Namestnikov -- Alex Iafallo  
Tanner Pearson -- Morgan Barron -- Cole Koepke

Josh Morrissey -- Dylan DeMelo  
Logan Stanley -- Neal Pionk  
Hayden Fleury -- Luke Schenn

Connor Hellebuyck  
Eric Comrie

**Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/10/07/everybodys-ready-to-go>

***'Everybody's ready to go'***

***Toews only surprise omission on Jets opening-day roster***

By: Ken Wiebe

All signs point to Jonathan Toews being ready to resume his NHL career on Thursday in the Winnipeg Jets season opener.

Although there is still another workout to get through, Jets head coach Scott Arniel sounded encouraged when asked about Toews' status for the game against the Dallas Stars, though it came with an expected caveat.

"I'm hoping so," said Arniel. "Day to day."

The confusion was created when the Jets revealed an opening-day roster that didn't include Toews on it, but rather had him on the non-roster injured reserve along with captain Adam Lowry, who continues to work his way back from off-season hip surgery.

Arniel explained this was more of a procedural move, one that was essentially the Jets exercising some precaution since Toews left last Tuesday's exhibition game against the Minnesota Wild after "tweaking something" in his lower-body.

Toews has since returned to the ice and is tracking towards playing his first NHL game since Apr. 13 of 2023.

"He falls into a different category because he didn't play last year," said Arniel. "It just gives us an extra day to kind of take this through."

"He falls into a different category because he didn't play last year."

Toews, who is coming back after a two-year hiatus that was health related, was a full participant in Tuesday's workout, skating on a line with Gustav Nyquist and Nikita Chibrikov while also seeing time with the Jets' second power-play unit.

Provided Toews makes it through Wednesday's practice without suffering a setback, he would be eligible to be added to the active roster and make his debut in front of a hometown crowd eager to welcome him into the fold.

There were no other surprises with the Jets' roster, which includes two goalies, seven defencemen and 14 forwards.

As long as Toews is good to go, Brad Lambert is the most likely candidate to be reassigned to the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

Parker Ford is another forward who doesn't require waivers, but he appears to have a leg up in the competition after appearing in the finale exhibition game last week.

The Jets will also be without defenceman Dylan Samberg (broken wrist) and forward Cole Perfetti (ankle sprain) to start the campaign, so their depth will be tested right out of the gate — even if Toews gets the green light to play.

A concerted effort was made by Jets management to enhance the competition within the organization and to help insulate some of the younger players turning pro by adding some experienced free agents, many of whom have NHL experience.

The Jets got some positive news on that front on Monday when defenceman Ville Heinola and forward Walker Duehr cleared waivers, since keeping those players in the organization supplies some additional depth for a team that looks to be much improved from last season.

"We learned from it last year that we needed the depth through the regular season and we needed the depth in the playoffs with injuries to key people," said Arniel. "We don't do what we did through the season if you don't have it. I think we're even deeper this year."

Heinola has seen limited playing time during the past two seasons because of issues with his ankle, so getting him into game action is a priority.

Although Heinola would likely prefer his journey include NHL playing time, he needs to go down and get back to doing the things he does well — which is moving the puck efficiently out of the defensive zone and getting involved offensively, both at even strength and on the power play.

If he can do that, either he could find an opportunity with the Jets or enhance his opportunity on another team.

Despite clearing waivers on Monday, Heinola's trade value improves by clearing waivers, since an interested team could send him directly to the minors before giving him a chance.

However, Heinola will become a Group 6 unrestricted free agent next season if he doesn't appear in 27 NHL games, so teams would be cognizant of that before making a potential deal.

As for the opportunity to open up against a Stars team that knocked them out of the Stanley Cup playoffs last spring in an overtime thriller in Game 6, the Jets are simply viewing this as an important Central Division matchup.

Nothing less and nothing more.

"It's a brand new year," said Jets winger Nino Niederreiter. "The first game, it's pretty amped up and everybody's ready to go. So, it will definitely be a great test right from the get-go.

"You can't think about the past. Obviously, we know how good of a team they are and we know we're a great team as well. There are some things we know we've got to be better at from the learning curve that we had last year."

After jumping out to a remarkable 15-1 start, the Jets are simply looking to get to their identity as quickly as possible.

"You can see it's a system that's hard to play against, but it requires hard work."

"It requires hard work," said Jets forward Gustav Nyquist, one of the newcomers adapting to a stifling defensive system that has led to consecutive Jennings Trophies for allowing the fewest goals in the NHL. "But it comes down to all five guys on the ice are just going to have to want to do it. And that's the kind of the standard that we've set here in camp, and I think we've done a good job of that.

"You can see it's a system that's hard to play against, but it requires hard work. But at the end of the day, just to get win a game — which they did a lot — it's kind of easy to do."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/10/06/back-to-the-moose-for-heinola>

### ***Back to the Moose for Heinola***

#### ***Clearing waivers might be best for defenceman's development, club***

By: Mike McIntyre

It appears Winnipeg's longest-running sports soap opera isn't ready to go off the air — er, ice — just yet.

The latest plot twist in the Ville Heinola saga came Monday, when 31 NHL general managers essentially said, "Nah, we're good," after being given the chance to land the talented but rarely used young defenceman for free.

Heinola clearing waivers was no doubt a surprise to plenty of fans who believe the Jets have held the smooth-skating 24-year-old Finn back from bigger opportunities.

A fresh start will have to wait, at least for now. Heinola will remain with the organization that drafted him 20th overall in 2019 but has only dressed him for 53 NHL games so far.

When — or if — the 54th occurs remains a mystery.

Heinola is headed back to the Manitoba Moose, where he's already appeared in 154 contests over parts of six seasons. That's great news for the American Hockey League club, which looks loaded on paper and should be a legitimate Calder Cup contender this season.

Not so much for Heinola, who dazzled in his NHL debut six years ago — scoring a goal and adding four assists in eight terrific games as an 18-year-old — yet hasn't been able to find his footing since.

What happened? Injuries have certainly played a part. Two years ago, Heinola was set to crack the opening-night lineup after a strong training camp, but a broken ankle in the final pre-season game limited him to just 41 games — all in the minors as he slowly worked his way back.

Last year, the surgically repaired joint got infected and required another procedure. Heinola dressed for just 20 games total — two with the Moose, 18 with the Jets. If it weren't for bad luck, he'd have no luck at all.

For those reasons, it's not surprising teams opted to take a pass on Monday. Keep in mind, a waiver claim must be kept on the NHL roster; you can't simply grab a player and stash him on the farm. There's simply not enough of a recent body of work to justify using a roster spot on Heinola right now.

No question he has plenty of tools, but putting them all together over an extended stretch has been a struggle.

#### *Healthy scratch*

This latest development, while undoubtedly disappointing for Heinola, might ultimately be for the best. He needs to play, period. Another season spent munching popcorn in the press box does him no good.

In that sense, the Jets seemingly did him a solid by putting him on waivers.

Sure, it came with some risk for an organization that has previously lost two young defencemen the same way — Jonathan Kovacevic and Declan Chisholm. That's not great asset management for a club that prides itself on a "draft and develop" philosophy.

But something had to give — especially since attempts over the summer to trade Heinola and alleviate the blue-line logjam weren't successful.

To his credit, Heinola has never complained about his role or usage. He's been a great teammate, always putting in the extra work that comes with being a perpetual healthy scratch and seemingly wearing a constant smile. That can't be easy.

Development isn't always a straight line, and defencemen can be especially tricky — many don't find their stride until their mid-20s. The Ottawa Senators, for example, drafted blue-liner Lassi Thomson 19th overall in 2019, one spot before Heinola. He's played just 18 career NHL games so far and also cleared waivers on Monday.

That's not to absolve the Jets of all responsibility here. Looking at their first-round picks since 2016, only Cole Perfetti (2020) has developed into a full-time NHL player.

Logan Stanley (2016) remains a work in progress all these years later. Kristian Vesalainen (2017) never panned out and ultimately returned to Europe. Chaz Lucius (2021) was forced to retire because of a medical condition. Rutger McGroarty (2022) refused to sign, prompting an eventual trade for Brayden Yager, who begins his pro career this fall with the Moose.

The jury is still out on Colby Barlow (2023), who starts this year with the Moose, and Sascha Boumedienne, entering his second season at Boston University. The Jets also traded away their top picks in 2018 and 2024.



Can the Heinola situation still be salvaged?

He should log heavy minutes in a top-pairing role with the Moose, quarterback the power play, and see penalty-kill time as well. If he can stay healthy and be productive, the future remains bright.

#### *“As The Ville Turns”*

Heinola will become an unrestricted free agent next July 1 if he doesn't play at least 27 NHL games this season. (He would remain a restricted free agent if he does). That seems unlikely, unless the Jets — already without Dylan Samberg to start the year — run into a tidal wave of injuries.

At this point, Heinola sits somewhere between eighth and tenth on the organizational depth chart. Winnipeg is starting the year with seven defencemen, and the Moose blue line also features top prospect Elias Salomonsson and veteran Kale Clague — a free-agent signing who passed through waivers last week after a solid camp with the Jets.

It's also possible a trade could be revisited, especially now that Heinola has cleared waivers. That actually makes him more valuable to some teams, who could stash him on the farm as extra insurance. Utah waived goaltender Connor Ingram last week, then traded him to Edmonton (with some salary retention) when he cleared.

How “As The Ville Turns” ultimately plays out remains to be seen. One thing's for sure: the waiting game — and the debate — show no signs of ending anytime soon.

#### *Ice chips*

The Jets had to submit their opening-night roster to the NHL by Monday afternoon's deadline. With Heinola and journeyman forward Walker Duehr clearing waivers earlier in the day, there were still 24 healthy skaters in camp along with the injured trio of Samberg, Perfetti and captain Adam Lowry.

At least one move had to be made — likely either forward Brad Lambert or Parker Ford being sent to the Moose. (Neither require waivers.) It's possible both could go down if the Jets opt to start the year with just 22 players, one under the league maximum, to bank salary cap space.

The team's decision will become clear on Tuesday morning when they return to the practice ice to prepare for Thursday's regular-season opener against the Dallas Stars at Canada Life Centre.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/10/05/jets-limping-into-regular-season>

#### ***Jets limping into regular season***

***Perfetti joins Lowry, Samberg on sidelines, Chibrikov handed opportunity***

By: Mike McIntyre

The hits just keep coming for the Winnipeg Jets, who will open the new NHL season this week in a world of hurt.

Add winger Cole Perfetti to the growing list of wounded players. The young forward suffered a high-ankle sprain in last Friday's preseason finale in Calgary and is officially listed as week-to-week.

"Not the best news we wanted to get," coach Scott Arniel said following Sunday's practice. "If it's broken, you usually have a pretty good timeline. When it's a high-ankle sprain, it's a little trickier."

Perfetti joins captain Adam Lowry (recovering from offseason hip surgery) and shutdown defenceman Dylan Samberg (broken wrist) on the shelf. Neither is expected back until some point in November, and it's now possible Perfetti could extend beyond that.

Perfetti is coming off a career year, having played all 82 games for the first time while setting personal highs with 50 points. He was slated to start on the second line alongside free-agent additions Jonathan Toews and Gustav Nyquist, and was likely eyeing a big season with restricted free agency looming next summer.

"He's upset about it, but he understands it's early in the year here and we'll get him back up and running," said Arniel.

"But it's frustrating, and then to see what actually happened. With five seconds left (in the second period Friday), just to go in and it was kind of a simple play and he just kind of got twisted. But at the end of the day, that's where it's at and he's going to heal and he'll be better for it."

With adversity comes opportunity, and Nikita Chibrikov appears poised to get the first shot at replacing Perfetti. The 22-year-old Russian, who was on the roster bubble heading into camp, took line rushes Sunday with Nyquist and Toews, who was back on the ice after sitting out a few days nursing a lower-body ailment.

"For me it's something special," said Chibrikov, who scored two goals and added an assist in four games with the Jets last year before suffering a season-ending knee injury with the Manitoba Moose in January.

The promotion capped a celebratory weekend for Chibrikov, who signed a two-year contract extension with Winnipeg on Saturday worth US\$875,000 per season.

"Big things are coming up. This is the first step," said Chibrikov. "I hope to stay here for life and be a part of this team. I am thankful to my parents and all those who helped me (get) here this long way. It is awesome."

Arniel cautioned that nothing is set in stone — admitting the opening-night lineup looks far different than the one he sketched out this summer — but said he wants to see how Chibrikov handles a top-six role.

"He's a little bugger out there," Arniel said with a grin.

"He gets under people's skin and he's not afraid to go into the corners first. He's got a good skillset. He's real quick. He darts, he gets in and out of holes, and he has the ability when he gets into a hole to shoot the puck as well."

One thing is clear: The Jets are more than ready to close the book on a bruising pre-season that took a heavy toll.

“You want to try and get through the pre-season healthy and ready to go. But obviously injuries happen, and it’s part of the game,” said defenceman Josh Morrissey, whose blue-line partner Dylan DeMelo left Friday’s game in Calgary after taking a stick to the throat.

Fortunately, DeMelo was back at practice Sunday — though unable to speak above a whisper due to swelling in his voice box.

“I guess next year we only have four (pre-season) games, so maybe that decreases the odds (of injuries). Hopefully, knock on wood,” said Morrissey.

“It’s just what happens in hockey. And obviously, we’ve got lots of depth here, and guys that are gonna have to step up in some big absences to start the year.”

All 32 NHL clubs must submit their opening-night rosters by Monday afternoon, with a maximum of 23 healthy skaters and a salary cap of US\$95.5 million (including players on injured reserve).

The Jets — who open Thursday at home against the Dallas Stars — made a pair of roster moves Sunday, placing Ville Heinola and Walker Duehr on waivers with the intent to assign them to the Moose if they clear.

Duehr, a depth signing last summer, is no surprise. But Heinola, the 20th-overall pick in 2019, certainly is. The oft-injured Finn has never quite found his footing with the Jets, appearing in just 53 NHL games.

Waiving Heinola appears to be as much about giving him a fresh start as anything else. If there are no waiver takers, he’ll at least have the opportunity to log heavy minutes with the Moose and stay sharp in case the Jets come calling. Parking the 24-year-old in the press box for extended stretches as a healthy scratch simply isn’t an option.

The moves leave Winnipeg with 24 healthy skaters plus the injured trio of Perfetti, Lowry, and Samberg. Heinola’s demotion suggests the Jets plan to carry seven defencemen: Morrissey, DeMelo, Neal Pionk, Haydn Fleury, Luke Schenn, Logan Stanley, and Colin Miller.

That means the final cut will likely come up front. David Gustafsson, Parker Ford, and Brad Lambert skated Sunday on a fifth line. Gustafsson would require waivers to be sent down, so it appears one of Ford or Lambert — who are waiver-exempt — could be the odd man out.

It’s also possible the Jets trim both and start the season with 22 healthy skaters.

“Real tough,” is how Arniel described these final decisions. “We’ve had these injuries here just in the last few days here that really kind of changed things.”

Perfetti’s absence also opens a hole on the top power play unit, where he was expected to join Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabe Vilardi, and Morrissey.

Could Toews slide into that role?

"We're still talking about that one. We're having a little bit of a chit-chat about that one and where we're going," said Arniel.

"I want it to be so that when Cole does come back he can slide in to what it looks like. We'll kind of just see over the next couple days, you'll see Tuesday, Wednesday and kind of get a feel for how it will go Thursday."

The Jets are spending Monday away from the rink for some team bonding before returning to the ice to get ready for the Stars.

### **Canadian Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/hockey/2025/10/07/winnipeg-jets-chasing-more-than-regular-season-glory-this-year>

### ***Winnipeg Jets chasing more than regular-season glory this year***

By: Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets are aiming to be the best team in the NHL this season – but in June rather than April.

After claiming the Presidents' Trophy last season for posting the most regular-season points (116), the Jets will try to rinse and repeat while improving enough to win the Stanley Cup.

It won't be an easy start with three key players on the shelf before the team even opens the regular season at home Thursday against the Dallas Stars.

Second-line winger Cole Perfetti is out week-to-week after suffering a high-ankle sprain in the club's final pre-season game last Friday.

"It's not the best news we wanted to get," Winnipeg head coach Scott Arniel said after Sunday's practice.

Second-pair defenceman Dylan Samberg broke his wrist during a Sept. 27 game and is out six to eight weeks, while captain Adam Lowry won't return until late October or early November as he recovers from hip surgery.

"It's just what happens in hockey," Jets star defenceman Josh Morrissey said of the injuries. "We've got lots of depth here, and guys that are going to have to step up in some big absences to start the year."

Former Chicago Blackhawks captain Jonathan Toews, a three-time Stanley Cup champion, joins Lowry with an injured non-roster designation to start the season.

Toews, 37, is making a comeback with his hometown team after missing two seasons with health issues. He sustained an undisclosed injury in Winnipeg's 3-2 pre-season loss to Minnesota on Sept. 30 but practised with the Jets on Sunday.

Earlier in training camp, Morrissey said players can't rest on last season's accomplishments or look ahead to the playoffs.

"It's one thing to have a great performance, but it's another to be able to back it up," he said. "That's got to be the thought individually throughout the lineup and then as a team. Our battle is trying to go to another level.

"When I say (last season) is in the past, you learn from the past, right? So I think that's something that should give us a ton of experience, a ton of confidence. It also sets the template for us."

Winnipeg (56-22-4) had the league's best power play last season, boosted its penalty kill to 13th and showed its strength in team defence.

Goalie Connor Hellebuyck had his name etched on the William M. Jennings Trophy for the second consecutive season as the netminder on the team with the fewest goals against.

Hellebuyck also took home the Hart Trophy as the league's most valuable player and claimed a second straight Vezina Trophy as the top goalie. He posted a 47-12-3 record with a 2.00 goals-against average, a .925 save percentage and had eight shutouts in 63 appearances.

The Jets then headed into the playoffs and won a gritty opening round against the St. Louis Blues with a double-overtime Game 7 victory. They advanced to the second round for the first time since 2021, but fell in six games to the Stars.

In his second year as head coach and fourth with the club, Arniel views last season as growth. Now he wants the players to ramp up one key element.

"All those things need to be in place, our defending, our offensive game, our specialty teams, but I'd like to take our battle level (up)," Arniel said. "We can win more battles."

The team will attempt to do that with some new personnel.

Winnipeg lost speedy winger Nikolaj Ehlers in free agency to Carolina, as well as forwards Mason Appleton (Detroit) and Brandon Tanev (Utah), but gained Toews and veteran winger Gustav Nyquist.

Nyquist, 36, wants to bounce back from his output last season while splitting time with Nashville and Minnesota (six goals and 30 points in 83 games).

"For me, personally getting up there a little bit in age and haven't gone all the way, looking at this team just from a hockey perspective, this was a great opportunity for me to come play really good hockey," Nyquist said.

Perfetti was supposed to start the season on the wing with Toews and Nyquist, but Nikita Chibrikov is now getting a look on that line after signing a two-year extension.

Winnipeg's top line stays intact with Mark Scheifele between Kyle Connor and Gabriel Vilardi.

"We have a great team, so we just want to try to emulate what we did last year," said Scheifele, who had 39 goals and 87 points in 82 games last season.

"We had a great year, we know we have a great team, that should give us confidence."

## **STAYING FOCUSED**

Connor, a pending unrestricted free agent, led the team in scoring with 41 goals and 97 points in 82 games.

His agent has been talking with the Jets about a contract extension, but the gifted winger isn't publicly discussing it while he stays focused on his play.

When asked if Minnesota forward Kirill Kaprizov's recent historic eight-year, US\$136-million deal (\$17 million annually) set the bar for himself and other elite players, Connor said each team is different.

"The one thing it says is the league is in a really good spot financially," he said. "I think every circumstance is so different, it's hard to say if it really affects anybody else."

## **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11466005/analysis-winnipeg-jets-cole-perfetti-injury/>

### ***ANALYSIS: Perfetti latest casualty for injury-plagued Jets***

By Kelly Moore Global News

ANALYSIS: Perfetti latest casualty for injury-plagued Jets - [imageView image in full screen](#)

As expected, Cole Perfetti was not on the ice for the Winnipeg Jets' first post-training camp practice on Sunday morning.

Also as expected, Perfetti will not be in the lineup when the Jets open the regular season Thursday night at home to the Dallas Stars.

Head coach Scott Arniel did not sound optimistic about Perfetti Friday night following the 5-4 shootout win in Calgary that put a wrap on Winnipeg's six-game exhibition schedule.

And Arniel confirmed those concerns to the reporters covering Sunday's practice at Hockey For All Centre — revealing Perfetti will be sidelined week to week with what's believed to be a high ankle sprain.

It's a freakish type of injury, just like the broken wrist Dylan Samberg suffered the week before, also against the Flames.

Toss in the extended absence of captain Adam Lowry, and the Jets will look a lot different from the team they were supposed to be for the first month and a half or so of the schedule.

Haydn Fleury came out of the pre-season looking like he's ready to step up in place of Samberg. Logan Stanley, not as much. If the big blue liner can't provide the consistency required by a contending team, there are others waiting in the wings.

You could argue, with justification, that Nikita Chibrikov and Parker Ford might not be on an NHL roster for opening night had it not been for Perfetti's misfortune. But they're still here, and Arniel

says Chibrikov will continue to skate with Jonathan Toews and Gus Nyquist on the second line when the team goes back to work on Tuesday.

The opportunity is there for the young Russian forward, whose confidence meter has to be pinging after signing a two-year, one-way extension on Sunday.

But if he falters, there are options.

For sure, Perfetti will not celebrate a second consecutive ironman regular-season schedule of 82 games played. And almost with the same certainty, we can predict that a 15-1 start to the season by Winnipeg this year is highly unlikely, given the circumstances.

But that does not mean the Jets will start 1-15 either.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11469363/analysis-winnipeg-jets-15th-season-begins-edmonds/>

### ***ANALYSIS: Puck drops Thursday on Jets' 15th season in Winnipeg***

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

The puck will drop on a new hockey season Thursday night in Winnipeg – the 15th for the Jets back in the city.

For fans of the team, it's been a quick ride to say the least, but a memorable journey with, undoubtedly, so much more to come.

Along the way, there have been great plays, great players, playoff highs, playoff lows, empty buildings and consecutive sellouts. For many of us, winter in Winnipeg has been so much more enjoyable with them than it was without.

So, as the Jets host the Dallas Stars on Thursday, what we should expect is what the team also forecasts for itself: a highly competitive season with a playoff spot secured for late April.

What we shouldn't expect, however, is another Presidents' Trophy, a second straight franchise-record 56-win season or 116 points and multiple trophies – including the Hart – for their goaltender again.

That is not to say those objectives cannot be reached for a second straight year, it's just that the reality is this season will be different, just like each one of the previous 14 have been since the team returned.

Now, before there's any accusation that we're selling the prospects for this season short before it even begins, it should be noted that a consecutive Central Division title is certainly attainable for a team that is deeper, more experienced and hungrier than ever.

It's a group that has figured out that the 82 regular-season games are only an audition to earn an invitation to a 16-team tournament that determines a Stanley Cup champion.

For sure, this will be an exciting season for the Jets. Different, as mentioned, but lively in its own way for everyone, especially the fans.

And so, as the puck drops on a new campaign Thursday night in Winnipeg, the 15-year ride in the city continues at high speed and a memorable journey in the NHL rolls along with, undoubtedly, so much more to come.

## **TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/10/07/which-canadian-nhl-team-had-the-best-offseason/>

### ***Which Canadian NHL team had the best offseason? (VIDEO)***

Which Canadian NHL team had the best offseason? Will all five Canadian teams that made the playoffs last season do it again this season? Can the Flames and Canucks find their way back into the playoffs? TSN's Director of Scouting Craig Button and TSN Hockey analyst Mike Johnson join Jay Onrait to debate these topics and share their picks to win the Stanley Cup.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/10/06/nhl-preview-show-how-will-the-jets-follow-up-their-presidents-trophy-season/>

### ***NHL Preview Show: How will the Jets follow up their Presidents' Trophy season? (VIDEO)***

On paper, the Jets enjoyed a lot of success last season. From winning the Presidents' Trophy to Connor Hellebuyck's Vezina and Hart campaigns, there was a lot to cheer for if you were a Jets fan. However, Winnipeg crashed out of the playoffs earlier than expected yet again. The TSN Hockey panel takes a deep dive into what we can expect from the Jets this season.

## **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6698907/2025/10/08/kyle-connor-winnipeg-jets-contract-extension/>

### ***Jets, Kyle Connor agree to 8-year contract extension that carries AAV of \$12 million***

By Murat Ates

Kyle Connor and the Winnipeg Jets agreed to terms on an eight-year contract extension Wednesday that carries an AAV of \$12 million.

Connor will become the highest-paid player on the Jets in 2026-27. It's the price Winnipeg was willing to pay to retain a 28-year-old star forward who just scored the most points by a player in a single season (97) in Jets 2.0 history.

The Jets finished first in the NHL with 116 points last season. Extending Connor long-term was necessary for Winnipeg to maintain a win-now approach while aging franchise players Connor Hellebuyck and Mark Scheifele continue to perform like elite players. Connor joins Scheifele, Hellebuyck, Gabriel Vilardi and Neal Pionk as Jets signed to contracts through at least 2030.

Connor's skill set is unique. He's a fast skater, creating separation for himself out of explosive cutbacks, and a particularly dangerous finisher from tight spaces. He has a knack for finding soft ice and his shot is deceptive, beating goaltenders from short and medium range. The Michigan-



born forward is an avid outdoorsperson and part of a group of Jets who like to go hunting and fishing on their off days in Manitoba.

Winnipeg Jets star Kyle Connor is leading the league in goals yet mostly remains anonymous leaguewide.

It's the second big-ticket extension in a Canadian market this week, following Connor McDavid's two-year, \$12.5 million AAV contract signed on Monday.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6697010/2025/10/08/winnipeg-jets-predictions-2025-26/>

### ***10 bold predictions for the 2025-26 Jets: Playoff seed, Toews' games total and more***

By Murat Ates

I hate "bold predictions" stories.

They're full of over-ambitious claims. Everyone's in the best shape of their careers. Everybody's going to have the best season of their life. Awards will be won, trophies will be lifted and nobody will remember when the writers' fan-pleasing bravado turned out to be wrong.

I argued with my editor until he let me write this Winnipeg Jets "bold predictions" piece all the same.

You see, I am in the best writing shape of my life. My words-per-60 have never been higher. My typos-dodged-above-expected rates are soaring. I even had a great summer in the gym working on my prognostication — and also I bench press something like six more pounds than I used to. Fear me!

I'm also riding an unsustainable 100 percent prediction rate: Last year, my one and only preseason prediction was that Nikolaj Ehlers would play out the season and walk as a UFA.

I might as well get super specific with my bold predictions for the Jets in 2025-26. Need to know how many games Jonathan Toews is going to play? Fear not: I'll tell you. Want to know how many goals everyone is going to score? I know that, too!

If I can rattle off 10 bold predictions for this season's Jets, base them in evidence, and get seven or eight of them right, I will black out with joy just like Cole Perfetti did in Game 7 against the St. Louis Blues.

I'd better make some calls I can back up.

#### ***10. Toews will play exactly 57 regular-season games***

Put the doomsday scenarios away: Toews' injury is believed to be minor. Officially, he's day-to-day, while Scott Arniel says he's "hopeful" Toews plays in Game 1 against the Dallas Stars on Thursday. This isn't a season-opening season-ender for the 1,067-game veteran.

But Toews will almost certainly miss some NHL action this season. It is critical to remember that a 37-year-old hockey player can be hurt for reasons that have nothing to do with age or medical history. Toews has played 82 games in only two of his 15 seasons thus far. Even at his Conn Smythe Trophy-winning peak, Toews was not invulnerable.

I've arrived at 57 games as Toews' total by estimating load management during the extreme game density of the Olympic year making up a number I liked. There are times when Winnipeg's schedule gets intense — January and March in particular — and I'm projecting Toews to take time off for rest and recovery. I'm also expecting the wear and tear of Toews' first season since 2022-23 to lead to minor injuries.

#### *9. Morrissey will finish sixth in Norris voting*

Josh Morrissey has finished in the top 10 of Norris Trophy voting for three straight seasons: fifth in 2023, seventh in 2024 and fourth in 2025. The explosion in Morrissey's career arc is the stuff of hockey legend: brilliant player has down year, goes through deep personal loss, then gets challenged by grizzled, veteran coach. Morrissey more than doubled his career-best offensive production with 76 points in 2022-23, then improved his defensive impact in the two seasons since then — while also scoring 69 and 62 points.

He's also an easy down-ballot vote for PWHA members who take note of offensive production but want to respect all-around performance. If Cale Makar, Quinn Hughes and Rasmus Dahlin put together seasons so good that Morrissey falls just outside the podium, he's still likely to earn league-wide respect. He's also a good bet to be an Olympian.

#### *8. A major midseason trade is coming*

I don't think the Jets loved getting shut out of the Brock Nelson sweepstakes. It's not that Nelson was the be-all, end-all — they were contenders with or without him — but Winnipeg wanted to make upgrades, identified a target and then got shut out at the last minute.

Whether it's a top-four defenceman or another impact forward, I can't imagine the Jets going through 2025-26 without a big push to go all-in. Winnipeg has committed to veterans in important positions: Connor Hellebuyck and Mark Scheifele are both 32. There is an expiring window, the desire to go deeper than the second round and enough holes on the roster to justify a big push by deadline day.

The who and the how are more difficult to predict. I think the Jets will get through their injuries, approach the Olympic break with a playoff spot, and then make their push.

#### *7. Salomonsson will end the season on the Jets roster*

The Manitoba Moose are going to be much better this season. They've added one of the AHL's top scorers (Samuel Fagemo), a top offensive defenceman (Kale Clague) and a once-dominant Moose (Ville Heinola) to a young team that will also improve from within this season. Elias Salomonsson was one of the team's few bright spots prior to his injury last season, but there wasn't a single Moose regular who finished the season as a plus-player.

That includes Salomonsson, who can keep building towards a top-four NHL job by excelling all over again on a much deeper team. The 21-year-old right-shot defenceman has the size, the strength, the offensive instincts and the hockey IQ to be a Dylan Samberg-type NHL defenceman someday.

I still think 2026-27 is the most reasonable start date to Salomonsson's NHL career, based on Jets history. I'm willing to guess that the right combination of his performances, Winnipeg's injuries and veteran decline could put him in the Jets lineup by the end of the season. By midseason, I'm not convinced he'll be demonstrably worse than Luke Schenn or Colin Miller.

#### *6. The Jets will have three 30-goal scorers (for the first time since 2018-19!)*

This one is a bet on Gabriel Vilardi's good health. Kyle Connor has scored at a 30-goal pace (or better) in all eight full-time NHL seasons of his career. Mark Scheifele has scored 30 goals or more four times in his career, including two out of the past three seasons. Connor and Scheifele will score plentifully if anything good happens for the Jets at all this season.

Vilardi, though? He's scored at a 30-goal pace for three straight seasons without getting above 27. He's power-play magic, more important at five-on-five than he's ever been, and still improving. He needs to play close to 80 games to score 30 goals for the first time in his career.

Who finishes fourth in Jets goal scoring, though? Will it be Perfetti, now with Nikolaj Ehlers gone? Can Gustav Nyquist do it for the first time in his career? The Jets could have three 30-goal scorers for the first time since Scheifele, Connor and Patrik Laine all did it — and still fall short of last season's 275 goals.

#### *5. Connor will sign an eight-year, \$12 million AAV extension*

It would make him Winnipeg's highest-paid player. It would include some level of signing bonuses yet unseen in Jets history. It would also keep Connor far away from Kirill Kaprizov's \$17 million, while not putting too much stock in Connor McDavid's Oilers-friendly \$12.5 million extension, either.

Every player's situation is different. I think Connor gets unique first-line, first-unit opportunities in Winnipeg. (Do you think he'd play more ice time per game in the playoffs than Aleksander Barkov or Matthew Tkachuk, as he did last season, if he were on the Florida Panthers?) I think Connor likes the community and outdoor living. I don't know what the future holds, but Connor is an enormous priority for the Jets. I think they keep him around for a long, long time.

Plus, breaking down a potential trend in Winnipeg's drafts and pondering the hole in the second defence pair.

#### *4. Winnipeg will lose one more homegrown draft pick by season's end*

Whether it's Heinola (for whom Arniel gave an impromptu sales pitch on Tuesday), forward David Gustafsson (who practiced on a defence pair with Miller Tuesday) or a prospect with trade value, I see lots of possibilities for Winnipeg's youth movement to take a hit this season.

Heinola got the first chance at an early exit but passed through waivers. He's fully recovered from the ankle injury (and subsequent infection) that limited him to 18 Jets games and 43 Moose games over the past two seasons.

"My message to (Heinola) was that he has to play," Arniel said Tuesday. "If that means he's down there and we have injuries and he's the best defenceman and he's the guy that comes up first ... or there ends up being a scenario where some other team has big interest and all of a sudden, there's a guy that maybe they look at (in a trade.)"

Gustafsson had an unimpressive preseason, pushed down the depth chart without a long look at a fourth-line job. Winnipeg is going to run Tanner Pearson, Morgan Barron and Cole Koepke in that role — and seems to be more impressed by Parker Ford for a depth role — and I'm no longer convinced Winnipeg's 2018 second-rounder is a forever Jet.

There are higher stakes available, too. The major midseason trade we talked about? That would come with a price. The Jets were elbowed out of the Nelson trade but it certainly seems they were prepared to offer a first-round pick and a top prospect, much like Colorado did.

### *3. The Jets will finish third in the Central with 99 points*

Yes, I'm projecting a step back. No, this isn't a catastrophe. The Jets are going to struggle at times this season — even if I don't think you should count them out.

Even if they'd stayed healthy, the Jets would need the best power play and best goaltending performance in the NHL to recreate last season's 116 points. Hellebuyck is a good bet to be great, but his regular-season performance was better than his own career average. The power play is going to be dangerous, too, but Ehlers' job belongs to Alex Iafallo now that Perfetti is week-to-week with a high ankle sprain. Haydn Fleury is lining up with Neal Pionk where Samberg would have played, Adam Lowry is targeting an early November return and Toews is working to reestablish his timing.

It's not all roses. Winnipeg is going to have to earn everything it gets this season.

### *2. They will be better prepared for the playoffs*

I think winning the Presidents' Trophy or finishing first in a team's division is more important to teams that have never done it before. The Jets have been there now. They won 56 games, racking up 116 points and earning the right to raise banners at Thursday's home opener.

They'd trade all of it for a Stanley Cup.

Winnipeg has earned the right to approach the season with an eye on peaking in April. This could be a dangerous attitude if the Jets didn't have so much early-season adversity coming their way. But these Jets are going to have to battle to get through Lowry, Samberg and Perfetti's injuries and stay in playoff position. They're going to have to stay patient as Toews rounds into form and other players have ups and downs.

The whole season will be a work in progress in a way all seasons are. It will also be a work in progress in a way last season's coast-to-coast Presidents' Trophy runaway campaign was not. This bold prediction is more subjective than the others but I don't imagine the Blues or whomever bullying their way through Round 1 against this season's Jets.

### *1. They will have their playoff revenge against Dallas in the first round*

I'm calling it now. The Central Division will finish:

Colorado

Dallas

Winnipeg

Minnesota

This time, Winnipeg will play Dallas in Round 1. The Jets will force Game 7 with a home win. Hellebuyck will be excellent.

They'll be lucky to win Game 7, but they'll do it all the same. Maybe a refereeing controversy will go Winnipeg's way, just for kicks.

**Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-to-include-multiple-bonuses-full-no-move-clause-in-connor-deal/>

***Jets to include multiple bonuses, full no-move clause in Connor deal***

By Elliotte Friedman

Quick follow-up on last night's Kyle Connor reporting:

The Winnipeg Jets are closing in on what's believed to be an eight-year, \$96-million extension (\$12 million AAV) with unrestricted free-agent-to-be Kyle Connor, but what really stands out are the deeper details.

Not only is it the biggest contract in Jets history, but, according to multiple sources, it also includes multiple seasons of signing bonuses and a full no-move clause — steps the organization has never taken before.

The deal, negotiated between chairman Mark Chipman, GM Kevin Cheveldayoff and Connor's agent, Rich Evans of Wasserman Hockey, is another example of new NHL realities in an expanding cap world.

Connor, averaging 35 goals and 0.97 points per game over the last eight seasons, would have been hotly pursued if he hit the open market next July. Recognizing the rapidly changing landscape, the Jets changed organizational philosophy. In the past, they avoided signing bonuses after Year 1 of a contract, and would not give full no-move clauses.

Life is all about adapting, and the Jets chose to do so in order to keep their talented winger. It's a big, big win for team, player and the Manitoba fanbase — who will be thrilled to hear that, for the second time this week, a Connor's committed to a Canadian city.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/what-a-potential-connor-extension-says-about-jets-team-dynamic/>

***What a potential Connor extension says about Jets' team dynamic (VIDEO)***

The Hockey Central panel discuss the Winnipeg Jets nearing an extension with star forward Kyle Connor and what the potential extension says about how the Jets have structured their team with players that are committed to one another.