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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-third-period-comeback-bid-falls-short>

***THREE THINGS: Jets third period comeback bid falls short
Vilardi scored twice for the Jets in a 4-3 loss to Carolina***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG - The Winnipeg Jets came up short in their bid to come back in the third period falling 4-3 to the Carolina Hurricanes at Canada Life Centre. Gabe Vilardi scored twice and Josh Morrissey had the other goal for the Jets who fell to 12-8 on the season. Morrissey extended his point streak to seven games and joined Dustin Byfuglien (3x) as the only defensemen in Jets/Thrashers history with multiple seven-game point streaks (also 11 GP in 2022-23). Eric Comrie made 24 saves and saw his record fall to 4-2 on the season. The Jets close out their three-game homestand on Sunday afternoon when they host the Minnesota Wild.

COMMS

With the news that Connor Hellebuyck will undergo a minor arthroscopic knee procedure on Saturday that will take him out of the Jets lineup for four-to-six weeks means that Eric Comrie gets a shot at being the number one goaltender. Comrie began that opportunity against the Hurricanes and unfortunately gave up a goal on the first shot of the game but settled down after that. The Jets continue to provide goal support for Comrie in his starts so far this season, as Winnipeg has scored at least three goals in four of his five appearances.

"Eric comes out with the same mind set every day, so we come out with the same mindset every day," said Gabe Vilardi.

"He's playing more now, obviously. But he's up for that challenge. It doesn't change much for us."

NOT THERE YET

The Jets had a tough second period in which they were only able to generate four shots on goal while Carolina jumped on their mistakes. With the Jets leading 2-1, Jordan Staal scored his second goal of the night to tie it at 3:08 and then with the Jets on the power play, Seth Jarvis scored on a rebound for a shorthanded tally. Andrei Svechnikov scored a power play marker to open the third period to extend the Hurricanes lead to 4-2. That's when Winnipeg pushed back and made it interesting thanks to this goal from Gabe Vilardi.

"I thought, second period they took it to us a little bit, but we were able to get our game back. And a lot of good looks to at least tie at the very least there in the third period," said Dylan DeMelo.

"So, sometimes the way it goes. But I thought that was a very winnable game for us. We just couldn't find that next one. Couldn't find that next one. And they obviously capitalize on their power play. And a shorty. So, those, maybe are the ones that stand out. But I think there was a lot of positives."

WELCOME BACK FLY

Nikolaj Ehlers made his return to Winnipeg after spending the past 10 seasons with the franchise. He ranks within the top six in Jets/Thrashers history in goals (225; 5th), assists (295;

6th), points (520; 6th) and game-winning-goals (39; 5th). During the second TV timeout in the first period, the Jets had a video tribute for the Danish forward.

It looked like Ehlers would score in his first game against his old teammates, with the Jets leading 2-1 in the first, Ehlers snapped a quick shot that Comrie stopped but the puck went up in the air and Dylan DeMelo would hit out of the air to stop a goal. Ehlers finished the night with an assist and one shot on goal.

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/blog-hellebuyck-out-four-to-six-weeks>

***BLOG: Hellebuyck out four-to-six weeks
Connor Hellebuyck will undergo a minor arthroscopic knee procedure.***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Considering how many games he plays and how long he has been playing it is quite remarkable how Connor Hellebuyck has avoided the injury bug.

Five times Hellebuyck has led the league in games played and the Winnipeg Jets have rarely had to know what it's like to be without the 32-year-old.

Until now.

TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger broke the news before the Jets had their morning skate that Hellebuyck will be out four-to-six weeks.

"He's been pretty healthy. This has been kind of nagging on him since training camp. It's something he's kind of known about. He was trying to play through it. He'd have good days, bad days. Just something the timing's right, get it done now," said head coach Scott Arniel.

"We have a lot of schedule ahead of us. I was really just thinking, sat down and talked to him, obviously medical staff, everybody, the agent... This was the time to do it."

Clearly the first priority for Hellebuyck is the Jets and their championship aspirations. But the Olympics are just around the corner and a chance to represent the United States at the Winter Games is a big deal as well.

"He is sore after games and couldn't practice. He didn't practice for a couple of days. So, there was still that. It has been building a little bit more and it wasn't going to get any easier for him. I know he would love to just keep playing," said Arniel.

"So, it wasn't looking at what was coming down the road, whether it's the Olympics or the playoffs, it is (about) him getting healthy for that second half and the big run.

Jets captain Adam Lowry summed up the feeling of the team when asked about the news of the day. It is obvious the group has full confidence in Eric Comrie and that they are starting to find the defensive structure that has made them successful the past two seasons.

"To put it plainly, it sucks. You lose the Hart Trophy winner, the Vezina winner, the best goalie in the world for an extended period of time. It's tough news, but we talked about it though," said Adam Lowry.

"We have all the confidence in the world in what Comrie can do, what Milly can do. Comms has come in and had a stellar start to the year. He had a great year for us last year. He puts in so much time and effort in the gym, on the ice before and after practice, working with Flatts, talking with Helle, I think that he's prepared for the increased workload."

Comrie has had his best years in the NHL as a member of the Jets and the reason he left after the 2021-22 season was a chance to be a starter in Buffalo. Now he will get that chance with his good friend being out at least a month. Comrie is 4-1 with 2.61 goals against average and .906 save percentage, in his four wins, the Jets have scored five goals.

"I know everyone here does watch Eric's starts over the last few years. He's played incredible. I think last year his record, we didn't give him a lot of run support in some of those back to backs and tough situations," said Josh Morrissey.

"But he's played well enough to have us win all those hockey games. He's stolen some games and stolen some points for us over that time, with some tough scheduling starts. I have all the confidence in the world in him. Everyone in the room loves Coms. He's a great goalie. The league probably doesn't see it a lot. He's going to get that opportunity here to show his stuff."

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/carolina-hurricanes-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-november-21-2025>

Staal scores twice, Hurricanes edge Jets to extend point streak to 5 Ehlers has assist in return to Winnipeg; Vilardi gets 2 goals in loss

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Jordan Staal scored twice for the Carolina Hurricanes, who hung on for a 4-3 win against the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre on Friday.

"I thought the boys held (them) off, and our power play came up big with a big goal for us," Staal said. "And it has been going for us, so that was huge for I think everyone. And then just staying strong in the third and [Brandon Bussi] kind of holding the fort."

Seth Jarvis and Andrei Svechnikov also scored, and Bussi made 24 saves for the Hurricanes (14-5-2), who are 3-0-2 in their past five games and 7-1-2 in their past 10. Sebastian Aho and K'Andre Miller each had two assists.

"I liked the game. I thought we were good all night," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We had a couple of gaffes, one was a bad line change, one was obviously kind of a weird turnover that ends up in your net, but other than that I thought we were pretty solid all night and had a couple of big plays. Obviously, [Staal] keeps leading the way ... but overall, I thought it was a great effort from all 20 guys."

Gabriel Vilardi scored two goals for the Jets (12-8-0), who had won two straight. Eric Comrie made 24 saves after it was announced earlier in the day that Connor Hellebuyck will have surgery on his knee and be out 4-6 weeks.

"[Comrie] made some big stops in the first there, and then on the penalty kill he had to make a couple of really big stops," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "It's not a situation where we ask him to stop 40. We need to play better in front of him. A couple of mistakes we made are things that we need to clean up for him. Whether it's him or whether it's [Hellebuyck], we can't give up those kind of opportunities. We gave up four goals. We're chasing the game. I just thought he was rock-solid and he's just his consistent self."

Staal scored 16 seconds into the first period to give the Hurricanes a 1-0 lead. He received a cross-ice pass from Jordan Martinook and skated into the right circle, where he made an inside-outside move on defenseman Dylan Samberg before beating Comrie with a wrist shot that went in off the far post.

"That early (in a game), I've had maybe one or two," Staal said. "I've already had one earlier this year (Staal scored 12 seconds into a 4-3 overtime win at the Los Angeles Kings on Oct. 18). Yeah, we obviously want great starts and that's always nice."

Josh Morrissey tied it 1-1 at 3:45. Mark Scheifele skated in on a 2-on-1 rush with Kyle Connor, but he passed back to Morrissey, who was the trailer on the rush and scored with a wrist shot from the left circle.

Vilardi scored on a power play to put the Jets in front 2-1 at 9:28. He blocked a dump attempt from Carolina defenseman Mike Reilly in the neutral zone, and the puck went right to Cole Perfetti, who skated in on a 2-on-0 rush before passing back to Vilardi for a one-timer in tight.

Staal tied it 2-2 with his second of the game at 3:08 of the second period. He redirected Jalen Chatfield's shot-pass from the right point while skating through the high slot.

"He could score every night because if you watch him, he gets opportunities every night like that," Brind'Amour said. "He's always around it. The first one was a great goal. Normally you see him get more like the other one, which is the tip in front, or some sort of goal around the net. But he was obviously our best player tonight."

Jarvis scored short-handed to give Carolina a 3-2 lead at 6:31. He got to a rebound in front after Comrie stopped Aho's breakaway attempt.

"We obviously made two mistakes on the two goals, gave up a short-handed goal, a power-play goal," Arniel said. "They're a pressure team, and for the most part there was some sloppiness near the end of the first, in the second a little bit, of not getting pucks out of our zone. ... We had opportunities to get back and tie that up, but if you give up a [short-handed goal] and a power-play goal, you're [usually] on the wrong end of things."

Svechnikov pushed the lead to 4-2 at 3:19 of the third period, scoring a power-play goal with a one-timer from the right circle off a cross-ice pass from Nikolaj Ehlers.

"[Ehlers is] one of the best passers in this league. You've just kind of always have to expect it and get open, and he'll always find you," Svechnikov said. "We actually watched the video on that one and [Brind'Amour] told us the seam pass would be open there. But there's a couple times where [Ehlers] was passing it to me and I wasn't even expecting it. So, like I said, you've got to expect it always. He can pass (to) you from everywhere."

Ehlers was playing his first game in Winnipeg since signing a six-year, \$51 million contract with Carolina on July 3. Selected by the Jets with the No. 9 pick in the 2014 NHL Draft, Ehlers played his first 10 NHL seasons in Winnipeg.

"[Ehlers] was, I thought, really good tonight," Brind'Amour said. "He made a lot of real subtle, high-end plays that created offense. We just, we didn't cash in. And obviously on the one goal he did make a great pass."

Vilardi scored his second of the game to cut it to 4-3 at 4:13. His intended pass for Connor on a 2-on-1 rush deflected five-hole off Chatfield's skate.

Miller was then assessed a minor for high-sticking with 52 seconds remaining in regulation, but the Jets couldn't tie the game on the ensuing 6-on-4 advantage.

"I don't know if it's what [Carolina] did, I think it's more about what we didn't do," Vilardi said. "I think we made a few too many mistakes at our blue line, at their blue line, just kind of feeding their transition."

"We worked. I think we had chances. We gave it our best, but we just couldn't get the tying goal at the end."

NOTES: Staal has scored four goals in his past four games. ... Morrissey extended his point streak to seven games (four goals, seven assists). ... Chatfield, who was activated off injured reserve earlier in the day, returned after missing seven games with an upper-body injury. He had one assist in 21:34 of ice time.

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-connor-hellebuyck-injury-status-knee-surgery>

***Hellebuyck out 4-6 weeks for Jets after knee surgery
Won Hart Trophy as NHL MVP, Vezina as best goalie last season***

By NHL.com

Connor Hellebuyck will be out 4-6 weeks for the Winnipeg Jets after having knee surgery on Saturday.

"Obviously, he's, what is it, 10 years, he's been pretty healthy," Jets coach Scott Arniel said Friday. "And this has kind of been nagging on him here since training camp. It's something we've kind of known about, he was trying to play through it, would be good days, bad days, just something that, timing's right, get it done now."

"A lot of schedule ahead of us, so that was really just the thinking. Sat down, talked to him, obviously the medical staff, everybody, agent. This was the time to do it."

Hellebuyck, who won the Hart Trophy as NHL MVP and the Vezina Trophy as the best goalie in the NHL last season, is 8-6-0 with a 2.51 goals-against average and .913 save percentage in 14 games this season. He last played on Nov. 15, allowing three goals in a 4-3 shootout win against the Calgary Flames.

Last season, Hellebuyck went 47-12-3 and tied for the NHL lead with 63 games played. He led all goalies in wins, goals-against average (2.00; minimum 25 games) and shutouts (eight), and

was second in save percentage (.925). He became the fifth goalie to win the Hart and Vezina in the same season, and helped Winnipeg win the Presidents' Trophy for having the best record in the League and the Jennings Trophy for allowing the fewest goals.

Hellebuyck has played at least 60 games each of the past four seasons and six of the past eight; the only two he didn't was during the pandemic shortened seasons in 2019-20 and 2020-21.

"Obviously we've been really fortunate to have 'Helly' be healthy and available. His durability has been something to marvel at," Jets defenseman Josh Morrissey said. "... You can't replace a guy like that."

Hellebuyck is expected to return in time for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026, which open with preliminary games on Feb. 11. Hellebuyck has not been named to the roster but was one of three goalies on the U.S. team at the 4 Nations Face-Off in February and started three of its four games.

Eric Comrie started and made 24 saves in a 4-3 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes on Friday. The Jets' backup goalie is 4-2-0 with a 2.84 GAA and .899 save percentage in six games this season.

"He's an absolute workhorse, so you know his game is sharp," Jets captain Adam Lowry said of Comrie. "With Connor and his relationship, I know they're great friends but they're also always talking about goaltending and different things. Obviously what Helly has done over his career and the last couple years is special, Eric's talked about how he's learned a lot from Helly in terms of how he sees and reads the game. So I think all in all they make each other better, they build each other up and it's a great tandem. I have all the confidence in Eric going forward."

Winnipeg recalled Thomas Milic from Manitoba of the American Hockey League on Friday. He is 5-2-2 with a 2.14 GAA and a .921 save percentage in nine AHL games this season.

"We're talking 4-6 weeks so I'm not sure, but I don't think Eric can go all those games, so [Milic] going to have to play," Arniel said. "At the end of the day, it's next man up. It really is. We're not replacing Connor."

A three-time Vezina Trophy winner (also 2019-20, 2023-24), Hellebuyck leads the NHL in wins since the 2020-21 season with 182. He is 330-191-44 with a 2.56 GAA, .918 save percentage and 45 shutouts in 582 regular-season games (572 starts) since being selected by Winnipeg in the fifth round (No. 130) of the 2012 NHL Draft. He is 24-34 in 58 Stanley Cup Playoff games.

"To put it plainly, it [stinks]," Lowry said. "You lose the Hart Trophy winner, the Vezina winner, the best goalie in the world for an extended period of time, so it's tough news. ... We have all the confidence in the word what Eric can do, what 'Milly' can do."

The Jets (12-8-0) are fourth in the Central Division.

"Our defensive game has been trending in the right direction here," Morrissey said. "Moving forward here, without Helly here these next number of games, we want to make sure we're building that defensive game."

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11538181/winnipeg-jets-fall-to-hurricanes-4-3-in-ehlers-return-to-winnipeg/>

Winnipeg Jets fall to Hurricanes 4-3 in Ehlers' return to Winnipeg

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

On a day where the hockey world learned that the Winnipeg Jets would be without star goaltender Connor Hellebuyck for the next little while, they faced a stiff test against the East-leading Carolina Hurricanes.

They availed themselves well but were unable to get the job done, falling 4-3 Friday night in a game that also featured the return of Nikolaj Ehlers to Winnipeg.

The Hurricanes outlasted the Jets in a thrilling chance-filled game. Despite giving up a goal at just the 16 second mark, the Jets played a solid first period. The Canes came on strong in the middle stanza and the Jets owned much of the third and came close to the tying goal several times late in the game.

"The chances were 10-5 for us 5-on-5," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "We did a pretty good job. Obviously made two mistakes on the two goals, gave up a shorthanded goal, power play goal.

"There was some sloppiness there near the end of the first, in the second a little bit in the sense of not getting pucks out of our zone, but also not getting through the neutral zone quick enough. But at the end of the day, we had chances. We had some opportunities and took our foot off the gas a little bit in the second period."

Ehlers had the primary assist on the game-winning goal and nearly scored in his return to Winnipeg as Dylan DeMelo batted a puck away out of mid-air as it neared the goal line. Ehlers received a standing ovation during a first period TV timeout.

Gabriel Vilardi notched two goals for the Jets, while Jordan Staal countered with a pair for Carolina.

Josh Morrissey scored for the second straight game to give him a seven-game point-streak, and he has 11 points over that stretch.

The Jets struggled at times to protect the puck and according to the official scoresheet they made 18 giveaways.

"I think we made a few too many mistakes at our blueline, their blueline," said Vilardi. "Just kinda feeding their transition."

Arniel shook up his lines in third period, making changes to three of their four forward lines, while keeping his top line intact.

"I was just trying to get a match (up) that was trying to work how we wanted to go," said Arniel. "Sometimes you do it to spark it. I thought all the lines did a pretty good job of creating some offence and zone time."

Before several fans had even taken their seats, the visitors broke the ice. A misplayed pinch by Neal Pionk allowed Brandon's Jordan Martinook to get to the puck in the neutral zone and fire it across to Staal as he entered the Winnipeg zone.

He made a move to cut back inside on Dylan Samberg before wiring a shot past Eric Comrie, the puck crossing the goal line just 16 seconds after the opening faceoff.

But it didn't take too long before the Jets drew level. With some Hurricanes going off for a change, DeMelo had the puck at centre ice and banked it off the boards for Mark Scheifele entering the Carolina end.

With all kinds of open ice and a 3-on-1 developing, Scheifele skated it deep into the Hurricanes end before dropping it back to a cutting Morrissey. With Kyle Connor also near the net, Morrissey had options but chose to shoot it and his shot eluded Brandon Bussi to make it 1-1 at the 3:45 mark.

The Jets had to kill off a Vilardi penalty and did so, with Carolina being called for their own penalty seven seconds after Vilardi came out of the box.

Carolina managed to get a clear early in the power play but as Mike Reilly backpedaled with the puck in the neutral zone, he fired a pass right off the shin pad of Vilardi, the puck ricocheting right to Cole Perfetti who had nothing but clear ice between him and Bussi.

As Perfetti got close to the net, and had two Hurricanes converging on him, he sent a pass to his right to Vilardi for an open-net tap-in to make it 2-1 Winnipeg at the 9:28 mark.

At the second media timeout of the period, a tribute video for Ehlers was shown at centre ice before the crowd gave Ehlers a big ovation for his ten seasons of service as a Winnipeg Jet. There was also a big cheer when he was shown on the screen during the Star-Spangled Banner, but whenever he touched the puck during the game, there was a small smattering of boos.

Ehlers nearly tied the score when his wrist from the slot caught the skate of Comrie and careened high in the air, appearing to be heading for the net but DeMelo whacked it out of mid-air before it got across the goal line.

Winnipeg took their 2-1 lead to the second despite being outshot 12-11 in the opening 20 minutes.

It took Carolina just over three minutes to tie the game early in the second. The Hurricanes cycled the puck around the Winnipeg zone before K'Andre Miller sent a point-to-point pass across to Jalen Chatfield. He sent a hard pass to the slot where Staal steered it on goal and it eluded Comrie to level the score.

The Jets had a chance to regain the lead on the power play a few minutes later but it was Carolina who scored shorthanded to put themselves back in front.

Connor tried to pass the puck to Vilardi to enter the Hurricanes zone, but Miller got a stick on the puck to break it up, allowing Sebastian Aho to skate onto the loose puck. He darted into the Winnipeg end and was denied on a partial breakaway by Comrie, but Winnipegger Seth Jarvis trailed the play and banged home the rebound to make it 3-2 Hurricanes at the 6:31 mark.

Carolina controlled play for most of the period, dominating possession time, outshooting Winnipeg 9-4 and out attempting the Jets 23-8.

The Jets had their hands full to start the third, knowing that Carolina was 10-0 this season when leading after 40 minutes. Making matters worse, the Canes struck on the power play at the 3:19 mark to extend their lead.

Andrei Svechnikov picked up the puck in the corner to the left of Comrie and sent it to the opposite point where Ehlers was waiting for it. He drifted lower into the zone before whipped a perfect, no-look pass back to Svechnikov that he one-timed into the net to make it 4-2.

Winnipeg shaved the lead back down to one just 54 seconds later. After Miller lost the puck in the Winnipeg end, Connor picked it up and passed it across to Vilardi to start a 2-on-1. Vilardi held the puck as long as he could as he skated it deep into the Hurricanes end and tried to pass it back to Connor, but his centering pass went off the skate of Chatfield and through the five-hole of Bussi.

The Jets started to press hard for the equalizer with less than half a period remaining, testing Bussi several times but the rookie was up to the challenge.

Comrie went to the bench for an extra attacker with 90 seconds but had to return to the net seconds later when the puck went out of play. He returned to the bench with 60 seconds to go as Winnipeg put on one last charge to try and tie the game, aided by a Carolina penalty for high-sticking with 51.1 seconds on the clock.

But they were not able to get one past Bussi before the clock ran out as the rookie, making his sixth NHL start, picked up his fifth win by making 24 saves, including 11 in the final 8:14.

Comrie turned aside 24 shots as well in his first of what should be many starts over the next four-to-six weeks.

The Jets will look to pick up a win in their final game of this three-game homestand Sunday afternoon against Minnesota. Pregame coverage begins at 1 p.m. with the puck dropping just after 3 p.m.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11529120/western-winnipeg-jets-road-trip-analysis-moore/>

Winnipeg Jets take down Columbus 5-2 on Scheifele's milestone night

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

Mark Scheifele made sure his milestone night would be a good one.

Playing in his 898th NHL game, setting a new franchise mark for games played, Scheifele tallied three helpers to propel the Winnipeg Jets to a 5-2 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets on Tuesday night.

The Jets had goals from five different players, including three markers from defencemen as they started the three-game homestand on a winning note. Winnipeg scored three straight goals as five players had multi-point nights in one of their most complete games of the season.

"I thought we did good coming out," said Jets forward Kyle Connor. "Their first goal, I thought it was, you know, bouncing puck. It just kinda goes that way. It didn't let us deteriorate from our game plan, stuck with it and yeah, we are able to keep coming. Top to bottom it was a full team effort tonight. Everybody did a great job, so you need that in this league. You need to be four lines deep and we really showed our depth tonight."

Josh Morrissey, Neal Pionk and Logan Stanley all scored goals for the Jets and it's the first time since March of 2023 the Jets had three different defencemen score in the same game.

"When your 'D' can add offence from that back end, it makes you that much more dangerous," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "We talk about depth scoring and sometimes you just look at the forwards, but I actually think Columbus is the highest scoring 'D' in the league right now and that's a big part of the game."

Morrissey had a goal and an assist to give him a six-game point streak and he's now second in defencemen scoring in the NHL with 21 points in 19 games.

Morgan Barron returned to the lineup from injury for the Jets, giving the team a completely healthy forward unit for the first time this season.

After hitting a bit of speed bump on the road trip, Scheifele is heating back up again. With three assists in the win, he now has six points in his last three games.

"The first game after a long road trip you kinda never know what you're going to get," said Scheifele. "We just tried to get the energy up and know that they had a really tough back-to-back for those guys. So, we just wanted to jump on them early. It's a good effort."

Scheifele came into the night tied with longtime teammate Blake Wheeler for the most games played in Jets/Thrashers franchise history (Thomas Steen has the overall Winnipeg NHL record, playing 950 games with the original Jets).

"I didn't know either," said Scheifele. "Obviously it's pretty cool. Been here for a long time so feel old some days, but obviously it's a tremendous honour."

After a failed power play in the opening minutes of the first period, the Jets, playing at home for the first time since Nov. 1, broke the ice thanks to some great 5-on-5 play by their third line.

Adam Lowry drove down low in the Columbus end and tried to center the puck but it deflected to the opposite corner. He tracked it down and sent it to the point for Pionk before circling towards the slot. Pionk then sent it back down low to Nino Niederreiter, who found a cutting Lowry for a point-blank chance that Lowry buried for his first goal of the season.

Winnipeg held onto the lead until late in the period when the Jackets drew level with 1:33 to go.

The play started innocuously with Columbus goalie Elvis Merzlikins handling a dump-in by banking it off the end boards to Damon Severson. He sent a pass to Miles Wood at the blue line that the speedy winger chipped up the ice before winning a footrace with Dylan DeMelo. Wood was hooked as he skated past DeMelo, which would have been a penalty or a penalty shot but Wood made it a moot point as he deked out Eric Comrie before sliding the puck through the five-hole.

Both teams managed to get 11 shots on net in the first but early in the second, the Jets restored their lead thanks to their big guns.

Scheifele picked up the puck in the neutral zone and cut across the ice before taking it into the Columbus zone. He carried it to the faceoff dot before sliding a perfect pass through the crease and through the legs of Zach Werenski, right to the tape of the stick of Morrissey who steered it into the net just 72 seconds into the middle frame.

The game's second penalty also went to Columbus with 5:10 left in the second when Luca Del Bel Belluz was called for holding, his first career penalty in his 22nd NHL game, and Winnipeg made him pay.

With the Jets' second power play unit on the ice, the puck was cycled around the Columbus zone before Gustav Nyquist sent a point-to-point pass to Pionk that the blueliner blasted through Merzlikins for his first of the season.

Winnipeg outshot Columbus 8-4 in the second as they carried the multi-goal lead into the final frame and built on their advantage at the 2:45 mark of the third.

Connor made a juke at the blue line before taking the puck towards the corner in the Columbus end. As he reached the goal line, he noticed some daylight high in the net and beat Merzlikins with a sharp angle shot that banked in off the goaltender.

The Jackets were able to cut the lead back to two just 79 seconds later. After the Jets failed to clear the puck, Charlie Coyle sent it across the ice to Cole Sillinger, who found Werenski in the slot. His shot eluded Comrie to make it 4-2.

But a little over two minutes later, the three-goal cushion was restored. Scheifele took the puck into the Columbus end before dropping the puck back to Stanley for a one-timer that the big man pounded past Merzlikins for his third of the season, extending his career-high.

Winnipeg held on from there to improve to 12-7 on the season. Comrie turned aside 20 shots as he personally improved to 4-1.

The Jets will look to make it three wins in a row when they host the Carolina Hurricanes Friday night as Nikolaj Ehlers makes his return to Winnipeg.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2025/11/22/winnipeg-jets-carolina-hurricanes-game-story-recap-loss/>

Jets goalie Hellebuyck out 4-6 weeks to undergo arthroscopic knee surgery

By Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

When Eric Comrie got scored on 16 seconds into Friday's game against the Carolina Hurricanes, Jets head coach Scott Arniel wasn't upset.

Comrie was replacing star netminder Connor Hellebuyck, whom the team said Friday was undergoing arthroscopic surgery for a knee problem dating back to training camp. He's expected to be out four to six weeks.

The former backup made 24 saves in the 4-3 loss to the Hurricanes.

"Obviously, we got caught right off the bat there on a transition play," Arniel said. "Yeah, I felt for him right away but then he settled in.

"He made some big stops in the first there and then on the penalty kill he had to make a couple of really big stops."

Gabriel Vilardi scored twice and defenceman Josh Morrissey added a goal for Winnipeg (12-8-0), extending his point streak to seven games with four goals and seven assists.

Jordan Staal had a pair of goals and Seth Jarvis scored shorthanded for Carolina (14-5-2). K'Andre Miller and Sebastian Aho each contributed a pair of assists and backup netminder Brandon Bussi stopped 24 shots.

Arniel said Comrie was "rock solid" and "his consistent self" despite the errors made in front of him.

"It's not a situation where we ask (Comrie) to stop 40 (shots)," Arniel said. "We need to play better in front of him. A couple of mistakes we made are things that we need to clean up for him."

Staal scored 16 seconds into the game, making a move to get around Jets defencemen Dylan Samberg and firing the puck past Comrie on the stick side.

Winnipeg defenceman Dylan DeMelo later batted a puck out of the air after it hit Comrie's pad in the opening frame.

What did Comrie say to him?

"He was saying, 'Nice save.' I was saying, 'It's the least I can do for all the times you've saved my back,'" DeMelo said. "Yeah, desperation play and I was lucky to hit it pretty flush."

Comrie is now 4-2-0 this season. He's being backed up by Thomas Milic.

The team wants to play well in front of all its goalies, but Comrie is a special teammate, DeMelo said.

"On and off the ice, he's one of our, if not our hardest worker on our team..." DeMelo said.

"A charismatic guy, fun energy, so when he's in the pipes we want to play hard obviously for all our goalies, but when he's in the net he just brings so much energy to this group and he's such a vital part of it."

Since Winnipeg's defence wanted to help Comrie out, Morrissey provided the first goal at 3:44 of the opening period to tie it up. Vilardi's power-play marker at 9:28 came after a Carolina turnover.

Vilardi said the team's drive doesn't change with Comrie in net.

"(Comrie) comes out with the same mindset every day, so we come out with the same mindset every day," Vilardi said. "He's playing more now, obviously, but he's up for that challenge."

Staal notched his second of the game when he got his stick on Jalen Chatfield's point shot at 3:08 of the second period.

Jarvis scored his 11th goal the season at 6:31 and Svechnikov stretched the lead to 4-2 three minutes into the third. Vilardi made it a one-goal game 54 seconds later.

Miller was called for high sticking Vilardi with 52 seconds left in the game and Comrie was pulled for the extra attacker, but no equalizer was scored.

"We're a group that we're going to play right down to the whistle," DeMelo said. "Six-on-four, you can't ask for more."

HELLO OLD FRIEND

The Jets played a video tribute in the first period for Carolina forward Nikolaj Ehlers, who played 674 games for Winnipeg before signing with the Hurricanes in the off-season.

Ehlers skated away from the Carolina bench and clapped his gloves for the cheering second sellout crowd of the season at Canada Life Centre.

He later assisted on Svechnikov's goal after sending him a no-look pass across the front of the net.

"(He's) one of the best passers in this league," Svechnikov said. "You've just kind of always have to expect it and get open, and he'll always find you." The Canadian Press

Winnipeg Jets star goaltender Connor Hellebuyck will be out four to six weeks to undergo an arthroscopic procedure on his knee, the NHL team announced Friday.

Hellebuyck is 8-6-0 with a 2.51 goals-against average and .913 save percentage this season for the Jets, who entered a game Friday against Carolina in third place in the Central Division.

Jets coach Scott Arniel said Friday that Hellebuyck had been trying to play through a knee injury, and the timing is right to get it taken care of.

Hellebuyck won his first Hart Trophy as NHL MVP and his third Vezina Trophy as top goaltender in 2024-25 as the Jets posted the best regular-season record in the league.

The surgery comes less than three months before the start of the Olympic men's hockey tournament in Milan, Italy.

Hellebuyck, from Commerce, Mich., was not included in the first group of six players announced for the United States' Olympic preliminary roster but was widely expected to be added to the team.

Eric Comrie is expected to take the Jets' starting role in Hellebuyck's absence. He is 4-1 with a 2.60 GAA and .908 save percentage this season.

In a corresponding move, the Jets called up goaltender Thomas Milic from the American Hockey League's Manitoba Moose.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6827415/2025/11/22/jets-connor-hellebuyck-surgery-brad-lambert-trade/>

Winnipeg Jets' latest questions: Brad Lambert's trade request, Connor Hellebuyck's surgery, more

By Murat Ates

The Winnipeg Jets could try for years without ever repeating the wild nature of their news cycle this week.

Adam Lowry, the team captain, signed a five-year, \$25 million contract extension. Connor Hellebuyck, the star goaltender, was injured for the first time in his career and is expected to miss four to six weeks after undergoing arthroscopic surgery. Carolina Hurricanes forward Nikolaj Ehlers made his return to Winnipeg on Friday and teed up Carolina's game-winning goal by exploiting an open seam in the Jets' penalty kill.

Oh, and Brad Lambert's trade request became a hot-button issue.

Are we about to find out who the Jets really are — on and off the ice — as adversity strikes? Let's start our tear through the Jets' biggest news items of the week by explaining what's happening with Lambert.

Brad Lambert trade watch: What's really happening?

Frank Seravalli reported Thursday that the Jets gave Lambert's representation the green light to find a trade partner. The report caused quite a stir, understandably, given the 2022 first-round pick's status as one of Winnipeg's top prospects, and fans want to know what's really happening.

The first thing to understand is that Lambert's inclination to play elsewhere is not about a distaste for Winnipeg, the city or the organization. He recently scored his first NHL goal and has three points in 10 NHL games thus far in his career. There's no holdout, no refusal to sign a

contract: He's playing through the second year of the three-year entry-level contract (after two ELC slide years) and reported to the Moose when assigned to the AHL. Lambert played for Manitoba against Chicago on Thursday night.

The second thing to understand is that Lambert's request is not new. Winnipeg has played a veteran-heavy roster since drafting Lambert and winning the President's Trophy last season, as Lambert struggled in the AHL. Given that he turned 21 last December and scored 35 points in 61 AHL games last season, it's hard to fault the Jets for committing to their veterans during such a successful season. He's turning 22 next month and watched as the Jets signed veteran forwards Gustav Nyquist, Tanner Pearson and Cole Koepke. The team then played fellow prospects Parker Ford in 11 games and Nikita Chibrikov in eight, compared to Lambert's four, so it's not hard to blame Lambert for feeling a little impatient.

The third key item is that general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff values Lambert. The Jets have been aware of Lambert's NHL ambitions for 18 months or more. They have no interest in trading him to acquiesce to his request. Winnipeg has a ton of leverage, with Lambert being exempt from waivers through the end of next season.

There is zero impetus for Winnipeg to trade him, unless Cheveldayoff believes the trade makes the Jets better. I think some level of trade talks has taken place over the past couple of seasons, but never to Cheveldayoff's satisfaction because Lambert remains with the Jets organization.

Lambert wants to play in the NHL and for the Jets if at all possible. They aren't ready to provide that opportunity, and there's merit in that, based on the team's "win now" goals and Lambert's performance thus far.

What happens next?

Lambert needs to tear the cover off the ball in the AHL. It's been two years since he was an All-Star in that league, and he struggled last season. Top-six forward prospects need to be able to drive offence in that league — with or without a star-studded supporting cast — and no NHL team is going to trade for him if they don't see quality performance.

Meanwhile, the Jets will continue to listen to offers. They're a team with playoff ambitions and plenty of veterans, even with Hellebuyck hurt. Lambert (and draft capital) could be a route to an impact player at the trade deadline. The Jets were in on Brock Nelson last season, who the New York Islanders ultimately traded for a package involving Calum Ritchie and a first-round pick. A trade like that could be a model for Winnipeg this year. Sticking with New York, the Islanders' acquisition of Bo Horvat for prospect Aatu R  ty, Anthony Beauvillier and a first-round pick also seems comparable.

Another option would be to look for prospects in other organizations who might help the Jets further down the line, as Winnipeg did when acquiring Brayden Yager from Pittsburgh for Rutger McGroarty.

If no sensible offers come Winnipeg's way, nothing is stopping the Jets from holding on to Lambert until they feel he's ready for a full-time NHL job. He's not the first young player with the Jets or any club to want to play in the NHL so badly that his representation is willing to ask for a trade. Many of those players, including Logan Stanley, stay with their original club until they find a way to break through.

Nikolaj Ehlers' return: Do the Jets miss his speed?

The Jets are the NHL's oldest team, according to this study, and the NHL's second-slowest team, per this collection of NHL Edge data. Ehlers' return to Canada Life Centre was met with cheers, a smattering of boos during a Hurricanes power play and a standing ovation after his tribute video.

It was also a reminder of Winnipeg's lack of footspeed. Ehlers isn't alone on the Hurricanes in that regard. In fact, Hurricanes forward Seth Jarvis has an even faster top speed and a similar number of speed bursts, according to NHL Edge data. Carolina's Andrei Svechnikov and Eric Robinson are close behind, while half the roster has a top speed of over 22 miles per hour this season. Morgan Barron and Koepke are the only Jets who hit those speeds regularly, and they're not nearly the same threat to score.

The Ehlers ship has long sailed. He is only an example. Carolina's two-goal second-period dominance of the Jets included a 2-0 lead in goals and a 9-4 lead in shots, highlighting Winnipeg's track meet disadvantage. The Jets could overcome many of those problems by making faster decisions with the puck. One more good defenceman — a stopper who can also move the puck — would make a world of difference to Winnipeg's team speed.

Luke Schenn struggled badly in the Jets' zone again, unable to execute his breakouts as quickly as the Hurricanes could take his outlets away. Stanley struggled with him, making one first-period giveaway to Ehlers that harkened back to a joke Ehlers had made before the game.

"I think the first few shifts are gonna be, you know, just worry about passing to the right guy," he said.

The Jets' third pair used to crush its sheltered minutes. It was buried in its own zone Friday, badly outshot and outscored 1-0. Winnipeg reduced Schenn to two shifts in the third period (and Stanley to two), which coincided with the Jets' surge in transition offence.

Winnipeg's forwards can do a better job of puck management, but the difference between playing in front of D who make versus miss their breakout passes is the bigger issue.

Connor Hellebuyck's injury: What are the playoff implications?

This is how it's all supposed to fall apart, isn't it? The Jets, propped up by their Hart Trophy-winning goaltender, are supposed to crumble as their backup takes the reins? It's a school of thought you're familiar with, whether you subscribe to it or not.

Coach Scott Arniel emphasized after Friday's loss that Winnipeg's problems were not about its goaltender.

"We need to play better in front of him. A couple of mistakes we made are things that we need to clean up for him," Arniel said.

With the loss, Eric Comrie's record fell to 4-2-0 and his save percentage to .899 this season — almost identical to his career .898. If the Jets keep giving up 29.8 shots per game, the difference between Comrie and Hellebuyck's career numbers adds up to 12 extra goals against Winnipeg during that time frame. That kind of goal differential is worth roughly two and a half wins. Call it a five- or six-point swing.

That seems like it could be the difference between Winnipeg making (or missing) the playoffs. The Jets are 12-8-0 and hold the second wild-card spot in the Western Conference by virtue of owning the games played tiebreaker over Chicago.

Is it that big of a deal? The Athletic's playoff probability model says no.

Winnipeg's playoff odds fall from 83 percent with Hellebuyck in net to closer to 75 percent with him missing the next six weeks. You may have noticed that hockey is played on the ice and not on a spreadsheet, though. The key interpretation to make is that the Jets' road is (obviously) harder without Hellebuyck, but Arniel's old-school wisdom of "We need to play better in front of him" carries truth.

Winnipeg's team play will have a much bigger impact on its fortunes than the four to six weeks of Hellebuyck's absence. It was something the team already needed to fix. The Jets' share of shots and scoring chances has improved in the past two weeks, but from awful to near 50 percent. They still need to make progress in this regard, regardless of the goaltender, to be a true contender this season.

Who's next for the Jets to sign?

Comrie is a pending unrestricted free agent who has a huge opportunity to demonstrate his importance to the organization. A strong spell in Hellebuyck's absence would go a long way toward creating a sense of urgency from the Jets. There may also be interest in attending to Cole Perfetti's restricted free-agent contract. Neither are quite as pressing as Kyle Connor's or Lowry's were, nor are unrestricted free-agent contracts for whichever of Nyquist, Pearson, Koepke, Stanley, Colin Miller and Schenn the Jets are interested in retaining.

Jonathan Toews is likely a special case. There's a good reason for everyone involved to stay patient, but I'd expect there to be interest later in the year, assuming all has gone well.

The Jets also have a collection of minor-league free agents. Pending RFA Moose players include David Gustafsson, Jaret-Anderson Dolan, Tyrel Bauer and Isaac Poulter. Pending UFA Moose include Ville Heinola*, Kale Clague, Walker Duehr, Phillip Di Giuseppe, Samuel Fagemo* and Mason Shaw. Finally, the Jets still have Kristian Vesalainen's rights, but he will become a UFA next summer. (*Group VI UFAs)

If the Jets hit the accelerator on any of these deals, it will be Comrie or Perfetti, but I don't expect that to happen soon.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6825388/2025/11/21/connor-hellebuyck-injury-jets/>

Winnipeg Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck to undergo minor surgery, miss 4-6 weeks

By Murat Ates

Winnipeg Jets star goalie Connor Hellebuyck will miss four to six weeks to undergo a minor Arthroscopic knee procedure.

Hellebuyck went the distance during his last start, stopping 31-of-34 shots he faced against Calgary last Saturday. He also stopped all three shots he faced in the shootout, but has been dealing with a minor, nagging knee issue since training camp. The surgery will be performed on Saturday, Jets coach Scott Arniel said.

"It was just something that the timing is right. Get it done now," Arniel said. "We have a lot of schedule ahead of us. We sat down and talked to him, the medical staff, everybody, the agent, this was just the time to do it."

Hellebuyck, 32, has averaged 60 games played per season since emerging as the Jets' No. 1 goaltender in 2016-17. This is the first substantial injury he's faced in his NHL career — a remarkable run of longevity, with Hellebuyck's 556 games played leading all goaltenders during this time period.

"To put it plainly, it sucks," Jets captain Adam Lowry said. "You lose the Hart Trophy winner, the Vezina winner, the best goalie in the world for an extended period of time."

Hellebuyck has missed occasional games to illness — and one when his son was born — but that's the extent of his absences. Hellebuyck abruptly left one Jets practice at this year's training camp, telling reporters three days later that he'd gone to a chiropractor to help him with a rib that was out of place.

But this is uncharted territory for the 12-7-0 Jets, and it comes with high stakes. If Hellebuyck misses six weeks, he'll be sidelined for Winnipeg's next 20 games.

Eric Comrie will assume the starter's role during Hellebuyck's absence. Comrie, 30, has a 4-1-0 record in five starts this season, including Tuesday's 5-2 win against Columbus. His career high for games played is 20.

"We have all the confidence in the world in what Eric can do," Lowry said. "Coms has come in and he's had a stellar start to the year, he had a great year for us last year ... he's going to come in and give us a chance to win every night."

The Jets also recalled 22-year-old prospect Thomas Milic in time for Friday's morning skate. Milic has a 5-2-2 record in the AHL this season but has yet to play his first NHL game.

"We're talking about four to six weeks. I'm not sure Eric can go all of those games," Arniel said. "(Milic) is going to have to play. I don't know how we're going to lay the schedule out but it gets busy once we head out on the road."

Hellebuyck is Team USA's presumed starter at the 2026 Winter Olympics after playing three of four games for the Americans at the 4 Nations Face-off. His four- to six-week return timeline places his comeback at the end of December, potentially leaving Olympic participation on the table.

The Jets hold a playoff spot by virtue of a tiebreaker, having achieved 24 points in fewer games than Chicago and Los Angeles — who hold the Western Conference wild-card spots — and Minnesota, who is on the outside looking in.

Hellebuyck is tied for eighth with 14 games played so far this season, after sharing the league lead with Andrei Vasilevskiy in 2024-25 — a season in which Hellebuyck won his first Hart Trophy, second William Jennings Trophy and third Vezina Trophy. He's a Tier 1, "world class" goalie in Jessie Granger's goalie tiers and the top goalie in the NHL Player Tiers (in the "franchise" category).

His numbers are down slightly this season, with his save percentage falling from a career-high .925 in 2024-25 to .913 so far this year, but he's still among the league leaders in goals saved above expected (GSAx).

He's in the second year of a seven-year, \$59.5 million contract extension.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/23/jets-mailbag-ironing-out-the-crease-the-defensive-corps-and-new-additions-on-readers-minds>

Jets mailbag: Ironing out the crease, the defensive corps and new additions on readers' minds

By: Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe

The Winnipeg Jets have hit the quarter mark of the NHL season and find themselves right in the thick of a heated playoff race involving pretty much every other Western Conference team.

Other than the Colorado Avalanche, nobody is threatening lap the field. That's upped the urgency for every game and created plenty of angst around here for fans who — let's be honest — got a bit spoiled by last year's incredible 15-1-0 start out of the gate.

It's also resulted in plenty of questions surrounding the state of the team. Are they spinning their tires? In danger of crashing? Is there another gear or two they can find?

Free Press hockey writers Ken Wiebe and Mike McIntyre have the answers in the latest edition of our monthly Jets mailbag.

1. How will the Jets divide the games in net while Connor Hellebuyck is out? **LEE**

WIEBE: Barring something unforeseen, Eric Comrie will carry the bulk of the load while Hellebuyck recovers from the knee issue that required arthroscopic surgery on Saturday.

Comrie has worked extremely hard after his return to the Jets and is prepared for this close up. But with the Jets facing a pair of back-to-back scenarios during the next two weeks, all signs point to Thomas Milic (who was recalled from the American Hockey League after an outstanding start with the Manitoba Moose that includes a .921 save percentage and 2.21 goals-against average in nine games) making his NHL debut on Saturday against the Nashville Predators.

Milic should also get one of the games the following weekend against either the Buffalo Sabres on Friday or the Edmonton Oilers on Saturday.

Milic, who was chosen by the Jets in the fifth round of the 2023 NHL Draft (as a 20-year-old), is someone the organization believes in. So, getting this unexpected look at him, no matter how many starts Milic makes, could prove to have some benefits.

It's also possible the Jets look for someone with a little more experience, given the timeline for Hellebuyck's return. Comrie has never made more than 20 appearances (and 18 starts) at the NHL level, but he carried a heavy workload during four of his seasons with the Moose. In a

relatively small sample size this season, Comrie has been steady, going 4-2 with a .899 save percentage and 2.60 goals-against average in six starts going into Sunday's game with the Minnesota Wild.

This is a stiff test for both the Jets and the goalies they will roll out during Hellebuyck's absence. Depending on the recovery, Hellebuyck could miss between 14 and 20 games. It's up to Comrie and Milic to show they can handle the increased responsibilities, otherwise Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff may have to scour the market for another option — even if it's a temporary solution.

2. I was wondering why Colin Miller hasn't played much this season. Any ideas?
JUDY

MCINTYRE: You aren't the only one with that question, Judy. In our game-day Warm-Up newsletter, I've pondered that topic myself at least a handful of times already this year.

It would be one thing if the six defencemen in the lineup were playing so well that you simply couldn't make a move. But that's not the case.

I'm looking at you, Luke Schenn — a guy who happens to play the exact same spot (third pairing, right-shot) that Miller would otherwise slot into. Schenn, 36, is really struggling, with his lack of mobility and foot speed really being exposed.

Whether you're using the so-called "eye test" or the underlying analytics, there's no way to sugar-coat it. Yet clearly the coaching staff is seeing something different as they keep rolling Schenn out, with him appearing in 16 of the first 20 games (at least a couple of his four absences were injury-related).

Miller, meanwhile, has played in just five contests. Unfortunately for Miller, he hasn't exactly made a compelling case himself, with plenty of rough patches in that rather short sample size.

At the very least, I'd like to see more of a rotation happening — especially with Dylan Samberg now back from injury, pushing Logan Stanley down to the third pair. I don't think Stanley-Schenn is a viable NHL tandem, especially when the Jets are on the road and can't control last change.

There's still a spot for Schenn on this roster, I believe. He's a Stanley Cup winner, oozes character and brings physicality to the lineup. But I think the ship has sailed on him being a regular.

I do wonder, once Haydn Fleury is cleared from concussion protocol, if we might see him given a look on the right-side (he's a left-shot) with Stanley. At this point, I think it's worth a shot.

3. If you were head coach Scott Arniel, after 20 games, how concerned are you about the production of Jonathan Toews and Gustav Nyquist? Do you foresee one or both of them being key cogs on a productive second line for the Jets in the second half of the season?
CRAIG

WIEBE: I don't think concerned is a word Arniel would use yet, nor would I.

There were definitely questions surrounding the level of production that Toews and Nyquist would supply, for different reasons entirely. Toews' journey back to health meant he went two-

and-a-half years between NHL games, so it stands to reason that the first quarter of being back in the league would include a few challenges.

The Winnipegger got off to a decent start and it's important to remember his value to the Jets stretches beyond the traditional stat line (which currently sits at two goals and eight points in 20 games). However, Toews' production has flattened out, as he's been limited to one goal during his past eight games, despite generating some chances for himself and his linemates.

Right now, he's on pace for somewhere in the neighbourhood of 30-to-32 points. Toews has shown his hockey intelligence on numerous occasions and he's among the league leaders in faceoff percentage (63 per cent) and there's no doubt he's having a positive influence in the room. I expect him to produce at a higher level during this second quarter and for him to be at his best when the games are the toughest. Reaching 40 points won't surprise me.

Nyquist is an interesting study. Just when it looked like he was putting a slow start behind him, he was sidelined by a lower-body injury. Since then, he's got one assist to move him to six assists in 15 games while still searching for his first goal.

The Jets were banking on Nyquist producing more on this one-year, show-me contract and they're not ready to come to the conclusion that he can't — or won't. But there's going to need to be a sharp uptick in his game for him to grow into a key cog on the second line in the second half of the season. At this point, he could be hard-pressed to eclipse the 11 goals and 28 points he recorded with the Nashville Predators and Wild last season.

4. When do the Jets finally give up and call up Elias Salomonsson and get him some NHL experience? I can't see them getting any further in the playoffs unless Josh Morrissey has a more physical partner (Salomonsson or a deadline pickup) and Dylan Demelo anchoring a third pairing with hopefully, a deadline pickup or Salomonsson. I'm ready to put any or all of Colin Miller, Luke Schenn or Haydn Fleury on waivers to make room and keep Logan Stanley as the 7th guy. I'm betting at least 2 out of the 3 would clear waivers.

ROB

MCINTYRE: Count me among those who would love to see Salomonsson get a bit of a look in the coming weeks. As I mentioned in my answer above, Schenn isn't moving the needle at all, nor is Miller at this stage.

Why not give your top blue-line prospect, who by all accounts is off to another strong start with the Moose, a bit of a test run?

You've actually identified the most obvious answer at the end of your question — waivers. I suspect that with eight healthy defencemen (once Fleury is cleared from concussion protocol), the team is reluctant to try to send anyone down for fear of losing potential depth.

Don't forget, they've been burned a couple times before with Johnny Kovacevic and Declan Chisholm. Of course, those were drafted and developed young skaters and not veterans like Miller, Schenn or Fleury.

Bottom line: I'm not holding my breath waiting for this to happen, even though I think it would be worthwhile. Until and unless the injury bug hits the back-end in a bigger way than we've seen so far, Salomonsson is likely going to have to keep biding his time on the farm.

5. In your estimation, which Jets receive high grades for the first quarter of the season? And which ones need to step up their game?

ED

WIEBE: The highest individual grades for the first quarter belong to defenceman Josh Morrissey (riding a seven-game point streak and up to 22 points in 20 games), centre Mark Scheifele and left-winger Kyle Connor, while Connor Hellebuyck was playing at a level that had him right in the middle of the Vezina Trophy discussion while playing through some discomfort with his knee.

Winger Gabe Vilardi was limited to four assists in his first nine games, but is flirting with being a point-per-game player and is up to eight goals after scoring twice on Friday against the Carolina Hurricanes.

Defenceman Neal Pionk took on expanded minutes in the absence of Dylan Samberg and has steadied himself since Samberg returned as his partner.

Cole Perfetti was limited to six games in the first quarter and deserves some additional grace as he works himself back up to speed after dealing with an ankle injury, but the Jets need more from the second line and Perfetti has the potential to drive the line and be the primary shooter on it.

The Jets will also be looking for both Luke Schenn and Colin Miller to raise their level on the third defence pairing.

6. Are Macklin Celebrini and Connor Bedard playing well enough to squeeze Mark Scheifele off the team Canada Olympic roster?

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MCINTYRE: No question the two first-overall picks are taking the league by storm this season, proving the future really is now.

If I'm Team Canada brass, I'm absolutely taking a long hard look at bringing one, if not both, players to Italy.

Here's the thing, though: Would it necessarily be at the expense of someone like Scheifele? I'm not so sure.

If Celebrini and/or Bedard are going to play, I'd think a top six role would have to be the plan. I don't see either, at this young stage of their career, adapting nearly as well to a bottom-six type assignment which might require them to check a lot more than they're used to.

I suppose we can debate if Scheifele would be up for that task, but he's made significant strides in his defensive game over the years and has even shown a willingness to move to the wing if needed. And I think if Scheifele is on the roster, he's most certainly going to be cast in a bottom-six role on this loaded team.

No question Team Canada has one of those "good problems" right now — so many talented, deserving players, and only so many spots — which is likely keeping the decision makers tossing and turning.

These next few weeks, leading up to the rosters being finalized at the end of December, are going to be fascinating.

7. Morgan Barron is my favourite Jet and I'd love to see him with more ice time. He drives the fourth line, but what if he and Vlad Namestnikov trade places? Do you think the second line would be more effective?

RODGER

WIEBE: Frequent mailbag readers and question askers understand that I'm in favour of increased responsibilities for Barron, even if it means shifting him back to the wing from centre, where he has excelled since the decision was made late last season.

Namestnikov got off to an excellent start this season, posting six goals and seven points in relatively short order. He's now gone eight games without recording a point, so the timing could be right for a change like the one you proposed.

Namestnikov is someone who has consistently shown he can play anywhere in the lineup and he won't change his style. Moving him back to the middle on the fourth line would provide an interesting look with some combination of Alex Iafallo, Cole Koepke or Tanner Pearson.

As for Barron, his speed and tenacity would likely mesh well with Jonathan Toews and Cole Perfetti. Barron is someone I've mentioned as a possible linemate for Lowry down the road as well, but giving him a test drive with Toews and Perfetti is something that should take priority.

Barron's potential to be a guy who scores 15-plus goals has been on display already this season and increasing his ice time could help him take the next step in his development.

8. How do the Jets centres rate percentage wise in winning faceoffs?

SHELDON

MCINTYRE: Let's start with the big picture: As a team, Winnipeg sat tied for sixth-overall in faceoff winning percentage as of Saturday, with a 52.9 per cent efficiency in the dot.

Last year, they were 49.3 per cent, which was 21st. The year prior, 47.6 per cent, for 24th.

What changed? The arrival of a certain 37-year-old three-time Stanley Cup champion who already has a community club and a lake named after him in this province.

Jonathan Toews is winning 63 per cent of his draws so far this year, which is second best among all NHL players. (Ottawa's Claude Giroux leads the way).

But it's not simply a one-man show for the Jets. Morgan Barron (53.3 per cent) and Mark Scheifele (50.5 per cent) are also getting their team the puck more often than not, while Adam Lowry (49.5 per cent through his eight games) is pretty much a coin flip as well.

Those are now the four centres on the team, with Parker Ford (44.6 per cent, back with the Manitoba Moose) and Vlad Namestnikov (36.7 per cent, back on the wing) filling in earlier this season but not having the same success.

You can debate how important faceoffs are — some pundits put very little stock on them, while I personally think puck possession is the name of the game, especially in key moments such as a

defensive zone draw on the penalty kill or an offensive zone faceoff on the power play or chasing a game late — but the Jets are more than holding their own this year.

9. With his recent signing, would you agree that naming Adam Lowry as captain, in the wake of Paul Maurice's departure and the removal of the captaincy for Blake Wheeler, was possibly the most crucial moment in Jets 2.0 existence?

IAN

WIEBE: Well, there's no doubt that the decision made by then head coach Rick Bowness was a monumental one. As for the most crucial moment in the franchise's existence, it makes for interesting debate.

Lowry's ascension to captain after being the second player drafted in Jets' 2.0 history is a remarkable story and that he's decided to be the latest player in line to spend his entire career with the organization is noteworthy and impressive.

Lowry's rugged, throwback style has made him a fan favourite and his inclusive and accountable nature has allowed him to thrive as a leader and in many ways, as the face of the franchise. The decision to make Lowry captain has been in the middle of the Jets' revival back into contender status, there's no argument here.

The impact of that decision should be felt throughout these next six seasons — likely enhancing its importance and strengthening your case.

But in terms of most crucial moments in the 15-year history of the franchise, signing top centre Mark Scheifele and All-World goalie Connor Hellebuyck to matching seven-year extensions in October of 2023 has to be right up there. The emergence of fellow homegrown talents, defenceman Josh Morrissey and Kyle Connor, as bona fide NHL stars is also on the podium.

And while things didn't end up the way either side envisioned, the Jets choosing Patrik Laine second overall in 2016 after moving up in the NHL Draft lottery is a moment that won't soon be forgotten, given the way those first several seasons went and with what the trade tree has since yielded.

10. I am always frustrated by your references to Winnipeg as a "challenging" destination for NHL players. How is Winnipeg different from other cold smallish hockey towns, like Edmonton, or Ottawa, or Minneapolis, or Buffalo? Would you want to live in Detroit or St. Louis, or even Columbus or Raleigh? What do you think can be done, if anything?

VALERIE

MCINTYRE: This would be a case of "don't shoot the messenger." I'm simply reporting what players (and agents) around the league have said through plenty of anonymous surveys, not to mention stipulations of various contracts.

The cold, hard truth is that Winnipeg isn't, and probably never will be, a prime destination. However, one thing is clear, and it's something I've gone to great lengths to write about in recent years: The players who do find their way here, whether that's through the draft, trade or free agency, tend to fall in love with the place.

For the most recent example, see the sit-down chat I did with Dylan DeMelo a few weeks ago. Just like you, Valerie, he also got his back up a bit over Winnipeg's perception around the league.

To your question of what can be done, building a Stanley Cup champion wouldn't hurt the case. That's a pretty good selling feature. So is having a team in "win now" mode with plenty of cap space and a rock-solid core of foundational pieces such as Connor Hellebuyck, Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor and Adam Lowry — all of whom are likely going to be Jets for life.

True North does have a reputation of going above and beyond for its players, something I've heard often from those who have left here and found the grass maybe wasn't as green in another market as they expected.

Bottom line: Winnipeg is always going to have its challenges. We are a small market by NHL standards and the winter weather is what it is. Those are things nobody can control.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/22/back-up-plan-good-for-comrie>

Back up plan good for Comrie

Winnipeg Jets goalie won't be making many changes as he takes over top role

By: Mike McIntyre

Eric Comrie knew the day was coming. He wasn't sure exactly when, but at some point Connor Hellebuyck was going to take a timeout on his season.

And so the Winnipeg Jets backup goaltender stayed ready, waiting for the moment when the pain got too much and the reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy shut things down in order to undergo arthroscopic knee surgery.

"He was trying to play through it. He's a tough guy," Comrie said Saturday of Hellebuyck's ailment, which first cropped up during training camp in September and was getting persistently worse over time

"He's trying to give everything this team he could, give everything he can to the city."

The decision was finally made this week, vaulting Comrie into the No. 1 spot for what is expected to be a four-to-six week recovery for Hellebuyck.

"He's never dealt with an injury before in his whole career, pretty much. Knock on wood, he gets no more," said Comrie.

"He's unbelievable. I hope his recovery goes along smoothly. It just shows you how good of a goalie he is. He can adjust his game and still play that good, considering how he was feeling."

Comrie, 30, is embracing his new lead role, which began with a tough 4-3 loss on Friday night the visiting Carolina Hurricanes. He'll be back between the pipes on Sunday afternoon as the Jets close out a three-game homestand against the Minnesota Wild.

"I'm just treating it as any other game. Like, just the same thing as if I'm backing up," Comrie said of his mindset.

“Just go out there and play my game. Today, I worked hard at practice making sure I got my work in, and tomorrow, go out there and do the best I can for this team and get the best I can for myself. That’s all I can do at the end of the day.”

Comrie has never made more than 20 appearances in a season but is likely to now blow by that number by Christmas. He’s notorious for staying on the ice late after practice to work with players — that’s the usual role of an understudy — but may have to tinker his workload now that he’s going to be pressed into more duty than ever.

“For sure, there’s definitely some different load management things you have to do,” he said.

There’s also a different mentality of taking the net every other night, rather than waiting a week or longer between starts. You don’t have nearly as much time to agonize over every little mistake — such as giving up the first goal on the first shot of the game by Carolina’s Jordan Staal just 16 seconds into the opening period.

“Flats (Flaherty) goes ‘Oh man, first shot of the game, I was a little worried.’ Like, I’ve been scored on the first shot of the game many times before. And you know what? It’s going to happen again,” Comrie said, noting a younger version of himself likely wouldn’t have handled adversity quite as well.

“It’s just the way things happen in this game of hockey. I just go out there and play my game. I’m gonna go out there, put the best foot forward, work as hard as I can every single day and just try to achieve success. I’m going to lay it all out because I love these guys. I’m gonna do everything I can to win for these guys.”

The feeling is mutual, and the Jets know they need to be hyper-focused on their attention to defensive detail and systemic structure to help weather the storm of not having Hellebuyck around. In that sense, the Carolina game was a solid first step as the Jets surrendered just one high-danger scoring chance all night at even strength.

“We played really strong against arguably one of the best teams, if not the best team in the league,” said Comrie.

“We could have won that game as and you can see over the last week here, we’ve been giving up a lot less chances. We played very good in our own end and limiting chance. I think we understand the more chances we limit, the more opportunity we’re going to have.”

Meanwhile, Hellebuyck’s injury has opened another door for Thomas Milic — the third-year pro who has been patiently working on his craft at both the ECHL and AHL levels since the Jets drafted him in the fifth round, 151st-overall, back in 2023.

The 22-year-old is, for now, the No. 2 man in the organizational pecking order. Unlike Comrie, he wasn’t aware the winds of change were going to start blowing with the big club.

“It was super special, right after our game the other night with the Moose, getting called into the coach’s office and hearing the news then,” said Milic. “It was a shock, but I am excited and I couldn’t stop myself from smiling. I am trying to stay grounded and enjoy every second.”

Making his NHL debut is no longer just the stuff of dreams. It's very likely to happen, perhaps as soon as next Saturday in Nashville when the Jets will be playing for a second straight night and Comrie will likely need a breather.

"Obviously, with a condensed schedule, it is a lot of games in a short amount of time. Comrie is going to hold down the fort, but I will be ready when I get my chance and I am just excited for it," said Milic.

Does that mean family and friends back in British Columbia have a bag packed and at the ready for a "I'm going to be playing" phone call?

"I'm trying not to jump the gun here. Taking it one day at a time and deal with that when it happens," he said.

Milic is off to a terrific start to this season, with a 2.14 goals-against-average and .921 save percentage over nine games with the Moose. The former Western Hockey League goaltender of the year, who went to the Memorial Cup with the Seattle Thunderbirds in his final junior season, said he's ready for the next big challenge.

"I'm just growing and maturing as a person and as a goaltender," he said. "No matter what level I have been playing at the last couple of years, I have learned a lot."

EXTRA, EXTRA – Top centre and leading scorer Mark Scheifele was missing from Saturday's practice at Hockey For All Centre but there's apparently no cause for concern: The team says it was just for routine maintenance and he's expected to be in the lineup against the Wild.

Along with Hellebuyck — who had his surgery on Saturday — depth defenceman Haydn Fleury was the only other player to not hit the ice. He's currently in concussion protocol and suffered a setback earlier this week. There is no timeline for his return.

Minnesota is coming in hot, having beaten the Pittsburgh Penguins 5-0 on Friday night. They currently occupy third place in the Central Division, two points ahead of the Jets, although Winnipeg owns two games in hand.

"There's no easy nights in the NHL. We got a bit of a lesson last night from Carolina, a team I'm very familiar with. They play a hard game, they play a fast game. They have a pressure style and we took a little while to adjust to that," said assistant coach Dean Chynoweth.

"It's a bit of a copycat league, too, when you're doing pre-scouts and watching other teams and you're trying to pick apart the other team with where we can benefit from, and teams are doing that to us. So I won't be surprised about (Minnesota) coming out extremely hard. Obviously it's a division game that we need."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/21/mistakes-costly-as-jets-fall-to-hurricanes>

***Mistakes costly as Jets fall to Hurricanes
Ehlers sets up game-winning goal on first visit to Winnipeg***

By: Mike McIntyre

With or without Connor Hellebuyck, the Winnipeg Jets were always going to be facing a tough test in the Carolina Hurricanes.

Taking on one of the NHL's top teams without the reigning Hart and Vezina trophy winner didn't help the cause Friday night in hard-fought 4-3 loss in front of a sold-out crowd at Canada Life Centre.

Jets goaltender Eric Comrie, who is going to have to hold down the crease for the next four-to-six weeks while Hellebuyck is recovering from arthroscopic knee surgery, stopped 24 of 28 shots he faced.

His debut as the main masked man got off to a rough start, with Carolina captain Jordan Staal beating him on the first shot of the game just 16 seconds into the opening period.

"I felt for him right away," said Jets coach Scott Arniel. "But then he settled in. He made some big stops. I thought he was rock-solid. He was his consistent self."

After Josh Morrissey and Gabe Vilardi responded later in the frame to give the Jets a 2-1 advantage, the Hurricanes stormed back with three consecutive goals to seize control.

Staal struck again early in the second, and then Winnipegger Seth Jarvis gave Carolina the lead for good a few minutes later with a shorthanded snipe. Sebastian Aho was originally stopped by Comrie on a breakaway before Jarvis buried the rebound.

The dagger came early in the third as Nikolaj Ehlers — returning to Winnipeg for the first time since signing a lucrative free agent deal with Carolina last summer — made a beautiful cross-ice feed to Andrei Svechnikov who buried the one-timer with his team on the power play.

That would prove to be the game-winner after Vilardi notched his second of the night with just over 15 minutes left in regulation, triggering a frantic Winnipeg push that couldn't lead to the equalizer.

"I don't know if it's what they did, I think it's more about what we didn't do," Vilardi said.

"I think we know they play an aggressive style. We knew that coming in, obviously. I think we made a few too many mistakes at our blue line, at their blue line, just kind of feeding their transition."

Hurricanes netminder Brandon Bussi looked shaky early on but really settled in, turning aside 24 shots.

"I thought that was a very winnable game for us. We just couldn't find that next one," said defenceman Dylan DeMelo.

The Jets had their modest two-game winning streak snapped and hit the 20-game mark with a 12-8-0 record. Carolina improves to 14-5-2 which has them on top of the Eastern Conference and trailing only the scorching hot Colorado Avalanche (14-1-5) for top spot in the NHL.

DANDY DANE: Ehlers admitted the 695th regular-season game of his career was going to bring about a wave of emotions. That's because he was facing the team he spent the first 674 with for the first time.

"Exciting, and definitely one that I was looking forward to. But also getting a little nervous here," the flashy new Hurricanes winger said prior to puck drop.

"I think the first few shifts are gonna be, you know, just worry about passing to the right guy."

Ehlers only passed the puck to a former teammate once — he was credited with a single giveaway — while finishing the game with one assist in 17:36 of action, with seven shot attempts (one on goal) and zero fights — something he'd joked about following the morning skate with regards to Jets defenceman Neal Pionk.

"He texted me the other night and asked me if I wanted my first fight in a 'Canes jersey? So, I told him that it would be your first in the NHL," said Ehlers.

The pride of Denmark cracked a big smile when, during the Star Spangled Banner, he was shown on the scoreboard and the crowd broke into a huge applause. And he was clearly moved during a TV timeout in the first intermission, as a video tribute was followed by a standing ovation.

Ehlers came within inches of a goal in the first period, his shot seemingly destined for the back of the net before DeMelo swatted it out of mid-air.

After a slow start offensively, Ehlers has chipped in at least a point in nine of the past 10 games and he's up to 14 points (4G, 10A) in 21 contests.

The Jets will visit Raleigh next Friday to wrap up the season series.

DEFENSIVE DETAIL: One thing the Jets were adamant about is the need to get back to their bread-and-butter — which is playing strong team defence.

That's been absent through large stretches of the young season, not helped by the fact several key players such as Adam Lowry, Dylan Samberg and Cole Perfetti have all missed significant time with injuries.

"It's important that we continue to try to improve in the areas that (during) the last few weeks I think we have," said Lowry. "That's defence, that's the chances we are giving up, neutralizing the rush, if we can play better defensively in front and then we can make Com's job more easier for him then we can kind of continue climbing the standings."

So how did they do in this one?

Fairly well — even if the final score may not have shown it. According to Natural Stat Trick, the Jets gave up just one high-danger chance at even strength all night, while generating 10 of their own. (All situations including special teams were 11-4 for Winnipeg).

That's pretty stingy, the kind of performance that is going to win you a lot more games than you'll lose over the long haul.

"I think our compete was there for the most part," said DeMelo.

"We had chances, second chances, rebounds, we were going to the net. Obviously some really good plays off the rush, some really good looks, you know? I think that third period, we didn't spend too much time in our D zone. So there was a lot of good there and stuff that we can, we can work on, for sure."

KEY PLAY: Svechnikov's power play goal proved to be the difference.

THREE STARS :

1. Hurricanes, Jordan Staal: 2G
2. Jets, Gabe Vilardi: 2G
3. Hurricanes, Sebastian Aho: 2A

EXTRA, EXTRA: The Jets made one lineup change, with forward Cole Koepke replacing Tanner Pearson on the fourth line. Defenceman Colin Miller was the other healthy scratch, while defenceman Haydn Fleury (concussion protocol) is the only other players besides Hellebuyck currently sidelined.

The crowd of 15,225 was Winnipeg's second full house of the season — but the first since opening night against the Dallas Stars.

Winnipeg is now 6-4-0 on home ice after losing seven regulation games out of their 41 last year.

The Jets will wrap up this three-game stint in their own backyard by hosting the Minnesota Wild on Sunday afternoon.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/21/i-want-to-finish-my-whole-career-here>

***'I want to finish my whole career here'
Jets' Lowry honoured to continue representing' great community'***

By: Ken Wiebe and Mike McIntyre

Adam Lowry isn't someone who enjoys hypotheticals, he prefers to deal in absolutes.

Earlier this week, the Winnipeg Jets captain was fielding questions from a group of young hockey players from St. John's-Ravenscourt when he was on the receiving end of one that could have caught someone else off guard.

If you weren't on the Jets, what team would you want to play for?

Lowry took a brief moment and kind of chuckled before explaining that if — and only if — playing for the Jets wasn't an option, his hometown Calgary Flames were a team that would be at the top of his list.

Lowry was quick to reiterate at the end of his answer that remaining with the Jets was his No. 1 option and, on Wednesday, he took the necessary steps to ensure that he wouldn't be seeking a new team or becoming an unrestricted free agent on July 1.

By inking a five-year extension that carries an annual-annual value of US\$5 million and total value of US\$25 million, Lowry became the latest member of the Jets core group to make another long-term commitment.

For both sides, this seemed like a matter of when — not if — they would find middle ground. But that didn't make the end result any less significant.

"I've had the privilege of playing here my whole career and I want to finish my whole career here," Lowry said on Friday morning before the Jets faced the Carolina Hurricanes. "It's hard to put into words, it's truly special. Winnipeg is a great community, Manitoba is a great province, so to have that support, to get to represent the city, it's truly an honour. I think if you ask anyone in here, playing in Winnipeg is special. The fans and the community is what makes it special."

That Lowry spoke highly of the organization that made him the second draft pick in 2.0 franchise history was intentional, but this wasn't hollow praise either.

"I've had the privilege of playing here my whole career and I want to finish my whole career here."

If he didn't feel this way, he had the ability to take his puck and go home — or to any of the other 30 NHL teams that were interested in his services on the open market. Instead, Lowry made the choice to invest further in a franchise that he's put a whole lot of sweat equity into since being chosen in the third round, 67th overall, of the 2011 NHL draft.

Make no mistake, this was a two-way street.

"They were very fair in negotiations and we both approached it from a standpoint that we wanted to get something done. They wanted to keep me and I wanted to stay," said Lowry. "It's not something that's lost on me to get the chance to play for one organization for your entire career."

The Jets value everything Lowry does, both on the ice as a physical, shutdown centre that can chip in offensively and off it, as someone who leads by example and is the epitome of a captain, not to mention a pillar in the community.

Lowry, who will be 33 when the new contract kicks in, fits perfectly in Winnipeg and Manitoba has proven to be an equally good fit for him.

"The biggest thing is he's earned everything he's gotten," said Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey. "Nothing was handed to him. He's done it the right way, every single day, all through that period of time. For him to get that contract you're just absolutely excited for him. He's earned it, he deserves it."

“Obviously for our group, to have our captain here day in and day out, it’s huge for the team, it’s huge for the city. It’s going to be great to see him be a Jet here for a very long time.”

Lowry joins Mark Scheifele, Connor Hellebuyck and Kyle Connor as homegrown players committed for at least five seasons after this one, with Morrissey on track to join that group with an extension of his own before he becomes a UFA in the summer of 2028.

“He’s earned everything he’s gotten.”

That’s the type of commitment that brings a smile to the face of head coach Scott Arniel.

“To see those guys wanting to finish their careers here, it’s really good for our organization. It’s good for us as a hockey team. It helps us to continue to be constant and consistent and just to move forward,” said Arniel. “Obviously, he has been around hockey his whole life and he helps me, he helps the coaching staff. He can be very emotional but he can be calm and recognize when our group needs to take a deep breath. The leadership side has grown and sometimes you get pressure being a captain, you think you have to do too much, but the best part is that he has gone out and led on the ice with his play and then the off the ice stuff has been tremendous.”

It’s impossible to overstate the importance of Lowry to stick around with this group, as there isn’t another player in the organization that does what he does — or does it quite as effectively.

He’s a high-character player that has been at the epicentre of the Jets rise back up to contender status.

Whether that’s his inclusive style of leadership, his ability to throw thundering checks or to drop the gloves when necessary to stand up for a teammate or his penchant for scoring important goals in the post-season — like his Game 7 overtime winner against the St. Louis Blues last spring, Lowry does it all.

Being able to drive play while handling most of the toughest defensive matchups against the most skilled players in the NHL is no easy task.

In many ways, he’s grown into one of the faces of the franchise and that’s a responsibility he also takes seriously.

The decision by then head coach Rick Bowness to name Lowry captain has ended up being a touchstone in the Jets’ rise back to contender status.

“Generally, I look at a lot of the captains around the league and they’re all great leaders. In our room, we have a lot of guys that could easily be wearing the C. When that came to fruition a couple of years ago, it was one of those things where it was very humbling and it wasn’t something that I expected,” said Lowry, who was asked if he ever envisioned being an NHL captain. “It’s something I am super proud to do. Looking back, I definitely don’t think that I could have expected to be wearing the C in the NHL or to have the career I’ve had so far.”

Lowry will skate in his 783rd regular-season game on Friday and seems destined to reach 1,000-plus in a Jets’ uniform.

But there is ample ground to cover before he reaches that milestone.

For the time being, the focus goes back to chasing Lord Stanley's mug and if Lowry didn't feel that was a legitimate possibility before the end of this next deal, he wouldn't have signed it.

AROUND THE GLASS

A report surfaced on Thursday from NHL insider Frank Seravalli that the Jets have given permission to the representatives for forward prospect Brad Lambert to seek a trade partner.

Lambert, the 30th overall pick in the 2022 NHL draft, was reassigned to the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League and had one goal — his first in the NHL — in four games with the Jets this season.

The speedy forward is someone who likely believes that he's ready to be an NHL player, but there isn't really a spot available for him in the middle-six at this time, which is how the two sides arrived at this impasse.

The Jets aren't far removed from defenceman Logan Stanley expressing similar frustration and he's now solidified his spot on the third pairing as an NHL regular, so it's possible the situation can be salvaged.

"Lambert is a good, young prospect for us and until something happens I still feel that he is going to be a Jet," said Arniel. "I have said this before about young players we are trying to make them 10, 12, 15 year vets. We want them to be a part of it and we are trying to teach them and bring them along as best as we feel we can.

"We have a veteran group right now and for those three guys, they were all disappointed when they went down and having to tell them the other day they were all disappointed and I understand his disappointment."

"They have decisions with their agents and wherever they handle stuff. But for me I think we will let it play out and hopefully (Lambert) is here and he gets a chance to play for the Winnipeg Jets," Arniel added.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/21/jets-hellebuyck-sidelined-with-knee-issue>

Jets' Hellebuyck sidelined with knee issue

Club's starting goaltender to be out 4-6 weeks after receiving arthroscopic surgery

By: Mike McIntyre

One of Connor Hellebuyck's greatest abilities over the course of his incredible 11-season NHL career has been his durability. The NHL's top workhorse simply never breaks down.

So you can imagine the shock throughout the Winnipeg Jets room on Friday when they learned the league's reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner was going to be sidelined for the next four-to-six weeks with a knee injury.

"To put it plainly, it sucks," said captain Adam Lowry.

Hellebuyck will undergo arthroscopic surgery on Saturday. The medical procedure is meant to clean up an issue that has been bothering the star goaltender since training camp.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel said the decision to shut Hellebuyck down now was reached after extensive consultation and deliberation.

"He was trying to play through it. He'd have good days, bad days. Just sometimes the timing's right, get it done now," said Arniel. "We have a lot of schedule ahead of us. I was really just thinking, sat down and talked to him, obviously medical staff, everybody, the agent... This was the time to do it."

Hellebuyck, 32, has made 14 starts this year, going 8-6-0 with a 2.51 goals-against average and a .913 save percentage. His last appearance was on Saturday in Calgary as the Jets skated to a 4-3 shootout victory.

"We've been really fortunate to have Helly be healthy and available. His durability is something to marvel at. Obviously now without him, you can't replace a guy like that," said defenceman Josh Morrissey.

It's now Eric Comrie's net. The 30-year-old made his sixth start of the season on Friday night against Carolina and has the crease for the foreseeable future. He was 4-1-0 with a 2.60 GAA and .908 SV% in his first five appearances.

"I have all the confidence in the world in him," said Morrissey. "Everyone in the room loves Coms. He's a great goalie. The league probably doesn't see it a lot. He's going to get that opportunity here to show his stuff."

Based on the projected timeline, Hellebuyck could miss anywhere from 14 to 19 games. Comrie has never appeared in more than 20 games in a season, which he did last year in Winnipeg.

The timing means Hellebuyck should be ready well before the Winter Olympics, where he's expected to be the No. 1 man for the American team in Italy.

"Obviously, the Olympics were part of (the considerations)," said Arniel.

"But we are worried about April, May and June. The date had more to do with the last week or so because it has been bothering him a lot more. He is sore after games and he didn't practice for a couple of days. It has been building a bit more and it wasn't going to get any easier for him. I know he would love to just keep playing. It is about him getting healthy for that second half and the big run."

Lowry said the Jets must stay true to their defensive discipline and detail which has led them to two straight William Jennings trophies as the NHL's stingiest squad.

"It's important that we continue to try to improve in the areas that the last few weeks I think we have," said Lowry.

"That's defence, that's the chances we are giving up, neutralizing the rush, if we can play better defensively in front and then we can make Coms' job more easier for him then we can kind of continue climbing the standings."

Helping to offset the loss of Hellebuyck is the fact the Jets have recently returned to being near full health. Lowry, shutdown defenceman Dylan Samberg and scoring winger Cole Perfetti were all injured at the beginning of the year, and forwards Morgan Barron, Gustav Nyquist and Cole Koepke have also missed games due to various hurts.

Depth defenceman Haydn Fleury (concussion protocol) is the only other player currently on the injured list, and he's getting closer to a return.

The Jets have called up Thomas Milic from the Manitoba Moose to serve as Comrie's backup. The 22-year-old is in his third pro season but has yet to play an NHL game. He is 5-2-2 with a 2.14 GAA and .921 SV% in nine AHL games this year.

Winnipeg's schedule includes three sets of back-to-backs over the next six weeks, meaning Milic could soon make his debut.

"I know it is different with goaltending but at the end of the day it is next man up, it really is," said Arniel. "We are not replacing Connor but, at the end of the day, our group has to be real good in front of Comrie and good in front of Milic, as well."

It's also possible the Jets look for other avenues to fill the void, whether it's through the trade market, a waiver wire pickup or a free agent signing.

One potential option might be 35-year-old Michael Hutchinson, who has 154 career NHL games on his resumé, 102 of those with the Jets between 2013-2017. He's currently living in Winnipeg — his wife owns Jenna Rae Cakes — after spending last season playing in Finland.

Hutchinson actually made an appearance at Jets practice on Monday, filling in for Hellebuyck.

Winnipegger Isaac Poulter, who signed with the organization as a free agent last summer, has been summoned from the ECHL's Norfolk Admirals to take Milic's spot and join second-year pro Dom DiVincentiis with the Moose.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/eric-comrie-unsure-hed-be-jets-new-no-1-goalie-until-hellebuycks-surgery-scheduled>

Eric Comrie takes over as Jets' No. 1 goalie, but callup Tomas Milic will get his shot, too

By Gordon Anderson

After grinding through nearly a quarter of the season on one healthy leg, Connor Hellebuyck earned a new level of respect from the other half of the Jets netminding tandem.

On Friday, the Jets announced that Hellebuyck will undergo a procedure on a lingering knee issue that could keep him out of the lineup until, possibly, the new year.

"I have known for a long time," said Eric Comrie, who now takes over the crease for the Jets, after practice on Saturday morning at the Hockey For All Centre. "Hellebuyck is a tough guy. He tried to give everything he could. Knock on wood, he has no more (injuries). I want nothing but the best for him. He's unbelievable."

Just as there are no atheists in foxholes, apparently there are no secrets in a dressing room either. Thus, Comrie knew there was a chance he would be thrust into the prime position, but he wasn't 100 per cent convinced because Hellebuyck is so committed and competitive.

"He told me he was going to play all 82 games," Comrie said. "But that's Helly's mentality. He wants to play all 82. It just goes to show how he felt he wanted to play every single game. I know it's a big year for him, with this team, and how much success he wants to have for us, but also for the Olympics, as well."

Hellebuyck was tabbed by many to start between the pipes for Team USA at the upcoming 2026 Winter Olympics in Italy come February.

If all goes well with the surgery and rehab, the all-world netminder is expected to miss four to six weeks.

In his first start as the team's No. 1, Comrie flew headlong into minor turbulence against Carolina on Friday evening when he allowed the first shot on goal to get past him, high on the blocker side.

"You know what? It's going to happen again," Comrie said about the Jordan Staal goal 16 seconds into the game. "It's just the way things happen in this game of hockey. You never know what is going to happen."

From there, Comrie's performance was good enough to give his team a chance to rally in the third period. And that is probably all the Jets can ask from Comrie.

Overall, Comrie stopped 24 shots in the 4-3 defeat.

"I thought we played a great game against Carolina," Comrie said. "We played strong against, I mean, arguably one of the best teams, if not the best team in the league. Colorado is right there with them. We played with them all night long. We could have won that game. We played very good in our own end, limiting their chances. We understand that the more chances we limit, the more opportunities we're going to have."

With the one-goal loss, Comrie's record dropped to 4-2. He owns a 2.84 goals against average and an .899 save percentage.

"Comrie has come in and had a stellar start to the year," captain Adam Lowry said. "He's going to come in and give us a chance to win every night. It's important that we continue to try to improve in the areas we have: That's defence, that's the chances we are giving up, neutralizing the rush."

"If we can play better defensively in front, we can make Comrie's job easier, Then we can continue to climb up the standings."

Prior to the Friday morning news dump, Hellebuyck, who won the Hart Trophy as the most valuable player and the Vezina Trophy as the best goalie in the league last season, was 8-6-0 with a 2.51 goals-against average and a .913 save percentage in 14 games.

"It just shows you how good he is," Comrie said. "He can adjust his game and still play that good, considering how he was feeling (with his knee injury)."

Call-up Milic eager for first NHL start

Meanwhile, the Jets promoted Tomas Milic from the AHL's Manitoba Moose on Friday, the third-year pro from New Westminster, B.C., assuming Comrie's role as the backup netminder.

"With a condensed schedule, there are a lot of games in a short amount of time," Milic said on Saturday afternoon. "So, the way it is, Eric Comrie is going to hold down the fort, but I will be ready when I get my chance, and I am just excited for it."

Following Sunday's home encounter with the Minnesota Wild, the Jets will go on the road for three games in four nights, starting Wednesday in Washington against the Capitals. They will then face the Carolina Hurricanes on Friday and the Nashville Predators on Saturday.

"I don't think Comrie can play in all those games," head coach Scot Arniel said. "Milic is going to have to play as it gets busy when we head out on the road. I know it is different with goaltending, but at the end of the day it is next man up, it really is. We are not replacing Connor, but our group has to be good in front of Comrie and good in front of Milic, as well."

The 22-year-old found out he was getting promoted after his 28 save performance in a 2-1 victory over the Chicago Wolves on Thursday night. Milic was drafted by the Jets in the fifth round of the 2023 entry draft. Milic played for the Seattle Thunderbirds in the Western Hockey League.

"It was super special, right after our game, getting called into the coach's office and hearing the news," Milic said. "It was a shock, but I was excited and I couldn't stop smiling. I am trying to stay grounded and enjoy every second."

<https://winnipegson.com/sports/nikolaj-ehlers-sets-up-game-winning-goal-as-jets-lose-4-3-to-carolina-hurricanes>

Nikolaj Ehlers sets up game-winning goal as Jets lose 4-3 to Carolina Hurricanes

By Gordon Anderson

Nikolaj Ehlers picked up the primary assist on the game-winning goal as the Hurricanes beat the Jets 4-3 on Friday night.

Andrei Svechnikov sent Ehlers' cross-ice pass into the back of the net at 3:19 of the third period before Eric Comrie could cover the distance across the crease.

Ehlers returned to Winnipeg for the first time since he signed a free-agent deal with the Hurricanes on July 3.

Gabe Vilardi scored 54 seconds later to cut the deficit to one, but the Hurricanes held on, despite a late penalty to K'Andre Miller at 19:08. Vilardi scored twice for the Jets.

Comrie will get the majority of the work for the next four to six weeks as Connor Hellebuyck is scheduled to have arthroscopic surgery on his knee on Saturday. The Jets called up Thomas Milic from the Manitoba Moose to back up Comrie. Comrie turned aside 24 of 28 shots.

Josh Morrissey also scored for the Jets. The loss snaps a two-game win streak for Winnipeg.

Jordan Staal scored twice for the Hurricanes. Seth Jarvis also scored. The 'Canes improve to 8-3-0 on the road 10-2-0 when they score first and 11-0-0 when leading after two periods of play.

Carolina backup Brandon Bussi earned up his fifth win of the season, stopping 24 of 27 shots. Bussi has won three straight games.

The Jets host the Minnesota Wild on Sunday afternoon.

ICE CHIPS

Tanner Pearson, Colin Miller and Connor Hellebuyck were scratched.

NOT AN IDEAL START

The Comrie era didn't get off to a roaring start as the Jets' new No. 1 netminder had the first shot of the game beat him high to the blocker side just 16 seconds into the game. Comrie was thrust into the top dog spot on Friday morning when the news broke that Connor Hellebuyck was heading for arthroscopic knee surgery. Hellebuyck is expected to miss four-to-six weeks. Thomas Milic was recalled from the Manitoba Moose in a corresponding move to the Hellebuyck news. Jets head coach Scott Arniel said the knee procedure is scheduled for Saturday.

ALMOST FOR EHLERS

During a stoppage at 7:43 of the first period, the Jets posted a video tribute to Nikolaj Ehlers. The former Winnipeg winger, known as 'Fly' to his ex-teammates, skated to centre and raised his stick in acknowledgement, the crowd giving him a warm welcome. Not long after, Ehlers had a glorious chance to score against his former mates, but Dylan DeMelo spoiled the moment. Comrie stopped the original point-blank shot, but the puck squeezed through the Jets netminder and appeared destined for the back of the net, but DeMelo skated into the crease and batted the puck out of mid-air and into the corner to the right of the cage.

NUMBER ONE

For the first time this season, the Jets allowed a short-handed goal at 6:31 of the second period when Jarvis buried a rebound after Comrie stopped Sebastian Aho on a breakaway. Miller blocked a Kyle Connor entry at the Carolina blue line, Aho picking up the puck in the neutral zone and beating Morrissey to the net. Comrie made the save on the original chance, but Jarvis was uncovered and scooped the rebound into the net for his 11th goal of the season.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/loyal-to-the-logo-adam-lowry-signs-five-year-extension-to-remain-a-jet-for-the-long-haul>

Loyal to the logo: Adam Lowry signs five-year extension to remain a Jet for the long haul

By Gordon Anderson

His hockey home is where the heart currently resides.

The Winnipeg Jets and captain Adam Lowry agreed to a five-year contract extension worth US \$25 million.

"I'm thrilled to be staying as Winnipeg was the only team I really wanted to go to, I want to stay with the same organization, I had the privilege of playing here my whole career, and I want to finish my whole career here," Lowry said after the Friday morning skate.

Lowry termed the entire process as 'very fair in negotiations.'

The team announced the extension on Wednesday evening. The new deal will begin in the 2026-27 season. The five-year length will keep Lowry in Winnipeg until 2030-31. The AAV of the deal is \$5 million per season.

Heading into a Friday night matchup with the Carolina Hurricanes, the 32-year-old has played seven games this season after undergoing off season hip surgery just days after the Jets lost to the Dallas Stars in the Western Conference semi-final back in May. He has one goal and two assists.

Jets defender Josh Morrissey is much like Lowry in that he also wanted to stay in Winnipeg for the long term. The Calgary native inked an eight-year deal back in 2019.

"We had kind of talked about it a little bit behind the scenes," Morrissey said. "He's earned everything he's gotten. Nothing was handed to him. He's done it the right way, every single day, all through that period of time. For him to get that contract, you're just absolutely excited for him. He deserves it. To have our captain here day in and day out, it's huge for the team, it's huge for the city. It's going to be great to see him be a Jet here for a very long time."

The Jets selected Lowry in the third round of the 2011 NHL entry draft. In 782 career games, Lowry has 122 goals and 154 assists.

"I'm really excited about that," head coach Scott Arniel said. "The talks have been going on for a while, since training camp and a little bit before that. But at the end of the day, to get it done, it's great ... He's taken a lot of pride in being the captain of the Winnipeg Jets with his play, with his leadership, with his community work, with everything he does. He's such a caring person and he helps us in a lot of areas with that leadership."

Other core players who have committed long term include Gabe Vilardi, Kyle Connor, Dylan Samberg, Mark Scheifele and Connor Hellebuyck.

"It's a testament to Mark (Chipman) and the ownership group, management and just the way they treat us as people, the way that they try and give us every resource possible to be successful," Lowry said. "It's a tight-knit community and this organization really treats us unbelievably (well). They care about us as human beings and they want to put us in the best possible position to succeed. In turn, they get a lot of loyalty."

Morrissey also likes the fact that the management group wants to extend the team's championship window.

"With Connor signing earlier and lots of players, going back to Scheifele and Hellebuyck extending, it extends our window," the defenceman said. "We feel we've got a great team with a chance to win every night and be competitive."

Lowry is currently in the final year of a five-year, \$16.25 million contract he signed in April of 2021.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/jets-grounded-in-goal-hellebuyck-out-after-knee-surgery-milic-set-for-first-nhl-start>

Jets grounded in goal: Hellebuyck out after knee surgery, Milic set for first NHL start

By Gordon Anderson

The Jets will have to fly on without the services of their all-star goalie.

On Friday, the club announced that Connor Hellebuyck will undergo surgery for a lingering knee issue.

"This has been nagging him since training camp," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said. "It's something we've kind of known about. He was trying to play through it. It would be good days, bad days, just something that, timing's right, get it done now."

As Arniel mentioned, the team wanted to avoid surgery by pursuing rest and preventive maintenance, but the situation is untenable now. Arniel says the surgery will take place on Saturday.

"He is sore after games and couldn't practice," the coach said. "(This week) he didn't practice for a couple of days. It has been building a little bit more, and it wasn't going to get any easier for him. I know he would love to just keep playing. So, it wasn't looking at what was coming down the road, whether it's the Olympics or the playoffs, it is (about) him getting healthy for that second half and the big run."

The repercussions of the situation spread quickly around the dressing room.

"To put it plainly, it sucks," Captain Adam Lowry said. "You lose the Hart Trophy winner, the Vezina winner, the best goalie in the world for an extended period of time. It's tough news."

Hellebuyck, who won the Hart Trophy as NHL MVP and the Vezina Trophy as the best goalie in the NHL last season, is 8-6-0 with a 2.51 goals-against average and .913 save percentage in 14 games this season.

Hellebuyck has played at least 60 games each of the past four seasons and six of the past eight.

"We've been really fortunate to have Helly healthy and available," defenceman Josh Morrissey said. "His durability is something to marvel at. Obviously now without him, you can't replace a guy like that. But we're super confident in Eric Comrie and Thomas Milic and our defensive game. We've been fortunate to not have him out of the lineup for a whole lot of years."

The 22-year-old Milic will make his first NHL start at some point soon as Comrie probably can't physically handle what is about to come, schedule wise, until the end of this month, never mind the 11 games until the Christmas break starts on Dec. 21

Comrie is 4-1-0 with a 2.60 goals against average and a .908 save percentage in five games this season.

"I don't think Eric can go all those games," Arniel said. "Milic is going to have to play and how we are going to lay the schedule out for as it gets busy when we head out on the road. I know it is different with goaltending, but it is the next man up, it really is. We are not replacing Connor, but our group has to be good in front of Comrie and good in front of Milic, as well."

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/11/22/what-adjustments-will-jets-make-with-hellebuyck-out/>

What adjustments will Jets make with Hellebuyck out? (VIDEO)

TSN Jets reporter Danielle Bain joins SportsCentre to share what the mood around the team has been after the news that Connor Hellebuyck will miss over a month due to knee surgery, and how they plan to adjust with him out of the net.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/11/22/sawyer-this-is-new-territory-for-eric-comrie-and-the-jets/>

Sawyer: 'This is new territory for Eric Comrie and the Jets' (VIDEO)

Jets on TSN commentators Dan Robertson and Kevin Sawyer recap Winnipeg's loss to the Carolina Hurricanes in their first game without Connor Hellebuyck this season.

<https://www.tsn.ca/video/2025/11/21/dreger-details-hellebuyck-injury-jets-next-steps/>

Dreger details Hellebuyck injury, Jets' next steps (VIDEO)

TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger joins Gino Reda to discuss the origin of Connor Hellebuyck's injury, which will result in a minor arthroscopic knee procedure, and is expected to sideline him for 4-to-6 weeks. Dreger also discusses whether or not the Olympics had any impact on the timing of the decision to have the procedure and how Winnipeg feels about its backup goaltenders.