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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/jets-can-t-beat-oettinger-lose-ground-in-wild-card-race>

***Jets can't beat Oettinger, lose ground in wild card race
Jake Oettinger made 22 saves as Stars swept season series from Jets***

By Jamie Thomas

Jake Oettinger recorded his 15th career shutout as the Dallas Stars knocked off the Winnipeg Jets 3-0 at American Airlines Center. The Stars also swept the season series (4-0) from the Jets for the first time since relocation. Winnipeg will wrap up this four game road trip Saturday in Columbus as they will face Rick Bowness and the Blue Jackets.

STARS POWER PLAY GETS HOME TEAM OFF AND RUNNING

The Dallas Stars came into the night with the second ranked power play in the league this season sitting behind the Edmonton Oilers. With Haydn Fleury in the box for cross-checking, the Stars took advantage at 9:43, Connor Hellebuyck stopped a cross-crease pass but Matt Duchene was there and banked the puck off the Jets goaltender and in for a 1-0 Dallas lead.

The Stars didn't take long to make it 2-0 on a nice passing play finished off by Arttu Hyry, Dallas took a 2-0 lead into the first intermission after outshooting the Jets 11-4.

"Yeah, I mean, just cleaning some things up, just getting into the game, whether it takes, just hitting a guy in the first shift, or just cleaning up, executing and making sure, we started off a little slow," said Dylan Samberg.

"And we've been playing at that fast pace and jamming it down the other team's throat kind of game recently, and it's been working for us. And obviously we didn't have that start that we wanted."

NO LUCK FOR KC IN THE SECOND

Kyle Connor had a few chances to get the Jets on the board with Dallas up 3-0, first Connor's shot would go off the goal post during a Winnipeg power play. With four minutes left in the period, Josh Morrissey found Connor in the slot and this time Jake Oettinger denied the Jets sniper. Winnipeg entered Thursday's contest with four different players holding a multi-game point streak, Connor, Morrissey, and Cole Perfetti each held a five-game point streak while Mark Scheifele had points in his last four. Those streaks clearly all came to an end on Thursday night in Dallas.

LOSS OF SALO

Jets rookie defenceman Elias Salomonsson has been very consistent with his play in the NHL this season. But in the second period, the Swedish blueliner took a massive hit from Stars forward Jason Robertson and did not return to the game. After the contest, Adam Lowry had some thoughts on the hit from Robertson.

"It's a tough one, because by rule of law, it's a legal hit. But, it's one of those ones where, as a defending player, you can't hit the guy with his face to the wall, but he can hit you," said Lowry.

"And generally, I find those hits kind of hit you in the head and neck area. It's generally name bar into the chin. It's tough to see Salo go down, he's played well for us all year."

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-dallas-stars-game-recap-april-2-2026>

Oettinger makes 22 saves, Stars shut out Jets to gain in Central Hyry, Erne each has goal, assist for Dallas; Winnipeg had won 4 of past 5

By Taylor Baird

DALLAS -- Jake Oettinger made 22 saves, and the Dallas Stars defeated the Winnipeg Jets 3-0 at American Airlines Center on Thursday.

It was Oettinger's third shutout of the season and his 15th in the NHL.

"Just like to get the win, and shutouts are icing on the cake. They're hard to come by. It takes a lot of luck and good play in front of you, which I had both tonight," Oettinger said. "Lately I've been trying to work on just staying in it the whole game. It's pretty easy to doze off and next thing you know, it's in the back of your net. Just trying to stay focused and if I'm not getting shots, I'm trying to simulate things in my head and try to stay in it. I thought I did a good job of that. You knew they were going to push so I just tried to make a few timely saves so it didn't get close."

Arttu Hyry and Adam Erne each had a goal and an assist for the Stars (45-19-12), who are 2-4-2 in their past eight games.

Dallas is in second place in the Central Division, six points behind the Colorado Avalanche.

"I think no matter what we put out there tonight, we were all ready to turn the page on what's been going on lately and get going in the right direction before the playoffs," Erne said. "When you go to the playoffs, you can't just flip a switch and get going. It's something you have to build towards. I think we want to finish these last seven games or so and put ourselves in a spot here where we're happy with our game come Game 1 of the playoffs."

Connor Hellebuyck made 18 saves for the Jets (32-31-12), who had won four of five and are 6-3-2 in their past 11.

Winnipeg is three points behind the San Jose Sharks for the second wild card into the Stanley Cup Playoffs from the Western Conference.

"I didn't like our first two periods. I know the first period, they got the couple ones on the power play and then we turned the puck over and gave them the second one. We didn't have enough compete, we didn't have enough guys getting our nose over the puck and being heavy on it. Our execution wasn't great," Jets coach Scott Arniel said. "Third period, we went out and decided we were going to do that stuff and, you know, I know it was a 3-0 game at the time, but that's how we have to be for the early parts of the game. Like we've done against Colorado, like we've done against Vegas and other teams. We've come out and played hard and heavy. We didn't do it early on enough."

Matt Duchene opened the scoring with a power-play goal at 9:43 of the first period. After his initial shot was stopped by Hellebuyck, the rebound bounced off the end boards back to

Duchene, who then put the puck in off Hellebuyck's right hip from below the goal line to the left of the net.

"They got the power-play goal and another quick one right after. We talked about getting off to a better start in Chicago, but I think just managing pucks, getting pucks on the forecheck, I thought they did a really good job of breaking pucks out. We were a little slower breaking pucks out and they came with a lot of pressure and we didn't really have great skate screens and a lot of low support. They are a good team and they make it tough to generate offense," Winnipeg captain Adam Lowry said. "I liked the pushback and the compete in the third but we have just got to do a better job of establishing a forecheck and directing some pucks at the net and finishing some plays low and if they are not there, not being too stubborn and putting some [pucks] to the goalie's feet."

The goal ended a streak of six games in which the Stars had allowed the first goal of the game.

"You're going to be in situations coming up that are hard situations. Can you sit down in the morning and get yourself centered and re-centered and come out and play a good game?" Dallas coach Glen Gulutzan said. "We did some individual video this morning and we challenged our guys a little bit. Like, 'Hey, enough's enough.' It was a really good response from a character group."

Hyry made it 2-0 just 1:29 later at 11:12 when he beat a sprawling Hellebuyck with a snap shot from the bottom of the right face-off circle off a cross-slot pass from Jamie Benn. It was Hyry's second goal in the past three games after he scored his first NHL goal on Sunday.

"That's where you want to score, in front of the home fans. I got it done, and it was really good," Hyry said. "I feel like [Erne and I] speak the same language with hockey. Simple hockey. Play deep and chase the puck, and I think we got a few huge recoveries there. It's easy to play with him."

Erne extended the lead to 3-0 at 2:15 of the second period. Lian Bichsel sent a slap shot from the point that was tipped by Erne in the left circle low to the glove side.

"We've always had those similar playing styles. And, they shut it down pretty well," Jets defenseman Dylan Samberg said. "We have a good goaltender, they have a good goaltender. Sometimes it goes our way, sometimes it goes their way. And obviously, with our start, we kind of dug ourselves a hole there and couldn't dig out."

NOTES: Oettinger surpassed Ben Bishop for the fifth-most shutouts in franchise history. ... Dallas dressed 11 forwards and seven defenseman. ... Stars defenseman Kyle Capobianco returned to the lineup after being a healthy scratch for the past 18 games. He had one block in 7:49 of ice time. ... Jets forward Morgan Barron was minus-1 and had one shot on goal in his return after missing the past two games due to a concussion sustained in a 3-2 loss to the Colorado Avalanche on Mar. 26. ... Winnipeg defenseman Elias Salomonsson was injured after a collision with Dallas forward Jason Robertson midway through the second period. Arniel confirmed postgame that he is in concussion protocol.

Associated Press

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-unable-to-gain-ground-after-being-blanked-by-oettinger-stars/>

Jets unable to gain ground after being blanked by Oettinger, Stars

By Associated Press

DALLAS — Jake Oettinger made 22 saves for his third shutout of the season in a matchup of Team USA Olympic goaltenders and rookie Arttu Hyry had a goal in his first multipoint NHL game as the Dallas Stars beat the Winnipeg Jets 3-0 on Thursday night.

Adam Erne also had a goal and an assist and Matt Duchene also scored for the Stars, who opened a five-game homestand that will close their home season. They are second in both the Central Division and the overall league standings, coming off a 1-2-1 road trip with only one regulation win in their previous 10 games.

Oettinger was an Olympic backup while Winnipeg's Connor Hellebuyck backstopped Team USA to the gold medal.

Oettinger has 31 wins, third in the NHL, with his first shutout since Dec. 3. In his previous five starts, he was 1-2-1 plus a no-decision when he was pulled after allowing four first-period goals.

Hellebuyck, who stopped 18 shots, is 20-21-11 after posting a career-high 47 wins last season while winning his third Vezina Trophy.

Duchene and Hyry scored 89 seconds apart midway through the first period to put Dallas ahead 2-0. Duchene collected his own rebound off the outside of the net behind the goal line and banked it off Hellebuyck. It was a power-play score for the NHL's best home power play.

Hyry had the secondary assist on Erne's deflection early in the second period.

Dallas led after one period for the first time in six games and improved to 22-4-3 when in that position.

The Stars went 4-0 in the season series, their first sweep of the Jets since the franchise moved from Atlanta in 2011.

With multiple forwards sidelined with injuries, Dallas played 11 and seven defencemen.

Up next

Stars: Host league-leading Colorado on Saturday.

Jets: Finish a four-game road trip on Saturday night at Columbus.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11757846/winnipeg-jets-playoff-push-hits-speedbump-thanks-to-3-0-loss-in-dallas/>

Winnipeg Jets' playoff push hits speedbump thanks to 3-0 loss in Dallas

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

The Winnipeg Jets were no match for the Dallas Stars on Thursday to send them even further from the playoff picture.

The Jets fell behind early and never recovered in a 3-0 loss to the Stars on stop number three of the four-game road trip.

The Stars dominated right from puck drop to sweep the four-game season series.

"Everybody has a role to play and you gotta go out and play it," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "And if we don't have 20 guys playing to their identity, it makes it very difficult for us. And that's the one thing that we've gotten since the break, coming out of the break. We've been really good with 20 guys stepping up and working together and being cohesive that way. Tonight, it was loose. We were missing 9-10 guys.

"You flush it. I just told them. They know that wasn't good enough. That's not gonna win you hockey games. We're desperate. We have to be desperate right from the start of the game."

The Jets remain two points out of the final playoff spot but that will change by the end of Thursday's action as the Los Angeles Kings are facing the Nashville Predators in a late start and one of them will get two points, so the Jets will be either three or four points out by the end of the night.

The Jets were outshot 11-4 in the first period with the Stars scoring goals only 1:29 apart.

"There's lessons to be learned from games like these," said Jets captain Adam Lowry. "We'll review the tape and then find a way to get a good start like we had in Colorado. It's tough going into other team's rinks and playing from behind and digging yourself two-three goal deficits, which generally don't lead to good outcomes."

Kyle Connor, Cole Perfetti, and Josh Morrissey all saw their five-game point streaks come to an end, while Mark Scheifele didn't register a point after doing so in their last four straight games.

Elias Salomonsson had to leave the game after taking a hard reverse hit in the second period.

"I've always thought that's a dirty play," Arniel said. "But whatever, I mean, it is what it is. I mean, he's probably easy on the kid, probably not expecting that."

Winnipeg got the game's first power play just 1:41 into the game but didn't get a shot on goal.

Just about seven minutes later, Dallas got their first chance with the man advantage when Haydn Fleury was called for cross-checking, and the league's best home power play came through.

The Stars cycled the puck around the Winnipeg end as Matt Duchene at the left point sent the puck to Mikko Rantanen at the right faceoff dot. Duchene then drifted deep into the zone and got the puck back from Rantanen.

Duchene's first attempt was stopped by Hellebuyck, sending the rebound into the end boards. Duchene then shot the loose puck back on net from below the goal line, banking it off the pants of Hellebuyck and into the goal at the 9:43 mark.

Just 89 seconds later, the Stars doubled their lead.

Alex Lafallo misplayed a pass in the neutral zone, stumbling back into the Winnipeg end as he was losing the handle on the puck. That allowed Jamie Benn to not have to clear the zone, scooping up the puck before dropping it off to Adam Erne.

Erne sent it across to Arttu Hyry, who then sent it back door to Benn who couldn't quite handle the pass. It bounced off his blade right back to Hyry, who buried it at the 11:12 mark.

Dallas finished the period with an 11-4 edge in shots on goal, which does not include Miro Heiskanen wiring a shot off the crossbar with just over three minutes left.

The Stars added to their lead just 2:15 into the second when a Lian Bichsel point shot grazed off Erne as it made its way to the net, eluding Hellebuyck to make it 3-0.

The Jets nearly got on the board during their second power play chance of the night when Connor got loose in the slot, but he rang his shot off the post.

Shots on goal in the second favoured Winnipeg 7-6 but they still trailed by three goals heading to the third.

They also had to finish the game without Salomonsson, who was felled by a reverse hit from Jason Robertson late in the second.

With not much going on in the third, Neal Pionk leveled Robertson with a low hip check along the boards. It appeared that Pionk was then angling for a fight with Robertson before Colin Blackwell got a hold of Pionk and wrestled him to the ground. It also led to a fight at centre ice between the captains, Benn and Lowry.

As a result of all this, the Jets wound up on a power play but once again failed to capitalize, thanks in part to a great sprawling save from Jake Oettinger.

Thanks to their three failed power plays in the game, the Jets are now 6-for-51 since the Olympic break.

Winnipeg decided to pull Hellebuyck for an extra attacker with under three minutes remaining and poured the pressure on Dallas as they tried to break the goose egg, but Oettinger made several strong saves to secure the shutout.

The Jets outshot the Stars 11-4 in the third and wound up outshooting the Stars 22-21 on the night.

Hellebuyck was saddled with the loss, making 18 saves in defeat.

Winnipeg will wrap up this four-game road trip Saturday in Columbus against a desperate and slumping Blue Jackets squad riding a five-game winless streak.

The puck will drop a little after 6 p.m. with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB beginning at 4 p.m.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/7166777/2026/04/03/winnipeg-jets-cheveldayoff-roster-deployment-prospects-playoffs/?redirected=1>

Jets can't afford to let late surge prevent hard questions about organizational missteps

By Murat Ates

There is a concerning element to the Winnipeg Jets' playoff push and it has nothing to do with the draft lottery.

No, this isn't about Gavin McKenna or Keaton Verhoeff or your prospect of choice. It's not about the Colorado Avalanche, who dominated Winnipeg two years ago and will start Round 1 as overwhelming favourites against any opponent. GM Kevin Cheveldayoff and the rest of the Jets front office need to face hard questions this offseason.

The problem with the Jets players' well-earned push up the NHL standings is that it gives Jets management the opportunity to fool itself. A review of past end-of-season interviews with Cheveldayoff — and the Jets' subsequent signings, trades, and deployment — indicates a team that's not always as self-critical as the circumstances have called for. Whether or not the Jets continue their late-season surge, the most important outcome from this season will be the lessons they learn from it.

When the Jets get it right, they hire Rick Bowness and turn a divided group into a defensive juggernaut. When they fail, they sign veterans who are too slow to play Bowness' brand of hockey or carry out Scott Arniel's "forecheck, backcheck, defend the guts of the ice" philosophy.

Last summer, Jonathan Toews, Tanner Pearson and Luke Schenn were lauded for their Stanley Cup-winning acumen as Arniel joked there was no way Toews would play on the team's fourth line. The Jets proceeded to play Toews like a second-line centre as his minuses piled up, then found that team performance magically improved once Pearson, Schenn, and Logan Stanley were moved at the deadline.

The team's belief seemed to be that it was a Cup contender that only needed playoff experience and a bit of toughness to take the next step. But Cheveldayoff's acquisitions and Arniel's deployment didn't have the quality or pace to play "Winnipeg Jets" hockey.

The team Cheveldayoff has built is a wild-card team based on roster quality with no clear route out of the mushy middle. Any swings taken towards a true second-line centre, an upgrade on defence or revamping Winnipeg's bottom-six forward group must be more effective than Cheveldayoff has been since a torrid streak of transactions that began with the Andrew Copp trade in 2022.

More recently, Winnipeg has sent a first-round pick, two second-round picks, a third-round pick and two fourth-round picks away for Sean Monahan, Tyler Toffoli, Brandon Tanev, Schenn and Colin Miller. Only Miller remains (albeit in a depth role). Winnipeg's .615 points percentage since Cheveldayoff shipped Schenn (and Stanley) to the Buffalo Sabres can't solely be attributed to that one transaction, but the dynamism and pace on its third pair since Schenn's departure has been a revelation by comparison. Isak Rosen is a good prospect but Jacob Bryson has been outscored 12-5. A lot of factors go into goal rates, but the small sample result is a downgrade on Schenn's 29-16 disadvantage in 46 games prior to being traded.

This is a long way of saying that the Jets' poor run of transactions in recent years may be responsible for part of their misery. Their most recent trade may be a step in the right direction, but it is not enough to ease concerns regarding its capacity for self-criticism.

"Everyone seems to forget the role that Logan Stanley played in winning four straight against Edmonton (in 2021)," Cheveldayoff told me in January 2025. "He was a regular shift player, he played all the (playoff) games. We go into Montreal, he's the one that scores the two goals in Montreal. So he's on a pretty good trajectory as a developing player at that point in time."

There is some missing context with respect to this quote. The discussion was rooted in Cheveldayoff's decision to protect Stanley at the 2021 expansion draft. I'd asked about that and followed it with a reference to two Jets defencemen lost to Stanley's development: Johnathan Kovacevic and Declan Chisholm.

The part he missed was that the Jets' evaluation of their own players had omitted the impact of variance, while ignoring the lengths their own coaches went to in order to hide Stanley from top-end talent that season. Stanley averaged the sixth-most minutes among Jets defencemen during the 2021 playoffs, playing nearly five fewer minutes per game than Winnipeg's No. 5 defenceman. The coaching staff kept Stanley as far from opponents' star players as possible, mirroring his extremely sheltered deployment from the regular season, and the Jets were still outshot (slightly) and outchanced (heavily) during Stanley's minutes.

The team was fooled by percentages — Connor Hellebuyck's incredible performance, combined with an unsustainably high shooting percentage — and decided it had a budding top-four defenceman on its hands. Why should the management team whose assessment missed PDO (and who traded two draft picks for Schenn after the quoted conversation) be trusted to re-route this year's Jets?

It's a good time to remember Winnipeg has made excellent offseason moves, too. Cheveldayoff's acquisition of Gabriel Vilardi, Alex Iafallo, Rasmus Kupari and the draft pick which became Alfons Freij was first-class work, turning an untenable situation into a clear win. Extending Vilardi, along with franchise cornerstones Hellebuyck, Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor, was critical towards building a playoff-contending team. Cheveldayoff has also retained Dylan DeMelo, Nino Niederreiter and Vladislav Namestnikov after acquiring each for discount prices, back when they were younger and more effective than the versions Winnipeg got this season. In all three cases, those players delivered positive value because they filled roles the Jets legitimately needed to fill.

This isn't a Logan Stanley hit piece. He's a beloved ex-teammate who eventually found his way to third-pairing quality. It's not an indictment of Toews, whose performance is often of solid bottom-six quality, and whose lack of cheat was evident during some of Winnipeg's worst games of the season.

It's an indictment of Winnipeg's ability to be fooled by its own success. It's difficult to head towards the 2026 offseason believing in the group that sold Toews as a second-line centre and the GM who said, "There is some offensive help there to replace (Nikolaj Ehlers)" with respect to Pearson and Gustav Nyquist.

The Jets roster needs help whether it makes the playoffs or not. The problem with the Jets' process is that they deemed Stanley's 13 minutes of five-on-five hockey per game and two goals against Carey Price in 2021 as indicative of a blossoming top-four defenceman. It predetermined Elias Salomonsson's AHL status this season, despite performance which has been markedly better than Schenn's.

It's clear Winnipeg has an imperfect sense of when a prospect is or isn't ready to make an NHL impact. Betting on veterans makes sense for a win-now, all-in team with no room in its decision-making matrix for a young player whose total impact may be superior to a veteran but whose shift-by-shift performance may fluctuate. Cheveldayoff has perhaps the most difficult GM job in hockey, given no-trade clauses and the unrestricted free agent market's lack of fondness for Winnipeg. But the idea that you can prescribe a player to a league prior to the season, like Salomonsson — as Arniel indicated last week — is costing Winnipeg the opportunity for long-term wins.

There are good examples of prospects "over-ripening" in other leagues. The Detroit Red Wings were famous for this, slow-playing the rise of Henrik Zetterberg and Pavel Datsyuk as two of the best players in the NHL. Still, Winnipeg's focus on the immediate moment has cost the team enough opportunities at NHL players for a long enough time period to be detrimental. (Remember the time Ville Heinola went over a month without playing a competitive hockey game in the NHL or AHL despite good health — twice?)

Let's end by taking a breath. Winnipeg won the 2025 Presidents' Trophy as the NHL's top regular-season team. It gave up the fewest goals in the league for two straight seasons prior to this one. Even when you include this season's middling (and potentially still miserable) outcome, the Jets have won the fourth-most games over the past three seasons. It is a truly impressive run of accomplishments following Winnipeg's last playoff miss in 2021-22, when Paul Maurice stepped down, Dave Lowry replaced him, and Bowness was hired in the offseason.

Recall that the Jets spent a large portion of the 2022 offseason recruiting outside opinions on their strengths and weaknesses. When Bowness first took Winnipeg's phone call, he didn't realize it could be to offer him a job. Cheveldayoff had recruited opinions from luminaries around the league, including sitting down at great length with coaches like John Tortorella to get honest outside opinions. It's clear that Winnipeg's management team is capable of finding the right answers to difficult questions — especially when their hands are forced, whether on the hiring front via Maurice's resignation or by trade in the form of Dubois.

That's why this late-season push carries foreboding undertones. There is a troubling ease with which a playoff-bound Jets team could blame Hellebuyck and Adam Lowry's surgeries, Dylan Samberg and Cole Perfetti's injuries, or sheer bad luck for their middling quality. A playoff spot would suck the urgency out of any offseason reflections, whether or not the Jets gave Colorado a fight.

Cheveldayoff is fond of saying that the NHL is a tough league to win in.

“Half the teams now don’t make the playoffs,” he said in 2022. “Half the teams are standing here the day after the season ends and answering the tough questions.”

Whether or not he finds himself among that half of the league seven games from now, Winnipeg needs its management to ask the hard questions this offseason.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/04/02/jets-playoff-hopes-dimming-with-loss-to-dallas-stars>

Jets’ playoff hopes dimming with loss to Dallas Stars

By: Ken Wiebe

DALLAS – The Winnipeg Jets picked a bad night to have too many passengers.

After winning four of the previous five games — including a tidy effort against the league-leading Colorado Avalanche on Saturday to open the road trip – the Winnipeg Jets were mostly overwhelmed in this battle with a Central Division rival that was looking to get its mojo back as they worked through a lacklustre stretch of hockey.

Just when you thought the Jets might be catching the Dallas Stars at a good time, it turned out to be the complete opposite.

A Stars team that had managed just one victory in the past seven games and two in the past nine came up with a dominating effort and won this one in a cakewalk, handing the Jets a 3-0 defeat that was damaging to their flickering playoff hopes.

“Everybody has a role to play and you gotta go out and play it. And if we don’t have 20 guys playing to their identity, it makes it very difficult for us,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel, whose team closes out the four-game swing on Saturday against Rick Bowness and the Columbus Blue Jackets.

“And that’s the one thing that we’ve gotten since coming out of the break, we’ve been very good with 20 guys stepping up and working together and being cohesive that way. (On Thursday), it was loose. We were missing nine or 10 guys.”

That’s far too many to be missing on one night and it’s one of the biggest reasons the margin for error just got slimmer, as the Jets now have just seven games remaining in the regular season.

“We have got to reflect on it and learn from it. There are lessons to be learned from games like these,” said Jets captain Adam Lowry.

“It is tough going into other teams’ rinks and playing from behind, digging yourself two or three goal deficits, generally, do not lead to good outcomes. Get our rest here. Recover and reset and clear the mind and get ready for Columbus. They are in a similar position as us, fighting for their playoff lives. They have been struggling and we know it is an important game for both teams. Hopefully, whoever gets the jump on the other one comes out on top.”

The Jets, who slipped to 32-31-12 for the season, entered the contest just two points out of the final playoff spot in the Western Conference, but they've got three teams to leapfrog and two others in hot pursuit of them.

Since the Los Angeles Kings and Nashville Predators were facing off in a game that was ongoing at press time and the San Jose Sharks won their game against the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Jets deficit has widened to three points and could possibly reach four by later this evening.

"We just flush it. They knew that wasn't good enough, that's not going to win you hockey games," said Arniel. "We're desperate. We need to be desperate right from the start of the game. And it has to be for 60 minutes. But we've got to move on to Columbus. That's a team that has their own battle, obviously they got beat again (on Thursday), so they're going to be pretty ornery in their own building. We're going to have to be a lot better with our details, our execution, our battle."

With the win, the Stars completed a four-game sweep of the season series, limiting the Jets to a solitary point that came from an overtime loss in Dallas in the previous meeting.

"We've always had those similar playing styles. And, they shut it down pretty well," said Jets defenceman Dylan Samberg. "We have a good goaltender, they have a good goaltender. And, sometimes it goes our way, sometimes it goes their way. And obviously, with our start we kind of dug ourselves a hole there and couldn't dig out."

Let's take a closer look at how things unfolded:

THE HIT – The Jets lost defenceman Elias Salomonsson with just under nine minutes to go in the second period.

Salomonsson, who was playing his 32nd NHL game of the season, was going to play the puck in the corner in the defensive zone when Stars left-winger Jason Robertson caught him with a reverse hit that appeared to include an elbow to the head.

Salomonsson was a bit wobbly as he made his way back up to his feet and eventually went down the tunnel for further evaluation.

Following the game, Arniel said Salomonsson has been placed in concussion protocol, which means he's out indefinitely.

"I've always thought that's a dirty play, but, whatever," said Arniel. "He's a young kid, probably not expecting that. That's exactly what it was, he wasn't expecting it."

Salomonsson has been providing quality minutes and his absence will certainly be felt.

"It is one of those ones where it's a tough because by rule of law that is a legal hit, but it is one of those ones where as a defending player you can't hit the guy with his face to the wall, but he can hit you, and generally I find those hits that hit you in the head and neck area, generally name bar into the chin," said Lowry. "Obviously, as a guy that plays a lot of defence I prefer to see that hit (taken) out."

“It is tough to see Sal go down as he has played well for us all year, stepped in playing big minutes when guys are out, whatever we have asked of him, he has really excelled at and really taken another step forward and was starting to play with a lot of confidence.”

THE LAPSE – After hammering home the importance of having a strong start, the Jets got tentative after allowing the first goal of the game to Matt Duchene, who banked a rebound chance off Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck for a power play marker just before the midway point of the first period.

They gave up another 89 seconds later to Arttu Hyry, who finished off a nifty passing play with Stars captain Jamie Benn.

That was compounded by a goal from Adam Erne that happened early in the second period and the three-goal deficit was too much to overcome.

“We didn’t have enough compete, we didn’t have enough guys getting our nose over the puck and being heavy on it,” said Arniel. “Our execution wasn’t great.”

THE KEY PLAY – A tic-tac-toe goal for Hyry made it a two-goal game and the Jets never fully recovered.

THE THREE STARS

Arttu Hyry, Stars, Scored once, added an assist.

Adam Erne, Stars, Scored once, added an assist.

Jake Oettinger, Stars, Recorded his third shutout of the campaign.

EXTRA, EXTRA – Hellebuyck made his 52nd start of the season and made 18 saves.

The Jets’ healthy scratches were defencemen Ville Heinola, Jacob Bryson and forward Danny Zhilkin.

Nino Niederreiter and Vladislav Namestnikov shed the non-contact jerseys and were full participants in the morning skate, as they continue to work their way back from lower-body issues that have sidelined the Jets forwards since late February.

The Stars switched things up and went with 11 forwards and seven defencemen, which allowed former Jets blue-liner Kyle Capobianco to return to the lineup for the first time since early February.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/04/02/i-feel-great-on-the-ice-barron-back-as-jets-face-off-against-dallas>

‘I feel great on the ice’: Barron back as Jets face off against Dallas

By: Ken Wiebe

DALLAS, TEXAS — Morgan Barron felt it was both necessary and important to take a stand, even if there were unintended consequences he had to deal with.

The Winnipeg Jets forward emerged from concussion protocol to suit up in Thursday's game against the Dallas Stars after being on the receiving end of a heavy right hand from Colorado Avalanche defenceman Josh Manson.

Following the morning skate, Barron explained why he took exception to the hit Manson delivered, resulting in a minor penalty for interference.

"I didn't have the puck. I think he got a two for it, that was kind of what I thought was the appropriate call," said Barron, who started the game on the fourth line with Isak Rosen and Parker Ford. "I don't think it was anything more than that."

After the whistle had blown, Barron found Manson in front of the net and challenged him to drop his gloves.

Manson obliged and while Barron caught the Avalanche blue-liner with a hard right that left him with a black eye, the Jets forward took a shot that forced him to sit for two games.

"Yeah, I watched it. I watched it a few times," said Barron, asked if he studied the video of his fight in the aftermath. "Obviously, (Manson) knows what he's doing and I kind of opened myself up there (to the punch). It's part of the game. I have no regrets about it. You learn from those things, I think. I was just sticking up for myself."

Suffering the injury was an unfortunate byproduct of sticking up for himself, but Jets head coach Scott Arniel appreciated the thought process behind what transpired.

"The fight came about in a situation where he got hit there without suspecting. I'm glad he stood up for himself," said Arniel. "Maybe not take on one of the toughest guys in the league, but at the end of the day he did a heck of a job."

"That's all part of this time of year, the desperation you're seeing from everybody. Everybody has battles, it doesn't have to be fights, but it does have to be that compete. That one went a little bit different, but at the end of the day to have him back, he's a key piece to our team."

Arniel was happy to have Barron back for what figures to be a heavy game against the Stars in what will be the fourth and final meeting of the regular season.

"Him eating up minutes, both five-on-five and on the penalty kill," said Arniel, asked where Barron's impact would be felt. "He's having a heck of a year for us. He's a key piece. His speed is a big factor. He helps push that line. I think just him, his confidence this year, how he plays without the puck, he's the type of guy that will get inside and use his power. That's what we need."

Barron felt fortunate that the symptoms of the first documented concussion of his career were mild.

"There's a lot of grey area about what is and what isn't (a concussion), with the severity of them and things like that," said Barron. "I don't know. I didn't try to compare it to anyone else's or any prior experience. I just took it day by day and like I said, I felt good and just went from there."

"It's been fine. Obviously, sitting at home, I felt pretty good pretty much the whole time. Just kind of going through the protocol and I got to watch the guys win two games, so it's been good."

“Honestly, I woke up the next day and felt like I played a hockey game. I felt pretty good otherwise and I’ve been in the rink every day. I just ramped up the workouts and skates and stuff as time goes. I never had any setbacks, luckily, so I got to take my (baseline) test two nights ago and I felt good.”

Getting past that final hurdle allowed Barron to jump on a plane and meet the Jets in Dallas for the critical Central Division battle.

“I always try to look at (the glass) half full. I missed two games and the guys went and got four points. This isn’t like I’ve been sitting on the sidelines for a few weeks,” said Barron. “I feel great on the ice. I feel I can pick up right where I left off.”

The Jets made one other change to the lineup, inserting Haydn Fleury on the third pairing for Jacob Bryson.

“I have a bit of a rotation going there. We’ll see how that plays,” said Arniel. “I wanted to get Bryson in. He had played a lot when he got here after the trade and then he sat for a while. So, it’s more of that.”

Going into Thursday’s action, the Jets were two points behind the Los Angeles Kings in the chase for the second wild card berth in the Western Conference.

“This wildcard chase keeps getting tighter and tighter,” said Barron, who sits eighth in team scoring with 11 goals and 23 points in 64 games. “I think everyone is in a good space and we’re excited to play a good team.”

The Jets close out this four-game road trip on Saturday against Rick Bowness and the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Winnipeg Sun

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/jets-lose-ground-in-the-playoff-chase-lose-3-0-to-the-stars/article_9b6118a4-a148-4e45-9477-ce4d1c42596a.html

Jets lose ground in the playoff chase, lose 3-0 to the Stars

By Gordon Anderson

The overall effort certainly fell well short of what the head coach expected or what the team desperately needed, considering its post-season plight.

“We’ve been very good with 20 guys stepping up and working together and being cohesive,” head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Dallas after a 3-0 loss to the Stars. “We were missing nine or 10 guys (tonight).”

On goals by Matt Duchene and Arttu Hyry just 1:28 apart, Dallas built a 2-0 lead after one period of play, outshooting the Jets 11-4 in the opening 20, and locking the Jets out over the remaining 40 minutes.

"I didn't like our first two periods. I know in the first period, they got the couple, one on the power play and then we turned the puck over and gave them the second one," Arniel said. "We didn't have enough compete, we didn't have enough guys getting our nose over the puck and being heavy on it. Our execution wasn't great."

Even though the Jets outshot the Stars 18-10 in the last two periods, the hole was far too deep for the offensively challenged Jets.

The Stars are now 30-6-2 when scoring first and 22-4-3 when leading after 20 minutes. Winnipeg is 6-20-6 when the opposition scores first and 4-15-2 when trailing after 20 minutes.

Getting that first goal was crucial and the tepid start by the locals sealed the club's fate against a Central Division foe who has had its way with Winnipeg this season, going 4-0-0.

"It is tough going into other teams' rinks and playing from behind, digging yourself two or three goal deficits, generally, do not lead to good outcomes," Jets captain Adam Lowry said.

Jets rookie rearguard Elias Salomonsson took a reverse hit from Stars forward Jason Robertson. He did not return to the game. His last shift was recorded at 8:43 of the second period.

Lowry did not offer his opinion on the hit, but he did acknowledge the hit was legal and within the bounds of the rule. But the captain did offer his thoughts on the contributions from the first-year rearguard.

"It is tough to see Salomonsson go down as he has played well for us all year, stepped in playing big minutes when guys were out, whatever we have asked of him, he has really excelled at and really taken another step forward and starting to play with a lot of confidence," Lowry said.

Arniel says Salomonsson is in concussion protocol. He went one step further than Lowry with his opinion on the sequence.

"I've always thought that's a dirty play, but, whatever, it is what it is," Arniel said. "You know, he's a young kid, probably not expecting that. That's exactly what it was, he wasn't expecting it. It is what it is."

The Jets (32-31-12) have now been shutout six times this season. Four of the games were 3-0 scorelines. The last time the Jets were shutout was a 2-0 setback on Jan. 19 in Chicago. Neither Connor Hellebuyck nor Eric Comrie has posted a shutout through 75 games. Hellebuyck (20-21-11) stopped 18 of 21 shots in the loss.

Adam Erne also scored for Dallas (45-19-12). Jake Oettinger (31-12-6) turned aside 22 shots for this third shutout of the season.

The Jets remain two points back of a playoff spot, but that number will grow later tonight to either three or four as the Nashville Predators play the Los Angeles Kings.

The Jets finish the four-game road trip on Saturday in Columbus against the Blue Jackets.

Ice Chips

Danny Zhilkin, Ville Heinola, Jacob Bryson, Vlad Namestnikov and Gustav Nyquist were scratched. Nino Niederreiter and Namestnikov skated in regular jerseys at practice on Thursday.

Captain, my captains

The Jets and the Manitoba Moose collected college captains this past week.

The organization inked forward Lucas Wahlin (University of St. Thomas) to a two-way deal, forward Davis Burnside (Ohio State) to an AHL deal, and defenceman Lukas Gustafsson from Boston College to an AHL deal. All three players were captains for their respective teams this past season.

In a flash, nothing new

The Stars scored a pair of goals 1:28 apart as Duchene and Hyry gave the Stars a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes on Thursday night. In the regular-season opener on Oct. 9, a Dallas 5-4 win, the visitors netted three goals in 2:22 as Robertson, Tyler Seguin and Wyatt Johnson spotted the Stars a 5-1 lead early in the third, and in the Stars 4-3 victory on Dec. 9, Roope Hintz and Alexander Petrovic scored 1:15 apart in the second, giving the Stars a 3-0 lead in that game.