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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-niederreiter-scores-twice-jets-end-4-game-slide>

***THREE THINGS: Niederreiter scores twice, Jets end 4-game slide
Jets get some much needed secondary scoring in 5-2 win over Nashville***

By Jamie Thomas

Nino Niederreiter scored twice to help the Winnipeg Jets beat the Nashville Predators 5-2 at Bridgestone Arena ending their four-game losing streak. Gabriel Vilardi, Cole Perfetti and Kyle Connor had the other goals for the Jets, Dylan Samberg had three helpers, and Luke Schenn had two assists. Eric Comrie was solid in the third period and finished with 21 saves for the Jets who are now 13-11 on the season. Winnipeg continues their five-game road trip in Buffalo on Monday.

STARTING ON TIME

The Jets had surrendered the first goal of the game in the previous four contests, and they were 0-4 in that situation. After a poor first period in Raleigh on Friday night, the Jets made sure they were ready to go from the drop of the puck in Nashville. In fact, 47 seconds into the game, Gabriel Vilardi scored on a rebound past Justus Annunen for the important 1-0 lead.

“Yeah, that was obviously a really good first period,” said Scott Arniel.

“And get out in front like that, especially up to nothing you’re not chasing the game and put some pressure on the home team. So liked a lot of what we did.”

SOME SECONDARY SCORING

Building off that first goal of the game, Winnipeg made sure to close out the opening frame the right way as well. With under a minute left in the first, Luke Schenn hit Nino Niederreiter in full stride through the neutral zone, after entering the Preds zone Niederreiter beat Annunen blocker side to give Winnipeg a 2-0 lead. The Swiss forward is the first forward not on the first line to score since Adam Lowry did so against Columbus earlier this month.

“Obviously feels really good getting a goal like that,” said Niederreiter.

“Goals haven’t been coming easy, so it’s a great feeling when one of those goes in.”

Cole Perfetti had two great scoring chances Friday night in North Carolina, the 23-year-old wasn’t going to miss another opportunity. In the second period, Perfetti went to the slot area and one-timed a brilliant pass from Vladislav Namestnikov for his second of the season at 12:18.

COMRIE GETS THE WIN

After starting four consecutive games in goal for the Jets, Eric Comrie got a night off on Friday. He returned to the net to face the Predators and while not that busy through the first two periods, Comrie was locked in for the third period. Comrie's held the fort before Kyle Connor gave the Jets a 4-2 lead at 9:37. The victory tonight over Nashville was Comrie's first ever win in four appearances against the Predators

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/30/answer-to-jets-woes-has-to-come-from-within>

Answer to Jets' woes 'has to come from within'

By: Mike McIntyre

NASHVILLE — Nobody said it was going to be easy. That's the reality of life in the modern NHL, where parity reigns and contenders and pretenders can seemingly trade places overnight.

But Kevin Cheveldayoff admits he didn't think it would be quite this difficult. Not for the reigning Presidents' Trophy winners who raised expectations after a dream 2024-25 season — yet now find themselves near the bottom of the league standings almost one-third of the way into 2025-26.

Just what has happened to the Winnipeg Jets? That's one of the many questions we posed to the club's longtime general manager, who spoke exclusively with the Free Press prior to Saturday's game at Bridgestone Arena.

"Obviously there doesn't seem to be a straight path to where we want to get to," Cheveldayoff said, shortly before his wounded club at least temporarily stopped the bleeding with a 5-2 victory over the Predators — the NHL's worst team — which snapped a four-game losing streak and improved their record to 13-11-0.

The win was only their fourth in the past dozen games, bumping them to 24th overall in the 32-team league. Some regression was expected. But these Jets haven't even resembled the Stanley Cup hopefuls fans fell in love with a year ago, despite retaining much of the same core.

Is the season already slipping away?

"I don't think it's necessarily a spiral," said Cheveldayoff. "It's a tough league to win in on a nightly basis, but one thing is tried and true: You have to play a certain way to be successful. When we can find that consistency and do that on a nightly basis, I think we can be successful."

That wasn't an issue last season. So why has the DNA of this group shifted? One theory: the Jets failed to adequately replace the flashy, creative Nikolaj Ehlers, who signed with Carolina in free agency.

Winnipeg's four free-agent additions — Jonathan Toews, Gustav Nyquist, Tanner Pearson and Cole Koepke — were meant to lighten the offensive load of the team's top players and bring some much-needed secondary scoring. They've combined for just six goals (Toews 3 in 24 games, Pearson 3 in 22, Nyquist 0 in 19 and Koepke 0 in 16).

Does Cheveldayoff bear some responsibility for those underwhelming returns?

"Yeah, sure, absolutely," he said. "It's one of those things where you're looking at what's available to you and you try to assess what might and might not work. I don't know that it's fair to put it on any individual UFA that we signed. There's lots of players that, as a group and as a team, you have to find a way to win."

"I think if you asked him there's a lot more left (to give) in his game."

Fair enough, as the list of underachieving forwards essentially involves everyone not named Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor or Gabe Vilardi.

"There's no question that line has carried a lot for us. We're very fortunate for that. Very odd, I guess, that nine other guys are in slumps at the same time," said Cheveldayoff. "But that's why you're a professional athlete — find a way."

The Toews signing came with great fanfare, with the future Hall of Famer pencilled in as the No. 2 centre behind Scheifele. But aside from his excellence in the faceoff circle, his production (9 points, team-worst minus-12) hasn't come close to what an elite team expects from that position.

Is it too early to deem this a failure?

"I think if you asked him there's a lot more left (to give) in his game," said Cheveldayoff.

"Not only is he having to come off two years of not playing, two years coming off the illness that he had, but it's playing in a new system, playing with different people... it's all a progression. I wouldn't say that he's doing backflips with his game. As a group we just need to continue to build as a team."

Another theory is the Jets simply got older and slower in a league trending younger and faster. Toews, 37, Nyquist, 36, and Pearson, 33, joined 36-year-old Luke Schenn, acquired at last year's trade deadline and now a regular on the blue line. None are known for their wheels.

Are the Jets properly built to compete?

“To win in the National Hockey League you have to play fast,” Cheveldayoff said.

“To win in the National Hockey League you have to play fast.”

“You can skate fast all day long. There’s lots of players that can do that, that can go one hundred million miles an hour. But you have to play fast. By that, you have to be able to execute at high levels and you have to be able to do the details.”

To that extent, he believes there’s untapped potential, and the lack of cohesive two-way play has bogged them down. The Jets did look quicker Saturday night against Nashville, which may lend support to that theory.

Injuries have played a role in Winnipeg’s struggles. That’s not an excuse. It’s the reality. Shutdown defenceman Dylan Samberg missed the first 16 games with a broken wrist; top-six winger Cole Perfetti missed 14 with a high-ankle sprain; and shutdown centre and captain Adam Lowry missed 12 after hip surgery.

All three are back but not yet up to full speed. And just as it appeared the roster was finally intact, reigning Hart and Vezina winner Connor Hellebuyck required arthroscopic knee surgery and has missed the past five games, with three to five more weeks expected.

On top of that, key defenceman Neal Pionk has missed the past three with a lower-body injury. Other teams are hurting too, Cheveldayoff noted, as this year’s compressed pre-Olympic schedule grinds down rosters league-wide.

“No one else is feeling sorry for you, so if you are, you better figure that out pretty quickly,” said Cheveldayoff.

“When other organizations have had to go through it, you either find a way or you don’t. You’ve got the challenge in front of you. The challenge is to find a way.”

With the struggles mounting, fans are clamouring for a shake-up. Is a trade on the GM’s radar?

“You’re always talking, you’re always looking,” he said. “But we are in a different world. There’s lots of teams that used to have to make trades because there was no salary cap room. Well, there’s lots of teams with lots of salary cap. So that avenue of necessity for some teams isn’t necessarily as great right now.”

“No one else is feeling sorry for you, so if you are, you better figure that out pretty quickly.”

Complicating matters: the standings are tighter than ever, and even the league’s bottom teams are still within striking distance of a playoff spot. There may be potential buyers out there. There just aren’t any sellers yet.

“In situations like this, the truth is it has to come from within,” Cheveldayoff said.

He made it clear he has full confidence in head coach Scott Arniel — a Jack Adams finalist last season — and the rest of the staff.

“The coaches, they’re preaching the same things. They don’t necessarily have the same group in front of them. They have to learn some different individuals, how to poke and prod and push and pull and different things like that,” said Cheveldayoff.

“It’s not something that anyone is sitting back and saying ‘Don’t worry about it, it’ll be all right.’”

Cheveldayoff hasn’t taken any additional steps with players, such as face-to-face meetings, but there has been an uptick in hot-stove sessions with Arniel and company to try to find answers. Even during the club’s 9-3-0 start, there was behind-the-scenes concern.

“There were some key points in the analytics of our group where we weren’t sitting there saying ‘Phew, we’re 9-3.’ You could see there were aspects of our game we were getting away with. And you can’t get away with it all the time,” said Cheveldayoff.

“The hardest part is how do you correct it?”

Arniel took the public-shaming route after Friday’s 5-1 loss in Carolina, saying some veterans “forgot to show up for the start of the game.”

Did that criticism catch Cheveldayoff off guard?

“It’s interesting. When a coach or a GM or whatever says those kind of headline material things, did those players just slough it off? No,” said Cheveldayoff.

“The context of that is they prepared, but it didn’t work for them. So what now? What next? It’s not like guys are sitting there having a coffee and a cigarette saying ‘OK, this is going to be an easy one tonight.’ But that, I think, is the mental aspect of how hard it is to play, how hard it is to stay, and how hard it is to be elite on a nightly basis.”

As losses have mounted, fans have pushed for Winnipeg to “play the kids” — something they’ve done in small sample sizes this year with forwards Brad Lambert, Parker Ford and Nikita Chibrikov, defenceman Elias Salomonsson and goaltender Thomas Milic all getting limited looks so far.

“One thing (Arniel) is very open to is trying to see if he can integrate some of these younger guys,” said Cheveldayoff.

“But you have to be very very careful when you put young players in situations. You have to make sure you can put them in the best situation to succeed or else you get chewed up and spit out in the National Hockey League.

Lambert, Ford and Chibrikov are now back with the Manitoba Moose, and reports surfaced last week — through Lambert’s agent — that he would be open to a trade, believing his path to full-time work is blocked with the Jets.

Is Cheveldayoff shopping the 2022 first-rounder, who has three points (1G, 2A) in 10 career NHL games so far?

“Brad’s a big part of our future here,” said Cheveldayoff. “When you come to the National Hockey League, you want to come here to show your strengths and be the player that we as an organization hope you can be.

“There’s lots of players in the American Hockey League that maybe got their chances, went to the National Hockey League and weren’t able to stay, and maybe now are career American Leaguers. One thing we always preach to our young players is I know you all want to get here quick, but we want you to stay here long.”

Cheveldayoff said as much as they may want to revel in last year’s accomplishments, life in the NHL moves fast. The Jets came into this year with a big target on their backs. So far, they haven’t responded accordingly.

“You can’t play this game or compete in this game with a rear-view mirror. You have to be forward thinking. Just because you had success isn’t going to mean that you’re automatically entitled to have that success moving forward,” he said.

“A coach can yell and scream and do things like that, but the players have to hold themselves accountable. That is a strength of our group and hopefully this is just part of the bumps along the way. It was smooth sailing for a long period of time last year until it wasn’t. You have to kind of earn your stripes.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/11/29/for-the-jets-thats-one-in-a-row>

***For the Jets that’s ‘one in a row’
‘Fragile’ Winnipeg ends four-game skid with win in Nashville***

By: Mike McIntyre

NASHVILLE — There were no victory laps being taken inside the Winnipeg Jets locker room Saturday night. No fist pumps, chest bumps or bold claims that everything was suddenly fixed. In fact, a casual observer might have had no idea, based on the subdued reaction, whether the hockey team won or lost.

But make no mistake: A 5-2 victory over the Nashville Predators inside Bridgestone Arena was just what the doctor ordered for a wounded group that desperately needed to stop the bleeding.

"It's one. It's one. We wanted to win one in a row. So that's the first one," head coach Scott Arniel told the Free Press.

Baby steps, for sure. But at least they are in the right direction. The Jets limped into the game having lost a season-high four games in a row, and eight of the last 11, to plummet down the NHL standings. A regulation defeat against the Predators — who currently occupy the league's basement — would have left only two points separating them.

"I liked a lot of what we did, our battle, our compete, that type of stuff we talked about," said Arniel. "I thought throughout our lineup, there were one-on-one battles happening and we were winning a lot of them. That was big for us."

Winnipeg improves to 13-11-0 on the year while Nashville falls to 8-13-4 as their modest two-game winning streak came to a screeching halt.

Let's break this one down further:

Timely start

On Friday night in Raleigh, Arniel was seeing red after his team tip-toed into the game. Following the 5-1 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes, he said "we had a lot of guys that forgot to show up at the start."

Safe to say his players got the message. Gabe Vilardi opened the scoring just 47 seconds into the game, burying a rebound that was created by a Mark Scheifele shot.

It was the first time in five outings the Jets hadn't fallen into a 1-0 hole, meaning they didn't have to chase the game for a change. That's a big deal when confidence is in short supply.

"You always want to start right from the get-go and right now we are a little fragile," said forward Nino Niederreiter. "Once you are fragile you are kind of trying to get the momentum going."

No surprise that it was the top line coming through. Vilardi's 11th of the year — and fifth in as many games — made it nine straight goals over the past five games in which some combination of himself, Scheifele and/or Kyle Connor had been involved with.

Secondary scoring? In this economy?

It had gone the way of the dodo bird, with Winnipeg's bottom nine forwards all in simultaneous slumps.

So you could feel the collective sigh of relief when Niederreiter took a great outlet pass from Luke Schenn and ripped a perfect shot over the shoulder of Nashville goaltender Justus Annunen with 54 seconds left in the opening frame.

At long last, some secondary scoring was on the menu.

"That really feels good getting a goal like that," said Niederreiter. "Goals haven't come easily lately, and it is a great feeling whenever one of those goes in."

Next up was Cole Perfetti, who got the monkey off his back when he finished off a nice passing play with linemates Jonathan Toews and Vlad Namestnikov to make it 3-0 just past the midway mark of the second period.

The floodgates had opened. Well, at least a trickle.

"We've got so many guys who have produced offensively for a long time in this league, and guys are going to go through ups and downs throughout the course of the season," said Schenn.

"You've just got to continue to push through and work at it. And, it's gonna come as long as we continue to do the right things and compete and go to the net."

Perfetti, who missed the first 14 games of the year with a high-ankle sprain and had only scored once in his first nine games back, was finally rewarded for all the great chances he's been getting lately.

"Our whole bench there, everybody jumped up on that one," said Arniel.

"Like we said, if you're not scoring goals, make sure you get close to the net and that's exactly where he went. Right down to the hashmarks. However it went in, it went in. It's a little bit of relief for him."

Comrie, cool and collected

It hasn't been an easy week for Eric Comrie, who took over the No. 1 netminder duties after Connor Hellebuyck underwent arthroscopic knee surgery, then promptly lost his first three starts.

He was given an extra day of rest when rookie Thomas Milic made his NHL debut Friday in Carolina, and it seemed to serve him well. Comrie was dialed in, stopping 20 of 22 shots.

"Coms, he is always there for us and always gives us a chance," said Arniel.

“Again tonight, when the heat kind of went up there in the third period, he was big. That’s what we need. The guys really enjoy playing in front of him. If we can get him some run support, like I’ve often talked about, it certainly makes his job a little bit easier.”

Indeed, things got a little too close for comfort when Nick Blankenburg scored on a late second period power play — the puck appeared to deflect off Jets forward Morgan Barron on the way in — and then Luke Evangelista got the home team within one with a sneaky backhand just 2:45 into the final period.

But Comrie, with some help from his teammates, shut the door the rest of the way. Connor gave his club some breathing room when he deflected a Schenn shot midway through the third, and then Niederreiter added his second of the night into an empty net to finish off a very productive night against one of his former teams.

“At the end of the day they signed me in the off-season and shipped me away a couple of months later (to Winnipeg) so that is just part of the business and how things are,” Niederreiter said of the Predators.

“But I am in a happy place right now and we have a good team and everything happens for a reason.”

Let’s get physical

This game wasn’t for the faint of heart, with plenty of big hits being dished out. That’s not unusual when these Central Division rivals get together, but it was the Jets who were the aggressors.

Schenn, Barron, Adam Lowry and Logan Stanley all delivered big ones which sent Predators players to the ice. Stanley also dropped the gloves with big Michael McCarron, who appeared to give him an extra punch to the face when both men were down on the ice.

There were plenty of other net-front scrums and even a big accidental hit that saw Predators forward Tyson Jost crush Namestnikov, who didn’t see it coming and was slow to get up. He had to go through concussion protocol, which he cleared.

Overall, the Jets outhit the Predators 27-19. We suspect ice bags were in short supply after this one.

Key play

Niederreiter’s first goal didn’t just give the Jets a two-goal cushion before the first intermission, but also showed that contributions can indeed come from players who aren’t on the top line.

Three stars

1. WPG LW Nino Niederreiter: 2 goals
2. WPG D Dylan Samberg: 3 assists
3. WPG D Luke Schenn: 2 assists

Extra, extra

Schenn was back in the lineup after being a healthy scratch in recent games, replacing rookie defenceman Elias Salomonsson who had shown some good signs in his first two NHL games yet had been on the ice for four even-strength goals against.

“Obviously no one likes being out of the lineup, but you take it and use it in the right direction to work on some things,” said the two-time Stanley Cup champion.

“It’s not the first time throughout the course of my career where there’s been a little bit of rough water. So you just want to be resilient. And when you get the call again, come in and try to help the team win.”

Forward Cole Koepke was Winnipeg’s other extra, while Hellebuyck, Neak Pionk (lower-body) and Haydn Fleury (concussion) remained sidelined.

Samberg’s three assists were his first three points of the year after he missed the first 16 games with a broken wrist.

Winnipeg went 0-for-4 on the power play, while Nashville went 1-for-4.

The Jets flew to Buffalo following the game, where they will enjoy the day off on Sunday, then face the Sabres on Monday night.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-snap-a-4-game-losing-skid-in-a-5-2-win-over-the-nashville-predators>

Jets snap a 4-game losing skid in a 5-2 win over the Nashville Predators

By Gordon Anderson

Ten different players recorded at least one point as the Jets beat the Nashville Predators 5-2 on Saturday night.

The win snapped a four-game losing streak that dated back to a 4-3 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes on Nov. 21. In between, the club lost to the Wild, the Capitals and again to the Hurricanes.

Nino Neiderreiter broke a lengthy goal-scoring drought with a short-side sparkler late in the first period to give the Jets a 2-0 lead at the end of 20 minutes.

“Definitely that really feels good getting a goal like that,” Neiderreiter told reporters in Raleigh. “Goals haven’t come easily lately, and it is a great feeling whenever one of those goes in.” He also scored an empty-net goal late in the third to ice the win. Neiderreiter logged 16:30 of ice time over 21 shifts.

“That was a good first period. To get out in front like that, especially up 2-0, you’re not chasing the game, and it puts some pressure on the home team,” head coach Scott Arniel added.

Eric Comrie stopped 20 shots to earn his first win since he was named the starter prior to the Nov. 23 game against the Minnesota Wild. Coming into the game, the club was averaging 1.75 goals scored per game since Comrie assumed the starting role for Connor Hellebuyck.

Gabe Vilardi, Cole Perfetti and Kyle Connor also scored for the Jets. Luke Schenn picked up two assists, and Dylan Samberg chipped in with three assists.

Nick Blankenburg and Luke Evangelista scored for the Predators. Nashville drops to 3-11-2 when the opponent scores first and 2-11-2 when trailing after two periods.

Justus Annunen turned aside 20 shots in the loss.

The Jets are in Buffalo on Monday evening.

Ice Chips

Elias Salomonsson and Cole Koepke were healthy scratches. Haydn Fleury and Neal Pionk were out with injuries. Pionk remains day-to-day with a lower-body injury. Fleury didn’t make the trip. The defender is still in concussion protocol.

Heated rivalry

Heavyweights Logan Stanley and Mike McCarron met, yet again, for a spirited tussle at 10:40 of the first period. Early in the fight, both players tumbled to the ice inside the Predators zone with Stanley continuing to throw punches at McCarron while seated on his pants. On Oct. 18, the combatants dropped the mitts at 8:08 of the second in a Jets 4-1 win at home. The two have a spirited fighting resume that dates back to April of 2024. They have now dropped the gloves three times since then.

Welcome to the club

Niederreiter scored his first goal in seven games when he beat Annunen to the short side at 19:06 of the first period. During the four-game losing streak, Vilardi and Mark Scheifele were the only forwards to score a goal. Josh Morrissey scored the other marker. The last forward to score a goal was Adam Lowry against Columbus on Nov. 11. Perfetti found his slump buster at 12:18 of the second period. It was his first goal in nine games. Niederreiter scored into the empty net at 19:39 of the third.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/an-absolute-lock-josh-morrissey-mum-on-team-canada>

'An absolute lock,': Josh Morrissey mum on Team Canada

By Gordon Anderson

Surely, Jets rearguard Josh Morrissey is a certifiable lock for inclusion on the Team Canada roster for the upcoming Olympic hockey tournament in Italy.

"He is absolutely a lock; he is on that team, but he won't say it," defensive partner Dylan DeMelo told The Winnipeg Sun. "He is humble that way."

The Canadian Olympic hockey roster will be announced about a month from now. No definitive date has been released publicly.

Avs defenceman Cale Makar is the only official 'lock' to make the team on the back end. Others include forwards Nathan MacKinnon, Connor McDavid, Brayden Point, Sam Reinhart, and Sidney Crosby.

There are plenty of websites and hockey insiders speculating on the eventual Canadian roster, and Morrissey is included on just about every list, if not all of them.

The impressive list of potential defenders includes Colton Parayko, Evan Bouchard, Drew Doughty, Thomas Harley, and Devin Toews among them.

When asked, the Calgary native says he wants to be on the team, but he would not share his private thoughts on the debate about his for certain inclusion.

He says he is solely focused on his beloved Jets. That much he did admit.

"I am just trying to bring my best every day and be the best player I can be for the Winnipeg Jets, and hope the rest takes care of itself," Morrissey said. "I have been happy with my start, and I want to keep building."

But DeMelo wasn't through pitching his partner's bona fides.

"He is in the same conversation with Makar and Quinn Hughes," DeMelo said. "His skating is fantastic, so his gap is always good. He plays against the top competition every night, and he produces points through all of that. He impacts the game everywhere."

Hughes was named to the U.S. roster on June 23.

Morrissey was asked for his personal elevator pitch. If he had 30 seconds alone in a lift with the Team Canada decision makers, what would he say to further solidify his case for belonging.

Firstly, he made it clear he would not 'beg' to be on the team, but he did talk about the state of his present game and where he sees it going.

The No. 44 in blue and white is second to Makar in points by a Canadian defenceman with 23 heading into league action on Sunday night.

"I try to be an all-around player and do whatever the team needs me to do," he said. "I have worked hard on my game, continuing to evolve and get better on the offensive side, defensive side and special teams. I love coming to the rink every day and working hard, trying to find ways to improve by watching the other top players around the league, trying to find things they do to improve my game."

With some of his idle time, Morrissey does fancy playing for Canada at the Milano-Cortina Olympics, saying "it would be impossible not to."

"It is a team that you want to make the most and something you dream about," he said. "From the time I was a little kid, the 2002 Olympics (in Salt Lake City) was the first one I remember watching. "

Canada beat the U.S. 5-2 in the gold medal game two-plus decades ago. Joe Sakic scored twice, including the game-winning goal.

According to NHL Edge stats, Morrissey is in the top 80th percentile or higher in several categories like skating distance, shooting percentage, goals, offensive zone time, shots on goal and speed bursts of 29 to 32 kilometres an hour.

Closer to home, the 30-year-old leads the locals in time on ice at 24:30, nearly two minutes more than second place Neal Pionk, who skates an average of 22:44 per game. Morrissey is tied with Kyle Connor and Gabe Vilardi for the most power-play points with seven and is alone in third in points per game at .96.

"He does so many things for our group," DeMelo said. "He is on the team in my books, and I am sure he will be when they announce it."

Morrissey played for Canada at the 4 Nations Face-Off last February.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-secondary-scoring-saves-the-day-in-streak-busting-win-over-predators>

Jets' secondary scoring saves the day in streak-busting win over Predators

By Gordon Anderson

Of note for the win-starved Winnipeg Jets, the secondary scorers showed up to play in a rather mighty way on Saturday.

Ten players chipped in with at least one point as the Jets snapped a four-game slide in a 5-2 win over the Nashville Predators.

“We have got so many guys who have produced offensively for a long time in this league, and guys are going to go through sort of ups and downs throughout the course of the season,” Jets defenceman Luke Schenn told reporters.

During the losing skid, the club lost twice to the Carolina Hurricanes and once each to the Minnesota Wild and the Washington Capitals.

Schenn chipped in with two assists in the victory. The last time Schenn had a multi-point game was back in February of 2023.

More secondary scoring came from another unlikely candidate in Dylan Samberg. For the first time in his NHL career, Samberg had a three-point night, notching three assists.

During the now vanquished losing skid, Gabe Vilardi and Mark Scheifele were the only forwards to score a goal. Vilardi scored four times and Scheifele netted a pair. Vilardi also scored against the Predators, giving him five goals in his past five games. Prior to the Nashville game, the last forward to find the back of the net was Adam Lowry against Columbus on Nov. 11.

“You’ve just got to continue to push through and work at it,” Schenn said. “It’s going to come (if) we continue doing the right things, competing and going to the net. It was great to see some guys get rewarded on Saturday night.”

Among those ‘rewarded’ with slump-busting goals were Nino Niederreiter and Cole Perfetti.

Niederreiter scored his first goal in seven games when he beat Justus Annunen to the short side at 19:06 of the first period. The Swiss winger also scored into the empty net at 19:39 of the third period.

“We are trying to play the right way, and things end up being in your own net, and you get frustrated and tonight was great to get a couple of goals from the depth,” he said.

Perfetti found his slump-buster at 12:18 of the second period. It was his first goal in nine games. He had his share of chances in the game against the Hurricanes on Friday. He was thwarted on a breakaway opportunity and later whiffed on a jam play at the net.

Even his goal against Nashville was an excuse-me swing. Perfetti didn’t get much power behind the shot, but the puck squeezed through for his second of the season. After the goal, he looked skyward. It was hard to tell if his facial expression was one of relief or frustration at whiffing on the clear-cut opportunity in the low slot.

According to Natural Stat Trick, Perfetti had five high-danger chances in the 5-2 loss to Carolina and one high-danger chance against the Predators.

“Our whole bench there, everybody jumped up on that one,” head coach Scott Arniel said. “It was a great play with Jonathan Toews getting in on it first and then the east-west behind the net to Vladdy (Namestnikov). Like we said, if you’re not scoring goals, make sure you get close to the net and that’s exactly where he went. However it went in, it went in.”

But the scoring, both goals and assists, watch still continues for Gustav Nyquist, Namestnikov, Tanner Pearson and Lowry, but to name a few of the players mired in lengthy goal-scoring slumps.

Nyquist is looking for his first marker in 19 games; Namestnikov has zero goals in his last 12 games; Pearson has one goal in his last 18 games, and Lowry has one tally in a dozen games played.

The next opportunity to simultaneously enhance both the win streak and the secondary scoring comes Monday night against the Buffalo Sabres.

“We wanted to win one in a row, so that’s the first one,” Arniel said. The biggest thing for us is the lessons that we learn from not being consistent with our shifts, and how it’s being consistent, with this game that we played tonight, that that’s how we (should play in) Buffalo.”

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-nashville-predators-game-recap-november-29-2025>

Niederreiter scores twice, Jets end 4-game losing streak with win against Predators

Samberg has 3 assists for Winnipeg; Evangelista gets 2 points for Nashville

By Robby Stanley

NASHVILLE – Nino Niederreiter scored twice, and the Winnipeg Jets won 5-2 against the Nashville Predators at Bridgestone Arena on Saturday, ending a four-game losing streak.

Gabriel Vilardi had a goal and an assist, and Dylan Samberg had three assists for the Jets (13-11-0), who played the third game of a five-game road trip. Luke Schenn had two assists and Eric Comrie made 20 saves.

“Right now, we’re just a little fragile group,” Niederreiter said. “Obviously the win tonight is definitely huge for our team, but once you’re fragile you’re just trying to kind of feel and get the momentum going. I’m glad we got on the board early and don’t have to

chase the game when it comes to that, but like I said, it's one win. We've got to go to the next."

Luke Evangelista had a goal and an assist for the Predators (8-13-4), who had won their previous two games. Erik Haula had two assists and Justus Annunen made 20 saves.

"I feel like we let one slip there," Predators defenseman Nick Blankenburg said. "I feel like we're trying to build that consistent game and we're trying to find that for 60 minutes. I think you'd be blind if you don't see that. There's glimpses and there's parts where it's really good. We've just got to find a way to do it for 60 minutes consistently."

Vilardi gave the Jets a 1-0 lead 47 seconds into the game on a rebound off a shot from Mark Scheifele.

Niederreiter gave the Jets a 2-0 lead at 19:06, carrying the puck into the zone on the left side and scoring on a wrist shot from the left circle.

"We've got so many guys who have produced offensively for a long time in this league," Schenn said. "Guys are going to go through sort of ups and downs throughout the course of a season. We've just got to continue to push through and work at it. It's going to come as long as we continue to do the right things and compete and go to the net."

Cole Perfetti made it 3-0 at 12:18 of the second period on a one-timer from the slot on a pass from behind the net from Vladislav Namestnikov.

"I think our whole bench, everybody jumped up on that one," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "Great play. [Jets forward Jonathan Toews] getting in on it first, the east-west behind the net to [Namestnikov]. Like we said, if you're not scoring goals make sure you get close to the net. That's exactly where he went."

Blankenburg scored for the Predators to make it 3-1 at 17:02 on a one-timer from the point on the power play.

"He's been fantastic," Evangelista said. "He's just such an easy guy to cheer for. Kind of an underdog story. He's not a big name that everyone hyped up early on. Even this year, he starts out of the lineup and he comes in and he's been one of our best players. The way he's playing right now, he's been tremendous for us."

Evangelista scored for the Predators to make it 3-2 at 2:45 of the third period, roofing a short backhand from just outside the right post after he corralled the puck behind the net on a pass from Haula.

Kyle Connor gave the Jets a 4-2 lead at 9:37 with a redirect from the slot after Schenn's shot was first deflected by the stick of Nashville's Tyson Jost.

“That’s why the fourth one hurt so much because I really thought we had really good momentum,” Predators coach Andrew Brunette said. “We had them on their heels. We kind of got into our game finally. It was a hard game to really get going and credit to them. They defended hard.”

Niederreiter added an empty-net goal to make it 5-2 at 19:39.

NOTES: Evangelista had his third straight multipoint game (six points; two goals, four assists). ... Predators forward Michael McCarron left the game in the second period and did not return. Brunette said McCarron is day to day. ... Predators defenseman Roman Josi had a 5:15 shift late in the third period.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6843214/2025/11/30/winnipeg-jets-season-stats-predators-nhl/>

Behind the one trend that defines the Winnipeg Jets’ season so far

By Murat Ates

This is a stats piece about a struggling Winnipeg Jets hockey team.

If you’re looking for ways to pile on as the Jets tumble down the standings, losing four of five and occasionally looking downright miserable, it’s easy to find statistics to support you. If you want to talk about the importance of secondary scoring, Saturday night’s win was all the proof you need.

But one win against the worst team in the Western Conference doesn’t change the Jets’ most important trend.

Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabriel Vilardi and Josh Morrissey have scored more points in Winnipeg’s last 10 games than every other player on the team combined. Winnipeg’s second-line centre, Jonathan Toews, has been outscored 7-2 at even strength in his last 10 games, while scoring only three points in 13 November games.

Toews isn’t alone in his struggles, though; more than half of the Jets roster scored three or fewer points in November, while defencemen Neal Pionk, Logan Stanley and Dylan DeMelo have outscored Toews, Gustav Nyquist, Tanner Pearson and Cole Koepke — Winnipeg’s four most notable UFA signings — in that same time frame. Eric Comrie and Thomas Milic aren’t good enough to make up for that on their own, the way Connor Hellebuyck so often is.

It all feels like rearranging the same information to take the same swipes at an offensively challenged team. Winnipeg has three players — Connor, Scheifele and Morrissey — who can break games open and a collection of players who won’t cheat

you but need more help breaking through. I don't question effort level with respect to anyone on Toews', Lowry's or Namestnikov's lines, despite their lack of production.

But it hasn't been good enough. The Jets are still looking up at the playoff cut line after Saturday's win. They're still 4-6-0 in their last 10 games, despite Stanley Cup ambitions. So what can we learn about this year's Jets? Why is this happening?

There's insight to be had about this team beyond "they're old" or "nobody is scoring." Let's start with a quick conversation with head coach Scott Arniel and a look at why secondary scoring has fallen off quite as badly as it has.

The relationship between breakout passes and offence

The Jets have gone from a top-10 team at five-on-five last season to one of the worst, whether you measure quality by zone time, shots or scoring chances.

Via Natural Stat Trick, Winnipeg has the third-worst percentage of shots and expected goals this season. Via the NHL's tracking data, it's spent the eighth-most time in its own zone at even strength. You know this by watching it: The Jets have gotten hemmed in their own zone for long stretches in ways the last team avoided, while so many more of their offensive attacks are one-and-done this season than last.

The idea of Lowry's line spending 45 seconds cycling in the offensive zone, then going for a line change, then watching from the bench as the next line carved through the offensive zone in the same fashion, used to be routine. Now, hand-off shifts by any line stand out because of their rarity, such as the eight minutes toward the end of the second period against Washington, when the Jets looked like a great team again.

So why the lack of goals?

I put that question to Arniel this week, asking about the role of Winnipeg's breakout problems in the Jets' lack of sustained offensive pressure. I believe that part of Winnipeg's offensive struggles is about what happens in the offensive zone — scoring chances that don't get finished or perimeter play caused by a lack of speed. I think a lot of it is about the quality of exit passes Winnipeg's forwards get from its defencemen.

My preamble referenced the importance of Winnipeg's first pass.

"We showed some examples of that this morning," Arniel said. "Our five-man breakouts, we did a great job of getting to our blue line. And then it was the next play after that. So I don't always call it the first pass. I call it the next pass."

Arniel said Winnipeg's centres have done a good job of getting low, picking up the first pass from their defenceman. The Jets' breakout problems have come after successful passes from D to centremen die on that next player's stick, whether they tried to skate it out or pass it off to a winger.

“Our offence starts that way,” Arniel said. “If you can push a team back on their heels because of the rush and you don’t have to dump the puck in all the time — or start again and regroup and do it again — that’s tilting the ice. That’s making the team play in the other end of the rink.”

Garret Hohl has been tracking Winnipeg Jets zone exits and other microstats at The Five Hohl.

I put my theory to him, based on Winnipeg’s struggles and Arniel’s commentary, that Winnipeg’s breakout issues are costing the team real goals. He sent me a ton of information and insight, but let’s start with this look at Winnipeg’s year-over-year decline in controlled zone exits per game.

This year’s Jets are getting out of their own zone with possession of the puck eight fewer times per game than last year’s version did. They’re chipping it out to release the pressure (without icing it) roughly the same amount as before. They’re getting stuffed one extra time per game, whether in the form of a turnover or a breakout attempt that turns into a battle situation.

That first number is a big one. We know that controlled zone exits are the gold standard of breakout situations because they help in two ways at once: the opportunity to create offence and the opportunity to avoid defending, all because Winnipeg still has the puck. Arniel put it plainly while talking about tilting the ice.

Hohl’s math can help us quantify the impact in a little more detail. Each breakout type has a different value. We know clean exits with possession are better than chipping it out. We know chipping it out is better than turning it over. These things are obvious, but Hohl’s tracking and his math help us create an “expected shots” value for each type of breakout. The combination of video tracking and analytics can give an “expected shots” number for each type of breakout — how likely each type of zone exit is to turn into a Jets shot.

Winnipeg’s breakout problems are costing it shots, scoring chances and real goals compared to last year’s team.

Winnipeg’s forwards and defencemen are suffering this season, but the D’s numbers have dropped off dramatically. It’s leading to roughly three fewer Jets shots per game, based on Hohl’s math, on a team that’s taking five fewer shots per game than the one that came before it.

It’s interesting, isn’t it? A team that’s removed Nikolaj Ehlers, Mason Appleton and Rasmus Kupari and replaced them with Toews, Gustav Nyquist and Pearson might expect a bigger drop off from its forwards. It’s possible that some of the forwards’ impacts are affecting the D numbers — a defenceman can only make a pass if there’s someone in a good spot to pass it to, but I think it’s pointing at a bigger problem among Jets defencemen.

With Samberg hurt to start the year and Pionk hurt now, the Jets have had to push a lot of defencemen above their ideal playing tier.

Luke Schenn, Logan Stanley, Haydn Fleury and Colin Miller have the four worst controlled-exit percentages on the team. Schenn has been a healthy scratch of late, but his propensity for dusting the puck off and then failing to hit his exit pass helped contribute to long defensive zone shifts in the 16 games he played. (That said, it was Schenn's exit pass that Nino Niederreiter collected off his skate on the way to scoring Winnipeg's second goal on Saturday night.) Stanley has impressed in key moments and may help on the third pairing but was outmatched alongside Pionk in the season.

Let's connect this idea back to Winnipeg's lack of secondary scoring. Here are Winnipeg's defencemen and their zone exit numbers. Note that 20 games have been tracked, but only one involving Salomonsson.

Wouldn't it make sense that forwards who get their exit passes from Morrissey have better offensive numbers than the other Jets? Lo and behold, Morrissey has shared roughly 200 minutes of icetime with each of Connor, Scheifele and Vilardi and not as many as 100 minutes with any other Jets forward.

Samberg, whose controlled exit numbers are second best, has only played eight games, while Salomonsson's sample is way too small for any conclusions. (He's been beaten up in terms of goals against so far while making a high rate of successful exit passes.)

Here's a reminder of what a clean exit pass can do, giving Niederreiter credit for the way he handled Schenn's pass off his skate.

What does it all mean?

I think there is a real and dangerous temptation to blame Winnipeg's lack of offence solely on the forwards who aren't finishing their scoring chances. It would be a lot wiser to consider why the Jets aren't generating scoring chances at all — and that's a problem that starts well before Cole Perfetti, Toews or whoever gets stopped by a goaltender. Scoring chances turn into goals in the long run, even if failed chances burn in the memory right now. Perfetti's relief-inducing goal against Nashville is proof; it came after multiple scoring chances in multiple recent Jets games.

The bigger problem is all of the chances you're not seeing happen at all. A lack of transition could sink the Jets' playoff chances far more effectively than a lack of finishing will, because transition problems are way more likely to last.

Winnipeg could use a prime-aged Blake Wheeler or Nikolaj Ehlers or any top-end forward who can single-handedly dominate transition hockey. The team's more pressing need — by far — is another defenceman who can make stops and then move the puck.

NHL goalie tandem power rankings 1.0: Evaluating all 32 teams in net this season

By Jesse Granger

We've passed the quarter mark of the regular season, so it's a good time to check in on how all 32 goalie tandems are performing.

As a whole, the trend of increased offense in the NHL has continued. Shots are down, goals are up and, as a result, the league average save percentage has dipped below .900 for the first time in 20 years. As the speed and skill of the game continue to increase, we're having to adjust what constitutes strong goaltending statistics.

While statistics are obviously a big factor in this ranking — results matter, above all — we will also be considering how these goaltenders have looked on film, and take their career-long performances into consideration. The roughly 25-game sample size we have for each team is enough to evaluate how each goalie is performing this season, but we can't ignore their priors.

Deciding how much weight to give each of the goalies when evaluating tandems can be tricky. For this exercise, goalies capable of handling a heavy workload, such as Andrei Vasilevskiy and Connor Hellebuyck, are given more weight within their tandem than goalies who play closer to a 50-50 split. In those cases, the impact of the backup is minimized but not ignored entirely. Conversely, tandems with two goalies performing at a high level are boosted in this ranking.

Without further ado, here's how every goalie tandem in the league has stacked up in 2025-26:

10. Winnipeg Jets

Connor Hellebuyck

14-8-6	.913	14.26
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Eric Comrie

9-5-4	.898	0.49
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When he's healthy, Connor Hellebuyck is the type of goalie who singlehandedly makes a tandem worthy of a top-five or top-six spot. However, his recent knee injury, which required surgery and projects to keep him out of the lineup for more than a month, combined with the fact that Eric Comrie isn't an elite backup option, caused the Jets to tumble down this ranking.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11551538/analysis-moore-winnipeg-jets-november-losses/>

ANALYSIS: Not a November to remember for Winnipeg Jets

By Kelly Moore Global News

ANALYSIS: Not a November to remember for Winnipeg Jets -  image in full screen

It was anything but a November to remember for the Winnipeg Jets.

So there is not much doubt the team will be focused on avoiding a repeat over the next three weeks leading into the Christmas break — beginning tonight in Buffalo.

Five wins and eight losses. That's how the Jets finished the just-completed month of the schedule, their worst November in a decade.

It could have been Winnipeg's worst November in the 2.0 history of the franchise had it not been for Saturday's 5-2 win in Nashville.

So for Jets Nation, the hope — and for the Jets' roster, the expectation — would be there is nowhere to go but up for the month of December.

But pump the brakes if you believe tonight's 6:30 p.m. faceoff in Buffalo is a given in aid of a solution. As enigmas go, the Sabres just might be the NHL's most difficult puzzle to piece together.

One night, they looked all-world in a 5-1 beatdown of Edmonton. Forty-eight hours later, they get embarrassed 6-2 by Calgary. And another 48 hours after that, they wallpaper Chicago 9-3. All in the same home stand.

Just last weekend, they followed up a 5-0 home loss to New Jersey with a 3-2 shootout win in Minnesota to end the Wild's seven-game winning streak.

So if you think there is a "book on Buffalo" because the Sabres are dead last in the Eastern Conference, you might want to rethink that position. The Jets certainly won't. Nor can they afford to.

Saturday's "almost must-win" can only be viewed as a potential starting point. Because while Winnipeg is not quite the Rubik's Cube Buffalo has been this season, the Jets have hardly been a model of consistency themselves.

Tonight could be another small step toward regaining their status as the team that delivers on a nightly basis.

What we just saw during the past month is an indicator of just how much work there is to do to get back to achieving that level of respect.