



**Columbus Blue Jackets News Clips  
August 7-8, 2025**

**Columbus Blue Jackets**

- PAGE 2: The Hockey Writers / Blue Jackets' Jet Greaves Has Tremendous Opportunity in 2025-26  
PAGE 4: NHL.com / Inside look at Columbus Blue Jackets  
PAGE 6: NHL.com / 3 questions facing Columbus Blue Jackets  
PAGE 8: NHL.com / NHL EDGE stats leaders for Columbus Blue Jackets

**Cleveland Monsters/Prospects**

- PAGE 10: Columbus Dispatch / Columbus Blue Jackets hire Stefan Matteau as Cleveland Monsters assistant  
PAGE 11: NHL.com / Top prospects for Columbus Blue Jackets

**NHL / Websites**

## **The Hockey Writers / Blue Jackets' Jet Greaves Has Tremendous Opportunity in 2025-26**

**By Nicholas Arnold – August 7, 2025**

The dog days of summer continue to roar onwards, and so we look ahead to the 2025-26 NHL season, which is now only a couple of months away. The Columbus Blue Jackets had a remarkable 2024-25 season compared to where many talking heads had predicted they would end up. Now with another summer of change for Ohio's NHL club comes a new round of opportunity for players in the organization to grab a bigger piece of the action – and a big piece has opened up between the pipes.

It's fitting that in a year when Paul McCartney is making his way to Nationwide Arena, someone with the same given name as the title of one of his hit songs will be getting a massive opportunity on the Blue Jackets. Jet Greaves, whose father Gerry may or may not have been as bold as the sergeant major, will be a regular member of the team's goalie tandem for the upcoming campaign. It's a massive step forward for the Cambridge, Ontario, native who has been the starting goalie with the American Hockey League (AHL) affiliate Cleveland Monsters for the last three seasons.

### **How Did Greaves Get Here?**

The undrafted Greaves benefitted heavily from a dearth of goaltending prospects in the Blue Jackets organization and got more ice time with the Monsters than maybe he should have at the start of his professional career. I say that because it's not like he had a particularly strong stint in junior. He spent two seasons on the Ontario Hockey League's (OHL) Barrie Colts, tending the twine in two of their worst seasons in recent memory. He only won 20 games in 60 starts, held an .899 save percentage (SV%), and didn't play a single playoff game for the team. Nothing particularly eye-popping there.

Regardless, Greaves began to form a relationship with the Blue Jackets. It began with an appearance at development camp in 2019. It was built on with a strong showing in a prospects tournament organized during the pandemic, in the midst of a lost season for Greaves since there were no OHL games, and culminated in a two-year AHL contract with the Monsters.

He took that opportunity and has continued to grow, becoming an AHL regular in 2021-22, a starter in 2022-23, winning 30 games in 2023-24, and a .920 SV% through 40 games in 2024-25. The hope is that he continues blossoming at the next level and becomes a real option between the pipes for the Blue Jackets. It would be a real success story for the team's developmental staff.

### **Greaves' Bar for Success in 2025-26**

The bar of success for Greaves shouldn't be to instantly step in and supplant Elvis Merzlikins as the starting goalie. While many believe Merzlikins is a lost cause, he's shown to be an NHL-caliber goalie capable of a hot streak here or there. In a tandem situation, that can be serviceable. Greaves simply needs to provide another reliable option that they can count on for a stretch of games when Merzlikins is off his game, which is something they did not receive from Daniil Tarasov, Spencer Martin, or Joonas Korpisalo over the last three seasons.

It seems like he's ready for the next step, as he showed quite well in a few appearances in April. In a five-game call-up to end the campaign, he only allowed four goals against, posted two shutouts, and held an almost infallible .975 SV%. During that stretch, he won all of his starts, which included two games against the regular season Eastern Conference-winning Washington Capitals. He was a massive reason why Columbus almost made the playoffs.

The Blue Jackets barely missed out on the playoffs in 2024-25, largely due to significantly below league-average goaltending. For 2025-26, if Greaves can start at least 30 games and play as reliably as he has, the Blue Jackets should have a real shot. If he exceeds those expectations and steals the starting job, that's just the cherry on top. Put simply and to paraphrase the great McCartney, with the wind in his hair of a thousand skate laces, the Blue Jackets are hoping they can climb on Greaves' back and go for a ride in the sky to their ultimate goal of the playoffs.

## [NHL.com / Inside look at Columbus Blue Jackets](#)

**By Wes Crosby – August 8, 2025**

The Columbus Blue Jackets are tasked with following a near fairytale.

Expectations were exceeded last season. Honoring Johnny Gaudreau and his brother, Matthew, who died Aug. 29 when they were struck by an alleged drunk driver, the Blue Jackets finished two points behind the New Jersey Devils for third in the Metropolitan Division and the Montreal Canadiens for the second wild card into the Stanley Cup Playoffs from the Eastern Conference.

That type of story usually warrants a sequel.

“This is going to lead in to where we want to get,” general manager Don Waddell said. “When you make the playoffs, you don’t want it to be a one-and-done situation. You want to be able to make the playoffs and, a few years from now, we’ll stop talking about making the playoffs and it’s about winning the Cup.

“I truly believe, after what I’ve witnessed this year, we have most of the pieces in that locker room.”

This season, the lead actors will be just about the same. Defenseman Zach Werenski led Columbus with 82 points (23 goals, 59 assists), ahead of forwards Kirill Marchenko (74 points; 31 goals, 43 assists), Kent Johnson (57 points; 24 goals, 33 assists), Sean Monahan (57 points; 19 goals, 38 assists) and Adam Fantilli (54 points; 31 goals, 23 assists).

“I always say you don’t make changes for the sake of change,” Waddell said. “You make changes to try to make your hockey team better. We felt we did that with the few changes we made. So, any time guys can be together, especially this group, this is a special group.

“Obviously, everything that happened last year and how they stuck together and how they are moving at the end of the year and moving forward, I think trying to keep the nucleus together was important.”

So, retaining Ivan Provorov was vital. The 28-year-old defenseman signed a seven-year, \$59.5 million contract (\$8.5 million average annual value) on July 1 after having 33 points (seven goals, 26 assists) in 82 games last season.

“They knew that I wanted to stay,” Provorov said on July 1. “I think my understanding was that they wanted to keep me. Obviously, I think it’s not a secret they, obviously, explored and looked at other options. Definitely was a stressful week. I think, for a little bit, definitely didn’t know if I was coming back or not.

“But obviously the want for me was to stay and to re-sign here. I’m glad we were able to come to an agreement and keep all of us together.”

Charlie Coyle, a 33-year-old forward, was acquired in a trade along with forward Miles Wood from the Colorado Avalanche on June 27 and could provide veteran presence to a roster projected to have an average age of 28.

“We’ve created a great atmosphere,” Waddell said. “It starts with the coaching staff. You have to give them a lot of credit for creating the atmosphere around the team. And then, as I’ve said, you have to be surrounded by good people and good veterans. I think that’s what’s helped our young players tremendously. That hasn’t changed.

“I think with the leadership we have in this team, knowing the potential of these players, I think there’s a lot more yet to come.”

Dean Evason enters his second season at the head of that staff after being hired as coach on July 22, 2024.

“They know the accountability that we as an organization, as a staff, as Don’s guys and us as a coaching staff are holding the players accountable [to],” Evason said on April 18. “More importantly, the players are holding themselves accountable. That goes a [heck] of a lot further than Don saying something or me saying something, when your peers are doing that.

“So, we’ll have to revisit some things systematically, whatever, and probably dial in some stuff, but they’ll know what to expect from me. They’ll know what to expect from us, as a staff.”

In Evason’s first season, Columbus got closer to the playoffs than just about anyone could have predicted. To Evason, it wasn’t enough.

“I know we’re going to get some accolades and all that kind of stuff, but at the end of the day, we’re not in the playoffs, right?” Evason said. “So, that was our first step, was to get into the playoffs. We didn’t get there. So, are we really happy with the foundation that we’re continuing to build on here this year? Sure. But it’s still extremely frustrating.”

That happens when a group starts to believe. Now, it’s time for belief to become reality.

“To me, I’ve been around teams for a long time,” Waddell said. “This is one of the strongest locker rooms I’ve ever been involved in.”

## **NHL.com / 3 questions facing Columbus Blue Jackets**

**By Wes Crosby – August 8, 2025**

### **1. Will the momentum carry over?**

Columbus was expected to finish well outside of the race for the Stanley Cup Playoffs last season but ended up two points behind the New Jersey Devils for third in the Metropolitan Division and the Montreal Canadiens for the second wild card from the Eastern Conference.

This season could determine if that upward trajectory is the new norm. Even last season, full of positives, was mired by inconsistency.

The Blue Jackets won 5-3 against the Detroit Red Wings in the 2025 Navy Federal Credit Union NHL Stadium Series at Ohio Stadium on March 1, capping a four-game winning streak. They were 1-7-1 in the next nine games, denting postseason hopes that six straight wins to finish the season couldn't rescue.

That experience could be invaluable in taking the next step.

"I always say, March and April, for some reason, they're harder to win in than October and November," general manager Don Waddell said. "It doesn't make any sense, but that's what we talk about. And we went through a dip in March. To be honest, I was wondering if we were going to get out of it.

"We did. That's a strong sign of this locker room."

### **2. Can the defense rise to the occasion?**

There was plenty of offense last season. The Blue Jackets averaged 3.26 goals to rank eighth in the NHL and fifth in the Eastern Conference.

The entire lineup seemed to produce. Kirill Marchenko and Adam Fantilli tied for the team lead with 31 goals. Kent Johnson (24), Zach Werenski (23) and Dmitri Voronkov (23) combined for another 70.

But the problem was that output was matched with an average of 3.26 goals against, eighth worst in the League.

The production is fine, but the defense needs to tighten for it to mean much.

"We have to keep the puck out of the net more, right?" coach Dean Evason said. "Like, we've talked about our scoring was good this year. We've got to keep the puck out of our net. So, our defensive game has to be better."

### **3. Can they win on the road?**

The Blue Jackets were 26-10-5 at home. They were 14-23-4 on the road.

Evason said he wasn't sure why there was such a difference, but part of it could have been special teams.

Columbus' power play (19.5 percent) and penalty kill (77.0 percent) each was 22nd in the NHL. Scoring more and giving up less in those spots is a straightforward solution.

But there's probably more to it. Evason said his job is to pinpoint an exact reason before being haunted by more of the same.

“Have to get better for us to get more points,” Evason said. “Have we identified exactly what we can do on the road? No. Do we have some thoughts? Yes. ... We will figure it out. We have to figure it out.”

## **NHL.com / NHL EDGE stats leaders for Columbus Blue Jackets**

**By Troy Perlowitz – August 8, 2025**

### **1. Werenski's skating distance and midrange shots**

Zach Werenski rewrote the Blue Jackets' record book last season by topping their single-season marks for goals (23), assists (59) and points (82) among defensemen. The first-time Norris Trophy finalist ranked second among NHL defensemen in goals and points, was fourth in assists and led all NHL players in average ice time (26:45; Columbus record).

Werenski also led the League in total skating distance (320.25 miles) last season, over 16 miles more than any other player (Colorado Avalanche's Cale Makar at 303.76). That is the most miles skated in a single regular season during the NHL's puck and player tracking era (since 2021-22) and includes the highest single-game mileage (5.16 miles against the New York Islanders on March 24) and single-period mark (2.04 miles in 3rd period of that same game) of the season.

In addition to his skating, Werenski was also an NHL EDGE juggernaut among defensemen last season in terms of his shooting metrics as he ranked second in midrange shots on goal (78), third in midrange goals (10) and ninth in long-range shots on goal (101).

### **2. Skating speed**

The Blue Jackets ranked in the NHL's top 10 in 22-plus mph speed bursts (95; eighth) and 20-plus mph bursts (1,904; seventh) last season. In terms of 20-plus mph speed bursts, forwards Adam Fantilli (264; 98th percentile) and Kirill Marchenko (183; 93rd percentile) each ranked highly at their position. Fantilli was also a standout in top skating speed (23.46 mph; 96th percentile) and 22-plus mph speed bursts (25; 97th percentile).

Fantilli and Marchenko shared the Blue Jackets lead in goals (31 each), becoming only the second pair of teammates in their history to each score 30-plus goals in the same season joining Brandon Saad (31) and Boone Jenner (30) in 2015-16. Both also excelled in terms of their shot speed metrics among forwards with Fantilli ranking in the 96th percentile in top shot speed (95.16 mph) and Marchenko ranking in the 84th percentile in average shot speed (61.18 mph).

Werenski's robust EDGE stats profile also covered skating speed as he ranked in the top five among defensemen in 22-plus mph bursts (12; tied for fourth) and 20-plus mph bursts (162; third) last season.

### **3. High-danger prowess**

Columbus finished with 89 points (40-33-9) in the standings last season, two behind the Montreal Canadiens for the second wild card in the Eastern Conference. Although the Blue Jackets did not qualify for the Stanley Cup Playoffs, it was a 23-point improvement compared to 2023-24, the largest gain of any NHL team.

The Blue Jackets were tied for seventh in goals per game (3.26) last season, which was also a substantial improvement from the previous season (2.85; tied for 24th in 2023-24). An underlying reason for this goal-scoring jump was their high-danger shooting prowess; Columbus ranked sixth in the NHL in high-danger goals (134) and third in high-danger shooting percentage (22.4).

In terms of high-danger goals, Fantilli (19; 96th percentile) and wing Dmitri Voronkov (16; 91st percentile) ranked highly among forwards last season, and Werenski led all defensemen in both



high-danger shots on goal (35) and high-danger goals (seven). Combined with goalie Jet Greaves' late-season heroics (5-0-0, .975 save percentage, two shutouts in final five games) and elite high-danger save percentage (.901; 99th percentile), the Blue Jackets could take another step toward the playoffs this season.

## **Columbus Dispatch / Columbus Blue Jackets hire Stefan Matteau as Cleveland Monsters assistant**

**By Brian Hedger – August 6, 2025**

Stefan Matteau will replace assistant coach Mark Letestu on the Cleveland Monsters' bench for the upcoming season.

Matteau, 31, played 13 professional seasons for teams in the NHL, AHL and two European leagues, including parts of four seasons for the Blue Jackets. He'll replace Letestu, a former Blue Jackets forward who spent four years as one of the Monsters' assistants before landing the head coaching role July 5 for the AHL's Colorado Eagles.

Matteau's NHL career spanned 92 games over seven years after he was selected 29th overall in 2012 by the New Jersey Devils. He finished with six goals, five assists and 11 points while playing for the Devils, Montreal Canadiens, Vegas Golden Knights, Blue Jackets and Colorado Avalanche.

He's another young AHL assistant for a Monsters' coaching staff that hired Letestu as an assistant at age 36 and is led by Trent Vogelhuber, who's 37 and heading into his fourth season as head coach. The staff also includes Brad Thiessen, who's 39 going into his fifth season as the Monsters' goalie coach and a goaltending development coach for the Blue Jackets.

Matteau is the son of forward Stephane Matteau, who played for six NHL teams and helped the New York Rangers win the 1994 Stanley Cup by scoring in overtime of Game 7 against the Devils in the Eastern Conference finals.

Former Miami University and Bowling Green coach Chris Bergeron, 54, rounds out Cleveland's coaching staff going into his second season as associate coach, while Mike Murphy joins the Monsters as head equipment manager. Murphy spent the past two years as head equipment manager for the Everett Silvertips of the Western Hockey League, a top Canadian junior circuit.

## [NHL.com / Top prospects for Columbus Blue Jackets](#)

By Wes Crosby – August 8, 2025

### 1. Cayden Lindstrom, F

**How acquired:** Selected with No. 4 pick in 2024 NHL Draft

**2024-25 season:** Medicine Hat (WHL): 0 GP, 0-0-0 in regular season; 4 GP, 2-2-4 in playoffs

Lindstrom (6-foot-3, 209 pounds) had a microdiscectomy in November to fix a herniated disc, forcing him to miss the entire 2024-25 regular season with Medicine Hat. He returned with an assist in Game 1 of the Western Hockey League Final and scored in Game 2 before taking a hard hit the next game, missing Game 4 and returning in Game 5.

“That was my goal all season was to go back and play with [Medicine Hat] there,” Lindstrom said on July 2. “Just watched them all year on TV there. It was hard. I had to do what I had to do here to get back. Worked as hard as I could. ... It helped me a lot, just coming into this summer, seeing what I had to work on. There’s a lot I need to work on after missing a whole year.”

The 19-year-old, moving to college hockey with Michigan State, has a chance to fully return as a top-end forward with a unique combination of size and skill.

**Projected NHL arrival:** 2026-27

### 2. Jackson Smith, D

**How acquired:** Selected with No. 14 pick in 2025 NHL Draft

**2024-25 season:** Tri-City (WHL): 68 GP, 11-43-54

Smith (6-3, 195) was projected as one of the top defensemen of the 2025 class, to the point Blue Jackets general manager Don Waddell said he didn’t anticipate the 18-year-old still being available at No. 14.

“We had him really high on our list,” Waddell said. “Some of our scouts that watched him rated his skating at a 10. That happens very rarely.”

With that agility on a big frame, Smith could transition well to the NHL in the not-too-distant future. For now, he’ll go from the WHL to Penn State, joining forward Gavin McKenna as another top prospect deciding to jump to the burgeoning program in Happy Valley.

“Getting to play against a bit of better competition, I think it gets you a bit more ready for the NHL, which is ultimately every hockey player’s dream,” Smith said.

**Projected NHL arrival:** 2026-27

### 3. Pyotr Andreyanov, G

**How acquired:** Selected with No. 20 pick in 2025 NHL Draft

**2024-25 season:** Krasnaya Armiya (MHL): 37 GP, 23-6-6, 1.75 GAA, .942 SV%

Andreyanov (6-0, 207) was the first goalie drafted in what was considered a deep class.

The 18-year-old has been dominant in the junior system of CSKA Moscow of the Kontinental Hockey League. He was Columbus’ top-rated goalie in the draft, Waddell said, and was second on its wish list behind Smith.

But Andreyanov won't be an NHL option for some time, since he's signed to remain in Russia for the next five seasons.

"Drafted him at 18 (years old) and if he's coming over at 22, 23, the hope is the development path brings him right to the National Hockey League," Waddell said.

**Projected NHL arrival:** 2030-31

#### **4. Luca Del Bel Belluz, F**

**How acquired:** Selected with No. 44 pick in 2022 NHL Draft

**2024-25 season:** Columbus (NHL): 15 GP, 2-6-8; Cleveland (AHL): 61 GP: 27-26-53

Del Bel Belluz (6-foot, 185) scored in his NHL debut on April 16, 2024. He had a goal and an assist on Jan. 9, the first of his 15 NHL games last season.

The 21-year-old should start this season in Cleveland again, but it's probably only a matter of time until he's back with Columbus.

**Projected NHL arrival:** This season

#### **5. Jordan Dumais, F**

**How acquired:** Selected with No. 96 pick in 2022 NHL Draft

**2024-25 season:** Cleveland (AHL): 21 GP, 4-7-11

Dumais (5-8, 173) had 140 points (54 goals, 86 assists) in 64 games for Halifax of the Quebec Maritimes Junior Hockey League in 2022-23.

He then had surgery to repair an abdominal injury, cutting his next season short and making him miss the start of last season. The 21-year-old returned in his first pro season with Cleveland.

A shifty forward with plenty of offensive upside, Dumais will continue to develop in the AHL and could earn a recall if he has a particularly strong season.

**Projected NHL arrival:** 2026-27