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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/blog-toews-day-to-day>

***BLOG: Toews day-to-day***

***Namestnikov takes Toews spot on second line with Perfetti and Nyquist at practice***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets are well known for their depth, and it is already being put to the test with the loss of Adam Lowry (out until November) and Dylan Samberg (out 6-8 weeks).

Thursday morning, all eyes were on one of the ice sheets hockey for all centre looking for Jonathan Toews. The Jets centre “tweaked” something on Tuesday night during the Jets 3-2 loss to Minnesota and did not take part of the 80-minute practice this morning.

“Just didn’t feel like we wanted to push that any farther,” said Scott Arniel.

So just day to day, he was in and got treatment today, we’ll move on tomorrow.”

In Toews place on the second line was Vlad Namestnikov between Gustav Nyquist and Cole Perfetti. Namestnikov has played with Perfetti before so there is familiarity there and another reason why the Russian forward is so valuable to the Jets. Arniel has multiple forwards that can move up and down the lineup.

“We’ve seen it over the last couple of years, like Al (Iafallo) jumping up, he went from our fourth line to our first line, different times,” said Arniel

“Vladdy’s been able to go wing, center. We’ve got, we’ve got a few guys now that within our roster that can do that. So, it helps me as a coach.”

The Jets are lucky that Namestnikov is ok after he was driven into the boards by Yakov Trenin on Tuesday night. The 32-year-old wouldn’t comment on that hit but was willing to discuss his versatility.

“I said it before, I’ll play whatever position, whatever line they need me on,” said Namestnikov.

“I’ll go out there and do my best. I think we are all ready to go.”

After a scare Monday morning, Connor Hellebuyck played Tuesday night against the Wild and was back on the ice with his teammates on Thursday. He is expected to start tomorrow against Calgary and shared the reason why he left the ice early at the start of the week.

“Well, I had a rib out of place. All I need to do is get a good back crack, and no one could do it here, so I had to get off the ice,” said Hellebuyck.

“It was skeletal so I couldn’t really move I went to tell the chiro, and he put me back in place in like five minutes and I was back here just as practice was ending.”

Hellebuyck made 16 saves against the Wild and said he was getting some of the rust out since he hadn’t played in a game since May.

“Getting sick of practicing all the time, and wanted to get some game action,” said Hellebuyck.

“And now it's kind of falling into that season routine. We have another game Friday, and, you know, them prepping for game one.”

Game one against the Dallas Stars comes six days after the Jets will play that final preseason contest in Calgary, that is a long time for someone like Hellebuyck who enjoys playing a lot.

But, you know, training camps hard, grueling. He wants some guys to heal up a little bit, so completely understand the time being,” said Hellebuyck.

“And I think in the long run, it helps. In the short term, you think ‘I want to play and just let me play,’ but it’s good.”

### **NHL.com**

[https://www.nhl.com/news/central-division-winner-roundtable-debate?utm\\_source=xdotcom&utm\\_medium=nhl\\_social&utm\\_campaign=media](https://www.nhl.com/news/central-division-winner-roundtable-debate?utm_source=xdotcom&utm_medium=nhl_social&utm_campaign=media)

### ***Central Division winner debated by NHL.com panel Stars, Jets, Avalanche among choices discussed by writers***

By NHL.com

The Central Division was the toughest in the NHL last season, producing the Presidents’ Trophy winner in the Winnipeg Jets, three teams that put up more than 100 points in the standings (Jets, Dallas Stars, Colorado Avalanche) and both wild-card qualifiers from the West (Minnesota Wild and St. Louis Blues).

So, winning the division, like the Jets did last season, is viewed as a major accomplishment.

Can the Jets do it again?

Of course, but several of the NHL.com writers have doubts. Five choose the Stars, who finished 10 points behind the Jets in the regular season, but beat Winnipeg in the playoffs, to be the top dog. Three chose the Jets and one picked the Avalanche, who are the most recent winner of the Stanley Cup (2022) from this division.

The Utah Mammoth were in the mix for much of the season and are hoping they can close a seven-point gap on the second wild card from last season. Great things were expected from the Nashville Predators last season, after the acquisition of Steven Stamkos and Jonathan Marchessault, but a struggle at the start of the season doomed them to disappointment. They are looking to bounce their way back into the playoff conversation.

The Chicago Blackhawks, under new coach Jeff Blashill, are looking to accelerate their rebuild this season.

Here is how the nine NHL.com writers see the Central shaking out this season.

### ***Colorado Avalanche***

The battle to win this division is going to be a dogfight between the Avalanche and Stars again and could go either way. I just think Colorado is on a mission. The fact that the Avalanche has won one of four Stanley Cup Playoff series since winning the title in 2022 must make the uber-competitive Nathan MacKinnon and Cale Makar bristle with frustration. Truth be told, when you have two of the top-five players in the sport on your roster like those two are, you're always going to be in the mix. Add in the fact that captain Gabriel Landeskog is back, and that's a huge boost for the team. He'd been out for three years because of a knee injury when he returned to the lineup for Game 3 against the Stars in the Western Conference First Round last spring and had four points (one goal, three assists) in five playoff games. Goalie Mackenzie Blackwood was 22-12-3 with a 2.33 goals-against average and .913 save percentage in 37 games after being acquired from the San Jose Sharks last season. -- Mike Zeisberger, staff writer

### *Dallas Stars*

There's a new coach in Dallas after a disappointing end to last season, when the Stars lost in five games in the Western Conference Final to the Edmonton Oilers, their third straight loss in the Conference Final. I think the frustration at that ending, plus the push from coach Glen Gulutzan, who replaced Pete DeBoer, will propel the Stars into the top spot in the Central Division, ahead of some tough competition. They certainly have the goaltending, with Jake Oettinger likely highly motivated by the chance to see action at the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026, but also have a full season of Mikko Rantanen, who was traded to the Stars on March 7 and was a huge force in the postseason. I expect big things from Rantanen, who scored 88 points (32 goals, 56 assists) in 82 games last season with three teams (Avalanche, Carolina Hurricanes and Stars). He will be settled, on a team heavy with fellow Finns, and will be gunning for a big season. -- Amalie Benjamin, senior writer

I'm looking forward to seeing what Rantanen can do in his first full season with the Stars after joining them in a trade on March 7 and signing an eight-year, \$96 million contract. The 28-year-old forward was a difference-maker in the Stanley Cup Playoffs last season, getting 22 points (nine goals, 13 assists) in 18 games. Expect more dominant play from Rantanen this season to push the Stars back to the top of the Central after they finished second behind the Winnipeg Jets last season. The Stars have scoring depth with Rantanen, Jason Robertson, Roope Hintz, Matt Duchene, Wyatt Johnston and Tyler Seguin and skill on defense with Miro Heiskanen, Thomas Harley and Esa Lindell and one of the best goalies in the League in Oettinger. -- Tom Gulitti, senior writer

A full season of Rantanen in the fold should help stabilize a tremendous top line with Hintz and Robertson. Johnston enters his fourth NHL season after having scored 177 points (89 goals, 88 assists) in 246 games. I feel Dallas is going to be a hungry, determined team and the core of this team has a win-now mentality. Defensively, Heiskanen, Harley and Lindell key the blue line, and hard-hitting Lian Bichsel (6-foot-7, 231 pounds) made quite an impact when he joined the team in December (team-leading 155 hits in 38 regular-season games). -- Mike G. Morreale, senior draft writer

Is this the year this current Dallas Stars core gets over the Stanley Cup hump? Could be, and the first step will be winning the Central Division in what should be a dogfight with the Jets, Avalanche and Minnesota Wild. But I'll take the Stars, who will be led by goalie Jake Oettinger, who is not only out to erase the painful playoff loss to the Oilers last season, but is playing for the No. 1 goalie spot for the U.S. in the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026. -- Bill Price, Editor-in-Chief

The Stars' center depth is strong with Hintz, Johnston, Sam Steel and Radek Faksa. They have arguably two No. 1 defensemen in Heiskanen and Harley, and they can play them on different pairs. They have one of the best wingers in the League in Rantanen. Robertson might not again be a 100-point forward (he had 109 points in 2022-23), but he's had 80 points the past two seasons, which is enough on a team as deep as Dallas. Duchene and Seguin can still bring the offense. Bourque could take the next step and be a top-six forward. Oettinger is one of the top No. 1 goalies. The Stars have to deliver in the playoffs, but setting themselves up best for the challenge should be the goal, and that's their motivation in the regular season. -- Dan Rosen, senior writer

### *Winnipeg Jets*

The Jets have the best goalie in the NHL in Connor Hellebuyck, and that gives them an edge in arguably the best division in the League. He anchored a team that won the Presidents' Trophy last season, and then added center Jonathan Toews for a comeback tour in his hometown. Toews likely won't be a 25-goal scorer in his return after two seasons away from the game, but with Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor and Gabriel Vilardi leading the offense, he won't have to be. What Toews does bring is the experience of a three-time Stanley Cup champion. He'll bring an element of mental toughness that only can help the group, which will be tested by the other talented teams in the division. But Hellebuyck, who remains in his prime at 32 years old, should be the difference in a second-straight division title. -- Adam Kimelman, deputy managing editor

Oh, I know, the Stars are the favorite pick among some of my colleagues and understandably so. They're great. But as much as the Jets have struggled in the postseason, I'm taking them to win the Central for the second-straight season. Hellebuyck is a big reason. The goaltender may have to answer questions for his playoff issues but there's no question he remains the best regular-season goalie in the NHL. The Jets lost Nikolaj Ehlers in free agency, but they've still got plenty of production with the likes of Connor, Scheifele and defenseman Josh Morrissey. I also expect Cole Perfetti's production to increase this season. Their defense remains strong, too. I like the Jets' makeup, and the Central will be theirs again. -- Tracey Myers, staff writer

Winnipeg won the Presidents' Trophy playing in a tough division and still have the talent to win the Central again this season. The loss of Ehlers will hurt, but Winnipeg added Toews and Gustav Nyquist to try and make up the offense. Toews is a proven champion and will bring a strong voice to an already veteran locker room. With reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner Hellebuyck in goal, it will take something special to knock the Jets off their perch atop the division. -- Derek Van Diest, staff writer

### **Associated Press**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11461652/nhl-central-division-tough-season-winnipeg-jets/>

### ***NHL's Central Division remains tough through the season and playoffs***

By Stephen Whyno The Associated Press

Mikko Rantanen was a staple for Colorado, helping the Avalanche win the Stanley Cup as part of his dominant decade in Denver. Then, all of a sudden last winter he was gone, traded to Carolina and by spring back in the division with bitter rival Dallas.

"Someone was like, 'Yeah, we might be like getting Rantanen,' and we're like: 'What are you talking about? Like, there's no way,'" Stars goaltender Jake Oettinger recalled. "Then all of a

sudden the guy you hate is walking into the dressing room and you're all like, 'Oh.' And then he's just a great guy and a great teammate."

Rantanen now plays deep in the heart of Texas for the Stars, who have made three consecutive trips to the Western Conference Final. His former team has Gabriel Landeskog back healthy after the long-term captain missed three years with a chronic knee injury. And Winnipeg hasn't changed much from the group that was the best in the NHL last season, making the Central an unending gantlet from October through the playoffs, with at least three Stanley Cup contenders at the top.

"Unless you win the Cup, it's a failure," said Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck, who won the Vezina Trophy as well as the Hart as MVP. "It doesn't matter how far you make it. You're always looking for what's going to get you to the next step, and that's where we are now."

#### *On the rise*

Colorado's point total has declined from 119 points during the championship season to 109, 107 and 102, but two-time Norris Trophy-winning defenseman and 2022 playoff MVP Cale Makar isn't bothered. Landeskog is back, Nathan MacKinnon and Makar remain two of the top five players in the league and the Avalanche believe they've found their goalie in Mackenzie Blackwood.

"We're going into this year with — as of right now, knock on wood — fully healthy," Makar said. "There's no question marks with anything. ... Just as a collective whole, I think it's a completely different feel with our organization and the excitement that's around us."

Dallas has a new coach, Glen Gulutzan, after firing Peter DeBoer following a rough end to the most recent trip to the West final when he abruptly pulled Oettinger and seemed to pin outsized blame on the franchise netminder. Oettinger says the Stars are full of confidence about getting over the hump.

Just getting to the playoffs would be momentous for the Utah Mammoth in their first season with that name and second in Salt Lake City since relocating from Arizona. The young core of captain Clayton Keller, fellow forward Logan Cooley and defenseman Mikhail Sergachev got a boost with an offseason acquisition of two-time 25-goal-scorer JJ Peterka and the Mammoth look capable of taking a big step forward.

"Each year, we've kind of gotten a bit better and realized how hard it is to win and how just tough it is make it, year in and year out," Keller said. "It's an exciting time, and I think we're all ready for that challenge and I really think JJ is going to help us out."

#### *On the decline*

Winnipeg has nowhere to go but down in the regular season after winning the Presidents' Trophy with 116 points on 56 wins. The Jets should still be one of the NHL's best.

Chicago is expected to struggle in 2023 No. 1 pick Connor Bedard's third season. The good news: There are some exciting young players around him, from forward Frank Nazar to defenseman Artyom Levshunov and the Blackhawks hope Spencer Knight is their solution in net. It will take more time — especially with the salary cap rising — to improve.

Nashville general manager Barry Trotz joked at the start of training camp he was hoping the Predators would prove preseason expectations wrong a third time in a row. Two years ago that

was a good thing when they made the playoffs and not so much in 2024-25 when they were a massive bust following a free agent spending spree.

“We started gelling and started playing more team hockey by the end of the season, so we once last season ended, I think everyone was just hitching to get a clean slate,” said Brady Skjei, who was one of those additions on a seven-year, \$49 million contract. “We really got to start off on the right foot this year and have a great start — kind of get that swagger back that we’ve known a lot of us have had in the past.”

#### *On the hot seat*

Predators coach Andrew Brunette’s job could be on the line if his team does not get off to a good start. Then again, so could Trotz’s if ownership decides he should be back behind the bench instead of running the front office.

Likewise, if Utah does not show growth, André Tourigny’s seat could be getting warmer. For now, he is safe.

#### *Predicted order of finish*

Colorado, Dallas, Winnipeg, St. Louis, Utah, Minnesota, Nashville, Chicago.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/10/02/thats-the-identity-of-our-team>

#### ***‘That’s the identity of our team’***

#### ***Jets’ strong foundation poises club for an encore***

By: Ken Wiebe

Scott Arniel knows it isn’t going to be easy.

When a team puts together a memorable season that includes a number of franchise records and earns several crisp new banners that will be unveiled next week — yet still falls short of the ultimate goal — there’s a stark realization that more is expected.

The good news for the head coach of the Winnipeg Jets is that a strong foundation has been put in place during the three prior seasons he was on the coaching staff — first as an associate coach under Rick Bowness and then as the bench boss last year when he was the runner-up for the Jack Adams Award as NHL coach of the year.

That foundation requires a serious commitment to playing without the puck which, in turn, allows the skilled players on the roster to spend more time on the attack rather than getting stuck defending.

Coming off consecutive Jennings Trophy-winning seasons where the Jets allowed the fewest goals in the NHL, it’s occasionally hard to believe there was a time not long ago when a good chunk of this group didn’t defend well.

As Jets captain Adam Lowry has openly admitted during the past several seasons, the team has turned a weakness into a strength.

"I mean, that's the identity of our team," said Jets centre Vladislav Namestnikov. "Team defence first, and then we take it to offence. We create a lot of turnovers from playing defence, and I think we just have to build on what we've done previously and just go from there."

When the subject was broached with Arniel on Thursday, he pointed out that the overall buy-in, especially from the top players, has created a trickle-down effect.

Once that high standard is created, there's a level of accountability that accompanies it.

"That part of it has certainly helped us to get everybody to do it," said Arniel, noting that he isn't doing as much teaching as he gets set for his fourth season because there is so much self-correction being done. "When you have that in place, it allows you to go and do other things instinctively. When you're out there thinking, I've got to go here or I've got to go there, you're not playing on your toes and you're not playing fast."

"So, now, because we know it so well, we're able to be quick and be able to do the other things at top speed that allows us to be the team that we are."

"When you're out there thinking, I've got to go here or I've got to go there, you're not playing on your toes and you're not playing fast."

The Jets aren't merely a one-trick pony though either.

Along with being stingy defensively, the Jets have plenty of offensive weapons — both of the high-end variety and in the secondary scoring column.

Their power play improved to first overall from the bottom third and the penalty went from near the bottom of the NHL to the middle of the pack.

But starting the season without Lowry up front and defensive stalwart Dylan Samberg on the shelf for six to eight weeks, the Jets will be tested on a number of levels.

That's why the prior building of that foundation is so essential, first in terms of integrating some of the new players brought in this past summer, and with others taking on a larger role because of those injuries up front and on the back end.

"We've got a few guys now within our roster that can do that," said Arniel. "It helps me as a coach that when those big injuries happen, we have key people that you're confident in."

The news sounds relatively positive for Jonathan Toews, who left Tuesday's exhibition game against the Minnesota Wild after tweaking something during the second period.

Arniel said on Thursday that the lower-body issue falls under the day-to-day category, which means Toews should be an option for next Thursday's season opener against the Dallas Stars — barring something unforeseen.

The other important element to the Jets equation is having the reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner between the pipes in Connor Hellebuyck.

Although the Jets have taken great strides to make life for Hellebuyck a bit easier — in terms of the quantity and quality of scoring chances he faces — there's clearly an advantage to having an elite goalie who happens to be a workhorse as the last line of defence.

Maintaining that without Lowry and Samberg figures to be more challenging, but that's why the Jets have worked so hard to get that defensive commitment throughout the four forward lines and three defence pairings that are in the lineup on a nightly basis.

Hellebuyck has created an incredibly high standard for himself during his decade in the organization — as evidenced by his low goals-against average and high save percentage for his career.

Those numbers last season alone were borderline absurd, which is why he received more votes than Leon Draisaitl of the Edmonton Oilers, Nikita Kucherov of the Tampa Bay Lightning and Nathan MacKinnon of the Colorado Avalanche when it came to awarding the Most Valuable Player award, as voted on by the Professional Hockey Writers Association.

What will Hellebuyck do for an encore?

"We put that one behind us and focus on the new year, a new me with no expectations," said Hellebuyck. "You come in and build the game like I did last year and I am really focused on putting my best foot forward every single day. It is a process as you're not to come in and expect to be the same guy (as you were) last year at Day 1.

"You never are and no one ever is, so I will continue to build my game and work on the process that I know is going to work."

"I am really focused on putting my best foot forward every single day."

What we know for sure is that Hellebuyck will be busy, as he's eclipsed 60 starts in six of his nine years as a starter.

Hellebuyck doesn't have to put the team on his back and carry them, but the Jets will need him to play at a high level if they want to challenge the likes of the Stars, Avalanche and St. Louis Blues for top spot in the Central Division.

"We didn't win the Stanley Cup and we didn't get past the second round. We've got some work to do to get there," said Arniel. "First and foremost, you've got to get in the playoffs. Our division didn't get any easier, the Western Conference isn't any easier."

The Eastern Conference isn't any easier either, not with the Florida Panthers and former Jets head coach Paul Maurice coming off consecutive Stanley Cup titles.

Arniel pointed to the Panthers as another example of why winning the Presidents' Trophy as the top team in the regular season matters, noting that Florida achieved the honour in 2022 before reaching the top of the mountain in 2024 and 2025.

Becoming battle tested doesn't happen overnight, but after taking several important steps forward, Arniel believes this group is poised to do more.



"It's all part of that growth of stepping towards that ultimate goal of winning the Cup. We've been doing that in the last couple of years," said Arniel. "We've still got a lot of work to do ahead of us through these 82 games. The first, to be able to be in that spot to compete, but then, to build our brand and continue to build our brand over the course of these (82) games."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/2025/10/02/ford-impresses-hellebuyck-never-stresses>

***Ford impresses, Hellebuyck never stresses  
Jets forward, goaltender on track as training camp winds down***

By: Ken Wiebe

That Connor Hellebuyck was so nonchalant about the subject of his absence earlier in the week came as little surprise.

But when a routine question about why he left Monday's skate was brought to his attention on Thursday, the Winnipeg Jets goalie provided an unexpected revelation.

"Well, I had a rib out of place," said Hellebuyck, who will be back between the pipes on Friday when the Jets close out the exhibition season against the Calgary Flames. "All I needed was a good back cracking and no one could do it here so I had to get off the ice. It was skeletal so I couldn't really move.

"I went and saw the chiropractor and he put me back in place in like five minutes and I was back here just as practice was ending. You can't fight through that when you can't move."

Was this rib issue something Hellebuyck routinely deals with?

"Have you ever slept wrong and woken up a little sore? It happens," said Hellebuyck. "It is not that big of a deal. You just pop it back in and continue to move on. It was odd that no one here could do it before the skate. It is normal."

Hellebuyck made his exhibition debut on Tuesday in the 3-2 loss to the Minnesota Wild, finishing with 16 saves.

"I felt pretty good getting some of the rust out," he said. "You get sick of practicing all the time and I wanted to see some game action and now it is kind of falling into that season routine."

Hellebuyck is gearing up for next Thursday's season opener against the Dallas Stars and feels he's right on track.

"It is more figuring out what part of my game I want to focus on a little more," said Hellebuyck when asked what was on his training camp checklist. "It changes from year to year and I can't tell you if there is an exact science one way or another every year but right now I am working on some patience and looking at some tape with the time we have and find the details I want to work on right now."

One of the interesting developments in Thursday's on-ice workout was that Parker Ford was at centre on the fourth line with Cole Koepke and Tanner Pearson, while the fifth line included a rotation of Brad Lambert, David Gustafsson, Walker Duehr and Nikita Chibrikov.

Essentially, there are six players battling for the final two roster spots up front — provided the Jets start with two goalies, eight defencemen and 13 forwards.

Ford scored a goal against the Flames last Saturday and has done a nice job since being moved to the middle.

He's an energetic player that plays with high intensity, finishes checks, he's done a nice job in the face-off circle and has seen time on the penalty kill — all things that are important for a role player.

"Well, he's still here," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "He impressed us last year, with his details, his work ethic. There's a lot there that we like. He's still in the fight. That's all you ask of these kids, put your best foot forward and he's done that."

The Jets' 23-man roster is due on Monday afternoon, though players who require waivers need to be subjected to them by Sunday.

#### *Loose pucks*

Defenceman Kale Clague and forwards Jaret Anderson-Dolan and Samuel Fagemo cleared waivers on Thursday and were assigned to the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

In terms of the rest of the line rushes on Thursday, with Toews not on the ice, Vladislav Namestnikov moved up with Cole Perfetti and Gustav Nyquist, and Morgan Barron skated with Alex Iafallo and Nino Niederrieter. The top line of Mark Scheifele, Gabe Vilardi and Kyle Connor was reunited. On the back end, Josh Morrissey was with Dylan DeMelo, Neal Pionk was with Logan Stanley, Luke Schenn was with Haydn Fleury and Colin Miller was with Ville Heinola.

#### **Winnipeg Sun**

[https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-breathe-easier-as-toews-listed-day-to-day-with-lower-body-injury?utm\\_source=winnipeg-jets](https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-breathe-easier-as-toews-listed-day-to-day-with-lower-body-injury?utm_source=winnipeg-jets)

#### ***Jets breathe easier as Toews listed day-to-day with lower-body injury***

By Gordon Anderson

The loyal fans of Jets Nation can take a deep breath — the Jonathan Toews injury situation isn't as dire as it seemed at the time of the incident.

The 37-year-old free agent signing left the ice during Tuesday's pre-season game against the Minnesota Wild with what appeared to be a non-contact injury while the Jets were on a second-period power play. Toews didn't play a shift in the third period.

Toews was not on the ice on Thursday at the Hockey For All Centre as Vlad Namestnikov centered his linemates, Gustav Nyquist and Cole Perfetti. But Toews was walking around the dressing room with no apparent issue.

Head coach Scott Arniel did say the injury was lower body in nature, without elaborating any further.

"(Toews) is day-to-day," Arniel said of the veteran centre, who logged 10:02 of ice time on 10 shifts. "He tweaked something the other night in the game, and we just didn't feel like he could push it any further.

"He's in and got treatment today, and we'll move on to tomorrow."

The Jets close out the pre-season on Friday night in Calgary against the Flames.

Toews is not the only player who is nursing bumps, bruises, strains and scrapes.

"We've had some other guys that have kind of done the same thing, you guys haven't noticed," Arniel said. "But there's been a couple of guys that are on this day-to-day thing. We're not in a situation to rush. These games aren't (ones) that you have to play in or you have to win it. We're trying to get him and everybody else ready for next week."

"Training camp is hard and grueling," added goaltender Connor Hellebuyck.

Arniel says the modern player is so in tune with how they're feeling physically that nothing can be gained from forcing a minor health issue when it's not needed.

"These guys work out 12 months of the year," Arniel said. "They all have their own special guys, different things, chiro or nutrition guys. All of these different things that they all have on hand for them every day. They know their bodies. and we want to make sure that when they're out on the ice, they're feeling good, they're not going to hurt themselves more, especially at this time of the year. That's part of what the new athlete is today. These guys are in great shape."

Meanwhile, defenceman Kale Clague, and forwards Jaret Anderson-Dolan and Samuel Fagemo cleared the waiver process and were assigned to the Manitoba Moose.

As of 4 p.m. on Thursday, the Jets had three goalies, eight defencemen and 17 forwards on the roster, for a total of 28 players. The club will trim its numbers down to a 23-man opening day roster prior to the roster deadline at 3 p.m. on Oct. 6.

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/jets-netminder-connor-hellebuyck-clears-the-air-on-his-early-exit-from-practice>

### ***Jets netminder Connor Hellebuyck clears the air on his early exit from practice***

By Gordon Anderson

Connor Hellebuyck had local social-media hearts pounding in anguish when he departed practice early at the Hockey For All Centre on Monday.

Three days later, Hellebuyck cleared the air in regard to his missing in action status.

"I had a rib out of place," he said on Thursday morning. "All I needed was a good back cracking, and no one could do it here, so I had to get off the ice. It was skeletal so I couldn't really move. I went and saw the chiropractor and he put me back in place in like five minutes and I was back here just as practice was ending."

On the day of the incident Jets head coach Scott Arniel said his netminder 'didn't feel quite right, so he just came off.'

And the head coach's response to his netminder's full confession days later?

"He just got fined for telling you (about that)," Arniel said with a chuckle.

Hellebuyck made his first start of the season against Minnesota on Tuesday night and is slated to get the nod when the Jets finish the pre-season Friday night in Calgary.

"It happens. It is not that big of a deal," Hellebuyck said of the tuneup. "You just pop it back in and continue to move on."

Hellebuyck made 16 saves as the Jets lost 3-2 to the Wild in St. Paul.

"I felt pretty good getting some of the rust out," he said. "You get sick of practicing all the time and I wanted to see some game action and now it is kind of falling into that season routine. We have a game on Friday and then prepping for Game 1 (against the Dallas Stars next week)."

With just one week away from the lid-lifer at home, Hellebuyck was asked about his status. As in, where is his game at the moment.

"It is more figuring out what part of my game I want to focus on a little more," Hellebuyck said. "It changes from year to year and I can't tell you if there is an exact science one way or another, but right now I am working on some patience and looking at some tape with the time we now have and find the details I want to work on right now."

The 32-year-old Commerce, Mich., native is coming off one of the best seasons for a netminder in recent memory. Hellebuyck won the Vezina for the second consecutive season with 2.00 goals against average and a .925 save percentage. He posted eight shutout and also won the Hart Trophy as the league's MVP.

The 6-foot-4 netminder is entering the season with a blank slate, with zero expectations.

"We put that one behind us and focus on the new year, a new me with no expectations," he said. "You come in and build the game like I did last year, and I am really focused on putting my best foot forward every single day."

Hellebuyck knows from experience alone that he is nowhere near where he needs to be. But he is adequately satisfied his game will elevate as the season progresses. Another incentive for the netminder is making the Team USA roster for the Milano Cortina 2026 Winter Olympics.

"It is a process as you're not to come in and expect to be the same guy (as you were) last year (on) day one," he said. "You never are, and no one ever is so I will continue to build my game and work on the process that I know is going to work."

Arniel likes the clean slate mentality coming his goaltender. With the ultimate prize not achieved, it's back to the beginning.

"I think that that's part of what we talked about from the opening speech at training camp," Arniel said. "We didn't win the Stanley Cup, and we didn't get past the second round. We've got some work to do to get there."

Last season was one for the ages for Jets 2.0 with the league's best regular season team, the most wins in franchise history the most road wins in franchise history and the number one powerplay in the league.

"We are so well-rounded, and we have scoring, we have a good defence," Hellebuyck said. "We have good special teams and good structured play. It is hard to pinpoint one thing as I think we do it all pretty well."

The Jets have 154 victories in the last three regular seasons. There is proof that some of the items the Jets value, like defensive zone responsibility, positional flexibility and strong special teams, are, in fact, working.

"(Our record of winning) makes guys want to stay," Hellebuyck said. "It makes guys want to play here. When you are winning everything is better and enjoying your time at the rink and it becomes less of a job of more of a sport that we play. "

### **TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/10/02/one-big-question-how-can-jets-overcome-past-playoff-stumbles/>

### ***One Big Question: How can Jets overcome past playoff stumbles? (VIDEO)***

The Jets are coming off a sensational regular season as a team and had some standout performances from individual players, but once again, the postseason ended in disappointment. How can the Jets overcome their past playoff stumbles in order to find success? TSN Hockey analyst Mike Johnson and TSN Director of Scouting Craig Button examine the One Big Question in Winnipeg.

### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11462654/analysis-winnipeg-jets-scott-arniel-coach-respect/>

### ***ANALYSIS: Jets coach Arniel has earned respect of players, fans***

By John Shannon CJOB

A week from now, we will (mercifully) be discussing a real NHL game with points and everything, as the Winnipeg Jets open their season against the Dallas Stars.

Between now and then, there will be some players moving from the NHL to the AHL, and more discussion of Kyle Connor's contract and Jonathan Toews' leadership. But what hasn't been discussed nearly enough is the transition that has occurred with this franchise — a change in culture, as it were — over the past three seasons that has made the Jets a formidable opponent in the NHL.

For many, it's easy to point the finger at former head coach Rick Bowness and the job he did, redirecting the energy and focus of this talented group of players. But not enough has been made of the job that Scott Arniel has done, both during the Bowness tenure and in the past 13 months since he was ordained the boss.

Let's remember, twice in Bowness's term, Arniel took the helm of the Jets, seamlessly. And when Bowness decided not to return, and with the optics of a coach's search, it was pretty obvious that Arniel had earned the head coach's job. He deserved it.

The change to Arniel has been amazingly smooth. From the outside, it appeared that the coach was born to handle this job. The 63-year-old coach acted and looked like a 43-year-old. He understood what the modern player needed to succeed. And he did it with confidence and empathy.

It might have looked seamless, but tell that to Arniel or his family, who felt the embarrassment of those 123 games in Columbus as the head coach more than a decade ago, and another 10 years in New York and Washington as an assistant, wondering if he would get another chance to prove himself — to redeem himself. His patience, poise and professionalism have paid off.

Much has been made of the change in culture in Winnipeg in the last three seasons. Make no mistake about it, Arniel was one of the architects of that change. This is now his team.

And he has earned every ounce of our respect.

### **Sirius XM NHL Radio**

[https://can.siriusxm.com/player/show/nhl-radio-interviews/879b2a42-c2c8-b20b-f658-fad40cdec0bc? branch\\_match\\_id=1501203325487501059& branch\\_referrer=H4sIAAAAAAAAAA8soKSkottLXL67I1UssKNDLyczL1g%2BpqPTO8YzISPFIsg8rSk1LLSrKzEuPTyrKLy9OLbJ1zijKz00FAGENAdQ6AAAA](https://can.siriusxm.com/player/show/nhl-radio-interviews/879b2a42-c2c8-b20b-f658-fad40cdec0bc? branch_match_id=1501203325487501059& branch_referrer=H4sIAAAAAAAAAA8soKSkottLXL67I1UssKNDLyczL1g%2BpqPTO8YzISPFIsg8rSk1LLSrKzEuPTyrKLy9OLbJ1zijKz00FAGENAdQ6AAAA)

### ***Scott Arniel – Winnipeg Jets Head Coach (AUDIO)***

Training camp & new team outlook