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Another dark Olympic day for Jets' Mark Scheifele

Paul Friesen

If Mark Scheifele's Olympic hopes had been rekindled, they got doused with ice water on Tuesday.

Back in early January, the Winnipeg Jets centre didn't hide his disappointment at being passed over for the original Team Canada roster.

"A dark day," Scheifele called it at the time.

Tuesday might have been even darker.

An injury to Tampa Bay's Anthony Cirelli, devastating as it is for Cirelli, cracked open the door for those hoping for a second shot.

Team Canada had a confidential list of injury replacements, a list that surely would have had Scheifele's name near the top.

Sam Bennett's though, was higher, as the 29-year-old Florida Panthers forward got the call.

The difference between the two?

Statistically, Scheifele was the easy choice, ninth in NHL scoring with 27 goals and 40 assists, compared to 19 and 23 for Bennett, both in 55 games.

It's a career year for Scheifele, on paper: he's on pace for 99 points, besting his previous high of 87, two years ago.

But the Olympic tournament isn't just about flashy numbers in an NHL regular season.

Bennett is feistier, far more physical and has a winning pedigree.

Two inches and some 15 pounds smaller than Scheifele, he's a two-time Stanley Cup champ who won the Conn Smythe Trophy as the most valuable player in last year's playoffs.

His post-season run of 15 goals included 13 in 13 road games, breaking Scheifele's record of 11 playoff goals in road games set in three rounds and eight games in 2018.

Bennett was also part of Team Canada for the 4 Nations tournament, another event for which Scheifele was overlooked.

With his 33rd birthday next month, this is likely Scheifele's last shot at pulling on the Maple Leaf for the ultimate hockey tournament.

Other players high on the replacement list include Chicago star Connor Bedard and Zach Hyman of Edmonton.

Not getting closer

The Jets play their last game before the Olympic break when they return home to face Montreal on Wednesday.

Montreal's 70 points is 18 more than Winnipeg, while the Jets remained separated from a wildcard playoff spot by nine points and five teams going into Tuesday's slate of games.

Going 2-1-1 on their recent road trip, the last game a 3-2 overtime loss in Dallas on Monday, did nothing to pull them closer.

Head coach Scott Arniel pointed to a sloppy second period in Dallas and Scheifele's failed chance to win it on a breakaway in overtime as two of the differences in the game.

"That was a game that was winnable," Arniel said, postgame. "You really hope to find a way to finish those off."

In the end, it encapsulated the Jets season, to date: close, but not good enough.

"We get our best player on a breakaway, goalie makes a great save," defenceman Logan Stanley said. "They make a really nice play and win the game. It's obviously frustrating. Five (points) out of eight is good, but we're desperate for points. We've got to win them all. So it stings. Usually you're happy with a point at the end of a road trip in a tough building like this, but it stings for sure."

Captain Adam Lowry called the loser point a "small positive."

Despite being a team desperate for points, though, the Jets aren't able to string together even a small streak of high-quality, 60-minute games.

Lowry's take on the four-game trip was indicative of the lapses.

He began it with this: "Outside the first period in New Jersey, where we were pretty loose, and then I don't think we liked anything from our Tampa game...."

Aside from Olympians Josh Morrissey, Kyle Connor and Connor Hellebuyck, they'll have plenty of time to mull over their predicament after Wednesday, as their next game is a full three weeks away.

High-flying Habs

The Canadiens, in third place in their division, hit Winnipeg with a record not much better than the Jets' over their last 10 games: 5-3-2, compared to 4-3-3.

But they've scored 35 more goals this season.

"A lot of speed," is what Lowry sees. "Looking back at our game in Montreal, great transition team. A lot of young players that are contributing for them. Some guys on the back end that can really skate, really jump into the rush... and they play fast. That's the biggest thing, is stay above their speed."

"High-flying offence," Stanley added. "We're going to have to regroup and be ready for them."

https://www.winnipegsun.com/opinion/columnists/remembering-peter-young-a-sports-broadcasting-legend/article_f60e8a5f-aae7-4adb-9805-5ed2ef5a0940.html

The legacy of 'PY the Sports Guy', Peter Young

By Marty Gold

It took blood cancer 13 years to claim the life of Winnipeg broadcaster Peter Young, who fought the disease with the support of his loving family, endured four rounds of chemo, and accepted his mortality with humility and grace.

From covering three Olympics, CTV's Wide World of Sports, CFL, WHA Winnipeg Jets and Goldeyes play-by-play, to boxing, golf, auto racing and calling tennis matches alongside Billie Jean King, Jimmy Connors, Andre Agassi and other stars, Peter forged a remarkable career that was recognized by the Manitoba Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association last year. He also did radio with KY58/CITI-FM and later CJAE, and until a few months ago filed a daily sports commentary, Just a Minute, before his voice faltered.

Not to mention, his work as a professional baseball league executive alone deserves a book.

Before Peter arrived in Winnipeg in 1974, sportscasting on local television was defined by a staid five-minute segment on the evening and late news. He changed that by focusing on local and amateur sports, launching Sports Star of the Week, and adding the fun-filled Plays of the Week highlight reel. Eventually, there were 15 minutes of sports on the TV news hour thanks to him.

Peter Young took advantage of every break he got and then opened doors for countless broadcasters, pro and amateur athletes, and even for me — although I didn't know about it until decades later.

Fort William Times-Journal sports editor Pentti Lund — a former NHL forward — hired Peter, at age 16, to cover fastball. By age 18, he was working at CJLX radio when the future voice of the WHA Winnipeg Jets, Ken "Friar" Nicolson, took him and another announcer to cover a Minnesota Twins game in the 1965 World Series. It was only a six-hour drive, but they never made it after stopping for lunch at a truck stop.

In one of his hilarious Facebook posts, he told the story:

"An 18-year-old can do worse than vodka and cheeseburgers before noon. Noon came and went... another round asked the bartender? And hey, Canadian dollars were worth \$1.05 USD back then. Well, you can see where this is going."

Watching the NBC broadcast at the bar, he and Friar filed reports back to the station after every inning using the payphone, and radio management was none the wiser.

Soon after, he was recruited to do ring announcing for Verne Gagne's AWA events, and he was so popular with the crew that when he married Marleen, Mad Dog Vachon, The Crusher, and other famous grapplers sent them wedding gifts. Peter noted that long before achieving fame as

David Letterman's sidekick, "Paul Shaffer, a school friend at FWCI and Lakehead U., played the organ in a Catholic church, then the grand piano through dinner at the Royal Eddie. We laughed when he was here a couple of years ago that his fee that night was \$20."

Then he came to Winnipeg, with a former CTV and CBC sportscaster having a hand in it. Phil Reimer had left broadcasting to work for Trans Air in Thunder Bay and flew Peter to Winnipeg to interview some Blue Bombers, which "led to my 50-year-plus friendship with Don and Rosemary Eisman Jonas."

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The next year, Peter enrolled in master's courses in sociology at the University of Manitoba, and CKY-TV hired him as a summer sports fill-in. Jonas, the beloved Bomber quarterback, set Peter up to live at the Westwood home of lineman Ray Watrin. But within weeks, Watrin was unloaded by general manager Earl Lunsford, who hated Jonas.

Peter responded with the chutzpah that made him a true legend. He called the Montreal Alouettes and impersonated Watrin, leaving an eager message for head coach Marv Levy.

"Long shot with little chance of a callback, right? WRONG. The phone rang at 7 p.m. Ray Watrin was on a flight to Montreal the next morning."

Watrin won the Grey Cup with Montreal that year and again in 1975.

"We had so many laughs about that over the years. Never told Coach Levy. So the brash, somewhat arrogant... OK... a lot arrogant kid from Thunder Bay got his landlord a couple of Grey Cup rings. Good story, huh?"

He kept up the Thunder Bay pipeline by convincing CKY radio to hire his Thunder Bay morning radio partner, Don Percy, whose charisma forever changed Winnipeg radio.

"So Don and I had worked or been together, in some media form or another, for 54 great years when we recently met to reminisce," Peter posted this winter. "At one time, we entertained hundreds of thousands — even millions, if you count my network TV audiences. Now we worry about who has the biggest... walker."

Folks he helped along the way also had good stories — about his character and kindness. I benefited from it too. In 1983, our New Brand Wrestling show was placed on the CKY summer schedule after Peter saw the pilot tape that I hosted and liked the energetic action. It was only two years ago when I interviewed him for a podcast about Bobby Hull that Peter told me about his helping hand.

"When I left CFRW/Q-94, he was instrumental in getting me a job at CJGX in Yorkton," Spencer Tapley told me. "That led to DJ'ing, the evening show and doing Yorkton Terriers hockey. I spoke with him about three months ago," Tapley said, but Peter gave no hint he was so ill.

In January, Kim Babij posted a video message to Peter: "Thank you for everything that you did for me to start my career. You gave me my first TV job, and I've always been grateful for you giving me that gift."

After Rod Black — who he also hired — was promoted to CTV Network Sports, Peter saw something in a demo tape sent in by a young TSN editorial assistant in Calgary seeking a new position.

Hiring female sports anchors was almost unheard of. He asked her to come to town.

"Pete gave me a legit NHL game-day assignment: Cover the Jets/Blackhawks skate, file a report for the 6 and then cover the game with a post-report for the 11:30 show. Looking back, it was exactly what an audition should be," said Lisa Bowes, now a successful children's author. "Like he had done for so many others, Pete championed my hiring and on Feb. 2, 1991, I was off to Manitoba for my first on-air job."

Sadly, he passed away on the same date 35 years later.

There was far more to Peter Young than just sports and broadcasting. Impact Security owner Ron D'Errico told of how Peter rushed with him to take Ron's mother to her own cancer appointment when she was in despair.

"He turned a situation that was glum, depressing and dark into a room full of sunshine, hope and happiness with laughter enjoyed by all."

Every Remembrance Day, Peter posted the diary of his grandfather, who served in the First World War and lamented the brutality of war that took the lives of family members long ago. Peter was a proud father to sons Jason and Branden — both born on Dec. 3 — and cherished the time he spent with his grandsons and at Hillside Beach.

He was blunt, brash and always had your back.

Godspeed, Peter.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/02/03/high-climb-in-standings-still-needed-for-jets>

***High climb in standings still needed for Jets
Club remains nine points out of wild-card spot after road trip***

By: Ken Wiebe

DALLAS — They went toe-to-toe with one of the best teams in the NHL.

They clawed back after allowing the first goal, building a 2-1 lead before eventually falling behind 3-2 in the latter stages of the third period on a nifty individual effort from Mikko Rantanen.

As it turns out, the Winnipeg Jets weren't ready for another regulation defeat, finding a way to score with the goalie on the bench for an extra attacker for the first time all season (after giving up 10 empty-net goals).

In the three-on-three session, Jets centre Mark Scheifele cruised in on a breakaway with the game on his stick, only to be thwarted by Dallas Stars goalie Jake Oettinger.

Back came the Stars and there was Thomas Harley potting the OT winner, just like he did in Game 6 of the second round series last May.

This time, the tough loss didn't send the Jets home for the summer. But in leaving a valuable point on the table, the Jets uphill climb to stay in the Western Conference playoff chase took another shot to the gut.

Instead of making up ground, the Jets rally was just good enough to remain within nine points of the second wild-card berth.

The Jets are back in action on Wednesday at Canada Life Centre in what will be the final game before the Olympic break.

With the NHL roster freeze set to kick in at 2 p.m. CT on Wednesday and running until 10:59 p.m. CT on Feb. 24, all signs point to the Jets big decisions coming in the days leading up to the March 6 NHL trade deadline (barring a phone call, of course).

The issue Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff is faced with is a complex one.

Having watched the team he constructed put together a 7-3-3 record during the past 13 games, recency bias might encourage him to give this group a chance to sort things out during the final 27 games of the regular season.

The issue there is that there are eight pending unrestricted free agents on the active roster, which means there could be an opportunity to recoup some of the draft capital that was used on previous runs.

When Cheveldayoff has said in the past that he needs to have one eye on the present and one eye on the future, this is when he needs to take his own advice.

No, that doesn't mean holding a full-on fire sale.

What it does mean is finding the best packages available for the bulk of those pending UFAs — at least the ones he can't sign to a contract extension prior to the Mar. 6 deadline.

While it's important to remember the Jets have exclusive negotiating rights until July 1, Cheveldayoff can't really run the risk of waiting things out like he did with Nikolaj Ehlers last summer.

One of the big decisions that is on the horizon revolves around defenceman Logan Stanley — knowing that he's on the verge of becoming a UFA for the first time in his career.

Stanley was in an unfamiliar situation on Monday night, tapped on the shoulder by head coach Scott Arniel to jump over the boards with the Jets looking for the equalizer and the net empty.

"He's earned the opportunity to be out there," said Arniel.

Stanley wasn't just out there, he made an impact on the outcome, pinching down and directing a shot toward the net that changed direction off Rantanen and beat Oettinger with 1:43 to go in regulation time for what was his ninth goal of the season.

'He's done a really good job this year of contributing a ton of offence for us.'

"You can see some of the stuff he's really been working on, creating chances coming down the wall, the poise with the puck," said Jets captain Adam Lowry, asked about the offensive growth Stanley has shown this season. "I know it was a fortunate bounce on the goal, but to get it through, to get that lane, he's done a really good job this year of contributing a ton of offence for us."

That offence Stanley has contributed — even with the unsustainable shooting percentage heater he's been on — would be difficult to replace. But he's going to be attractive to a number of contenders given his US\$1.25 million contract.

The Detroit Red Wings are believed to be one of several contenders that might have some interest, which makes sense when you consider they're preparing for their first foray back into the Stanley Cup playoffs since 2016.

Defenceman Luke Schenn and winger Tanner Pearson (who has scored all seven of his goals at even strength) are guys with championship pedigree that should garner some interest.

On that front, Winnipegger Jonathan Toews is an intriguing candidate as well.

NHL insider Elliotte Friedman reported on Monday that the Jets and Toews' representatives plan to discuss the prospect of him waiving his no-movement clause during the Olympic break.

Although Toews' offensive numbers have dipped after a strong start coming out of the Christmas break, he would be appealing to teams like the Colorado Avalanche and Tampa Bay Lightning — two of the clubs that showed interest during the summer before the three-time Stanley Cup champion chose to sign with his hometown team.

Part of Toews' motivation for coming back was to take another run at a title and for a guy who hasn't appeared in the playoffs since 2020, there would probably be some appeal to join a team with a little more secure spot in the standings.

Cole Koepke has found his game in the second half, adding some important offensive contributions on the fourth line to his ferocious forechecking and physical play.

Koepke's willingness to go to the hard areas and secondary scoring ability will appeal to playoff teams looking to add depth, though you could make the case those qualities are why the Jets might want to extend him as well.

Despite not scoring in 34 games this season, Gustav Nyquist has been moved prior to the deadline on three prior occasions, so it's possible he could be dealt again, even as an insurance policy.

Defenceman Colin Miller remains sidelined with a knee issue, though he should be healthy before the end of the regular season. And given the league-wide shortage of right-handed shooting blue-liners with playoff experience, don't be surprised to see him attract attention.

That brings us to goalie Eric Comrie, who is playing his best hockey of the season, having allowed a total of three goals during his past three starts.

Comrie is an obvious candidate for an extension, but you can also expect teams looking for goaltending depth to be calling to check on his availability.

Whether or not Cheveldayoff considers other moves for players with term on their contracts remains to be seen, but there's enough evidence to say with authority that this roster needs an upgrade in talent moving forward.

That's what makes the next month and change so important in determining the direction of the Jets' franchise.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/02/03/longtime-cky-sportscaster-brought-the-jets-to-life>

Longtime CKY sportscaster brought the Jets 'to life'
Peter Young dies at 79

By: Kevin Rollason

Longtime local television sports broadcaster Peter Young, whose voice was "synonymous with Winnipeg Jets hockey," died Monday after a battle with cancer.

Best known locally for his time at CKY-TV, Young called Jets games in both the World Hockey Association and the National Hockey League, covered the CFL's Grey Cup and went to three Olympic Games — in Sarajevo, Los Angeles and Calgary.

Young's son, Jason, said at one point his dad was doing a morning show on radio with Don Percy, heading to a high school to teach physical education and mathematics, before wrapping up his day doing an evening television news broadcast.

"He always had something going on, right up until recently," Jason said.

True North Sports and Entertainment, the company that owns the Winnipeg Jets, said in a statement it was saddened to hear of the 79 year old's death, a man "whose voice was synonymous with Winnipeg Jets hockey."

"He brought the team to life with play-by-play that spanned both the Jets' WHA and 1.0 NHL days, adding to an incredible career that told the stories of community athletes, all the way to the Olympic stage. His voice and his work certainly left a mark with Jets fans and beyond."

The Winnipeg Football Club said in a statement that "Peter was a fixture on national Canadian Football League telecasts in the 1970s and 1980s and a must-watch presence locally through his work with CKY-TV, which included extensive coverage of the Blue Bombers over many, many years."

“The club would like to offer its condolences to Peter’s many family, friends and fans.”

Young was inducted into the Manitoba Sportswriters and Sportscasters Association’s Media Roll of Honour last year and into the Northwestern Ontario Sports Hall of Fame’s builder category in 2023.

Born in what’s now Thunder Bay, then known as Fort William, Ont., Young was in high school when he began reporting on sports for the Fort William Daily Times-Journal. He went on to cover sports for a radio station while, at the same time, serving as sports editor of the Argus, the student newspaper at Lakehead University, where he attended.

Young later came to Winnipeg, where he was taking a master’s degree in sports sociology, when he heard there was an opening for sports director at the then-CKY-TV.

“He applied for it, but it was more or less as a joke, and he got it,” Jason said.

Young was also a main host for CTV’s Wide World of Sports.

“Growing up, as a kid it was kind of odd for me that at school no one knew each other’s dads, but everyone knew my dad. It all came back (on Monday) when I saw hundreds of people commenting on the Facebook post. I was honoured by how many people saw him the way we saw him, as a kind and caring person.”

After leaving CTV, Young became the first play-by-play voice of the Winnipeg Goldeyes, founded a sports consulting company, and served in management of sports franchises in Florida, Arizona and Calgary.

“He truly was a legend in the local media community from his time at CKY — and he also left his mark on the national media scene with CTV,” said Judy Owen, a longtime sports reporter for The Canadian Press.

“Peter liked nothing better than to talk about sports, but not just the stories he covered. He was so proud of the young reporters he helped get into the business when he was CKY Winnipeg’s sports director and he didn’t think of gender,” adding he hired Rod Black, Lisa Bowes, Steve Vogelsang and Kim Babij.

Bowes said she was “heartbroken” to learn of Young’s death.

“He was a one-of-a-kind boss and played a significant role in my working life. Not only did he give me my big break at CKY — among many others — but he continued to support my endeavours in the 35 years since then. That is extremely rare and a true gift.”

Vogelsang said in a text everyone has a story about Young.

“The list of people who owe their careers to Pete, which includes me, is the approximate length of Portage Avenue.”

Joe Pascucci, who was sports director at rival CKND-TV/Global Winnipeg, said Young was competitive not only behind the microphone.

Pascucci said the two were once part of a team made up of media members and Blue Bombers playing a friendly game in Starbuck.

“(He) got into a battle for the puck — wouldn’t you know it, the gloves came off and Peter would have his nose broken,” he said. “Didn’t miss a shift, partied at the social, and was on the air Monday doing his sportscast.

“Last year, I nominated Peter for consideration to the Canadian Football and Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame and I’m sure those honours are coming.”

Besides Jason, Young is survived by Marlene, his wife of 57 years, son Branden, and two grandchildren, Alexander and Everett.