

## **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-toews-scores-first-goal-as-a-jet-in-win>

***'This community is amazing'***

***Jets defensive stalwart DeMelo happy to make Winnipeg his year-round home***

By: Mike McIntyre

When True North Sports & Entertainment held a June news conference to announce how proceeds from Whiteout street parties would be distributed to grassroots groups addressing Winnipeg's homelessness crisis, a surprising face stood out in the crowd at Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin on Main Street: Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo.

Considering the hockey season had ended more than a month earlier in heartbreaking fashion, you'd have expected the veteran blueliner to be long gone, joining teammates in scattering to their various off-season homes, not to be seen again until training camp in September.

Thing is, DeMelo was home. The Ontario native has put down deep roots in Winnipeg, living here virtually year-round with his wife, Jessica, and their two boys, Caleb, four, and Eddie John, 15 months.

That's a rarity among NHL players and truly makes him one of us — coaching his son's Timbits team, socializing with neighbours, keeping tabs on local events, and gaining a deeper appreciation for the bond between the city and its sporting heroes whether at the local park or the grocery store.

"This community is amazing. People here I'm going to have as life-long friends. I'm just so fortunate," DeMelo, 32, told the Free Press earlier this week in a one-on-one conversation that went far beyond typical topics like defensive structure and penalty killing.

"It's been a dream fit."

Now into his sixth full season in Winnipeg, DeMelo has realized one very important thing about this place:

"The Jets? They're Winnipeg," he said.

"It's funny, I'll go to my kid's school and be like 'Hi there, it's nice to meet you.' And they're like 'We know who you are.' People will say 'You guys are so down to Earth.'" Well, yeah, we're just very fortunate to play a sport for a living."

"It's been a dream fit."

His appreciation for the city also means occasionally defending it when Winnipeg takes a hit from some of his peers in player polls, free-agent decisions, or no-trade clauses.

"It's not a fair representation. And it is sometimes disappointing because I know how much Winnipeg has to offer, and how much the organization is trying to be the best that they can be," said DeMelo.

"Once you're here, you don't want to go."

DeMelo has seen the bad-mouthing up close. He was part of the 2017-18 San Jose Sharks team that made headlines when a video surfaced of players ranking Winnipeg among their least-favourite cities to visit. Tomas Hertl described it as "cold and dark," while Justin Braun jokingly wondered if the city even had Wi-Fi.

DeMelo acknowledged that visiting for a one-game stop in winter is very different from living here year-round.

"It's so nice to have that community outside the arena, people you can depend on if you're in a pinch. I think that's what makes Winnipeg unique, for sure. There really is that sense of community," he said.

"When I'm on the road, my wife sometimes might be overwhelmed with both the boys. And our neighbours will be like, 'Hey, we'll take them over here to give you a bit of a break.' And the kids want to play with each other, so it's great."

DeMelo said the decision to stay put was based on several factors, including what they felt was best for their growing kids. They did make a trip back home this summer to visit extended family in London, but that was essentially "vacation."

"If it was just myself, or me and my wife, maybe (shuffling around) would be OK. But when you have kids, and you have to move them from school and their friends and all the activities they're doing, that's so hard," he said.

"It's so nice to have that community outside the arena, people you can depend on if you're in a pinch. I think that's what makes Winnipeg unique."

"It was nice, after this past season ended, I was able to hang out with neighbours a little bit more because obviously I wasn't playing. I was able to have that time."

Living in the Winnipeg neighbourhood they do helped seal the deal.

"We've been in the same place for five years now. It was a new development so a lot of people came in together at the same time. It reminds me a lot of where I grew up," DeMelo said.

"I had all my buddies down the street. We'd come home from school and your parents would be like, 'Hey, whose house are you going to? OK, come home before the street lights come on.' I really like that in Winnipeg, people go outside, even when it's cold. They go hang out, they go to the outdoor rink."

So how, exactly, did we get here? For DeMelo, it's been a long journey, one that began 14 years ago when he was drafted in the sixth round by the Sharks while playing for the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors of the Ontario Hockey League.

He started his pro career a year later in Worcester with the AHL affiliate, making his NHL debut three years after that. Now in his 11th NHL season, DeMelo was traded to the Ottawa Senators in 2018 as part of the blockbuster Erik Karlsson deal, and then to Winnipeg in February 2020 — a third-round pick went the other way.

"I knew on the ice there'd be a good fit, because at the time there was a lot of turnover with the D-core. I knew there was a spot and an opportunity for me to go play with Josh (Morrissey), play with the great players we have here. But sometimes you never know off the ice," said DeMelo.

"We've been so happily surprised that off the ice, it's been equal if not greater than the on-ice success."

That's high praise, considering DeMelo has now signed a pair of contract extensions with the Jets — three years at US \$12 million in the summer of 2020 (\$3 million AAV), and four-years at US \$19.6 million in the summer of 2024 (\$4.9 million).

He set a new career high in points in 2022-23, then re-wrote his personal record book again in 2023-24. He's been a key part of the NHL's stingiest defensive team for two consecutive years and watched as Morrissey has grown into one of the league's best blue-liners.

"It's been a lot of dedication to the craft to be able to have that security. And it gives us such peace of mind, for sure," said DeMelo, who is signed through 2027-28.

"We've been so fortunate to make so many friends here. In the community. On the team with the group of guys and their kids, the wives. This is the place, most likely when it's all said and done, where I'm going to have played the most of my career at. So for me that's very special."

### **Canadian Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/hockey/2025/10/21/toews-starting-to-feel-comfortable-playing-with-jets>

### ***Toews starting to feel comfortable playing with Jets***

By: Darren Haynes, The Canadian Press

CALGARY – Jonathan Toews' first NHL goal in more than 2 1/2 years was a pivotal one on Monday night.

Toews' power play marker at 2:41 of the third period came off a deflection of a Neal Pionk point shot to tie the game 1-1. Mark Scheifele notched the game-winner at 15:06 as the Jets rallied for a 2-1 decision over the struggling Calgary Flames.

"The number 1 thing was the chemistry and the energy in the locker-room that this team has, that was a big selling point, and playing for a team like this that can contend and have a chance to win a Stanley Cup," said Toews, playing his 16th season in the NHL.

After missing the past two seasons due to health issues, the longtime Chicago Blackhawks star signed a one-year deal in the summer.

"On top of all that, to do it in my hometown in Winnipeg, that's a big part of it too," said Toews. "So when I really came down to it, I couldn't really see myself wearing any other sweater."

So far, so good with his new team. After Winnipeg dropped its season opener, 5-4 to the Dallas Stars, the Jets have reeled off five consecutive victories with Toews looking more and more comfortable every night.

"These last few games, I feel like I'm really starting to settle in, and just think less," said Toews. "Now that some of the systems, and the play calling, and the draws, and what we do off faceoffs, all those little details of our team game have finally become second nature, I can go out there and maybe not overthink but start to relax with the puck and feel a little bit more comfortable and not as afraid to make mistakes.

"And then from there, the offence comes."

Toews' last goal was on April 13, 2023.

"His game has been getting better every game," said Jets' coach Scott Arniel. "It's probably a big weight off his shoulders, but at the end of the day, we're not looking at these early games, we're just trying to get him up and running and playing and being comfortable with how we play, and him feeling good about himself."

In addition to logging more than 18 minutes in ice time, the 37-year-old was a deadly 15-6 at the faceoff circle against the Flames, bumping his season win percentage to a stellar 63.5 per cent.

"That's a huge asset for us. We weren't the best faceoff team over the years and he's helped us in that area, and it's helped everybody pick up their game," said Arniel.

But the intangibles the three-time Stanley Cup champion brings extend far beyond that.

"That leadership, the hockey sense that he has. He's got a great mind for the game. You can hear him when he talks to his linemates, talks to his teammates. He has drive," said Arniel. "All that stuff we've seen in the past, but now he's real good for our group in the sense that he passes on that knowledge."

At this stage in his career, slotted in as the club's No. 2 centre, Toews is no longer relied upon to lead the offence. The team has Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor to lead the way on that front, both of whom are off to a superb start.

Scheifele (7-3-10) and Connor (3-6-9) have both opened the season with six-game point streaks. Scheifele has goals in five straight games to pace the club with seven.

"The game nowadays, there's no space, it's so fast, but they just have that connection. And a guy like Gabe (Vilardi) goes out there too and just finds that empty space. He's such a good catalyst for those two. So it's fun to watch that line," said Toews.

Scheifele welcomes Toews' veteran presence.

"He's a guy that wants to get back in the rhythm of things. He wants to excel each and every game and I think that's the coolest thing," said Scheifele. "A guy with as much experience as he has is still wanting to grow his game each and every night. He fits right into this group and we're lucky to have him."

Toews sees great things ahead for his new club.

“Everything I had heard was that they’ve got an experienced group, and you saw what they did in the playoffs last year, and experience like that only continues to build, and especially their success in the regular season,” said Toews.

### **NHL Network**

<https://illegalcurve.com/nhl-network-mark-scheifele-and-kyle-connor-are-off-to-hot-starts-for-the-winnipeg-jets/>

#### ***Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor are off to hot starts for the Winnipeg Jets (VIDEO)***

Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor are off to hot starts to the season for Winnipeg. Former NHLers Mike Rupp and Cory Schneider share their thoughts.

### **The Hockey News**

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/latest-news/moose-mired-in-early-season-slump-after-tough-weekend-in-grand-rapids>

#### ***Moose Mired in Early-Season Slump After Tough Weekend in Grand Rapids***

By Jake Tye

While the Winnipeg Jets are off to a strong start in the NHL with a 5-1-0 record, their AHL affiliate, the Manitoba Moose, are struggling to find their footing early in the season. The Moose have dropped to 1-3-0 after a tough weekend in Grand Rapids, where they lost both games of a three-game road series against the Griffins. The final matchup of the set is scheduled for Friday, but it's just the beginning of an extended road trip that includes three more games before the team returns to Winnipeg in November.

The weekend opener saw the Moose fall 5-2, though the score didn't quite reflect the competitiveness of the game. After allowing an early goal, Manitoba quickly responded with Samuel Fagemo's first as a Moose, aided by a screen in front. However, Grand Rapids regained momentum with two more goals, and while Danny Zhilkin narrowed the gap with his second of the season in the middle frame, the Griffins added two more in the third to pull away.

Goaltender Domenic DiVincentiis faced heavy pressure throughout, making 36 saves on 41 shots. The 21-year-old netminder was tested repeatedly by a veteran-laden Griffins lineup that featured the AHL-maximum of eight experienced players, a factor that clearly influenced the outcome. Veteran forward Dominik Shine led the way for Grand Rapids in the opener, tallying a goal and an assist, while fellow veterans Austin Watson and Sheldon Dries also found the scoresheet.

Saturday's rematch was a more complete effort from the Moose, who fired 37 shots on goal but couldn't solve rookie goaltender Michal Postava. The Griffins' netminder turned aside 35 shots, frustrating Manitoba's offense early. Grand Rapids took control in the third period with two quick goals just 16 seconds apart, stretching their lead to 3-0.

Veterans John Leonard and Eduards Tralmaks each scored twice to secure the 4-2 victory. Manitoba's only goals came in the third period when Phil Di Giuseppe netted his first with the

Moose on a shorthanded chance, and Brayden Yager added his second of the season in the final seconds on a breakaway.

Defensive lapses have plagued the Moose early this season. They've allowed 15 goals in just four games, placing them in the bottom six defensively across the league. Offensively, the team has only managed 10 goals, tying them for 18th with the Hershey Bears.

Following Friday's series finale in Grand Rapids, the Moose continue their road swing with a single game against the Chicago Wolves before wrapping up October with back-to-back matchups against the Tucson Roadrunners. Puck drop for Friday's game in Grand Rapids is set for 6:00 p.m. CT. Fans can catch the action live on AHL.TV via FloHockey.tv or listen in on 680 CJOB.

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/latest-news/jets-logan-stanley-breaks-quirky-scoring-streak-ties-unique-nhl-record>

### ***Jets' Logan Stanley Breaks Quirky Scoring Streak, Ties NHL Record***

By Jake Tye

In the Winnipeg Jets' 4-1 win over the Nashville Predators on Saturday, defenseman Logan Stanley did more than help his team secure two points, he made a small piece of NHL history.

Stanley scored his second goal of the season, marking the first time in his career that he has found the back of the net more than once in a single campaign. The goal ended a uniquely specific streak that had followed him since his debut: for each of his first five NHL seasons, Stanley scored exactly one goal.

The oddly consistent pattern drew attention from fans wondering whether it might be an NHL record. That question was answered on Sportsnet's 32 Thoughts podcast, where hosts Elliotte Friedman and Kyle Bukauskas revealed that Sportsnet's statistics department had dug into the data.

According to their findings, Stanley is the first player in league history to score exactly one goal in each of his first five NHL seasons. While no other player has ever started their career that way, three former NHLers in Mike Weber, Scott Parker, and Rich Pilon have each managed five different seasons of one-goal production at various points in their careers.

Parker, a noted enforcer during his time with the Colorado Avalanche and San Jose Sharks, likewise wasn't expected to provide much offense. Pilon, who played over 600 NHL games, was similarly renowned for his defensive toughness.

The record for the most non-consecutive one-goal seasons belongs to former defenseman Jassen Cullimore, who reached the single-goal mark in eight different campaigns. Over a 15-season NHL career spanning 812 games with five teams, Cullimore tallied 26 goals and 85 assists for 111 points, and was part of the Tampa Bay Lightning's 2004 Stanley Cup-winning roster.

Stanley's place among these names adds a layer of curiosity to what has already been an intriguing season for the Jets. Known far more for his physicality and reliable defensive play

than offensive contributions, the 6-foot-7, 231-pound defenseman from Kitchener, Ontario, was selected 18th overall by Winnipeg in the 2016 NHL Entry Draft.

Since making his debut in the 2020–21 season, he has suited up for more than 150 games with the Jets and currently carries a cap hit of \$1.25 million in the final year of his contract. With two goals already this season, Stanley may be building a case for an extension.

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/latest-news/right-where-they-left-off-jets-remain-among-league-leaders-across-the-board>

### ***Right Where They Left Off: Jets Remain Among League Leaders Across the Board***

By Carter Brooks

With the eyes of the sports world on the Toronto Blue Jays, Los Angeles Dodgers and the World Series, attention has slightly shifted from its typical hockey-centric focus - up in Canada at least.

With Vladimir Guerrero Jr. and the Blue Jays advancing to their first World Series since 1993, television ratings for baseball will likely be the highest numbers ever recorded in Canada, while hockey and football are placed on the back burner for the time being.

That said, Canadian markets typically under the spotlight a few games into a fresh season have yet to really face the limelight. That said, Toronto's other big team, the Maple Leafs, have had a rather dismal start to the 2025-26 season. Expected by most to be Canada's best Eastern Conference club, the Leafs are just 3-3-1 and sit behind Detroit, Montreal and Florida within their Atlantic Division.

The Edmonton Oilers, whom many presume to be Canada's (and even the league's) top club this season also hold an identical 3-3-1 record and are buried deep within the Pacific Division's crowded mid-upper section.

Then, there's the story of the Winnipeg Jets. The club that finished the 2024-25 season as the NHL's best club, winning its first Presidents' Trophy in franchise history, while its goaltender Connor Hellebuyck took home the Hart, Vezina and Jennings trophies, is off to another great start.

No, the Jets were never going to catch their history-making 15-1 record to start last season, but they have certainly gotten off on the right foot just six games into the new year.

Starting the season off with a close 5-4 loss to Dallas, the Jets have rallied back for five-straight wins and have improved their record to 5-1-0 on the year. Hellebuyck is boasting a sparkling .927 save percentage and a 2.21 goals against average, while Mark Scheifele is tied for first with seven goals scored.

But it's not just individual success within Winnipeg's roster either. The team has picked right up where it left off last season on its special teams play. The Jets are currently third, league-wide on the power play (30 percent success rate), while owning the No. 1 spot across the league on the penalty kill (96.3 percent kill rate).

It's not just that either, as the Jets sit fourth in goals scored per game (3.83 average) are tied for first with two shorthanded goals scored and own the highest shooting percentage across the

board (15.9 percent). That said, they are the 30th ranked team in terms of shots taken, meaning they are the most successful shooting team in the league, opting for quality over quantity.

Defenceman Logan Stanley has already set a new career-high with his second goal, Josh Morrissey has set a new Jets franchise assists record, while Scheifele has set the all-time points record and continues to demonstrate his talents to the Canadian National Team selection staff following his snub from the 4 Nations Face-Off last year.

The Jets have yet to face any team sitting in the league's upper half of the current standings, but as they quite often say, it is still early.

And again, with the eyes of the sporting world having shifted to that of a different sport until November, there is no time like the present for Winnipeg to turn back the clocks a year and continue playing the way it began last season. The first-place finish aside, the Jets will certainly look to improve upon their postseason performance this spring, following last season's five-win-in-13-game showing.

For now the attention will shift to a mini three-game homestand with Seattle, Calgary and Utah making their respective ways to Canada Life Centre for a stretch of three games in four nights.

### **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6734305/2025/10/22/nhl-front-office-rankings-2025/>

#### ***Which NHL teams have the best front offices? Execs cast their votes***

By Chris Johnston, Michael Russo and Sean Gentile

If one Stanley Cup victory lap doesn't do the trick, might as well take another.

The Florida Panthers' second straight championship was enough, at least, to push them to the top of The Athletic's NHL front-office rankings, as voted on by many of the league's top decision-makers.

For the second straight season, we asked high-ranking league executives — general managers, assistant GMs, senior advisers and scouting directors — who they felt were the league's best-run clubs.

The execs, who spanned 27 organizations and included half of the league's GMs, were asked to rank the league's top five front offices.

First-place votes were worth 10 points, second-place seven, third-place five, fourth-place three and fifth-place one. Participants were granted anonymity for their votes and comments to allow them to speak freely, and they were not allowed to vote for their own teams.

The Panthers, indeed, ran and hid with the title. Four other teams received first-place votes, four more jumped into the top 10 and three crashed out, going from the top 10 to receiving zero votes.

Here are the final rankings for 2025, along with execs' assessments of their peers.



#### *4. Winnipeg Jets*

*Total points: 77 (appeared on 21 ballots)*

*Owner: Mark Chipman*

*GM: Kevin Cheveldayoff*

*Last year: 16*

No team rose more than the Jets, who won the Presidents' Trophy last season behind an MVP performance from Connor Hellebuyck and an improved group around him.

Cheveldayoff and Co. earned high marks for making the most of a relatively small staff and for retaining top talent — most recently star winger Kyle Connor, who this month signed an eight-year, \$96 million contract extension.

"They have no geographical or financial advantages, but they've built a quality team that has had a lot of success," a Western Conference assistant GM said. "They are able to retain their stars. And they've been able to make quality trades."

Those circumstances pushed Winnipeg up the list despite the fact that they haven't made a conference final since 2018.

"The job that group has done to stay competitive in that market is impressive," an Eastern Conference front-office exec said. "(They're a) very loyal, very tight group, and while they haven't broken through, to remain competitive like that is impressive."