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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-record-first-win-of-preseason>

THREE THINGS: Jets record first win of preseason Jets lose Samberg in second period, but beat Flames 4-2

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets won their first game of the preseason thanks to a 4-2 victory over the Calgary Flames at Canada Life Centre. The Jets got goals from Walker Duehr, Nikita Chibrikov, Parker Ford and Neal Pionk. Pionk (1G, 1A) and Chibrikov (1G, 1A) had multi-point nights for Winnipeg, Eric Comrie made 22 saves. Winnipeg will play their final two preseason games on the road starting Tuesday in St. Paul against the Minnesota Wild.

SAMBERG LEAVES GAME EARLY

Dylan Samberg only played 8:43 tonight after he left the game in the second period and did not return, Jets head coach Scott Arniel said it was “a freak accident” and that more information will come in the next day or so. Samberg took a hit from the Flames Ryan Lomberg and went straight down the tunnel afterwards. The Jets have Sunday off.

PRESEASON DEBUT FOR MANY JETS

Because of Samberg’s departure, the Jets were down to five defencemen and Josh Morrissey led the way with 27:06 of ice time. Morrissey was playing in his first preseason contest and first game since he was injured in the second round of the playoffs in the series against Dallas. Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabriel Vilardi and Pionk were the other Jets regulars that made their first game appearance since camp started.

GOOD NIGHT FOR A FEW PROSPECTS

The Jets will likely be making some roster decisions before Monday and so it was a good night for Duehr, Chibrikov and Brayden Yager who had his best game of the preseason with a nice assist on Chibrikov’s first period goal. The 20-year-old also won 63 per cent of his faceoffs.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/09/26/jets-depth-players-fall-flat-in-4-0-pre-season-loss-to-oilers>

Jets drop Flames as auditions wind down Next round of training camp cuts to come before Monday’s practice

By: Ken Wiebe

The boys on the bubble did their best to stay in — or perhaps extend — the conversation.

At a time when the Winnipeg Jets are set to announce the next round of cuts, a bunch of players that are trying to win one of the final available jobs on the NHL roster up front made their presence felt in a 4-2 victory over the Calgary Flames on Saturday night at Canada Life Centre.

Whether it was Walker Duehr, Nikita Chibrikov or Parker Ford finding the back of the net or Brayden Yager and Jaret Anderson-Dolan distributing the puck nicely, there were some strong contributions from youngsters and veterans alike in this one.

Looking for a highlight-reel marker?

Look no further than the goal from Chibrikov from the high slot.

Yager made a nifty move to create some space and then put his vision on display to locate Chibrikov alone in front and he delivered a deft backhand right on the tape before Chibrikov took care of the rest, ripping home a one-timer.

Although Yager didn't record a point on the previous goal, it was his drive to the far post that allowed a cross-ice pass from Duehr to go in off Flames defenceman Brayden Pachal.

The drive to the far post was also on display as Anderson-Dolan found Ford for a backdoor tap-in.

"There were a lot of good efforts," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel, who also mentioned what he was looking for from those players on the bubble. "If you are a banger, bang. If you're a skilled guy, go out and do what you need to do. Everybody has skill sets and they're all a little bit different. Try to do that. If you get a chance to play on any of the special teams, show us what you can do there."

Duehr, who is in the mix to be the 12th or 13th forward, has been making good on his chances during training camp and the exhibition season after signing a one-year deal as a free agent this past summer.

He's been noticeable on a number of fronts, using his speed effectively while also getting some time on the penalty kill.

"I think just trying to play my north-south game and sticking to things that make me a successful player, which is straight lines and being physical and hard to play against," said Duehr, who has 92 NHL games on his resume with the Flames and San Jose Sharks, who claimed him off waivers last season.

The Jets plan to take Sunday off, though Arniel told reporters on Saturday morning that the next round of cuts would be imminent and taking place before the team returned to practice on Monday.

The fifth of six exhibition contests is set for Tuesday night at Grand Casino Arena as the Jets face the Minnesota Wild for the second time this month.

Let's take a closer look at what transpired in this one:

THE INJURY: The worst thing that can happen to a team in the exhibition season is to have a key player go down with an injury.

To this stage of training camp, the Jets have remained mostly healthy — at least until Saturday night.

Dylan Samberg was on the receiving end of a hit from Flames forward Ryan Lomberg early in the second period and the Jets defenceman was favouring his left arm as he left the ice.

Samberg, who finished with 11 shifts for 8:43 of ice time and chipped in an assist, virtually ran down the tunnel for further evaluation and didn't return.

Arniel didn't have much of an update on Samberg's status, though it's obvious the Jets will be holding their breath until they get some clarity on the severity of the injury.

"He's getting checked out here. We'll get more information in the next day or so," said Arniel, who was also asked about the hit itself. "It was just a freak accident, it really was."

Samberg is coming off an outstanding season where he became a staple in a second-pairing role, though he was on the shelf for an extended period of time with a broken foot after he blocked a slapshot from Nashville Predators centre Steven Stamkos in November.

The Jets have some important decisions to make when it comes to exposing an experienced defencemen or two to waivers during the next week or so, but an injury to Samberg that keeps him out for an extended period of time would leave the door open to another blue-liner sticking around — at least on a temporary basis.

THE RETURN: Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey was in the lineup for the first time since suffering a knee injury in Game 6 of the second round series with the Dallas Stars after getting tangled up with forward Mikko Rantanen.

Because of the injury to Samberg, the Jets used five D-men for the final 36 minutes or so, which meant that Morrissey wasn't exactly eased into things and it meant a heavy load for each of the guys on the back end.

Morrissey finished the evening with a game-high 30 shifts for 26:37 of ice time, recording three shots on goal and six shot-attempts while chipping in an assist.

"It wasn't an overly physical game," said Morrissey. "Some nights, 26 or 27 (minutes of ice time) look different than others. It was unfortunate with (Samberg) going down there in the second, but most guys will tell you they like playing more minutes and I'd be one of those guys. It's nice to kind of get thrown into it."

Arniel conceded his initial plan didn't include having Morrissey play that many minutes, but the adjustment had to be made.

"Oh I know, he's always asking for more minutes," said Arniel. "You don't want to do that your first time out but, at the end of the day, it gets them all up to speed and like we say, Josh loves that. We'll see how this goes with (Samberg's injury)."

Morrissey was also asked about the shot of fellow Jets blue-liner Neal Pionk, who scored on the power play with a point shot that made it through a screen supplied by Jonathan Toews.

"I don't know, he must have been working on it this summer. It looked pretty good," said Morrissey. "Hopefully, he saves some for the year."

Pionk finished with five shots on goal, one hit and two blocked shots in 22:08 of action.

THE KEY PLAY: This play is normally reserved for flashy goals or big saves, but seeing Jets defenceman Dylan Samberg depart with an apparent upper-body issue easily is the biggest storyline coming out of this exhibition game.

THE THREE STARS

Neal Pionk, Jets – The blue-liner had a power play goal and added an assist while logging north of 22 minutes.

Nikita Chibrikov, Jets – The Russian winger scored on a one-timer and chipped in an assist.

Brayden Yager, Jets – The forward prospect chipped in an assist, had five shots on goal and was more involved at both ends of the ice.

EXTRA, EXTRA: Toews suited up in his second exhibition game and finished with one shot on goal and two shot-attempts. He also won 69 per cent of his draws, going 11 and 5 in the dot. As a team, the Jets won 32 draws and lost 21 to earn a 60 per cent share.

Eric Comrie turned aside 22 of the 24 shots he faced in his second start of the exhibition season.

Earlier in the day, Arniel announced that reigning Hart Trophy and three-time Vezina winner Connor Hellebuyck will be starting the final two games of the exhibition season. Hellebuyck has yet to appear in any of the first four games, though he made it clear when he spoke to the media prior to training camp that he knew exactly what he needed to be ready for the regular season.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/tough-decisions-jets-to-make-roster-moves-in-the-coming-days>

'Tough decisions': Jets to make roster moves in the coming days

By Gordon Anderson

Inevitably, dashing a man's childhood dream is the hardest part of any hockey season.

"There are some tough decisions," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said on Saturday morning at the Hockey For All Centre. "We've got battles at the forward position and battles at the defence position. We can't keep everybody. Hopefully, it works out for us."

With the regular season less than two weeks away, the National Hockey League waiver wire is active.

As of 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, 20 players across the league were placed on waivers. Along with the ongoing waiver process, the Manitoba Moose open training camp on Monday at 10 a.m.

A player loses their waiver exemption once they reach a specific threshold of playing experience, a formula based on their age when they signed their first NHL contract, the number of professional seasons played (NHL or American Hockey League), and the number of NHL games played.

When a team wants to send a waiver eligible player to the AHL, they must place the player on waivers, a process that allows other NHL teams to make a claim.

Veterans such as Mason Shaw, Kale Clague, Sean Anderson-Dolan and David Gustafsson can be claimed on waivers should the team option them to the minors.

According to Puck Pedia, the Jets have 15 players who are waiver exempt, including Colby Barlow, Nikitia Chibrikov, Brayden Yager, Jacob Julien, Danny Zhilkin, Dominic DiVincentiis, Elias Salomonsson and Brad Lambert.

"The big thing for us is depth," Arniel said. "It's important. We needed that last year during the season, we certainly needed it during the playoffs. These players, you hope they're part of that depth. They're hard to replace."

The Jets did not give an exact date when they will start to make their moves, but movement is inevitable, nonetheless.

"We do have to make, starting after (Saturday night), we knew we needed 40, 45 guys this weekend with back-to-back (games)," Arniel said. "But we do have to trim it down after this, whether that happens on Saturday or Sunday, there will be some numbers, some people moving out. Kind of us as the week goes on, we'll talk about other guys."

https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/neal-pionk-emerging-as-key-piece-of-jets-puzzle?utm_source=winnipeg-jets

Neal Pionk emerging as key piece of Jets' puzzle

By Gordon Anderson

Step by step, Jets defenceman Neal Pionk has worked himself into game shape and now the routine is more about fine-tuning what's already there.

"It starts with the little details in practice," Pionk said on Saturday, prior to the Jets preseason game against the Calgary Flames on Saturday night. "Just getting out there early and staying out there late, making sure you are on top of the drills, getting your hands going, getting your feet going, all those little details outside of the actual games."

Even though the Minnesota native has lagged in terms of the number of games played in the preseason, he is where he needs to be in terms of his physical and mental readiness. His preparedness for the season is on par, and more importantly, represents his wants and needs.

After all, the d-man has worked on his routine for more than a decade. Pionk played in 69 regular season games last season. He scored 10 goals and added 29 assists. His 10 goals equaled a career high, hitting the double-digit mark during the 2022-23 campaign.

"It starts when you enter junior hockey and you build from there, whether you pick up little things from the veterans there and then you get into pro hockey and you see how the pros operate," he said. "Of course, you might tweak things here and there, but I am going into my ninth year of pro hockey, and I have a routine pretty much down. I will add and will take some things out and that goes with the summer routine as well. All those little things build into the season."

But the routine is a continual process as Pionk is always working and re-working whatever gets him into tip-top shape for the grind of a long season.

“Whether it is taking away or adding something, you are always looking to improve and always looking to get that step ahead,” he said.

Pionk was paired with Dylan Samberg against the Flames.

“We expect big things,” Pionk said. “We know we can play against the top lines, and I think we have proved that over the last couple of years. And we will look to continue that again and it start with tonight and getting the confidence back and getting the chemistry back with each other. “

Over the course of training camp one theme has been the overall depth of the lineup, and the organization at large.

“You look at some of the guys playing on the so-called third and fourth line, those guys are legitimate players,” Pionk said. “Even on the back end too, the guys on the bottom pairs could easily be top four guys around the league. (On the whole), it gives you confidence when you have depth throughout the entire lineup and you have guys that can make plays everywhere.”

With Pionk hitting the ice on Saturday night, Connor Hellebuyck is the only regular from last year’s squad to not suit up for a preseason game.

Head coach Scott Arniel says Hellebuyck will get in between the pipes before the puck drops for real against the Dallas Stars on Oct. 9.

“We’ve got a lot of goalies around right now, so Hellebuyck gets a lot of detail stuff with (assistant coach Wade Flaherty, just building himself up so that Tuesday, Friday those are his to go,” Arniel said.

The Jets are in Minnesota on Tuesday to play the Wild and in Calgary on Friday.

https://winnipegssun.com/sports/a-how-to-guide-for-up-and-coming-prospects-in-jets-organization?utm_source=winnipeg-jets

A how-to-guide for up-and-coming prospects in Jets organization

By Gordon Anderson

How can a highly touted prospect within the Jets organization get on the radar of the boss in the control tower?

“I want them to show me what they do best,” head coach Scott Arniel said. “I’m not going to bark at a kid for trying to make a play. If he tries it six or seven times and it still doesn’t work, I might maybe suggest something to him.”

Arniel mentioned forward Colby Barlow as a player who recognizes what will get him paid going forward.

“Barlow is a good example of a guy that, set aside the conditioning and coming (to camp) in good shape, he’s a goal-scorer and he’s a shooter,” Arniel said. “That’s what he’s been doing. He’s been doing it in practice, and he’s been doing it in games.”

Speaking of goals, Barlow scored against the Edmonton Oilers in a 3-2 setback on Tuesday night. Barlow was originally credited with the club’s opening goal, but the call was reversed and credited to Colin Miller. Barlow scored late in the third in the one-goal loss to the Oil.

However, there is a narrow ledge to navigate as a natural affinity towards a particular skill set must be tempered within the framework of a team-first concept.

“At the end of the day, for me, there are systems — because you are playing with four other guys, you do have to know what you’re doing and be responsible when you don’t have the puck so you don’t screw up your linemates or your defensive partner,” Arniel said.

The coaching staff is always coaching, reinforcing and steering prospects towards a best of both worlds concept. For most players, a complete game is a sure-fire way to have a lengthy career.

“That’s why in the practices, there’s a lot of teaching, a lot of repetition through different phases of our system,” Arniel said. “They’ll get that, and they’ll get it as they move along.”

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11454511/winnipeg-jets-notch-first-win-of-the-preseason-downing-calgary-4-2/>

Winnipeg Jets notch first win of the preseason, downing Calgary 4-2

By Christian Aumell Global News

With the Winnipeg Jets icing their best preseason lineup to date, you would think that their big guns would have been the big contributors in a 4-2 home win over Calgary Saturday night.

But it wasn’t the likes of Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabriel Vilardi who drove the bus; it was mostly players who were fighting to make the team or improve their standing in the call-up pecking order.

Winnipeg opened the scoring at the 5:12 mark of the first period thanks to a bit of a fluke. Walker Duehr drove the puck into the Calgary zone and sent a low shot on net from the corner. Devin Cooley turned it aside but the rebound bounced off Brayden Pachal and into the net.

The Jets doubled their lead at the 12:02 mark of the period. Brayden Yager had his initial shot blocked but he collected the loose puck after the block, dragged it to his backhand and sent a great pass to Nikita Chibrikov in the slot who made no mistake to make it 2-0.

Calgary got one back on the power play just over a minute later when a Zayne Parekh point shot found its way through Eric Comrie.

With just under 2:30 to go in the first, the Jets restored their two-goal lead. Jaret Anderson-Dolan carried the puck along the wall deep in the Calgary end before sending a tape-to-tape

pass to a hard-charging Parker Ford in front of the net and Ford steered it home to make it 3-1 after 20 minutes.

Both teams managed to get eight shots on goal in the first and added ten more in the second.

The Jets stretched their lead in the middle frame thanks to a Neal Pionk power play goal, beating Cooley from the point thanks in part to a good screen in front by Jonathan Toews.

That was the lone goal of the second but there was concern on the Winnipeg end when Dylan Samberg had to leave the game early in the period. He took a hit from Ryan Lomberg and was seen favouring his left arm/shoulder before heading down the tunnel.

Calgary cut the lead to two at the 5:23 mark of the third when Yan Kuznetsov banged home a rebound but that was as close as they would get.

Comrie made 22 saves as the Jets picked up their first preseason win in their final preseason home game.

The Hockey News

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/latest-news/kevin-cheveldayoff-s-long-game-how-patience-and-planning-built-a-contender-in-winnipeg>

Kevin Cheveldayoff's Long Game: How Patience and Planning Built a Contender in Winnipeg

By Jake Tye

KEVIN CHEVELDAYOFF vividly recalls the conversation. It was about six weeks before the 2016 trade deadline, a potentially franchise-changing time for the Winnipeg Jets, when he spoke with soon-to-be free agent Dustin Byfuglien. The franchise was at a crossroads. One season removed from its first playoff berth since arriving in Winnipeg, the Jets were outside a wild-card position, and there were rumors swirling that 'Big Buff' could be wearing a different jersey following the NHL's trade freeze.

But with the deadline in the offing and Byfuglien inching towards big-money free agency, pen hit paper on a five-year, \$38-million contract that kept the blueliner in Aviator Blue. Byfuglien made his reasoning clear to the GM, too. "He talked about, 'I like what we have going here,'" Cheveldayoff said. "I know it takes time, and it's a great place to play, my family likes it here, and we've got some great young players."

Byfuglien was prescient, particularly since those were dark days, especially given how far the franchise has come in two-plus years since he signed on the dotted line. But the truth is one didn't need to dig far beneath the surface to see a team oozing with potential, one built on the bedrock of drafting and developing an elite young core on the verge of having outsized expectations. But this has been the plan all along.

Cheveldayoff remembered early meetings with Jets ownership, back when the organization was seeking to replace former Atlanta Thrashers staff with its own people. Cheveldayoff outlined a plan, drawing on experiences with the Chicago Blackhawks and AHL's Chicago Wolves. He wanted to evaluate the existing talent, no doubt, but "the long-term look (was) to grow a group of

players through drafting and developing and to have that group of players essentially grow up together and grow into something that becomes a cohesive unit.”

The difference between Winnipeg and others who have adopted the draft-and-develop model in the post-lockout, salary cap era is that the Jets have been wary of fast-tracking the future. Aside from prodigious sniper Patrik Laine, selected second overall in 2017, Cheveldayoff and Co. have slow-played prospects who have since become key contributors.

Take Mark Scheifele, a burgeoning star among the NHL’s best, who spent two additional seasons in the OHL after being drafted seventh overall in 2011. Nikolaj Ehlers, too, was sent back to junior after his selection as the ninth overall pick in 2014. Kyle Connor earned his stripes with the Manitoba Moose before he became the NHL’s leading rookie goal-scorer, and Josh Morrissey and Adam Lowry had to make their way through the AHL before becoming featured players. “You make decisions that are in the best interests of both the player and the team, both in the short term and the long term,” Cheveldayoff said. “All these things take a level of buy-in, a level of trust, and an understanding that there’s a bigger picture.”

Taking the long view has helped Cheveldayoff keep course, too. There are others – GMs, organizations, fan bases – who seek the quick fix after repeated regular season disappointments. Yet Cheveldayoff’s trade ledger is relatively barren. He has made 26 trades in seven years. And no one would mistake the Jets GM for a spendthrift. Prior to the 2017-18 off-season, which saw the signings of Steve Mason and Dmitry Kulikov, Winnipeg passed on the high-dollar big fish for cost-effective minnows in free agency. “(Ownership) maintained, as they always maintained, if and when there was an opportunity and we needed to spend, that we would,” Cheveldayoff said. “It’s all about striking when you feel the opportunity is right.”

THE MAN WITH THE PLAN

Cheveldayoff went into the Jets job with a long-term winning strategy – and he stuck with it.

Not to be undersold is the role that coach Paul Maurice has played since his arrival in 2014. As important as staying true to the plan has been, having a voice in the room who understands big-picture thinking, relays that message to the players and leads them into battle knowing the process necessitates pain en route to the destination. Thus, in hiring Maurice, Cheveldayoff was honest: there would be distressing days. “Consequently, he was very candid,” Cheveldayoff said. “And we’ve been very candid with the players we’ve been able to retain, keep and be a part of this, as to what our plan was.”

But through the retention of their own big-name free agents, drafting and developing talent, maintaining focus on the broader scope and hiring a coach willing to take lumps and refocus the veteran leadership during tough times, Cheveldayoff maintains that not only formulating but executing a blueprint that can produce a winner comes from the top down. “It begins and ends with ownership, the commitment and understanding and the buy-in from that group,” Cheveldayoff said. “You also need a knowledgeable and understanding fan base. Fortunately, we have both.”