

WinnipegJets.com

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-come-up-short-in-denver>

***THREE THINGS: Jets come up short in Denver
Jets drop third consecutive one goal game as they fall 3-2 to the Avs***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets put up a good fight in Denver against the league's best team but fell short losing 3-2 to the Colorado Avalanche at Ball Arena. Morgan Barron and Mark Scheifele scored for the Jets who dropped their third consecutive one goal game and are 15-17-2. Connor Hellebuyck made 23 saves for the Jets; Winnipeg will travel to Utah to face the Mammoth in their final game before the Christmas break on Sunday.

MISSING CHANCES

When chances present themselves against a team that is defending as well as the Avalanche, you have to make it happen. The Jets had a glorious opportunity with under six minutes left in the first and down 1-0, Winnipeg came in on a 3-on-1 and Mark Scheifele was denied by Scott Wedgewood. Moments later, Martin Necas scored on an Avalanche odd man rush to make it 2-0.

"Just kind of put yourself in a tough spot, that's a tough team to chase," said Morgan Barron.

"Obviously they're at the top of the standings for a reason. Yeah, gotta find a way to not put ourselves in those holes."

PK STARTING TO TURN CORNER

After a tough stretch that saw them allow a power play marker in eight-consecutive contests, the Jets penalty kill has now gone 7-for-7 in the previous two games. In the second period, Winnipeg took three consecutive penalties, and the PK held the high flying Avs to just four shots. With under a minute left in the period, Cole Perfetti took a tripping minor. With Perfetti in the box, Alex Iafallo ripped a clearing attempt off the glass in the Jets end that landed in the Avs zone and Morgan Barron raced past Cale Makar and beat Wedgewood for his second shorthanded goal of the season.

WELL PLAYED THIRD

Colorado restored their two-goal lead 1:58 into the final frame thanks to a Parker Kelly redirecting a Josh Manson shot. However, Winnipeg pulled to within one goal again when they took advantage on the power play. Gustav Nyquist faked a shot before sending a quick pass over to Scheifele who had the easy tap in goal to make it 3-2. Unfortunately, the Jets couldn't get another goal to tie it but really liked the way they played on Friday night.

"We stayed in the game. A lot more battle, a lot more compete. I thought we had some really good looks and opportunities," said head coach Scott Arniel.

"That was a better effort than obviously the last one. So, gotta find a way to get over that hump."

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-colorado-avalanche-december-19-2025>

***Burns scores, Avalanche top Jets in 12th consecutive home win
Colorado extends point streak to 7 games (6-0-1); Winnipeg has lost 6 of 7***

By Ryan Boulding

DENVER -- Brent Burns scored a goal, and the Colorado Avalanche held on to win their 12th consecutive game at home, 3-2 against the Winnipeg Jets at Ball Arena on Friday.

The goal was his fifth of the season, and Burns became the fourth defenseman in NHL history to record at least five goals in a season at age 40 or older.

Martin Necas and Parker Kelly also scored, and Josh Manson had two assists for the Avalanche (25-2-7), who are 14-0-2 on home ice and have extended their point streak to seven games (6-0-1). Scott Wedgewood made 20 saves.

"I loved our game 5-on-5. First period, I thought we could have been up more," Colorado coach Jared Bednar said. "Second period, we were really good again. One of our better defensive efforts of the year and physical.

"Made a mistake on the power play, gave up the short-handed one. Made a mistake on the penalty kill, gave up a quick power-play goal. But besides that, I liked our game. I thought it was, like, really solid."

Morgan Barron and Mark Scheifele each scored a goal, and Connor Hellebuyck made 23 saves for the Jets (15-17-2), who have lost three straight and are 1-5-1 in their past seven games.

"There were a lot of good things. Don't want to get down to that team that quick, 2-0, obviously, but at the end of the day, we stayed in the game," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "Right now, we're a delicate, fragile group, and we're finding ways to lose games. We got to somehow kind of [get] that next play that ties that game or gets us in the lead early on, and those are the things that we have to do."

Burns scored when his wrist shot from above the right circle caromed off the left skate of Winnipeg defenseman Haydn Fleury and past the right leg of Hellebuyck to make it 1-0 at 9:45 of the first period.

"It took me four shifts in the first period there to start to finally realize that I just got to pass it over to Brent, and then he can make plays from there. He's been hot," Manson said. "It's nice to play with him now, where I get to give it to him and let him just make plays up there."

Necas extended it to 2-0 at 15:05 when he beat Winnipeg forward Cole Perfetti in a foot race before finishing Nathan MacKinnon's centering pass past Hellebuyck's glove with a wrist shot from between the hashes.

Barron scored a short-handed goal at 19:22 of the second period to cut it to 2-1. He beat Colorado defenseman Cale Makar to a clear off the glass at the left wall of Colorado's zone, cut

through the left dot toward the crease, and went forehand to backhand past Wedgewood's glove while skating by the crease.

“‘Bucky’ made a great save on the play, obviously. Kind of a breakdown, and then I think everyone else just kind of lost sight of the puck,” Barron said. “Happened to kind of find it in the air and had a little bit of a step on everyone. Obviously, a big goal to, kind of, bring it back within [one], but got to find a way to close out those games and get back in it.”

The goal was his second short-handed goal of the season.

Kelly deflected Manson's shot through his own legs and under Hellebuyck to make it 3-1 at 1:58 of the third period.

“Honestly, I just wanted to get a screen, and the puck was on the ice,” Kelly said. “So just tried to touch it a little bit. And, yeah, I look behind and it's in the net. So yeah, feels nice.”

Scheifele cut it to 3-2 with a power-play goal at 3:38. After winning it off the draw at the right face-off circle in the Jets offensive zone, Scheifele got the puck to Josh Morrissey, who then found Gustav Nyquist at the point. Scheifele moved to the right side of the crease and shoveled Nyquist's feed inside the post.

“It's kind of been our Achilles' heel,” Barron said. “It feels like a lot of times when we play poorly or play OK, it's a one-goal game and we just can't, kind of, find that extra juice to squeeze two points out of it. So there's obviously some things we can build on, but sooner or later, [we've] got to find a way. We're in the crunch time here.”

NOTES: Barron scored his fifth career short-handed goal, which is tied for the sixth most in Jets/Thrashers history. ... MacKinnon, who had an assist, recorded 125 points (53 goals, 72 assists in 82 games) in a calendar year (including playoffs) for the third time, which passed Mikko Rantanen (two times) for the second most in Avalanche/Nordiques franchise history. Only Peter Stastny (four times) has recorded more. ... Colorado's 12 straight wins at home is the second-longest home win streak in Avalanche/Nordiques franchise history. The longest was 18 wins from Nov. 11, 2021-Jan. 30, 2022. ... Perfetti played just one shift in the third period. “That was just a coach's decision,” Arniel said.

Associated Press

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-losing-streak-reaches-three-with-loss-to-avalanche/>

Jets' losing streak reaches three with loss to Avalanche

By Associated Press

DENVER — Brent Burns and Martin Necas scored early and the Colorado Avalanche held on to beat the Winnipeg Jets 3-2 on Friday night for their fourth straight win.

Parker Kelly also scored for the Avalanche, who are 6-0-1 since their last regulation loss, a 6-3 defeat at the New York Islanders on Dec. 4. Scott Wedgewood finished with 20 saves.

Colorado has won 12 straight at home to move to 14-0-2 at Ball Arena this season with the 16-game home point streak the fourth longest in franchise history — and longest since going 20-0-

2 in 2021-22. At 25-2-7 the Avalanche have 57 points — tied with the 2022-23 Boston Bruins and 2008-09 San Jose Sharks for the second-most in NHL history through 34 games.

Morgan Barron and Mark Scheifele scored for Winnipeg, which has lost three straight (0-2-1). Connor Hellebuyck had 24 saves.

Trailing 2-0, Winnipeg got on the scoreboard with a short-handed goal with 38 seconds remaining in the second period. Barron chased a loose puck down the ice, skated across in front of Wedgewood and tucked a backhand past the goalie for his sixth of the season.

Kelly restored Colorado's two-goal lead 1:58 into the third, deflecting a shot by Valeri Nichushkin past a screened Hellebuyck.

Scheifele pulled the Jets to 3-2 with a power-play goal at 3:38, deflecting a pass from Gustav Nyquist past Wedgewood from the left doorstep. It was Scheifele's 17th.

Burns gave the Avalanche a 1-0 lead at 9:45 of the first period. Burns sent a pass towards Jack Drury that deflected off the skate of Jets defenseman Haydn Fleury and past Hellebuyck for his fifth.

Necas doubled the lead with 4:55 remaining in the opening period as he got a pass from Nathan MacKinnon on an Avalanche rush and put it past Hellebuyck for his 15th. MacKinnon got his NHL-leading 59th point and 31st assist to tie Necas for the team lead.

Up next

Jets: At Utah on Sunday to finish a three-game trip.

Avalanche: At Minnesota on Sunday.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11586038/winnipeg-jets-fall-3-2-in-colorado-for-third-straight-loss/>

Winnipeg Jets fall 3-2 in Colorado for third straight loss

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

The good news for the Winnipeg Jets is that they availed themselves well, on the road, against the best team in the NHL.

But when you're nearing the midway point of the season and are sitting just two points from the bottom of the league standings, there is no time for moral victories as the losses pile up.

The latest defeat for the Jets came Friday night in Denver, a 3-2 loss to the Colorado Avalanche that extended their losing streak to three games and dropped them to 3-9-1 on the road since the start of November.

The Avalanche jumped out to a two-goal lead in the first period and while the Jets played them tight for the final two periods, they still came up short against the Avs who won their fourth game in a row and have still not lost in regulation on home ice all season.

"There was a lot of good things," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "You don't want to get down to that team, that quick, two-nothing obviously. But at the end of the day, we stayed in the game. I thought there was a lot more battle, a lot more compete. I thought that we had some really good looks and opportunities. That was a better effort than obviously the last one."

"We got to find a way. We got to find a way to get over that hump of winning those games. Right now, we're a delicate, fragile group and we're finding ways to lose games."

Brent Burns, Martin Necas, and Parker Kelly scored the markers for Colorado.

The Jets went more than 120 straight minutes of hockey without scoring a goal until Morgan Barron ended the drought in the final minute of the second period with a shorthanded tally. Mark Scheifele scored the Jets only other goal on the power play in the third.

But the Jets continue to find themselves chasing games after falling behind early.

"Got to find a way to, I guess, not put ourselves in those holes," Barron said. "It feels like we're right there but got to take the next step and find a way to get two points, I guess."

"I think we liked our game better. But again, the frustrating part is it's kinda been our Achilles' heel. Feels like a lot of times when we play poorly, or play okay, that's a one-goal game – we just can't kinda find that extra juice to squeeze two points out of it."

Slumping Jets forward Cole Perfetti was dropped to the fourth line and was then benched for much of the third period, getting only nine seconds of ice time in the final frame.

"That was just a coach's decision," said Arniel.

Colorado showed off its speed right from the get-go, with Brock Nelson getting free on a 2-on-1 and Artturi Lehkonen getting behind the defence for a solid chance, but Connor Hellebuyck turned aside both.

But the Avalanche broke the ice just shy of the midway point of the frame.

The play began with a point shot that went wide of the net and bounced off the end boards back towards the faceoff dot. Several Jets watched as Jack Drury raced onto it first, starting a cycle that resulted in Burns getting the puck at the opposite point.

He tried to send a pass to a cutting Drury in the slot and at first glance, it appeared that Drury steered the pass into the net, but it actually banked in off the skate of Haydn Fleury, giving Burns his fifth goal of the season.

Just over five minutes later, the Avalanche doubled their lead. Lehkonen corralled a loose puck in his own end and quickly sent it out to the neutral zone where Nathan MacKinnon was waiting for it. He carried the puck into the Winnipeg end as Necas sped past Perfetti towards the net. MacKinnon fed it across to Necas and he made no mistake, beating Hellebuyck for his 15th of the season.

The Jets nearly got on the board in the final seconds as the puck sat loose, inches from the goal line behind Scott Wedgewood but Winnipeg couldn't get a stick on it before the whistle was blown.

Winnipeg held the Avalanche in check in the second as they got a first-hand look at the weakest part of Colorado's game. The Avalanche had three power plays, but for some reason, the turbo-charged Avalanche attack stinks on the power play, sitting in 25th place entering the night at only 15.7 per cent.

The Jets killed off a Scheifele holding penalty early in the period, a too-many-men call with just over seven minutes left, and then Perfetti was called for tripping with 56 seconds to go.

That seemed to indicate that the Jets would be entering the third period trailing by at least two goals, but they flipped the script on Colorado and scored a massive shorthanded marker.

Alex Iafallo banked the puck high off the boards and down the ice, and a streaking Barron got past Cale Makar and got to the puck first. He took it to the net, drove wide on Wedgewood and tucked a backhand past the netminder before Makar could get back to give the Jets a huge boost entering the third.

It was Barron's second shorthanded goal of the season and his third goal overall in his last five outings after going 20 games without a goal.

While Winnipeg was able to continue the remainder of the Perfetti penalty to start the third, Colorado struck at even strength at the 1:58 mark when Parker Kelly tipped a Josh Manson point shot through Hellebuyck to make it 3-1 and take the wind out of Winnipeg's sails.

The Jets earned their second power play of the night 3:31 into the third when Gabriel Vilardi was hooked by Devon Toews and just six seconds later, Winnipeg cashed in.

Off a won faceoff, the Jets got the puck to Gustav Nyquist at the left point, playing up on the top unit in place of a demoted Perfetti. He skated with the puck before sending a perfect backdoor pass to Scheifele that he steered into the net for his team-leading 17th of the season.

Colorado briefly thought they had made it 4-2 with 10:38 remaining when a shot was tipped past Hellebuyck with a high stick. Officials immediately waved it off and replays confirmed that Kelly's stick was several feet above the crossbar when it last touched the puck.

Kelly had another good look with less than four minutes to go when he rung one off the crossbar in transition.

The Avalanche did an excellent job of milking the clock away in the dying minutes, pinning the puck along the boards in the Jets' end on two separate occasions, resulting in Winnipeg not being able to pull Hellebuyck until there was just one minute left.

Winnipeg was unable to generate anything dangerous with the goalie pulled as time expired before the Jets could complete the comeback.

Hellebuyck turned aside 23 shots in the loss while Wedgewood made 20 in victory.

The Jets will play their final game before Christmas Sunday in Utah. The puck drops just after 6 p.m. with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB starting at 4 p.m.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/12/19/jets-fall-to-league-leading-avalanche-3-2>

Jets fall to league-leading Avalanche 3-2

By: Mike McIntyre

DENVER — It ended up being a nail-biter, rather than the blowout many expected. However, the end result on Friday night was all-too-familiar for the Winnipeg Jets: Another loss.

This one came at the hands of the NHL's top team, the Colorado Avalanche, who raced out to an early two-goal advantage and hung on for a 3-2 victory at Ball Arena.

"There was a lot more battle, a lot more compete. We had some really good looks, some opportunities. That was a better effort than the last one," said Jets coach Scott Arniel.

"But we've got to find a way to get over that hump of winning those games. Right now, we're a delicate, fragile group and we're finding ways to lose games."

Morgan Barron cut a 2-0 deficit in half with a shorthanded breakaway goal late in the second period, and then Mark Scheifele answered a third-period Colorado goal with a power-play tally to keep his club in the fight. That's as close as they would get.

"That's a tough team to chase. Obviously they're at the top of the standings for a reason. Gotta find a way to not put ourselves in those holes," Barron said of falling behind early, which has been a theme of late for his team.

"I think we liked our game better. But again, that's the frustrating part, it's kind of been our Achilles heel, it feels like. A lot of times we play poorly, we play okay, if it's a one-goal game we just can't kind of find that extra juice to squeeze two points out of it. There's obviously some things we can build on, but sooner or later we've got to find a way. We're into crunch time here."

Avalanche goaltender Scott Wedgewood stopped 20 of 22 pucks for the victory while Jets netminder Connor Hellebuyck made 24 saves. The reigning Hart and Vezina Trophy winner has given up just eight goals in four games since returning from injury, stopping 101 of 109 shots. But he only has one win to show for it, playing behind a pop-gun offence.

The Jets are well past the point of moral victories. They have now lost 16 of their last 22 games (6-14-2), falling to 15-17-2 overall and are just two points out of the basement of the NHL standings. The Avalanche continue to soar to potentially historic hockey heights, improving to a ridiculous 25-2-7.

HEAD CASE: An elbow to the face way back on Nov. 11 ended up being a much bigger deal than Haydn Fleury expected. The Jets defenceman was ultimately diagnosed with a concussion, something he's dealt with before in his hockey career, and knew the road back could include a few bumps.

Sure enough, a couple setbacks along the way — plus a bout of the flu — made it a six-week recovery process.

"It took a little bit longer than you'd like," Fleury said.

He was finally back in the lineup Friday night, skating beside the red-hot Logan Stanley who had scored three times in the past five games and was up to a career-best six goals on the season.

It was a tough night at the office for the pair.

Brent Burns opened the scoring at 9:45 when his shot hit Fleury's skate and beat a surprised Hellebuyck. And then a poorly-timed pinch by Fleury — and a lost footrace by Cole Perfetti — led to a Martin Necas breakaway tally at 15:05.

Stanley did make a physical impact, crushing Nathan MacKinnon and later Necas with big hits.

GRIZZLED VETERANS: Jonathan Toews, Gustav Nyquist and Tanner Pearson had a combined 2,736 NHL games between them. That's a lot of miles on the odometer. Coach Scott Arniel decided to see what the long-in-the-tooth trio might look like together, putting them on a fourth line that had a combined age of 106 years old.

"My century club," Arniel called them.

All three were signed as free agents last summer and have struggled to produce. Nyquist and Pearson have each had a handful of healthy scratches lately, but Arniel opted to dress both Friday and park Cole Koepke in the press box. He, too, was a UFA signing on July 1.

Toews showed some major frustration during the morning skate, two-handing his stick across the glass during a botched power-play drill. That pretty much sums up where things are at these days for the 37-year-old, who has one assist in his last 18 games.

The three other forwards with him on that second PP unit — Nyquist (0 goals in 25 games), Nino Niederreiter (no points in 10 games) and Vlad Namestnikov (1 assist in 22 games) have struggled mightily as well.

There were some positive signs, however.

Pearson made an impact in the game, dropping the gloves to fight Avalanche defenceman Josh Manson in the first period after he rocked Perfetti with a big hit.

"Don't like the hit. I think bigger guy and smaller guy," said Pearson, who is not exactly a scrapper. "Just didn't like it and try to answer the bell."

Nyquist contributed as well after getting bumped up to the top power play in the third period, taking the spot of the struggling Perfetti. He made a perfect slap-pass to set up Scheifele's team-leading 17th.

Speaking of Perfetti, he took a nine-second shift early in the third period after his late second-period tripping penalty expired, then never saw the ice the rest of the game.

"A coach's decision," is how Arniel framed it.

PRACTICE? WE TALKIN' ABOUT PRACTICE: The Jets have been lamenting the lack of practice time this year due to a compressed schedule given the upcoming Olympic break. So it was a curious move to see them cancel Thursday's scheduled workout in Denver.

Arniel chalked up to flying in from St. Louis in the wee hours of the morning following Wednesday's 1-0 loss, having to adjust to a time change and altitude and having to make the trek to the University of Denver to skate, since the game arena was being set-up for the Nuggets NBA game later that night.

"We met, actually, at the hotel, had a half hour meeting with the guys, showed some video and went over some stuff," Arniel explained. "That was more about coming into this building and being fresh."

There's no question the Jets had some jump Friday, but it ultimately wasn't enough.

"There's stuff to clean up and stuff happens. It's hockey. But I think for the most part, it was a good game," said Pearson.

RESPECTFUL RIVALS: There may be plenty of hockey fans and pundits wanting to pile on the Jets for their poor play. Don't add Avalanche centre Brock Nelson to that list.

"A pretty complete team. Probably a better team than what their record of late would show," Nelson said prior to puck drop.

Colorado head coach Jared Bednar isn't ready to write off Winnipeg, either.

"Every team is going to go through their little bumps in the road. Theirs came more than likely to some injuries they've had," he said. "Now they're getting healthy and playing pretty well. We know they're a dangerous team, they're highly committed to the way that they play."

CHANGES COMING? With the Jets mired in a prolonged slump, talk has naturally turned to what kind of help could be on the way.

One of the names currently blowing around in the rumour mill is Seattle Kraken forward Mason Marchment. The 30-year-old winger, who is in the final year of his current contract, has 13 points (4G, 9A) in 13 games with the Kraken who are reportedly open to trading him.

He previously played for the Toronto Maple Leafs, Florida Panthers and Dallas Stars, where he had a career-high 53 points (22G, 31A) in 2023-24. Marchment is someone the Jets have previously been interested in, given the hard-nosed way he plays.

There's also a historical connection: Marchment's father, Bryan, played parts of three seasons with the 1.0 Jets.

KEY PLAY: Parker Kelly's deflection off a Josh Manson shot just 1:58 into the third period restored Colorado's two-goal lead and proved to be the game-winner.

THREE STARS:

1. COL G Scott Wedgewood: 20 saves
2. WPG F Morgan Barron: 1 goal
3. COL D Josh Manson: 2 assists

EXTRA, EXTRA: Winnipeg went 1-for-2 on the power play and a perfect 3-for-3 on the penalty kill, including Barron's shorthanded tally.

"You want to win the specialty teams battle. Now it's the five-on-five goals, we need some of those again too," said Arniel.

"We've got to find a way to balance our specialty teams in with our five-on-five guy. That will help us not be down and (maybe) get up on teams and maybe can run away on teams."

Defenceman Luke Schenn came out to make room for Fleury, with defenceman Colin Miller the other healthy scratch.

This was the first of four meetings between the clubs this season. Colorado visits Winnipeg on March 14 and March 26, with the Jets returning to the Mile High City on March 28.

The Jets flew to Salt Lake City following the game and are slated to practise on Saturday. They'll wrap up the road trip, along with the pre-Christmas portion of their schedule, by facing the Utah Mammoth on Sunday.

"We need to gain points and we've got to get a feel-good moment here before the break," said Arniel.

"Again, another Central Division rival. We need to play like we did the last 50 minutes of (Friday's) game. We need to do that for 60 (minutes)."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/12/19/jets-morrissey-should-be-shoo-in-for-olys>

***Jets' Morrissey should be shoo-in for Olys
Predictions for Milan-Cortina as men's hockey roster deadline looms***

By: Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe

A weekly lap around the NHL by Free Press hockey writers Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe

DENVER — There hasn't been a whole lot to smile about lately for Josh Morrissey, with his Winnipeg Jets experiencing extreme turbulence these days.

But the mere mention of the upcoming Winter Olympics brought an instant glow on Friday morning, especially since he'd be hitting the ice a few hours later with an expected pair of future teammates in Colorado's Nathan MacKinnon and Cale Makar.

"They're both special players. Just what they're doing is incredible every night," Morrissey told the Free Press.

Prior to facing the Jets, MacKinnon led the NHL in goals with 28 and was tied for the points lead with Connor McDavid at 58. Makar, meanwhile, topped all blue-liners with 40 points. They are a huge reason the Avalanche are sitting on top of the league standings with a 24-2-7 record.

"They're both great guys off the ice. I had a chance to skate with them a little bit last summer (at the orientation camp in Calgary) and see how hard they work on their craft," said Morrissey.

He joked that it's a lot more fun to be on the same side as the dynamic duo rather than try to contain them, which is a major part of his assignment every time Winnipeg and Colorado clash.

We already know MacKinnon and Makar will be on the squad, as they were among the six players initially named earlier this year. McDavid, Sidney Crosby, Brayden Point and Sam Reinhart were the others. The clock is now ticking and the final decisions are looming for the rest of the 25-man squad. The roster is set to be announced on Dec. 31.

"I'm definitely thinking about the Olympics. It's coming up quick here," MacKinnon said following his team's morning skate on Friday.

"I'm excited. Obviously there's a couple guys on the Jets that are looking good. Scheif (Mark Scheifele) and J-Mo, they're two friends of mine now. Great guys, great players. It would be fun to play with both guys at the Olympics."

Morrissey is a lock, especially after his strong play at the 4 Nations Face-Off. He entered play on Friday tied for sixth in scoring among NHL defencemen (tied for fourth among Canadians) with 28 points. Scheifele is among those on the bubble for the final 19 spots. His 40 points lead the Jets and are sixth amongst Canadian forwards in the league.

"Scheif, I think we play similar games a little bit in the O-zone," said MacKinnon. "I definitely can learn a lot from him."

Roster projections have been plentiful — and for good reason, since there appears to be some debate for the remaining spots on the periphery. With that in mind, we've dusted off the Dump & Chase crystal ball to predict what the team is going to look like once it is submitted.

KEN'S PICKS:

FORWARDS

Crosby-MacKinnon-Reinhart

Celebrini-McDavid-Marner

Wilson-Suzuki-Jarvis

Marchand-Bennett-Scheifele

Stone-Point

DEFENCE

Toews-Makar

Morrissey-Theodore

Sanheim-Parayko

Chychrun-Schaefer

GOAL

Thompson

Kuemper

Blackwood

KEN SAYS: Goaltending is the biggest question mark and there could be some implications attached to St. Louis Blues general manager Doug Armstrong leaving Jordan Binnington off the roster, but it has to be under consideration given how tough it's been going for him this season.

Logan Thompson is the clear-cut No. 1, Darcy Kuemper has the Cup-winning experience Binnington would have brought to the table and Mackenzie Blackwood's numbers since moving to the Colorado Avalanche have been impressive. While the injury to Blackwood left him off most early lists, he's delivered strong performances in the 13 games since he returned.

On the back end, leaving Los Angeles Kings stalwart Drew Doughty off the roster isn't an easy choice, but making room for 2025 first overall pick Matthew Schaefer has become a necessity, given his high-end talent and mobility. Colton Parayko isn't a lock, but he's likely to get the nod over Doughty given how well the Blues' defender played at the 4 Nations Face-Off.

Up front, winger Brandon Hagel is likely to usurp one of the players on my list and he's someone I have no issue with being on the team. He's been much better than teammate Point this season, but Point was named to the team in advance.

Chicago Blackhawks star Connor Bedard will be on the on-call list in case of injuries, but his own injury might leave him on the outside looking in — despite his fantastic start to the season.

Anthony Cirelli is a Jon Cooper favourite — and for good reason — but Montreal Canadiens captain Nick Suzuki is the front-runner for the Selke Trophy and is contributing at nearly a point per game pace, that's why he gets the nod.

A trio of Manitobans — Travis Sanheim of Elkhorn and Winnipeggers Seth Jarvis and Mark Stone — should all be back after helping Canada win a gold medal last February. Scheifele's production at five-on-five (33 of his 40 points heading into Friday's action) pushed him ahead of the strong candidates that also include Dallas Stars forward Wyatt Johnston.

Strathclair product Morgan Geekie is having an incredible season for the Boston Bruins, but is likely going to be a victim of the numbers game.

MIKE'S PICKS:

FORWARDS

Crosby-MacKinnon-Marner

Celebrini-McDavid-Stone

Hagel-Suzuki-Wilson

Marchand-Point-Reinhart

Jarvis-Cirelli

DEFENCE

Toews-Makar

Morrissey-Theodore

Chyhrun-Doughty

Schaefer-Bouchard

GOAL

Thompson

Kuemper

Binnington

MIKE SAYS: Five differences from Kenny: Up front I have Hagel over Bennett, who is not having a great season (11 goals, 11 assists) and whose hard-nosed style of play can be filled by the likes of Tom Wilson and Brad Marchand, among others. And Cirelli over Scheifele, even though I personally wouldn't make that call. But as Kenny alluded to above, Cooper loves him.

On the blue-line I have Evan Bouchard and Doughty in, and Parayko and Sanheim out. Bouchard, for his defensive flaws, has the big bomb from the blue-line and was outstanding in the Stanley Cup Final last spring, showing he can handle a big stage. For Parayko and Sanheim, it's a case of getting off to slow starts (by their standards).

In goal I believe they'll go with Binnington — based almost entirely on his 4 Nations play — even if it's as the third-stringer, with Blackwood getting edged out.

From a purely selfish storyline perspective, given that I'll be in Italy to cover the Olympics for the Free Press, I hope I'm wrong and Scheifele and Sanheim are both on the squad.

AROUND THE GLASS BUS BOYS

They grow up so fast, don't they? Morrissey was feeling nostalgic on Friday as he talked about riding the bus with the Prince Albert Raiders more than a decade ago, dreaming big with good friend and teammate Leon Draisaitl.

Just look at them now. Morrissey is one of the top defencemen in the NHL, and Draisaitl has morphed into an elite power forward who just eclipsed the 1,000-point mark earlier this week with a four-assist game in Pittsburgh.

"Going back to junior we both had aspirations of playing in the NHL. It's hard not to reminisce," said Morrissey, who was with Draisaitl during the 2012-13 and 2013-14 campaigns.

"Those hours on the bus where we'd be streaming hockey games. Watching NHL teams trying to emulate them. For us at the time we watched a lot of Ottawa games."

Morrissey had his eye on then Senators defenceman Erik Karlsson, while Draisaitl would closely study Jason Spezza.

"It's hard to imagine how fast the time has gone," said Morrissey. "To see him (get 1,000 points) is pretty special. I don't think he's slowing down any time soon."

Morrissey sent his old pal a congratulatory text earlier this week and will get the chance to talk in person when Edmonton comes to Winnipeg on Dec. 29.

"Right away in junior you saw the whole package. He's a huge guy, big frame, amazing vision — he can hang on to the puck against anyone and you can't take it away. And he's got this amazing release which is kind of unique to him," said Morrissey.

"He has every tool you could want. And the competitive edge, as well. It's easy to look past with all the skill, but his compete and love of the game is probably what's driven him to be as great as he is beyond just the natural ability."

BEST D-VISION?

The Central Division got an infusion of talent last week when the Minnesota Wild added Vancouver Canucks captain Quinn Hughes in a blockbuster deal.

This was a big swing by Wild general manager Bill Guerin, who sent defenceman Zeev Buium, centre Marco Rossi, winger Liam Ohgren and a 2026 first-rounder to the Canucks, who are in a battle for the NHL basement.

The ability to add Hughes — who is one of the best defencemen in the NHL — was a major coup for Guerin, who earlier this season signed winger Kirill Kaprizov to a massive contract extension.

Hughes praised Guerin for having the gumption to make the deal, leading some observers to believe that the mobile blue-liner might be willing to sign a contract extension when he becomes eligible for one.

“I might be biased but I think the Central Division is the hardest in the whole league and it got even harder,” said Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo.

“It is a gauntlet. Our division is really tough, top to bottom with great players at all positions. I guess we got the riches of the D-corps in our division and if there was an all-star team, I would like our chances out of the Central.”

Asked for his initial thoughts on the deal, Jets head coach Scott Arniel made it clear he would have preferred the Canucks had sent Hughes to the Eastern Conference.

“Not overly excited to see that,” said Arniel. “I was really hoping he’d get reunited with his brothers (with the New Jersey Devils).”

In three games since the move, Hughes has one goal and one assist and the Wild have gone 3-0-0.

The Jets will get a chance to see the new-look Wild when they visit next Saturday, Dec. 27.

Winnipeg Sun

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/rocky-mountain-low-delicate-fragile-jets-drop-another/article_76f0b736-1ded-4275-8d7d-00e0afc87605.html

Rocky Mountain low: ‘Delicate, fragile’ Jets drop another

By Paul Friesen

No team has more regulation losses in the NHL right now than the Winnipeg Jets. Let that sink in for a minute.

Last year's top regular-season team lost its 17th game of the season, 3-2 in Colorado on Friday, matching Calgary, Vancouver and Utah in the loser's club.

The drop has been as stunning as it is sudden for a team that set its sights on advancing deeper into the Stanley Cup Playoffs this season, not falling out of them.

"Right now we're a delicate, fragile group," head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Denver. "And we're finding ways to lose games. We've got to somehow (make) that next play that ties that game or gets us in the lead early on."

Instead, they turned in another forgettable first period, trailing 2-0 after it.

They gave the league-leading Avalanche all they could handle through the next 40 minutes, but the result does nothing to get them back on track.

"You just put yourself in a tough spot," Morgan Barron said. "That's a tough team to chase. We liked our game better. But again, that's the frustrating part. It's been our Achilles heel... if it's a one-goal game we just can't find that extra juice to squeeze two points out of it. There's obviously some things we can build on, but sooner or later we've got to find a way.

"We're into crunch time here."

Barron and Mark Scheifele, on the power play, were the Jets' goal scorers, Barron's coming shorthanded to make it 2-1 late in the second period.

The Jets gave up another one early in the third, got that back with Scheifele's less than two minutes later, but that was all she wrote.

"We've got to find a way to balance our specialty teams with our five-on-five," Arniel said.

Winnipeg falls to 15-17-2 and has just three wins in last 15 games, six in its last 22.

Colorado improves to 25-2-7, 14-0-2 at home.

The first half of the opening period was played mostly in the Winnipeg zone, and that produced the game's first goal.

Some 10 minutes in, a shot by Avs defenceman Brent Burns went off the skate of Jets defenceman Haydn Fleury and past Hellebuyck.

The Jets got a power play soon after but didn't register a shot.

Colorado made it 2-1 when Cole Perfetti couldn't keep up with a two-on-one and watched Martin Necas take a pass from Nathan MacKinnon to beat Hellebuyck. It was a sign of things to come for Perfetti.

Winnipeg's penalty-killing unit was called on three times in the second period and didn't just answer the bell, it rang it.

Barron's shorthanded marker in the last minute gave the visitors life going into the third.

Whatever momentum they generated was lost two minutes into the third, Parker Kelly's net-front deflection sneaking past Hellebuyck to restore his team's two-goal lead.

The Jets refused to wilt, though.

Less than two minutes later, Gustav Nyquist took a turn on the power play and set up Scheifele for his 17th goal of the season.

That sparked the Jets and Colorado was on its heels.

It also sparked a bump in intensity, both teams throwing big hits.

But the Jets couldn't parlay that into the tying goal.

Perfetti, one of many players struggling to produce, was benched for the third period, Arniel simply calling it "a coach's decision."

Final shots were 26-22, Avs.

Up next for the Jets, a Sunday stop in Utah, their last of this three-game trip and their last game before Christmas.

"We need to gain points and we've got to get a feel-good moment here before the break at Christmas," Arniel said. "We need to play like we did the last 50 minutes of that game. We need to do that for 60."

Barron put it another way.

"Don't want to go home with nothing on this road trip."

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/2025/12/20/biron-jets-arent-in-the-same-company-they-should-be-in-the-west/>

Biron: Jets aren't in the same company they should be in the West (VIDEO)

After another tough loss, this one against the Colorado Avalanche, the Winnipeg Jets fall to 6-14-2 since November 4th, the worst in the NHL over that span. Is it time to panic in Winnipeg? TSN Hockey analyst Martin Biron joins SportsCentre to discuss.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6904520/2025/12/20/winnipeg-jets-nhl-trade-deadline-sellers/>

Why the Winnipeg Jets should wait before they sell at the NHL trade deadline

By Murat Ates

The Winnipeg Jets were devastated when they gave up the puck and the lead and lost to the Ottawa Senators. Their fans were devastated when Winnipeg couldn't impose itself against the St. Louis Blues to the point of scoring a single goal.

But Friday night's loss to the Colorado Avalanche, as close as it was, drives home a different point.

The Avalanche are all of the things Winnipeg is not. They have a superstar, best-in-class forward talent in the form of Nathan MacKinnon. They have an even better version of Josh Morrissey in Cale Makar. They're also deep in the way that Stanley Cup favourites are deep, with 15 skaters who'd be inside the Jets' top 10 scorers' list, and fast in a way the Jets simply cannot match. Colorado is also the Jets' most likely first-round opponent, if the Jets dare to dream of making it that far.

So Friday night's game served as a loud, searing, "Go on a run if you can. Make the playoffs. We dare you."

For many Jets fans, the loss will feel like the final straw — of cold realities settling in. Winnipeg is on track to become the fourth team in NHL history to miss the playoffs after winning the Presidents' Trophy. Winnipeg's offseason bets on Jonathan Toews, Gustav Nyquist and Tanner Pearson, among others — along with last season's deadline day bet on Luke Schenn — aren't paying off. It is as if the Jets sized themselves up, gambled that they were Stanley Cup contenders who only needed experience to get over the top, and found they were wrong on all fronts.

So it makes sense to go scorched earth. It makes sense to sell off every pending UFA — Toews, Nyquist, Pearson, Cole Koepke, Logan Stanley, Colin Miller and Eric Comrie — who'd return any amount of NHL Draft capital. Next year's UFAs shouldn't be off-limits, either, if contending teams are willing to pay the right prices for Nino Niederreiter, Vladislav Namestnikov, Haydn Fleury or even Morgan Barron. The draft capital can be collected, combined and sent out the door when the Jets are ready to make good decisions about who might help their "win now" team.

But this is not a scorched-earth column.

This is an analysis of where the Jets currently sit, the long odds that face them, and how they might dig themselves out of the hole they're in.

As I see it, Winnipeg is more likely to waste excellent seasons by Connor Hellebuyck, Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor and Josh Morrissey than it is to arrive in the postseason with a realistic chance to contend for the Cup. I don't even think the Jets are a playoff team. It's a bad sign that they're 5 points out of a playoff spot, for one, and it's tough to imagine a team where only one line scores going on the tear it needs to close that gap. Getting clear of the Calgary Flames, Chicago Blackhawks, Utah Mammoth, San Jose Sharks and St. Louis is a daunting concept — admittedly more due to the number than the quality of teams involved — and beating Colorado in Round 1 seems next to impossible.

So, why not set fire to the whole thing?

The short answer is that there's plenty of time for the Jets to cut ties with their playoff hopes, lean into the quality of the No. 6 draft pick and call it a wasted season. It might not feel like it, but there are 2 1/2 months until the trade deadline. This gives Winnipeg an opportunity — if not to turn itself into an outright contender, then to ride out January and see if Hellebuyck can drag them to striking distance of a wild-card spot. It might not feel like it, given the Jets' 3-10-2 record in their last 15 games — especially if you're the type to promote hard tanking — but there are good reasons for Winnipeg to keep pushing for wins in January.

The Jets have a good top line and a bad bottom nine, two good defence pairs and one frequently dragged down by Luke Schenn, and Hellebuyck in net. It makes sense for them to go after a mid-tier veteran — Mason Marchment was briefly one example, as Elliotte Friedman suggested Friday before Marchment got traded — this far in advance of the trade deadline.

In fact, there are several reasons, many of which are designed to help the Jets get more out of next season's Connor, Scheifele, Morrissey and Hellebuyck.

1. Winnipeg must try to save its season and not send out a first-round pick

The Jets haven't drafted inside the top 10 since a lottery win led to Patrik Laine in 2016. Cole Perfetti, taken with the No. 10 pick in 2020, has the 10th-most points in his draft class, but he's one of just three Jets picks from the last 10 drafts on Winnipeg's roster right now.

Meanwhile, the Jets head toward this year's draft without a second-round pick (part of the cost of acquiring Schenn) or a fourth-round pick (the cost of acquiring Colin Miller). Scott Wheeler writes that this year's draft class is "headlined by Canadian NCAA exports Gavin McKenna and Keaton Verhoeff, Swedish winger Ivar Stenberg, hulking Windsor Spitfires winger Ethan Belchetz, Muskegon Lumberjacks center Tynan Lawrence and a quintet of high-end CHL defensemen."

It would be a shame for Winnipeg to sacrifice such a player chasing a first-round loss at the hands of Friday night's Avalanche. It would be a different kind of shame for it to call itself a win-now team and then sit on its hands as the season appears to slip away. Mid-tier veterans such as Marchment are getting moved, and he won't be the only one. I think it's that kind of trade — for a faster, middle-six player — that could help the Jets now. It would be the type of trade a team that believes in itself makes to show its players it has their backs, while protecting the few Grade-A trade assets it still has in stock.

More on "message sending" in a moment.

2. Striking early buys time, but the Jets can still sell

There's a new rule this season, where 75 days must pass between the first and second time a player is moved with salary retention: Friday was the last day a player could be traded with retained salary and be traded with salary retention a second time at the trade deadline. The Jets can no longer make any new acquisition at one-quarter of his cap hit come deadline day.

But they can still sell.

Moving early to find just one more player who might impose himself on a game doesn't freeze Winnipeg's roster in place. That's a point a lot of people miss. The organization claims to be a win-now team. It's not winning now, so it makes sense to make moves to help that cause, especially after selling Connor, Scheifele, Hellebuyck and others on the idea that Winnipeg has a window to compete for the Stanley Cup.

What doesn't make sense is committing to those moves if January and February don't change the Jets' playoff trajectory.

Remember that a Cup-contending Jets team sized up last year's trade market and decided to acquire Schenn for a second- and fourth-round pick, and Brandon Tanev for a second-round pick. Clearly, there are some circumstances in which playoff-bound teams find it appealing to move draft capital for veteran depth in the name of a playoff push. Winnipeg would be well

within its rights to acquire a mid-tier player in the Marchment vein, watch for signs it has sparked the roster, then move him again at the deadline.

The Jets have Schenn's Cup-winning experience to shop; Nyquist, who fetched a second-round pick at last year's deadline; Pearson, who has won a Stanley Cup; and Toews — the three-time Cup-winning veteran who they've sold as a playoff-capable addition — to shop for draft capital.

It behooves the Jets to make moves to save their season — if they're willing to make the right decisions on deadline day. If Hellebuyck goes on a tear, the Jets find a spark and the wild-card spot looks like it's theirs to win, then the Jets will have earned the right to keep their own pending UFAs. If the Jets continue to fall short — and remember that they have 2 1/2 months, including 27 games, to change that trajectory — then they must have the courage to move their failed bets for assets that can help future editions of their win-now hockey club.

I'm influenced by the Washington Capitals here, after a lengthy, far-ranging conversation with Capitals general manager Chris Patrick. The Capitals showed courage in committing to their 2023 playoffs miss, acquiring a first-, second- and third-round pick for Dmitry Orlov and Garnet Hathaway, then adding a third-round pick for Marcus Johansson. Follow the trade trees down the line, and Washington avoided a rebuild: A third-round pick was the cost to acquire No. 1 goalie Logan Thompson, and a different third-round pick was packaged with Nick Jensen to acquire top-pairing defenceman Jakob Chychrun.

Winnipeg has sent so many picks out the door at recent deadlines that it can't make those kinds of trades. If this truly isn't the year, it must be willing to act on that — not because extra draft capital helps next year's Cup attempt, but because it can be packaged and moved for players who do. Taking an early swing wouldn't change that. It could be a net gain if the Jets were willing to retain salary while moving that same player on deadline day.

But they have to show their players they're willing to try first.

3. Giving Winnipeg's players a boost — while keeping a first-round pick — fights apathy

All of this asset talk distracts from the fact that hockey is a game played by real people with real emotion.

So put yourself in Connor's, Scheifele's or Gabriel Vilardi's shoes. You're among the only players producing right now. You're among the only players who can impose their will upon a game. When head coach Scott Arniel comes after you for shift length and points to a shift wherein you gave up eight scoring chances — then plays you nearly 25 minutes in the same game — aren't you going to feel wholly justified in stretching shift lengths, chasing offence and exhausting yourself in search of goals? Wouldn't you be justified in that, even if it leads to bad habits, because you're the only forwards producing any offence at all? Imagine you're any of the Jets who are not scoring — outmatched but giving your best effort in a losing cause.

Arniel has one "break glass in case of emergency" move he hasn't tried in earnest: splitting Connor and Scheifele in the hope it gets two lines going instead of one. Whether or not it helps the team win — remember, we're talking about a 3-10-2 record in Winnipeg's last 15 games — Arniel needs to break up his golden duo. Whatever it feels like, even after Colorado, this season hasn't gone off the rails until players start going off on their own program. The Jets need to spread the limited wealth they do have on the roster, lest double standards emerge.

We saw that version of this team once. It was toward the end of Paul Maurice's tenure. Let's be clear: Arniel isn't going anywhere, and his debut season was Winnipeg's best ever. But hockey players are people, just like their fans. They need to be sold on winning or on a clear path to improvement, and the consequences of a wasted season could stretch well beyond 2025-26.

Winnipeg needs to act with courage and conviction — soon, and again at the deadline if its trajectory remains unchanged. Some as-of-yet unseen creativity would also do a world of good. Otherwise, Winnipeg will do more than waste brilliant seasons from core players. It will waste the window it sold them on to get them to stay.