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<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/featured/2026/03/29/jets-wont-go-down-without-a-fight>

Jets won't go down without a fight Improved play during recent run keeps playoff hopes alive

By: Ken Wiebe

CHICAGO — That was supposed to be the week where the Winnipeg Jets' playoff dreams went up in smoke.

Where the proverbial roof was about to cave in.

After they eked out a shootout win over the New York Rangers last Sunday, the Jets were set to face a dramatically higher degree of difficulty with a visit from the Vegas Golden Knights and a pair of games against the league-leading Colorado Avalanche.

This was clearly sink or swim territory for a team having difficulty cutting into a five-point gap between them and the Nashville Predators.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the Jets being forced to lean into where their first round draft pick might be — and whether or not it was going to be in the top five later this June.

Instead of crumbling against a team that has had their number in both the regular season and playoffs lately or serving as road kill for a team that's been first overall for the bulk of the campaign, the Jets found a way to stay afloat.

A victory over the Golden Knights on Tuesday set the stage, but a 3-2 loss to the Avalanche on Thursday threatened to leave the Jets in critical condition.

However, a tidy 4-2 victory in the rematch on Saturday only enhanced the belief the Jets have been building since coming out of the Olympic break.

When you throw in a 3-1 win over the Avalanche on Mar. 14, you can understand why the Jets weren't worried about the mathematical equation or how big a longshot they had become.

No, winning two regular-season games against the team setting the pace in the NHL doesn't guarantee success during the final nine outings on the docket that are guaranteed.

Nor does it mean the Jets have planted a seed of doubt in the minds of the Avalanche if they somehow complete the comeback and slide into the final wild-card berth in the Western Conference.

It does show that the Jets still deserve to be in the discussion — and that they're not going to go down without a fight, even if those on Team Tankathon would prefer the losses pile up to increase the odds of a top-five draft pick.

"We are playing confident right now, I really like our game defensively and it is leading to us getting opportunities on the offensive end, and we have started to put pucks in a little bit more and that is huge," Jets forward Cole Koepke told reporters in Denver. "We have to keep chipping

away, keep winning our games and hopefully get a little bit more help on the outside but we have to make sure we take care of our own games first.”

As the Jets prepare to continue a four-game road trip against the Chicago Blackhawks on Tuesday at United Center, only one thing is certain.

Each of the teams remaining in the chase for the eighth seed in the West have flaws, including the Jets.

So, how have the Jets transformed from underachieving disappointment to forcing themselves back in the race?

Well, since suffering through the 11-game winless skid that is still threatening to leave them on the outside looking in, the Jets have responded by going 16-8-7.

By collecting 39 of a possible 64 points, the Jets put together a .609 winning percentage.

For the sake of context, when the Jets put together the best record in franchise history and captured the Presidents' Trophy last season, their winning percentage at the end of 82 games was .707.

That was aided by an incredible 15-1 start out of the gate, which doesn't make it any less impressive, it just meant the level of stress was mildly different than the pressure on the current group as they've battled to remain relevant and put some heat on the teams they've been trying to hunt down and eventually leapfrog.

Now, a 32-game sample size doesn't make their run sustainable, nor does it ignore the 15-22-5 record posted during the first 42 games of the campaign.

Let's not forget, this was a group that started out 9-3 in the current season before posting only six wins in the time between Nov. 4 and Jan. 8.

This isn't about getting bogged down by the numbers or projecting what it would take to sneak past the Seattle Kraken, Los Angeles Kings or the Predators either.

It's virtually impossible to figure out who is going to do what during the stretch run, as each of the teams have been erratic at various points.

The Jets have 18 points available to them and they'll need to accumulate at least a point and usually two in each remaining game if they plan to overcome the odds.

No matter how these final nine games go, there will be plenty of time to sift through what went wrong and where the Jets didn't measure up.

For the time being, the players and coaching staff are planning to live in the moment, leaning into what they're doing well while trying to augment the areas that haven't been at an optimal level — like a power play that needs to return to crisper puck movement and embrace a shooting and attack mentality.

One of the keys to the Jets' turnaround revolves around playing faster and a renewed commitment to defensive structure.

Having Connor Hellebuyck as locked in as he's been in the majority of his starts since Mar. 1 (and during the Olympics) and backup Eric Comrie riding a personal six-game winning streak, goaltending has been a strength — and it must continue to be.

"I thought Helly was outstanding and that's what we're going to need nine more of," Jets head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Denver after Saturday's win. "He came up large when he needed to be and that's what you need. When Helly can see pucks or he gets a look at that first shot, he's usually pretty strong."

The template that's led to success also includes a highly productive top line, a second line centred by Adam Lowry that has found the scoresheet more often and examples of secondary scoring that have become far more prevalent, like Koepke provided on Saturday.

A revamped defence corps is benefiting from a return to health for Josh Morrissey and Neal Pionk, improved play from Dylan Samberg and the boost Elias Salomonsson has delivered during this latest recall from the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

Can the Jets keep it up and do what looked virtually unthinkable just a few weeks ago?

It won't take long to find out.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2026/03/30/put-your-best-foot-forward-2>

'Put your best foot forward'

Hellebuyck remains confident despite regular-season turbulence

By: Ken Wiebe

CHICAGO — Connor Hellebuyck pulled up a chair in the lobby at the Blackhawks Ice Center with a calmness that is similar to when he stares down a shooter on a breakaway.

At a time when the pressure is ratcheting up around him in terms of the playoff chase in the Western Conference, the Winnipeg Jets starting netminder seems to be at peace and simply relishing the moment.

"It's not like I didn't have the confidence before (the Olympics)," the Milan Cortina Games men's hockey gold medallist said on Monday afternoon. "I thought I was playing great before, but going there and being able to prove what I felt like I was playing like, it's huge. I thought I was playing at a very high level and I went there and just continued to prove that and got better results.

"It's fun. I feel like I've been playing playoff hockey since Feb. 11. So yeah, it's stressful and I'm not going to be perfect every single night and I know that."

As the Jets get set to continue a four-game road trip against the Chicago Blackhawks on Tuesday, they find themselves three points behind the Nashville Predators — while holding a game in hand.

Hellebuyck had an optimistic response when asked how the Jets have been able to reduce the deficit in the chase from 11 points to three.

"I feel like I've been playing playoff hockey since Feb. 11. So yeah, it's stressful and I'm not going to be perfect every single night and I know that."

"It's one of those things where you can't worry about trying to get back in," said Hellebuyck. "You worry about yourself every single day and put your best foot forward and let the results happen. The more stress you build up on yourself and put on yourself, the more likely you are going to fail or run into some roadblock along the way."

"For me, I'm trying to be even-keeled, worry about myself and worry about stopping that puck as many times as I can and let everything else take care of itself."

Hellebuyck — who has gone 4-4-2 in his last 10 games — is quick to recognize his numbers like save percentage (.899) and goals-against average (2.80) are down this season, but he doesn't view that as cause for concern.

"I know this game is so results driven. All the media likes to talk about is the stats sheet and the results and you kind of have to, it's sports," he said.

"But as an athlete, there's the results part of it and then there's the, 'How do you feel? How are you playing? How is your game?' This part is what I care about."

"I feel like I'm at a very high level, so it's nice to put some results with that."

Hellebuyck is someone who prides himself on keeping fresh despite carrying a heavy workload. And the search to find the perfect balance is a complex equation that requires some tinkering.

"I do very much enjoy the management side of the game," said Hellebuyck. "For me, it's not just, you're playing every single night, get your rest and play. There's more to it. 'When are we going to activate the muscles? When am I going to get a little (weight) lift in? When is rest more important, when is the morning skate important?' All of that management is really fun to me because that's where you can make small strides that actually make a big difference."

"I am a bit of an over thinker, so to have something else to think about and not nit pick my goalie game is kind of nice. My mind has got to be somewhere, so I might as well keep it task oriented."

"I feel like I'm at a very high level, so it's nice to put some results with that."

Hellebuyck turned aside 21 of 23 shots in Saturday's win over the Colorado Avalanche and he also expressed his frustration to officials during a stoppage in play after Ross Colton knocked him to the ice behind the net after the Jets goalie played the puck.

"On the slew foot? He said it was incidental contact. The guy took a route between me and the net," said Hellebuyck, noting the contact was inevitable given the space between him and the net Colton tried to squeeze through. "I don't think he was doing it on purpose, but he made a dumb decision on a route and that's what penalties are. Most penalties are accidents. That's a penalty in 99 per cent of games. I've seen it go against us multiple times, whether you like it or not. It is a penalty."

"They ended up getting a shot down main street and I don't even know where my stick was."

It was the second time in just over a week that an opponent made contact with Hellebuyck in and around his crease, the first coming in a game against the Pittsburgh Penguins when Egor Chinakhov essentially cross-checked him after he was pushed by Jets defenceman Dylan Samberg.

“He did that on purpose. He took a bump this way and turned this way,” said Hellebuyck. “You can tell. He was falling, looked at me and then went like that (in a cross-checking motion). That one was for sure on purpose. I don’t know why. No one even blinked an eye at that.”

Hellebuyck understands that crease crashing is a common occurrence at this time of the year and that opponents are going to try to get in his face and under his skin.

He also realizes the importance of staying poised in intensity-filled environments.

“On the biggest stage in the world, you play as well as he did, you know what that does for your confidence,” said Jets centre Mark Scheifele, referencing his netminder’s Olympic win. “We’re so lucky to have him on our team. I think he’s the best goalie in the world and he showed it.”

And if opponents continue to see it during the majority of these final nine games, this group might just pull off a Stanley Cup playoff berth on a heater.

“He always had that belief, but sometimes you don’t really know you’ve got it until you do it — and he really did it in that gold medal game,” said Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo. “Obviously, he won the game for them and played fantastic. He’s been such a rock for us. We see it on a nightly basis. For him to do it on a stage like that and then get that recognition from everybody outside of Winnipeg, it was great to see.

“He is soaking it in, as he should. It’s a once in a lifetime opportunity to get that recognition. It’s well deserved. We get to see the confidence on a nightly basis, but it’s good to (have) everybody else see it as well.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/2026/03/30/toews-throws-opening-pitch-at-wrigley>

Toews throws opening pitch at Wrigley Jets enjoy day at the ball park in Chicago

By: Ken Wiebe

CHICAGO — Jonathan Toews emerged in a blue Chicago Cubs hat and a home white jersey with pinstripes and No. 46 on the back — an ode to Canadian pitcher Ryan Dempster.

The crowd inside Wrigley Field roared for the former Chicago Blackhawks captain as he made his way to the mound to toss out the ceremonial first pitch on Sunday afternoon before the matinee game against the Washington Nationals.

Toews went through a windup and fired the ball toward the plate, saluting the crowd and pointing to his heart in a show of appreciation before making his way into the seats to enjoy the off-day with his Winnipeg Jets teammates — who face the Blackhawks on Tuesday at United Center.

“You know what, he was joking that he’s more of a hitter than a pitcher,” Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said after a well-attended optional skate on Monday. “I’d like to see him get in there (the batter’s box) and swing a little bit. He looks like he’s done it before, that’s for sure. But he said he was pretty nervous up there.”

Toews has done a lot of impressive things in Chicago during his storied career, leading the Blackhawks renaissance that included three Stanley Cups during a five-year span.

Some of those career highlights were shown as Toews made his way onto the mound.

“It was a cool atmosphere, cool to see Toews throw the first pitch.”

“First time at Wrigley, yeah. Haven’t been to a baseball game in a long time, too, so it was a cool atmosphere, cool to see Toews throw the first pitch,” said Jets centre Mark Scheifele. “I don’t think you realize how far away the home plate was from the mound, but I think he did a pretty good job.”

With a rare two-day break between games on this four-game road trip, the Jets were able to enjoy an afternoon of relaxation at the iconic ball park known as the Friendly Confines.

“It was a great day overall,” said DeMelo. “We haven’t had any time to do things together as a team. It’s been game, travel, game, off-day, whatever it is, it’s just been that type of year with the amount of games and the volume we’ve had. I think this was our first two-day break in three weeks.

“It was nice to have a nice sunny day and watch the Cubs play. Everything about the whole day, just hanging out and going for dinner with the guys, that’s the fun stuff about this league. You get to hang out with your teammates, get to know them, share some laughs, and share some memories.”

“That’s the fun stuff about this league. You get to hang out with your teammates, get to know them, share some laughs, and share some memories.”

What were DeMelo’s overall impressions of his first trip to Wrigley Field?

“Wrigley was really cool. Just walking to the stadium was really awesome. You kind of feel the history and the vibe in there,” said DeMelo. “That’s the thing about baseball, every stadium and every ball park are different. I’ve been to a handful and they’re all unique in their own way. But this one, with the history and the old school seats and stuff like that. It was on my bucket list and I’m glad I was there.”

Toews wasn’t the only member of the Jets to receive a warm ovation, as cameras showed U.S. Olympians and gold medal winners Connor Hellebuyck and Kyle Connor on the scoreboard as well.

“(The Cubs) got the two home runs right after it, so we’re going to take a little bit of credit for that,” said Hellebuyck, another first-time visitor to Wrigley.

“I didn’t play any (organized) baseball. In the park with friends and stuff. I just got into fantasy baseball this year, but I’m just trying to learn everything. When they made the rule changes for

baseball, I thought it was a lot more enjoyable to watch. I wouldn't say I'm a new fan, but I'm pretty into it now."

Most of the healthy Jets were on the ice on Monday for the optional workout, while three players on the road to recovery joined them in non-contact jerseys, including forwards Nino Niederreiter and Vladislav Namestnikov and defenceman Colin Miller.

Meanwhile, there was some encouraging news back in Winnipeg as forward Morgan Barron — who has been in concussion protocol since taking a hard right hand in a fight with Colorado Avalanche defenceman Josh Manson on Thursday — was on the ice at Hockey For All Centre on Monday.

Although a timeline for his return will depend on how the next few days go, there's a chance Barron could meet the Jets at some point before the road trip is over.

Moose battling

The Jets' primary affiliate also finds itself in the thick of a playoff chase in the American Hockey League, with the Manitoba Moose closing a four-game road trip on Tuesday against the Toronto Marlies. The club sits in fourth place in the Central Division standings.

The Moose are currently two points behind the Texas Stars, while holding a game in hand, but the club hosts the Milwaukee Admirals next week who are in hot pursuit and just one point back.

Manitoba returns home for a six-game homestand that includes a weekend set with the Grand Rapids Griffins starting Friday. That will be followed by two-game sets against both the Admirals and Stars.

Moose captain Mason Shaw leads the Moose in points with 37 in 61 games, while Samuel Fagemo leads the team in goals with 17.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11751330/analysis-winnipeg-jets-find-answer-for-second-line-woes/>

ANALYSIS: Winnipeg Jets have found a short-term answer for second line woes

By Kelly Moore CJOB

ANALYSIS: Winnipeg Jets have found a short-term answer for second line woes - [imageView image in full screen](#)

All season long the Winnipeg Jets have been looking for a second line.

Scott Arniel and the coaching staff have found a solution at a most opportune time.

Saturday Night in Colorado, Gabe Vilardi opened the scoring before the four-minute mark on a deflection of a Josh Morrissey point shot, aided by Adam Lowry filling in for a pinching Dylan DeMelo and keeping the play onside.

How reliant have the Jets been on taking a 1-0 lead this season, you ask? Twenty-six of their 31 wins have been when they have scored first.

Cole Perfetti scored the game winner, with just over five minutes to play — also on a deflection — after Vilardi won a board battle behind the Avalanche net to get the puck back up high for a Jacob Bryson point shot.

This is now four straight games with at least a point for a member of the trio of Vilardi, Perfetti and Lowry. Over a 10-game stretch, the totals are eight goals and 13 assists for 21 points. And most of that damage has been done at even strength as a line.

Add in the challenge of being matched up against the likes of Nathan MacKinnon, Jack Eichel and the opposition's top line on many nights, and that five-on-five production carries even more weight.

Without a doubt, job one for GM Kevin Cheveldayoff in the off-season will be to find a way to solve that gaping hole at 2C on the depth chart to allow captain Lowry to go back to doing what he does best as one of the most proficient shutdown centres in the NHL.

But the Winnipeg Jets' only IMMEDIATE concern is finding a way to stay in the playoff hunt.

Winnipeg Sun

https://www.winnipegsun.com/sports/winnipeg_jets/winnipeg-jets-delight-chicago-crowd-with-surprise-visit/article_220240a9-6834-462b-a5c0-909d9a9c473d.html

Heroes for a day: Winnipeg Jets get cheers from Chicago crowd

By Paul Friesen

For one day, at least, Chicago sports fans were cheering on members of the Winnipeg Jets.

That'll change on Tuesday night when the Jets continue their desperate push for a playoff spot against the Blackhawks.

But on Sunday afternoon at Wrigley Field, home of the Cubs, three Jets got cheers in the Windy City.

It began when the Cubs played a video montage of highlights from Jonathan Toews' legendary career with the Blackhawks before their game against the Washington Nationals.

The three-time Stanley Cup winner and long-time Blackhawks captain then threw out the first pitch as the crowd cheered and several Jets teammates watched from just outside the Cubs' dugout.

"Not bad," Scheifele, back in the hockey arena, said of Toews' arm in an interview with reporters on Monday. "I don't think he realized how far home plate was from the mound. But he did a pretty good job."

"He was joking that he's more of a hitter than a pitcher," Dylan DeMelo added. "I'd like to maybe see him get in there and swing a little bit. It looks like he's done it before, that's for sure. But he said he was pretty nervous up there."

Toews was honoured by the Chicago hockey crowd when the Jets played there earlier this season.

For Sunday's baseball occasion, the Winnipeg native wore a No. 46 Ryan Dempster jersey. Dempster is a fellow Canadian who pitched for the Cubs during Toews' career with the 'Hawks, and the two became friends.

In the fourth inning, the Cubs recognized Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck and winger Kyle Connor, both members of the gold-medal-winning U.S. Olympic team.

Scheifele says it's quite something to see Hellebuyck, the star of the gold-medal game, becoming a household name south of the border.

"We really saw it when we were in San Jose," No. 55 said. "There's people that I don't know if they even knew anything about hockey, but they knew Connor Hellebuyck, which is really cool to see just how much the Olympics did for hockey."

From being the hero of Team USA to visiting the White House and meeting President Donald Trump, who promised him the Presidential Medal of Freedom, to various U.S. stops along the way, it's been quite the month for the three-time Vezina Trophy winner.

"We see it on a nightly basis," DeMelo said. "And for him to do it on a stage like that and get that recognition from everybody outside of maybe Winnipeg... he is soaking it in. As he should. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get that recognition. It's well-deserved."

Hellebuyck, Toews and Connor won't be as well-received on Tuesday, as the Jets have a chance to pull to within one point of idle Nashville, the current holder of the last wildcard playoff spot.

Seattle (one point up on the Jets) and the L.A. Kings (two) are also in the way. Then there's San Jose, one point back but with two games in hand going into their Monday night tilt against St. Louis.

"We've just been trying to stay in the fight," DeMelo said. "We've been up and down all year. But the last little bit our urgency has been really high. We understand the situation, and guys have been digging in and playing hard. It's going to go down to the wire, so we're just hoping to keep accumulating them and hopefully get in there."

The Jets are coming off a Saturday win over Colorado, the top team in the NHL, which can't hurt their confidence.

"That was a resilient game," Scheifele said. "To come out with the win and get some greasy goals and guys blocking shots and doing all that stuff, it took a full team effort."

All but counted out going into the Olympic break, the Jets are 9-4-4 since, renewing hope, even if it's still faint.

DeMelo says one of the big difference is keeping their foot on the gas.

“We had some stretches there where we have leads and then we’re sitting on our heels and just letting them come at us,” he said. “Safe is death in this league. You don’t need to be careless, obviously, when you’re up. But you still need to play with assertiveness and play on our toes, and we’d gotten away from that. We’ve done a better job of that now... and it’s been paying off for us.”

After Chicago, it’s off to Dallas for a Thursday game, Columbus two days later.

Western Conference rivals still on their schedule include Seattle, Vegas, Utah and the Sharks.

Because of the Olympics it’s been a grind of a schedule, which made Sunday’s team outing to the ballpark and dinner after the game such a welcome diversion.

“It was a great day, overall,” DeMelo said. “We haven’t had any time to really do things together as a team. It’s just been that type of year with how many games we’ve had. I think this is our first two-day break in three weeks.”

https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/jets-trying-to-avoid-a-step-back-as-the-hawks-loom-large/article_ccca6aa4-3887-437d-9888-4df691eb9e3f.html

Jets trying to avoid a ‘step back’ as the ‘Hawks loom large

By Gordon Anderson

Even with a surprising road victory over the Colorado Avalanche on Saturday, the Jets aren’t overly giddy.

“It’s just one at a time,” Jets head coach Scott Arniel told reporters after a 4-2 win in Denver. “I know you guys don’t want to hear it, but we looked at the scoreboard, and we got some help around the league. That’s what we need, but you’ve got to win to gain ground. We did that. Now our focus zeroes in on Chicago. It can’t be one of those ones where you have a great game here and then you take a big step back.”

As Arniel mentioned, stop two of the four-city tour is in Chicago on Tuesday night for the fourth and final meeting of the season. The Jets have earned four of a possible six points against the ‘Hawks.

The last time the Jets arrived in Chicago (27-33-13) with something to play for ended in a 2-0 loss. The club touched down for a Jan. 19 game with four wins and one OT loss in their previous five games. Spencer Knight made 32 saves that night.

The Jets gained some measure of confidence in beating the top team in the league, record wise, but the feelgood factors go away with poor performance.

The Jets (31-30-12) have been unpredictable this season, but that kind of behaviour must be in the past now with nine games left in the season and three points to make up in the Western Conference wildcard standings.

“We are in a spot where we need to win every game, but we say if we play the right way that we can keep up with anyone and we have shown that in the past two games,” Cole Koepke said. “We didn’t get the win at home against the Avalanche, but we still played a close game with

them and on Saturday we dialed in and showed what we could do. We just need to gain confidence from that and keep going.”

The Jets are in Dallas on Thursday and Columbus on Saturday.

“We need to win another game, and then we need to win another game after that,” Gabe Vilardi said. “That’s our mindset.”

Same scenario, different result

Two days after one video review goal went against the Jets, the second video review goal was allowed to stand.

And what a crucial call by the league’s off-ice officials as the Jets earned a 4-2 victory on Saturday night in Colorado.

After some delay, the home team challenged Cole Perfetti’s tip-in goal at 14:49 of the third period for interference as Jonathan Toews and Gabriel Landeskog battled for position in the crease before the puck squeezed through Avs goaltender Mackenzie Blackwood.

“Honestly, I’m standing there and I’m sure (for Avalanche head coach Jared Bednar), it’s the same thing,” Jets head coach Scott Arniel told the media in Denver. “We’re not sure what the call is going to be because it’s hard to figure out. Every call is a little bit different. The only thing for me on that one is that Blackwood’s blocker hit (Toews) after the puck was by him. That’s what we thought, what we were hoping and we had our fingers crossed. It went our way. That was a big call.”

In his post-game availability, Bednar didn’t seem to have an issue with the goal. He called for a review because of the timing.

“I feel the contact was probably a little bit late as the puck was already going by Blackwood,” Bednar said. “I challenged it because of the timing with a one goal home game at five-on-five, and it is hard to create offence and if they go up 3-2, you have a couple of shifts and then you are pulling the goalie. So, if you try to erase it off the board, it was worth a shot. It was close enough.”

“Well, it was a big goal when it went in,” Gabe Vilardi said. “To see that they challenged, I thought (the referees) made the right call, personally. To see that it was confirmed a goal, we were all excited. But the job wasn’t done. That’s how it went.”

Kyle Connor added some insurance with an empty-net goal at 17:51.

Some 48 hours beforehand, the shoe was on the other foot, with the Jets disputing a third period go-head goal by Avs all-star Nathan MacKinnon.

MacKinnon’s marker was challenged for interference as MacKinnon’s right skate contacted Connor Hellebuyck’s left leg, but the puck appeared to be in the net before the contact was initiated. The goal was allowed to stand as the game-winner in Colorado’s 3-2 victory over the locals.

Minutes after the completion of the game, Arniel was looking for an answer to his satisfaction.

“It was a real cross-up,” Arniel said. “The referees told us he tipped the puck before his stick went into Hellebuyck’s glove. The league said it was contact in the white, incidental contact on the white ice, and there is video where MacKinnon’s stick goes into Hellebuyck’s glove before the puck hits his stick. Three different opinions going on right now.”

https://www.winnipegssun.com/sports/more-weight-than-words-for-jets-captain-adam-lowry/article_3f830282-2e54-47c0-ab5a-9471442c1d62.html

‘More weight than words,’ for Jets captain Adam Lowry

By Gordon Anderson

Given the very public nature of the occupation, when a professional athlete struggles on the field of play, fans and players of that team are aware of those scuffles.

“From a personal standpoint, it has been a disappointing season, production wise, and it certainly hasn’t gone like the last few years have gone (for me),” Jets captain Adam Lowry told the Winnipeg Sun.

Of the Winnipeg forwards who have played 10 games or more, only Gustav Nyquist (1), Brad Lambert (2), Isak Rosen (1) and Parker Ford (0) have scored fewer goals.

The Calgary native has five goals and 15 helpers in 61 appearances. To put that in perspective, the No. 17 in the ‘Polar Night Blue’ and white silks scored four goals in 13 playoff games last season, including the series winner in Game 7 of overtime against the St. Louis Blues.

Normally, it is standard procedure to pencil in the centreman for double-digit goal seasons. Prior to this campaign, the previous time he finished with fewer than 10 goals came during the 2019-20 season, when he scored four in 49 games. He scored a career-high 16 last season in 73 games.

In the competitive atmosphere of a dressing room, it would only be natural if the captain’s words, whatever the tone or message relayed, were sounding a little hollow these days as Lowry’s lack of offensive production has contributed to their precarious position in the playoff standings.

“As a leader on this team, actions generally carry more weight than words and sometimes the words feel a little empty when you are not performing on the ice,” he said.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel says Lowry’s effectiveness as captain hasn’t degraded in his eyes, regardless of the results with less than three weeks remaining in the regular season.

“It doesn’t matter if he is having a good game or a bad game, he is our leader and that is the area, for me, he is good at, one of the things he always makes sure he is pushing the group the rest of the time,” he said.

The 33-year-old admitted his lack of consistent production in front of the net is keeping him up and night. He is eager to contribute to this frantic chase for a wildcard spot in the Western Conference.

The Jets trail the Nashville Predators by three points for the second wildcard spot in the West heading into league play on Sunday night.

"I know there is another level of my game that I need to get to, and I am trying to find it every day at practice, finding different ways to contribute, whether it is on the scoresheet or little things in the game that might go unnoticed. It does frustrate me, at times," he said. "I know I am not going to score every night or get a point every game, but to go on stretches like I have this year, you sometimes feel like you are letting the team down."

Lowry recently broke a 24-game goalless drought in the 3-2 shootout victory over the New York Rangers last Sunday afternoon at Madison Square Gardens. His previous goal was Jan. 13 against the New York Islanders. He also went 17 games without scoring between Nov. 18 and Dec. 29.

Lowry missed the entirety of training camp and the opening month of the season after off-season hip surgery in the days following the Jets' loss to the Dallas Stars in the second round of the playoffs last May.

No matter how the remainder of the season plays out, Lowry says the year has been a learning experience, and despite his many years in the league and multiple seasons as the captain, there is always knowledge to be gained through adversity.

"This is really the first turbulence we have hit since I have been the captain, where we've had extended losing streaks, and we find ourselves not comfortably in a playoff spot," he said. "And how do (I) navigate the confidence in the room, how do (I) navigate motivating guys when they are down on themselves or (just) trying to get the team out of the rut. It has been a good learning experience on how to handle different types of adversity."

Lowry was named captain of the Jets in September of 2023. The Jets drafted Lowry in the third round (No. 67) of the 2011 NHL draft.

The Hockey News

<https://ca.sports.yahoo.com/news/jets-didnt-really-too-far-191653379.html>

Jets "Didn't Really Get Too Far" When it Came To Trading Cole Perfetti Says NHL Insider

By Jake Tye

The Winnipeg Jets are navigating a difficult follow-up campaign after delivering the best regular season in franchise history a year ago, prompting questions about how the organization plans to retool while remaining competitive in the National Hockey League.

As the trade deadline approached, Winnipeg found itself at the center of multiple rumors involving high-profile roster moves. Among the most notable storylines was speculation surrounding Cole Perfetti, the team's former top-10 selection in the 2020 NHL Draft.

Reports suggested the 24-year-old forward had surfaced in trade discussions, raising concerns among fans about the team potentially moving on from one of its emerging offensive talents.

That speculation was addressed this past week by The Fourth Period's David Pagnotta, who clarified that Winnipeg's intentions were not to shop Perfetti, but rather to find complementary pieces to elevate his role on the second line.

Speaking on Daily Faceoff's The Sheet, Pagnotta explained that the Jets had explored options across the league to identify players who could mesh with Perfetti's playmaking style. However, those conversations occasionally led opposing teams to inquire about acquiring Perfetti himself, discussions that ultimately did not progress.

The clarification aligned with the sentiment among some Jets fans, who questioned the logic of trading a young, developing forward as a starting point for a roster retool.

Not all observers agree with this however, as some fans have argued that Winnipeg could have leveraged Perfetti's value to address its need for a more established second-line center. One such viewpoint, shared on social media, suggested an alternative approach that would have seen younger forwards like Isak Rosen and Brad Lambert take on larger roles alongside a newly acquired pivot.

For now, the Jets will need to answer if they are committed to Perfetti or not as part of their core moving forward as the Whitby, Ontario native is set to become a restricted free agent this July. Winnipeg has the choice of negotiating a contract extension or exploring other options, including a potential sign-and-trade scenario, a strategy that has gained traction across the league in recent off-seasons.