

Winnipegjets.com

[*Three things - Five straight wins for Jets
Ehlers scores 200th career goal, Brossoit records third shutout of season*](#)

By Jamie Thomas

Nikolaj Ehlers scored his 200th career goal and Laurent Brossoit made 24 saves for his third shutout of the season in a 3-0 win for the Winnipeg Jets over the Dallas Stars at American Airlines Center. The Jets (49-24-6) won their fifth in a row and moved into second spot in the Central and are now only five back of the Stars for first. David Gustafsson and Mark Scheifele also scored for Winnipeg who close out their road trip Saturday afternoon in Denver when they face the Colorado Avalanche.

RIGHT TEMPLATE

Winnipeg has been desperately trying to get back to the style of game that they played when they went over 30 games giving up three goals or less. It looked like the Jets found it in Dallas against a Stars team that had beaten them three previous times this season. Brossoit did get his sixth career shutout tonight, but he got a lot of help from the group in front of him and was really impressed with the teams effort in the first period.

"The first period was probably my quietest. The guys played so well. I just had to be sharp. Some open shots. It really wasn't that complicated for me in the first," said Brossoit who set a career best with his 14th win of the season.

"In the second they had a push and I had to make a couple saves, but like I said we came out hot and we stayed the course throughout the whole game."

200 FOR EHLERS

After a challenging final two periods in Nashville, the Jets desperately needed to get back to their game facing the Stars. In the opening 20 tonight at America Airlines, the Jets played near flawless hockey and at 14:51 they opened the scoring. Nikolaj Ehlers jumped on a loose puck in the slot and backhanded it under Jake Oettinger. Ehlers is the first Danish player to reach 200 career goals and he had a bounce back performance after only playing 9:37 in Nashville.

"So, for me, it was a pretty simple game today," said Ehlers.

"And it was nice to score that goal and get the boys going and I think we played a pretty big game, so that's good."

BIRTHDAY BOY

David Gustafsson celebrated his 24th birthday on Thursday by finding out that he was coming back into the lineup. The Swedish forward hadn't played since March 28. Gustafsson started on the third line on the left side of Adam Lowry (the Jets captain played in his 700th game) and Mason Appleton and with the Jets leading 1-0 in the second, Gustafsson redirected a shot from Dylan Samberg behind Oettinger. It was his first goal since October 30.

NHL.com

[*Jets prospect McGroarty aiming to win NCAA title before deciding NHL future*](#)

[Michigan forward playing in Frozen Four semifinal against Boston College on Thursday](#)

By Jessi Pierce

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- Rutger McGroarty won't make a decision on his NHL future today. He's focused on trying to win an NCAA championship first.

Ideally, the 20-year-old forward won't be making the call on whether to sign an entry-level contract with the Winnipeg Jets or return to the University of Michigan for his junior year until after the NCAA Division I men's championship game Saturday, a game he hopes the Wolverines will be playing in.

"Hopefully, selfishly for this team, hopefully we can delay the decision as long as possible," McGroarty said following team practice at Xcel Energy Center on Wednesday. Michigan faces Boston College in the second national semifinal at 8:30 p.m. ET on Thursday. Boston University plays the University of Denver at 5 p.m. ET.

The Jets selected McGroarty in the first round (No. 14) of the 2022 NHL Draft. He attended his first development camp with Winnipeg last July after getting 39 points (18 goals, 21 assists) in 39 games as a freshman at Michigan.

This season, McGroarty is second on Michigan with 52 points (16 goals, 36 assists) in 35 games and ranks seventh among all NCAA Division I players in points per game (1.49), impressive numbers considering he missed nearly four weeks after breaking several ribs and puncturing his lung on Nov. 17.

After returning, McGroarty was the captain for the United States when it won the gold medal at the 2024 IIHF World Junior Championship in January, finishing the tournament with nine points (five goals, four assists) in seven games.

"I learned more from that injury than I could have ever imagined," McGroarty said. "I feel like just seeing other people in the hospital, just not taking anything for granted and just being able to play hockey every day. I mean, hockey is a sport that we all love. So that's the No. 1 thing that stands out to me.

"And then on the ice, I've been a lot more consistent this year. In the NHL, you play 82 games, so you've got to be consistent every night. And then just continuing to grow as a hockey player. I mean, nothing's really changed. I feel like I'm the same player. I know what kind of player I am and I'm just more mature, more consistent, smarter. I feel like everything's just kind of gotten a little bit better."

Winnipeg brass has been vocal about wanting to have McGroarty (6-foot, 200 pounds) on its roster next season, with ongoing discussions and check-ins with him once or twice per week since he was drafted.

McGroarty said that although he can sense the excitement from the Jets, they have not pushed him to make a decision while he aims to help Michigan to its first championship since 1998.

"As the second half (of the season) has kind of ramped up, I've gotten a couple more texts, but they've been very respectful with the playoff push we're making," McGroarty said. "They've had

a talk with my agent but nothing crazy. We haven't had the serious talk yet. But yeah, they've been very respectful and it's been great."

For now, McGroarty is laser focused on the Frozen Four and bringing a title to Michigan -- before possibly joining the NHL.

"We'll see," he said with a smile.

[Brossoit stops 24, Jets shut out Stars to move into 2nd in Central Division](#) **[Scheifele, Ehlers score for Winnipeg, which wins 5th in row; Dallas had won 10 of 11](#)**

By Taylor Baird

DALLAS -- Laurent Brossoit made 24 saves, and the Winnipeg Jets moved into second place in the Central Division with a 3-0 win against the Dallas Stars at American Airlines Center on Thursday.

Winnipeg is tied with the Colorado Avalanche in points (104) but owns the tiebreaker, which is regular-season wins (43 for Winnipeg, 41 for Colorado).

The shutout was Brossoit's third of the season and sixth in the NHL.

"We know that they're dangerous off the rush, and it seems like we took that away for the most part," Brossoit said. "In the [defensive zone] we didn't give them much, and any rebounds I gave up, our guys were first to the puck. It was consistent the whole 60 (minutes)."

Mark Scheifele, Nikolaj Ehlers and David Gustafsson scored for the Jets (49-24-6), who have won five in a row after losing six straight. Mason Appleton had two assists.

"That's the game we want to play," Winnipeg coach Rick Bowness said. "That team's a great hockey team over there, obviously. We knew we had to bring our A-game out there on every shift and we did. That's the way we want to play and we're going to."

Jake Oettinger made 21 saves for the Stars (50-21-9), who had won 10 of 11 and would have clinched first in the Central with a victory. The loss ended an eight-game winning streak for Oettinger.

"We can always keep getting better," Dallas forward Jamie Benn said. "I think that's the best thing about hockey. As good as you are, there's always things you can improve on. We'll learn from this one. Take some positives from it if we can and learn from our mistakes. We would have liked to [clinch the division] tonight. Didn't happen, so we've got a big game Saturday now."

Ehlers gave Winnipeg a 1-0 lead at 14:51 of the first period when he knocked in a rebound five-hole from the slot.

"I think the pressure game we got back to, getting pucks deep, all the old hockey cliches," Ehlers said. "Getting the pucks deep and working on their [defense] and creating turnovers, getting some [offensive zone] time from that was something that we, earlier in this season, were

really good at. Today, we got back to that. We played it simple most of the time, but there's still some things that we need to clean up."

Gustafsson extended it to 2-0 at 9:20 of the second period, deflecting Dylan Samberg's shot from inside the blue line above the right face-off circle.

"I think against that team, you want to play out front. You want to get the first goal and then they have to open it up a little bit," Dallas coach Pete DeBoer said. "Credit to them, they defended hard. They were the more desperate team. We didn't give them a whole lot either, but you have to score in this league to win, and it's one of the few nights we didn't do enough to score."

Scheifele scored into an empty net at 17:39 of the third period for the 3-0 final.

"I recognize a lot of the system, for sure. (A) disciplined team," Stars forward Tyler Seguin said. "Their [third forward in the defensive zone] was always above, their [defense] played well, they're in your face. We know the style. Couldn't crack it tonight. A team like that, when they score first or two, they really get into that system. If we get up on them, they can't really play it. If we see them again, that'll be the message."

NOTES: Winnipeg forward Adam Lowry played his 700th game. ... Ehlers scored his 200th goal, becoming the sixth player in franchise history to reach the mark, and the first Denmark-born player in NHL history to do so.

Associated Press

[Laurent Brossoit gets third shutout, Jets' win keeps Stars from clinching Central Division](#)

By Associated Press

DALLAS — Laurent Brossoit stopped 24 shots for his third shutout in his past five starts, David Gustafsson scored on his 24th birthday and the Winnipeg Jets beat the Dallas Stars 3-0 on Thursday night.

The Jets won their fifth consecutive game coming off a six-game winless streak and prevented the Stars from clinching the Central Division title.

Instead, Winnipeg avoided a season sweep by Dallas and matched Colorado in second place with 104 points, five behind the Stars.

"That team's a great hockey team over there," said Jets coach Rick Bowness, who led the Stars for 2 1/2 seasons from 2019-22. "We knew we had to bring our 'A' game, and they did. That's the way we want to play."

Dallas has two games remaining, while the Jets and Avalanche each have three. Winnipeg has clinched the tiebreaker against Colorado with a 2-0 season series lead going into the teams' final meeting Saturday in Denver.

Nikolaj Ehlers opened the scoring with an unassisted goal, his 24th, late in the first period. Gustafsson scored midway through the second. Mark Scheifele added an empty-netter for his 25th.

"They're in first right now for a reason," Ehlers said of the Stars. "For us to go out there and play the way that we did tonight against a great team, that shows what we can do if we play the right way."

The Stars, second in the NHL in scoring, were shut out for the third time this season, and first since a 4-0 loss at Tampa Bay on Dec. 4. It was the first time Dallas was blanked at home.

"I recognize a lot of that system for sure," Stars forward Tyler Seguin said of facing Bowness' defense-first team. "We know the style. Couldn't crack it tonight."

Dallas didn't lose ground in the President's Cup race for the best record in the NHL. The New York Rangers lost to Philadelphia at home and remained one point ahead of the Stars with 110. The Rangers have two games remaining as well.

Jake Oettinger made 21 saves for Dallas as his eight-game winning streak ended.

"We've been on a really good run here for a long time," Stars coach Pete DeBoer said. "I guess that's the silver lining, we didn't beat ourselves tonight, and they got a couple of bounces around the net."

Brossoit, the backup to Connor Hellebuyck, made several scrambling saves and got a break in the second period when a shot redirected by Jamie Benn clanged off a post and settled under the 31-year-old journeyman.

The first two shutouts of the season for Brossoit came a week apart in March. His sixth career shutout came in his first action in 10 days. Brossoit is 7-1 in his past eight starts going back to Feb. 20.

"We didn't give up a lot, but when we did, he was there," Bowness said. "He's been so good for us this year."

UP NEXT

Jets: Winnipeg won in Colorado on Dec. 7 and beat the Avs again at home nine days later.

Stars: Seattle at home Saturday.

Global Winnipeg

[Brossoit clutch, Jets shine against Dallas Stars for fifth straight win](#)

By Ross Levitan & Russ Hobson Global News

Laurent Brossoit made 24 saves for the shutout and the Winnipeg Jets made a Central Division statement Thursday with a 3-0 blanking of the Western Conference leading Dallas Stars on the road.

Winnipeg won their fifth straight game to move into a tie for second place in the division with the Colorado Avalanche with each team having three games left to play in the regular season.

The Jets have been searching to find their form for what seems like forever and finally put it all together for one of their best performances since beating the New York Rangers three weeks ago.

“That’s the way we want to play the game,” said Jets head coach Rick Bowness. “That team is a great hockey team over there, obviously. We knew we had to bring our ‘A’ game out there on every shift and we did. That’s the way we want to play.”

The Stars had won 10 of their last 11 games and had beaten the Jets in all three of their previous meetings this season.

But on this night the Jets looked more like the team we saw back in December and January.

“It looked a lot like that stretch we had of a lot of games with not a lot of goals against,” said forward Nikolaj Ehlers. “But it’s not just the goals against, it’s seeing how everybody is working together out there. And that’s what we need, so that’s exciting.”

“For us to go out and play the way that we did tonight against a great team like that, shows what we can do if we play the right way.”

The email you need for the day’s top news stories from Canada and around the world. Brossoit was fantastic again in the Jets’ net and recorded his third shutout in just his past six starts. The Jets held the Stars to just 24 shots on goal, including just seven in the third period.

“We know that they’re dangerous off the rush and seemed like we took that away for the most part,” said Brossoit. “In the ‘D’ zone we didn’t give them much and any rebounds I gave up, our guys were first to the puck and it was consistent in all 60 (minutes).”

Brossoit has only allowed more than three goals in a game twice in 21 starts this season.

“Timely saves when we needed them,” said Bowness. “We didn’t give up a lot of grade A’s tonight, but when we did, he was there. He’s been so good for us this year. He’s been outstanding.”

Ehlers opened the scoring with 5:07 remaining in the first period, depositing a rebound from the slot past Stars goaltender Jake Oettinger.

The Dane’s 24th goal this season was also the 200th of his NHL career.

Winnipeg was able to double its lead 9:20 into the second period. Dylan Samberg’s point shot deflected off a Stars’ stick, then hit David Gustafsson before it trickled into the back of the net. The goal was Gustafsson’s 3rd of the season and first in 29 games.

The best chance for Dallas to score in the first two periods came with just under a minute remaining in the second.

Stars defenceman Thomas Harley’s deflected shot from the point skipped in and went off the right post, bouncing out and directly under Brossoit.

The third period featured a lot of offensive zone pressure for Dallas, but Brossoit stood tall.

Then with the Stars goalie pulled late, Mark Scheifele put an exclamation mark on this game with an empty net goal. It was just the second Jets shot on goal in the period.

Cole Perfetti was scratched for Gustafsson, while Adam Lowry appeared in his 700th career NHL game.

The Jets and Avalanche are tied for second in the Central with 104 points each, but Winnipeg holds the tiebreaker with more regulation wins.

And it sets up a Winnipeg-Colorado showdown Saturday afternoon in Denver, the Jets final road game of the regular season.

The pregame show begins at 1 p.m. on 680 CJOB, with puck drop just after 3 p.m.

[ANALYSIS: Jets finally solve Dallas problem with second place within reach](#)

By John Shannon CJOB

Just when you think there's nothing more to prove in this long NHL season, a game like Thursday night's occurs and helps you prepare for the Stanley Cup playoffs.

The Winnipeg Jets defeated the Dallas Stars on Thursday night. And for a game this late in the season, between two teams already bound for the post-season, it proved to mean so much.

If you're an avid sports fan, you've seen players in many sports who are going through scoring droughts. When they end that drought, they gesture that they are finally taking the "monkey off their back." Well, I fully expected to see Rick Bowness make that gesture Thursday night. The Dallas monkey was finally off his back this season.

It was the Jets' first win vs. Dallas this hockey year — by a shutout no less — and the three goals the team scored equaled the goals they scored against the Stars in the first three games, head-to-head.

Remember, it wasn't that long ago this team went winless in six, and everyone — and I mean everyone — was getting a little nervous. Now, five wins later, this team appears ready for anything.

The satisfaction of defeating Dallas and avoiding the season sweep should be sweet indeed for the former Stars coach and his Winnipeg team. To win in Dallas might be as important as anything.

You see, there is (and rightly so) a true belief with the Jets that this is going to be a long, successful spring through the Stanley Cup playoffs. It's not unreasonable to think that a Dallas-Winnipeg second round match-up could be a reality. Getting the W in Big D proves there is no jinx against the Stars.

Thursday's game also marked the 19th win inside the Central Division for the Jets. That's a better total than the Stars, Avalanche and Predators — the other teams going to the post-season from the Central.

So now, it's on to Colorado for the Jets. And a game that now means so much more. Second place is in their sights. And if they win out in Denver and at home to Seattle and Vancouver, second place is theirs.

Winnipeg Free Press

Jets shine with total team effort to blank Stars 3-0

By: Ken Wiebe

DALLAS — That is what playoff hockey is supposed to look like.

On a night when the Winnipeg Jets avoided a four-game season series sweep to the Dallas Stars, the most important thing to come out of the 3-0 victory at American Airlines Center on Thursday night had virtually nothing to do with the final score.

Other than showcasing exactly what it's going to take in order to have a chance to play well into and possibly beyond April.

This was a clinical effort, one where puck management was precise and where doing the little things was evident as they got back to playing their pressure game all over the ice.

"It looked a lot like that stretch we had with a lot of games with not a lot of goals against," said Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers, who scored the game-winning goal. "But it's not just the goals against — it's seeing how everybody is working together out there and that's what we need, so that's exciting."

Playing such a complete game was even more impressive when you consider the opponent, a Stars team that had won 10 of the previous 11 games.

"Oh, it's huge," said Ehlers, whose team extended its winning streak to five games. "I mean they're in first right now for a reason. They've got an incredible team and for us to go out and play the way that we did against a great team like that, it shows what we can do if we play the right way. We've just got to buy in."

One of the items near the top of the to-do list was making life a whole lot easier for the man between the pipes.

On that front, the Jets were highly successful, drastically reducing the number of high-danger chances against as Laurent Brossoit delivered his 14th victory and third shutout of the season.

Offensively, the Jets scored goals from Ehlers, David Gustafsson, and Mark Scheifele into an empty net to improve to 49-24-6.

"That's the game we want to play. That team's a great hockey team over there, obviously," said Jets head coach Rick Bowness. "We knew we had to bring our A game out there on every shift and we did. That's the way we want to play and we're going to."

The Jets close out this four-game road trip on Saturday afternoon against the Colorado Avalanche for a tilt that could determine second spot in the Central Division.

Let's take a closer look at what transpired in the Lone Star State:

The response

Ehlers couldn't have enjoyed spending a good chunk of the third period on the bench in Tuesday's 4-3 overtime win over the Nashville Predators, but he was quick to respond after being reunited with Sean Monahan and Tyler Toffoli.

Ehlers, who was limited to a season-low 9:37 of ice time in that outing, found himself alone in the slot and buried a beautiful pass from Sean Monahan for his 24th goal of the campaign at 14:51 of the first period.

Prior to the contest, Bowness talked about the importance of finding some continuity on his two scoring lines and was hoping the reunion of Ehlers with Monahan and Tyler Toffoli could be a way to spark some production. Bowness referenced that line scoring roughly at a goal per game clip before Toffoli got sick and missed a game due to illness on Apr. 1.

Monahan was quick to grab the puck as a souvenir since it was the 200th NHL goal for Ehlers.

"It was nice to score that goal and get the boys going," said Ehlers. "When you play it simple, you don't have to think too much and you do what comes to your mind first. You don't create as many turnovers so I think I was able to use my speed a lot today and I tried to shoot the puck when I got it. Playing with those two guys has been a lot of fun so it's exciting to get back and to be playing well.

"They're easy players to play with. (Toffoli) has an incredible shot. We obviously want him to use that as much as possible and (Monahan's) defensive play and his playmaking skills, the way that he reads the game, is a lot of fun to play with. And for myself, I try to skate as much as I can and get open for those two and create something. So far it's been really good and we want to keep that going."

Bowness and Ehlers had a productive talk on Thursday morning.

"Yeah, he wasn't happy with his game (against the Predators)," said Bowness. "Listen, he was good at both ends of the ice, you saw that back check in the second period. That's just as impressive as the goal so I thought he had a really, really solid game on both ends of the ice," said Bowness. "But he was ready to go tonight and he's an honest guy. That's right. He is accountable. And he knows he wasn't at his best. And he takes great pride in that. So give him a lot of credit for a good bounce-back game."

Gustafsson ends drought

The Jets made one lineup change, inserting David Gustafsson up front for Cole Perfetti, who had just 9:23 of ice time in Tuesday's game against the Predators. Gustafsson, who sat out eight of the previous nine games as a healthy scratch, snapped a 30-game goal drought that stretched back to Oct. 30 when a point shot from Dylan Samberg caromed in off his skate after it changed direction off the stick of Stars forward Mason Marchment.

"I'm not surprised. He's been working his bag off for the last bit here. We all see that," said Brossoit. "I was happy to see him out there and happy to see him succeed."

Gustafsson is having a solid season but he's been a victim of the numbers game after the arrival of Toffoli and has had to stay patient for his next opportunity.

Oddly enough, Gustafsson was put into the lineup for his defensive ability but also found his way onto the scoresheet.

Brossoit stands tall

Much of the talk going into the contest revolved around Jake Oettinger's brilliant play against the Jets this season – and throughout the first six starts in his NHL career.

Playing with the confidence that has allowed the Jets to feature one of — if not the — best tandem in the NHL this season, Brossoit finished with 25 saves in what was his 21st start and 22nd appearance.

Brossoit improved to 4-0-1 against the Stars and has turned aside 110 of the 115 shots he's faced in those meetings.

"It really doesn't matter who's on the other side," said Brossoit, "but thanks for jinxing it."

He was tracking the puck well, controlled his rebounds and came up with timely saves when called upon — once again showing plenty of teams around the NHL that he's ready for a heavier workload come next season once he becomes an unrestricted free agent on July 1.

One of the Stars' best chances was a point shot from Thomas Harley, which Jamie Benn redirected and clanged off the post.

"That's all I gave him," Brossoit said with a wry smile.

The milestone

Lowry suited up in his 700th NHL game on Thursday, another impressive milestone for the third-round pick in the 2011 NHL Draft.

"I'm super thankful to have been fortunate enough to play in the league this long doing something I love," said Lowry. "That's the thing you think back on when you look back on your career, grateful for the support I've had from my family and grateful to have done it all with one organization. It's another game for me, now, at this point, but it's always nice to hit these milestones."

Lowry has done an excellent job in his first season as team captain and his performance on the ice has matched his leadership abilities.

"He plays the right way and he plays a 200 foot game and he plays a hard game. So it's really impressive to play that many games when you play as hard as he does and as physical as he does," said Brossoit. "He's been great (as captain). He's got a very calming presence. He's very inclusive, he plays the right way on the ice and leads by example. So I can't say enough good things about him."

Extra, extra

Jets winger Nino Niederreiter was a bit more involved in the morning skate on Thursday and took part in an off-ice workout afterward as he works his way back from a lacerated leg that was a result of a skate cut. Bowness wasn't ready to fully commit to a timeline for his return to the lineup, but did say he was "hopeful" that Niederreiter might be able to play against the Avalanche on Saturday.

[Opportunity knocks and Stanley answers](#) [Towering blue-liner making strong case for regular roster spot](#)

By: Ken Wiebe

DALLAS — Logan Stanley was probably wondering if he would get the chance to be more than just someone to plug in when his services were required.

A healthy scratch in 43 of the first 53 games this season, Stanley's opportunities to jump into the Winnipeg Jets lineup were few and often far between.

Between Dec. 13 and Feb. 8, Stanley sat out 21 consecutive games — none owing to injury.

Though Winnipeg's defensive corps has been incredibly healthy this season, Stanley was clearly seventh on the depth chart.

When Colin Miller was acquired on trade deadline day, it was natural to wonder if Stanley might slip another notch. That simply hasn't been the case.

By suiting up against the Dallas Stars on Thursday for a third consecutive game, Stanley has emerged as a candidate to be in the lineup for Game 1 of the Stanley Cup playoffs later this month.

"It feels good to be playing hockey at this time of the year," Stanley said. "It's better than watching, that's for sure. I'm just trying to play my game, keep it simple and be reliable and build trust with the coaches. We'll see what happens down the stretch."

Clearly, Stanley has been through enough in his NHL career to realize he's not in position to go into cruise control. A player on the periphery of the roster must always be on his toes, since there is always someone on the roster or in the minors that's hungry to take the job.

There have been plenty of mental challenges for Stanley to endure this season, but he's kept a level head and found a way to play his best hockey when the games are getting tougher.

"Any way you can have a positive impact on the game, it feels good," said Stanley. "That's what I'm trying to do."

Jets head coach Rick Bowness has downplayed the idea of a competition for the spot on the third pairing alongside Dylan Samberg, repeating the coaching staff is trying to keep all of Stanley, Nate Schmidt and Miller sharp as the regular season winds down.

That may be true, but it's impossible not to notice Stanley has appeared in six of the past eight games, compared to four for Schmidt and one for Miller.

It doesn't mean Stanley has won the job, but he's been able to bridge the gap and given the coaching staff something to talk about.

"He's not chasing the game, he's letting the game come to him," said Bowness. "When the opportunity (is there) to be physical, he's making his presence felt. He's making the quick,

simple and easy play with the puck. He's up with the play sometimes, he's got a heavy shot and he's getting that through.

"The biggest thing is that he's been very consistent and there's no dropoff in his play."

Stanley's ability to battle through the long stretches between games is something his teammates and coaches admire.

"He comes to the rink ready to work," said Bowness. "As frustrating as it was for him — and that's the last two years. He had the injuries last year that set him back and limited his ice time. This year, when he wasn't playing, as hard as it was for him, he kept a stiff upper lip and he kept working."

Stanley's long reach and ability to help clear the front of the net on the penalty kill is another one of the reasons his stock has risen.

The final decision of who will be on the third pairing for Winnipeg's post-season opener and beyond might be related to the matchup and in all likelihood, there will still be plenty of jockeying for position.

That Stanley put himself to be in consideration is a testament to his ability to keep a positive attitude.

"It's an underrated thing to be able to go out of the lineup for extended periods of time and just keep your mind sharp and stay positive and continue to be a great teammate," said Jets captain Adam Lowry. "That's what makes (Stanley) so popular in the room. Whether he's playing or he's not playing, his demeanour doesn't change. He's cheering guys on and doing extra work in the gym and continuously working on his game, so that when these opportunities have come around, he's been able to take advantage of them and play really well."

Stanley, the 25th overall pick in the 2016 NHL Draft, recognizes he has more to give and wants to have a bigger impact.

"The more you play, the easier the game becomes," said Stanley. "It's hard to play one or two games and sit out for a few weeks. It definitely gets easier the more that you play and you've just got to stay on top of your game."

"We've got eight strong (blue-liners), so anyone can play on any given night."

[McGroarty's stellar season ends as Michigan falls to Boston College in Frozen Four](#)

By: Mike McIntyre

ST. PAUL — Rutger McGroarty's magical season has come to an end — two wins short of the ultimate college hockey goal.

His Michigan Wolverines were outclassed 4-0 on Thursday night by the top-ranked Boston College Eagles in one of the semi-finals of the Frozen Four at Xcel Energy Center, which was played in front of a terrific crowd of 18,598.

McGroarty, the top forward prospect of the Winnipeg Jets, now faces a critical decision — does he elect to turn pro and immediately sign with the organization that drafted him 14th overall in 2022, or does he return for one more season with the Wolverines?

Some clarity about his future should come in the next few days.

Although he was held off the scoresheet in this one by a star-studded BC squad that includes a pair of 2023 first-rounders that had huge games — 4th-overall Will Smith (two goals) and 23rd-overall Gabe Perreault (one goal, two assists) — McGroarty emerged as one of the top players in the NCAA this year.

He had 52 points (16 goals, 36 assists) in 35 regular-season games, a significant jump from the 39 (18 goals, 21 assists) he produced in 39 contests last year.

McGroarty also captained the U.S. World Junior team to a gold medal over Sweden in early January, with five goals and four assists in seven games. The tournament came just six weeks after he was stretchered off the ice during a Michigan game, suffering from a punctured lung and broken ribs after being checked hard into the boards.

The 20-year-old, who is 6-1 and 200 pounds, has been in constant contact with the Jets during his season. Director of player development Jimmy Roy was at Thursday's game, while general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff and assistant GM Larry Simmons attended earlier playoff games.

Boston College will now play in Saturday's championship game against the Denver Pioneers, who rallied to beat the Boston University Terriers 2-1 in overtime earlier in the day.

Dallas Morning News

[No celebration yet as Stars shut out by Jets, remain one win away from division clinch](#)

By Lia Assimakopoulos

The stage was set for the Stars to have a night to remember Thursday.

Facing the Winnipeg Jets, a division rival that they had beaten three times already this season, the Stars needed just one more win to clinch their first Central Division title since 2015-16.

The New York Rangers had also lost their game to the Philadelphia Flyers earlier in the night, opening the door for the Stars to take over first in the Presidents' Trophy race for the first time this season.

While all the variables lined up for the Stars entering their matchup with the Jets, Dallas couldn't take care of the one thing it could control.

The Stars suffered their third shutout loss of the season by a 3-0 finish against the Jets on home ice, losing their first game against the divisional foe this year. Dallas struggled to possess the puck all game and was stifled by Winnipeg's elite defense, as the Jets scored first and were able to settle into their game.

With the loss, Dallas still leads the Central Division by five points, but Colorado has a game in hand, so the Stars will need to win one of their last two games to clinch the title. They also lead the Western Conference by four points but will now need to win out to guarantee the title.

Winnipeg is one of the NHL's best defensive teams, and it showed at the American Airlines Center Thursday. They held Dallas well below their average of 2.47 goals allowed per game, which ranks second in the NHL. Former Stars head coach Rick Bowness now leads their group and is known for his defense-first style.

"I recognize a lot of that system for sure. Disciplined team," Stars forward Tyler Seguin said. "When they can score first or two, they can really get in that system."

But the Jets managed to play their game without their best player — Vezina frontrunner Connor Hellebuyck — who was resting for Saturday's game against Colorado, which could decide home ice advantage for the first round.

Backup Lauren Brosoit put up a standout performance and recorded his third shutout of the season.

The Stars looked out-of-sync all game and had just seven high-danger scoring chances to Winnipeg's nine.

Even when they did have chances, luck wasn't in their favor. A breakaway by Logan Stankoven and Wyatt Johnston early in the second period was stopped by a penalty for Winnipeg dislodging the goal. Another shot by Johnston with 52.8 seconds left in the same period hit off the post, then Brosoit's back but somehow still didn't go in.

On the other end, Winnipeg found a goal in each period. The first was by Nikolaj Ehlers on a backhand, as Jake Oettinger was recovering from a previous save. The second was on a deflection by David Gustafsson. The third was an empty netter by Mark Scheifele.

Neither of the first two goals were Oettinger's fault, but he didn't receive much support defensively.

Pete DeBoer shifted the defensive pairings throughout the game, largely because 23-year-old Swedish defenseman Nils Lundkvist played just 8:44 in the contest. Ryan Suter had the next fewest minutes by a defenseman with 16:28.

"It's that time of year. It's not equal ice time," DeBoer said of Lundkvist. "You've got to make decisions to win hockey games. Coaches have to make tough decisions."

Dallas will hope Thursday's performance was one they needed to get out of their system before the playoffs begin. But with just two regular-season games remaining, the window is closing to keep their destiny in their own hands.

"You have to have perspective," DeBoer said. "We've been on a really good run here for a long time. Tonight, even though we're off, we didn't beat ourselves. They got a couple bounces around the net. We just didn't work hard enough to get another one."

TSN.ca

[**7-Eleven That's Hockey: Are the Jets destined for a quick playoff exit? \(VIDEO\)**](#)

It's pretty much a certainty that the Jets and Avalanche will play each other in the opening round of the playoffs and OverDrive host Bryan Hayes examines Winnipeg's chances in the potential series and whether Connor Hellebuyck can be the difference-maker.

[**Brossoit backstops Jets to important win in Dallas \(VIDEO\)**](#)

Connor Hellebuyck backup Laurent Brossoit had a 24 save shutout, which included a several scrambling stops. TSN's Dan Robertson and Kevin Sawyer have more on his play, and explain how important Winnipeg's forecheck was in the victory.

Winnipeg Sun

[**Jets issue statement with shutout win in Dallas**](#)

By Scott Billeck

The Winnipeg Jets would be wise to find a suitable container to bottle the game they played in Dallas on Thursday night.

While they're at it, wrap it in bubble wrap and find a safe place for it. They'll need it in a couple of weeks.

Such was Winnipeg's poise when finally cracking the Stars' code, avoiding a season sweep by their Central Division rivals with a 3-0 win at American Airlines Center.

The game, doused with a playoff feel to it, was everything the Jets weren't a few nights earlier in Nashville.

They were on top of the puck, sound defensively, great on the forecheck, and pressed the pedal to the floor from start to finish to improve to 49-24-6.

And they were rewarded with a statement win just a few games out from the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Laurent Brossoit made 25 saves for his third shutout of the season, helping Winnipeg win their fifth straight.

Nikolaj Ehlers notched his 200th NHL goal, and birthday boy David Gustafsson snapped a 30-game drought with his third of the season on the day he turned 24 as the Jets wrestled second place from the Colorado Avalanche.

Winnipeg is in Denver on Saturday for a game that very well could determine home-ice advantage in the first round, with both teams likely to meet one another when the playoffs get underway in less than two weeks.

The Jets hold the tiebreaker, should both teams finish tied on points.

Winnipeg played their best game in months in the heart of Texas.

From the first drop of the puck, the Jets were making hay against a Dallas team that had won nine of 10 coming into the night.

Ehlers's 24th of the season came off an offensive zone faceoff he helped win. He got it back to the point before shovelling it home from the slot a few seconds later, at 14:51 of the first.

The second goal was another product of hard work, with Gustafsson using his size and strength to muscle his way to the front of the net, tipping home a Dylan Samberg point shot at 9:20 of the second.

Mark Scheifele potted an empty-netter late to put the finishing touch on the win.

Samberg, meanwhile, can share the shutout with Brossoit after making two key saves.

The first came in the opening frame, with Samberg showing great awareness to get the puck back under Brossoit after it had squeaked through Winnipeg's backup in the crease.

An act of desperation in the second period, with all five Jets caught up ice, saw Samberg race back to get a diving stick on a cross-ice pass attempt on a Dallas 2-on-0.

Winnipeg held Dallas's power play at bay, going 2-for-2 on the kill. The Jets could not convert on their two attempts with the man advantage.

[BILLECK: Jets looked like old, impenetrable selves in Dallas win](#)

By Scott Billeck

Nikolaj Ehlers said it best on Thursday night.

"It looked a lot like that stretch we had with a lot of games with not a lot of goals against," he told reporters after his Winnipeg Jets had seen off the Dallas Stars 3-0 at American Airlines Center.

But that was only the first part of what was a great answer from the speedy winger, who scored his 200th NHL goal and 24th of the season — a goal that proved to be the game-winner in the end.

"It's not just the goals against — it's seeing how everybody is working together out there, and that's what we need, so that's exciting," he said.

Ehlers zoomed out a bit, choosing to look past the scoreline. The Jets' performance in Dallas was more critical.

It's the blueprint, the key to success if the Jets are to experience any in the playoffs.

It has to look like that.

Thursday's game only had brief moments of worry, not extended stretches or whole periods at a time.

Winnipeg was poised from the moment the puck dropped, and they looked comfortable up 2-0 in the third period when Dallas was pressing.

This team played this style of game for 34 straight games until the end of January, when the wheels started to fall off.

Thursday was an excellent reminder to them that they could do that again against one of the most formidable teams in the NHL, never mind the Western Conference or the Central Division.

And Ehlers, who rode pine in the third period against Nashville on Tuesday, had his finger on that pulse, too.

“They’ve got an incredible team. For us to go out and play the way we did against a great team like that, it shows what we can do if we play the right way,” he said. “We’ve just got to buy in.”

Buying in wasn’t an issue during the first half of the season when it was often rewarded with a win and the feeling of doing so the right way.

Few games in the last couple of months have produced that same feeling.

Sure, the Jets have continued to rack up wins, but some of them have felt quite hollow. Just look at Tuesday’s 4-3 overtime win in Nashville. Two points, yes. But no one was singing the team’s praises after it.

The win in Dallas was something the team could be proud of.

“That’s the game we want to play,” head coach Rick Bowness said. “That team’s a great hockey team over there, obviously. We knew we had to bring our A-game out there on every shift, and we did. That’s the way we want to play.”

The Jets’ test now is to avoid getting caught up in the emotional high of a statement win.

Colorado is next on the docket, and the Jets will likely face the Avalanche in the first round.

Saturday is just as much a tune-up for that as it is a chance for the team to show they can replicate the process.

You need to do that four times to win a round, and 16 times to win a Stanley Cup.

- Bowness on Ehlers’ bounce-back game in Dallas: “He wasn’t happy with his game. We had a good talk this morning. And he was really good. Listen, he was good at both ends of the ice, you saw that back check in the second period. Like that’s just as impressive as the goal so I thought he had a really solid game.”

- David Gustafsson’s return to action from a five-game stint in the press box as a healthy scratch went about as well as he could have hoped. Put in a position to thrive on the third line, Gustafsson muscled his 6-foot-2 frame to the front of the net and got a touch on a point shot to snap a 30-game drought — a nice present on his 24th birthday.

- I see Winnipeg’s 13th and 14th forwards going into the playoffs as the seventh guys for each of the top and bottom six. If someone were to get injured in the top six, Cole Perfetti, who was

back as a healthy scratch on Thursday, would be a prime candidate to take their spot. In the same way, if someone in the bottom six got hurt, Gustafsson would be a solid replacement to fill in. (There are also permutations where someone like Nino Niederreiter could get bumped up to the top six to fill in, and Gustafsson, who had a great audition on the third line, could take his place.)

- The line of Ehlers, Sean Monahan and Tyler Toffoli has now outscored their opposition 8-2 in 15 games together since Toffoli was added at the trade deadline last month. That's a line that's clicking. The Jets need the same from Mark Scheifele's top unit.

- Speaking of that, Scheifele's line was good against Dallas. They weren't getting caved in, as we've seen in the past from that line. They had some chances. Connor nearly scored in the second, set up by Scheifele in the slot. That shift also witnessed a solid backcheck by Scheifele to negate an odd-man rush.

- Are Dylan Samberg and Logan Stanley Winnipeg's third pairing heading into the playoffs? They had a good game, minus the 2-on-0 they allowed when all five Jets seemed to forget there were a couple of Stars behind them in the second. Still, Samberg's hustle back saved a goal, even if he took a penalty for delay of game after crashing into the net and knocking it off its moorings.

JETS NOTEBOOK: Bowness goes back to Connor, Scheifele; Lowry hits 700

By Scott Billeck

It's the square peg that Rick Bowness continues to try to wedge into a round hole.

The results have varied for the Winnipeg Jets head coach.

There are times of brilliance between Kyle Connor, Mark Scheifele and Gabriel Vilardi. Of course, there would be, given each player's individual skill.

But together as a line, the overarching theme has been far from bright.

In 24 games together this season, they've been out-attempted 194-145, outshot 103-74, outchanced 108-70 (including 54-25 in high-danger chances) and outscored 12-9.

Those aren't the numbers you'd want to see for a top line on an NHL hockey club.

Still, Bowness returned to the well on Thursday in Dallas, trying to find something that had yet to be uncovered.

"They've got to tighten it up a little bit," Bowness told reporters in Dallas after the team's morning skate. "We split them up because they were spending a little bit too much time in our zone."

That's a problem for a line that has taken the lion's share of offensive zone draws while together—some 73.7% of all faceoffs they've taken.

Bowness said he's searching for some continuity in his forward lines.

“They’ve played together a lot and we’ve got to get them going, it’s as simple as that,” he said.

Bowness’s reasons, at first glance, seem a touch, well, out of touch.

Connor and Scheifele do wonders on offence, but together, historically, they’ve always given more than they’ve taken.

But in putting back together a line that’s struggled on both sides of the puck, he’s also going back to a line that’s been very good in a small sample size.

Nikolaj Ehlers, Sean Monahan, and Tyler Toffoli have played just 14 games together this season, but their numbers have been sound.

They’ve out-attempted their opponents 81-64, outshot them 45-36, outchanced 33-29 (including a solid 13-4 edge on Grade-A chances), and, crucially, outscored 7-2.

“Before Tyler got sick, they were scoring every game,” Bowness said. “So we’ve got to get a little more balance up front in those top two lines.”

It seems to be very late in the year—Thursday was Game 78 for the Jets—for a head coach to still be searching for his best forward units.

But Bowness figured they had a good mix before Toffoli got sick.

“We haven’t been able to get it going... but listen, we’ve got 102 points so far,” Bowness said. “So let’s not lose sight of that. We’ve had a really good regular season up until now, and we’re not finished. We’re still pushing for home ice in that first round.”

Bowness moved Cole Perfetti back to the press box on Thursday in favour of David Gustafsson, who was with Adam Lowry’s line with Mason Appleton.

Nino Niederreiter, a regular at Lowry’s side, took the morning skate but is still healing from a skate cut last week.

The hope, Bowness said, is to have him back in the lineup on Saturday in Colorado.

Lowry plays 700th game

Adam Lowry knew it was coming.

Often, players approaching milestones will suggest they didn’t know until someone brought it up to them.

Usually, that someone is the Winnipeg Jets captain.

So, he was well aware of his own milestone, Game No. 700, which he hit on Thursday in Dallas.

“I have a pretty good bead on these things and where other guys are at in the milestones, hold them accountable,” Lowry said.

“Super thankful to have been fortunate enough to play in this league this long doing something that I love. That’s the thing you think back on when you look back on your career. Grateful for the support I had from my family and grateful to have done it all with one organization.

“It’s another game for me now, at this point. But it’s always nice to hit these milestones.”

The Hockey News

[Frauds? Please: Winnipeg Jets Find Solutions, Not Excuses Ahead of Playoffs](#)

BY JACOB STOLLER

The "contender versus pretender" discussion is ruminating around the Winnipeg Jets.

It all started on March 1 when former NHLer Ryan Whitney said on the Spittin Chiclets Podcast that an anonymous Western Conference player told him the Jets were "the biggest frauds in the league and that they'd lose in the first round."

Winnipeg was the top team in the Western Conference when that episode aired. But since being put on blast, they've posted an 11-8-1 record, endured a six-game losing streak and fallen to fifth in their conference and third in the Central Division based on points percentage.

"We had a chance to finish first in the division, and we kind of squandered it," Jets captain Adam Lowry told The Hockey News on Monday.

Some may feel deja vu from last year when Winnipeg fell apart at the end of last season, posting a 14-14-2 record to close out the 2022-23 season and finishing seventh in the West after being in the top three for most of the year.

But these Jets are different than those Jets, and it's not because they've won four straight games heading into Thursday. They're a far cry from the team Bowness was so 'disappointed and disgusted' with after last year's first-round exit. And much of it is thanks to a much-needed and long overdue culture change that has gotten them out of their way.

Last year's dressing room had some issues. While Blake Wheeler was stripped of the captaincy to create a more collective leadership group, players admitted in exit media interviews they still viewed him as their leader. Given how Wheeler criticized Bowness for airing his grievances publicly in that press conference — it was clear his definition of accountability differed from Bowness'. Then there was Pierre-Luc Dubois, whose contract status loomed over the team when it became clear a long-term contract wasn't likely.

But this summer was transformative for the organization. It all started when Bowness called some players to gauge what they thought the Jets needed to add for this season.

"Everyone told us, 'We just want players here that want to be Winnipeg Jets,'" Bowness said in a recent interview for The Hockey News' Playoff Special issue.

When the Jets signed franchise cornerstones Connor Hellebuyck and Mark Scheifele to long-term extensions during training camp — they averted having to play a season with the cloud of 'will they stay, or will they go' looming over their head.

The Jets are pulling the same rope for the first time in a while. And that can't be understated — especially in light of their fall in the standings.

"This year, we've tried our best to get the conversation out there. Last year, when we were losing a bunch in a row, it was kind of the elephant in the room," Jets defenseman Brenden Dillon said. "Whereas this year, it's a conversation of 'hey, we need to end this.' "

It all ties into the slogan Bowness had painted on the walls of the team's dressing room.

'Solutions, Not Excuses'

"If you can focus on the things you can control — whether that's practice habits, getting in the gym, watching more video or talking to your linemates — you can be the solution to a problem as opposed to just compounding it," Lowry explained.

This year, the Jets' collective buy-in has helped shape their blue-collar identity.

"We don't have a player with 100 points," said Dillon. "We don't have players having 50-goal seasons. We're a team that's built on playing like a team."

That teamwork has made Winnipeg a defensive juggernaut for most of the year — ranking first in 5-on-5 goals against per 60 minutes (1.85). It's not solely because of Hellebuyck. Look no further than when the Jets went on a 35-game streak of allowing no more than three goals in a game. Hellebuyck's brilliance was the driver, of course, but the team's ability to limit odd-man rushes and slot chances against can't be understated.

"Not much works against them," Nashville Predators coach Andrew Brunette said in mid-March. "They're really deep. They're well-coached. They don't give up a whole lot."

The Jets have the ingredients to win. They've got a world-class goaltender in Hellebuyck, an elite No. 1 defenseman in Josh Morrissey and a bona fide No. 1 center in Scheifele. They've got a plethora of skilled wingers in Kyle Connor, Nikolaj Ehlers, Gabriel Vilardi and Tyler Toffoli rounding out their top six. Their bottom six forwards are built for playoff hockey, and their defense gets the job done.

But as much as the Jets have given reasons to believe in them, their next two games against two divisional rivals, the Colorado Avalanche and Dallas Stars, will define how they're viewed heading into the post-season. And Morrissey knows what to do about those "fraudulent Jets" allegations.

"Making a run or winning a Cup is the best way to answer anyone who views our team that way," he said.