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**Jets eliminated from playoffs due to special teams, defensive issues**  
**Lack of offense from top players, inability to solve Georgiev among factors in 5-game loss**

By Darrin Bauming

The Winnipeg Jets were eliminated from the Stanley Cup Playoffs by the Colorado Avalanche with a 6-3 loss in Game 5 of the best-of-7 Western Conference First Round on Tuesday. It is the second straight season Winnipeg lost in five games after winning Game 1 in the first round.

The Jets (52-24-6) entered the playoffs as the No. 2 seed from the Central Division and played the Avalanche in the postseason for the first time. Winnipeg was tied for fourth in the regular season with 110 points.

*The skinny*

Potential unrestricted free agents: Sean Monahan, F; Tyler Toffoli, F; Brenden Dillon, D; Dylan DeMelo, D; Colin Miller, D; Laurent Brossoit, G; Collin Delia, G

Potential restricted free agents: Cole Perfetti, F; David Gustafsson, F; Logan Stanley, D

Potential 2024 Draft picks: 5

Here are five reasons the Jets were eliminated:

*1. Defensive woes*

Despite Winnipeg's consistent defensive structure and a League-leading 199 goals against (including shootout-deciding goals) in the regular season, Colorado's goal production was relentless. In the five games, the Jets allowed 28 goals, the most in the NHL this postseason. Winnipeg also allowed 13 goals in the third period, also the most in the playoffs.

The Jets were unable to contain the depth of the Avalanche, who got goals from 12 players. Nathan MacKinnon, Mikko Rantanen and Cale Makar each had nine points (two goals, seven assists), but Winnipeg also allowed depth forwards Valeri Nichushkin and Artturi Lehkonen to score in each game of the series.

*2. Special teams struggles*

The issues with the penalty kill and power play carried over from the regular season, when Winnipeg was 22nd on the power play (18.8 percent) and 21st on the penalty kill (77.1 percent). Against the Avalanche, the Jets were 10-for-16 on the penalty kill (62.5 percent), allowing two power-play goals against in each of Game 1 (0-for-2), Game 3 (4-for-6), and Game 4 (2-for-4).

Winnipeg was 3-for-13 with the man-advantage in the series, including three games when it went 1-for-2 on the power play. But in Games 2 and 4, the Jets were held scoreless with the man-advantage, missing out on seven power-play opportunities in those two games combined.

*3. Top players didn't shine*

The Jets had their offense clicking in a wild 7-6 win in Game 1, but they scored eight goals combined over the next four games. After Winnipeg's top line combined for three goals and

eight points in Game 1, including a goal on the power play, Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, and Gabriel Vilardi scored just two more times in the rest of the series.

Sean Monahan and Tyler Toffoli were brought in prior to the NHL Trade Deadline to bolster the second line with Nikolaj Ehlers. But when it mattered most, Monahan (one assist), Toffoli (two goals), and Ehlers (two assists) did not provide the scoring support the Jets desperately needed when facing the offensively deep and talented Avalanche.

#### *4. Georgiev elevates play*

Questions loomed large surrounding Avalanche goaltender Alexandar Georgiev and whether or not he had the ability to keep the Jets offense at bay. Though he led the NHL with 38 wins this season, his .897 save percentage in the regular season was tied for 48th among qualified NHL goaltenders (20 games).

In the final regular-season game between the Jets and Avalanche on April 13, Georgiev was pulled in the first period after allowing four goals on 15 shots in a 7-0 home loss. Then in Game 1, he allowed seven goals on 23 shots in the lone loss for the Avalanche in the series.

Just when things looked most bleak for Colorado's defensive play, Georgiev help flip the script and had a 2.00 goals-against average and .932 save percentage in four straight victories to help capture the series.

#### *5. Hellebuyck looks human*

Connor Hellebuyck is a Vezina Trophy finalist and won the William M. Jennings Trophy for allowing the fewest goals per game in the NHL this season among qualified goalies (25 games). In Hellebuyck's 60 games (third in the NHL), all starts, he had a 2.39 GAA, .921 save percentage and five shutouts -- all ranked in the top five in the NHL in the regular season among qualifying goaltenders.

He allowed at least four goals in each of the five games after allowing at least four goals 10 times in his 60 games in the regular season.

Hellebuyck was under siege from the start against Colorado's overall speed and physicality throughout the series. The Jets may have relied on their Vezina-caliber goalie a little too much, and he was far from the sole reason they faltered in Round 1 with the entire team looking inexperienced, a far cry from their reputation as a tough and defensively structured opponent.

**[TSN.ca](https://www.tsn.ca)**

### **[The Smokehouse: The Great Whiteout turned out to be The Great Wipeout for the Jets \(VIDEO\)](#)**

What began as The Great Whiteout in Winnipeg turned out to be The Great Wipeout for the Jets at the hands of the Avalanche. Coming into the playoffs, the Jets had the best goals against in the NHL and the best goaltender in the league, and there was every reason to believe they would go deep in the postseason. But it quickly came crashing down. TSN Director of Scouting Craig Button puts the heat on Winnipeg in this edition of The Smokehouse.

### **[The Ray & Dregs Hockey Podcast | Recapping the Winnipeg Jets and Colorado Avalanche first round series](#)**

Ray Ferraro & Darren Dreger chat about the Central Division first round matchup starting at the 9:23 mark of the podcast. Ferraro spent the first few minutes detailing why Colorado was just so dangerous after making adjustments following their game 1 loss. At the 12:12 mark Dreger began with the idea of there being a “significant review” in Winnipeg. Ferraro chimes in at the 14 minute mark about whether it’s time to make changes to the core. They chat about Connor Hellebuyck around the 17:30 mark. Ends at 18:23.

**Sportsnet.ca**

***What are chances that Jets sign either or both Toffoli or Monahan?* (VIDEO)**

Jets reporter Sean Reynolds joins the Jeff Marek Show to discuss how he sees the future playing out for two rental trade pieces in Tyler Toffoli and Sean Monahan, why he doesn’t like the fit for Toffoli, but why they should try to bring back Monny.

***32 Thoughts Podcast | Reflections on the Winnipeg Jets and Colorado Avalanche first round series* (AUDIO)**

Jeff Marek and Elliotte Friedman chat about the entire NHL on the latest edition of the 32 Thoughts Podcast including some discussion about the Jets and Avs first round series which ended last night in game 5. Starts at the 18:07 mark. Runs to 26:26.

***The Jeff Marek Show | What’s next for the Winnipeg Jets?* (VIDEO)**

Fill-in host Matt Marchese is joined by NHL Network Radio’s Jonathan Davis and the duo start the Jets/Avs talk at around the 1:16:05 mark of the podcast and then they welcome Sean Reynolds of Sportsnet for a post-mortem at the 1:26:30 mark.