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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/injury-update-on-logan-stanley-and-ville-heinola>

Injury update on Logan Stanley and Ville Heinola "I'm not a doctor, so I'm not 100 percent sure how long it will take."

By Mitchell Clinton

WINNIPEG – All of a sudden, the depth on the left side of the Winnipeg Jets defence is getting tested.

Logan Stanley, who was supposed to play in Wednesday's preseason tilt with the Edmonton Oilers, was a late scratch and didn't participate in Thursday's practice.

"Stan tweaked something there. We're going to get a little more of a look at him," said head coach Scott Arniel. "He won't be available to us for the next few days here. We'll see where we're at."

Arniel did admit that there is fear that Stanley's injury could be more long-term, but the tests Stanley will undergo over the next couple days will be a better indicator of the path forward.

As for Ville Heinola, his timeline is just as murky as Stanley's.

Heinola had surgery on his ankle – the same one where an infection was found just a couple days into training camp last week – and is out a minimum of four weeks.

"They took the pin out of his ankle. I'm not a doctor, so I'm not 100 percent sure how long it will take," said Arniel. "It will depend on there being no swelling or infection. Then we go from there."

Dylan Samberg, who played 20:59 in the 6-1 win over Edmonton on Wednesday, didn't participate in the on-ice sessions on Thursday. The news is far better in his case than it was for Stanley or Heinola.

"That was more maintenance after last night. He got a little bit of a bump from last night," Arniel said. "He's playing tomorrow, so I want to make sure he's good to go. He's not hurt enough that he's going into tomorrow's game not 100 percent."

The next preseason game on the schedule goes Friday in Minnesota. While every preseason game is an opportunity for players trying to make an impression, the injuries on the team's back end mean there could be an added emphasis on that particular contest.

"(Dylan) Coghlan and (Haydn) Fleury, now it's another opportunity for those guys to step up," Arniel said, adding Elias Salomonsson to that list as well.

Simon Lundmark, who played 13:29 against Minnesota as the replacement for Stanley, was also commended for his efforts by Arniel.

"He found out five minutes before warm-up that he was going in and did a fantastic job," he said. "Like I said at the very beginning, there are opportunities, they come in different ways, and those guys are doing a great job of taking advantage of it."

BARRON WAITING PATIENTLY

It's been almost a week since Morgan Barron made his preseason debut against the Minnesota Wild on September 21. He played 14:19 that night, recording two shots, but since then it's been all practice sessions for the 25-year-old.

"I'm sure I'll be getting in one soon again and get another opportunity to ramp up toward the season," said Barron. "I think as we inch toward the start of the regular season the systems start to come into play a little bit more, the line-up morphs into what it will look like for game one of the regular season."

The Halifax, NS product is looking to build on his 2023-24 campaign, which saw him set a career high with 11 goals. It was the first time he's hit double-digits in that category.

His average ice time per-game (10:30) was a shade under three minutes less than the previous season (13:15), but he still had the third-most shorthanded ice time per-game on the team (among forwards) at 1:26.

He's always been reliable - even taking face-offs when called upon - but like any player, he's always hoping to expand his role.

"For me, there were times last year where I did that and there were times where I didn't. It needs to be consistent," he said after Thursday's one-hour skate. "I have a belief in myself. If I keep playing my game the way that I know I can, those things will come in time. But you definitely have to manage your timeline and when you're going to get there. It's something we've all worked on, everybody wants more minutes. You've got to go out there and prove it to the coaches."

It all starts on October 9 against the Edmonton Oilers at Rogers Place. Barron knows there is more work to do in training camp before that day arrives, but that doesn't mean the group isn't getting antsy for it to arrive.

"This is kind of the point where camp just kind of drags out and you just want to get going and compete against other teams," Barron said. "It's exciting. We're all just ready to get going now."

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/5797311/2024/09/26/jets-roster-depth-chart-2024/>

Jets roster projection: Predicting opening-night lineup, final camp battles

By Murat Ates

WINNIPEG — "What we did during the regular season was tough to do," Winnipeg Jets defenceman Neal Pionk said in a recent one-on-one conversation. "We're planning to do it again."

Pionk followed that conversation up with a one-goal, three-assist performance that vindicated his swagger.

The most striking thing about it, though, is not Pionk's matter-of-fact tone. It's not his four-point performance or the words of praise head coach Scott Arniel heaved his way postgame. To me, the most striking thing about Pionk's businesslike declaration is how prevalent it is throughout the Jets dressing room.

No matter which players I've spoken to, an inevitable point of discussion is about building off the Jets' 110-point season and the defensive standard they set. The players' tones are not hypothetical. Nobody is looking at Rick Bowness' retirement or Brenden Dillon's departure or the Central Division race with anything short of confidence. Winnipeg did a good thing last season, the players say, and this season's battle isn't to match it. It's to push past it.

Arniel's coaching staff has done its part — early, at least — by revamping the special teams. Those were the obvious aspects of Winnipeg's game to improve upon and a supreme source of insulation. The Jets' defence could falter in the face of inexperience or star goaltender Connor Hellebuyck could have a good regular season instead of a great one. Winnipeg's 110-point season is a lofty goal but approachable if its special teams are merely average.

What about the roster, though?

One week into camp, Winnipeg's roster battles are sorting themselves out. Arniel appears to be going back to familiar lines, whether it's Gabriel Vilardi up top or Cole Perfetti and Nikolaj Ehlers as two-thirds of the Jets' second line. Brad Lambert adds a wrinkle, as do injuries to Ville Heinola and Logan Stanley, but I think we can project Winnipeg's opening-night lineup with a high degree of accuracy based on what we've seen so far.

Here are our projections for the Jets' opening-night lineup, plus insights from Lambert, Hellebuyck, Arniel and more as we take the pulse of Winnipeg's roster so far at camp.

Forwards

Kyle Connor
Mark Scheifele
Gabriel Vilardi
Cole Perfetti
Vladislav Namestnikov
Nikolaj Ehlers
Nino Niederreiter
Adam Lowry
Mason Appleton
Morgan Barron
Rasmus Kupari
Alex Iafallo
David Gustafsson

Projected waivers: Jaret Anderson-Dolan, Dominic Toninato, Axel Jonsson-Fjallby, Mason Shaw

Projected AHL assignments: Brad Lambert, Nikita Chibrikov, Daniel Torgersson, Parker Ford

Projected CHL assignments: Brayden Yager, Colby Barlow

The most striking thing about this forward group is that it contains exactly the same 13 names that we projected in July. Despite the hype (and very real progression) in Lambert's game, the 6-foot-1 Finnish forward appears destined to start the season on the outside, looking in.

Lambert scored a power-play goal against Edmonton on Wednesday night but skated in the AHL-heavy Group B at Jets camp on Thursday. Arniel told reporters not to read anything into it.

"Don't make more than what it is," Arniel said. "I told you before that the veterans weren't playing in the first two games, they have to get their reps. He may be part of it at the start of the season on October 9 (but) the big guys have to get their reps."

Lambert will play in Minnesota on Friday night. Nikita Chibrikov will, too. After making it clear that Lambert is still in the mix for a job, Arniel spoke about the need to see Lambert against a higher level of competition than he got against Edmonton on Wednesday.

"I'm pretty sure we're going to get a pretty good lineup in Minnesota tomorrow and next week in Calgary," Arniel said. "(Lambert is) learning as he goes here. From two years ago, to last year, to now, every day in camp here has been a growth day and a learning day, and he's been real good at it. We'll just put the next obstacle in front of him and see how he handles it."

We're reading into it anyway

We're clear, right? The Jets head coach has said Lambert still has a shot to make it into the opening-night lineup while stressing that we shouldn't read too much into Lambert's Group B demotion.

I can't help myself, though. Sizing things up from here, I think that Lambert will begin his year in the AHL — even though I believe that Lambert has shown tremendous growth since arriving in Winnipeg. He's using his speed more effectively than before because he's finding more ways to keep his head up, scan the ice and take advantage of his teammates' strengths. I'm not sure if he's ready for the defensive side of second-line centre duties and I expect that's what will eventually keep him in the AHL until injury strikes.

Lambert spoke about building his defensive game after Wednesday's game against Edmonton.

"It's tougher battles here in the NHL and it's a step up from the American League, but that's what I work for all summer," Lambert said. "I feel like I am doing pretty well, and obviously can and will still improve. But every 50-50 puck is huge and the more of those you can win is huge."

Could Lambert play so well against NHL-ready lineups starting this Friday in Minnesota that he changes the Jets' roster calculus? Yes. Do I see Winnipeg waiving Rasmus Kupari or David Gustafsson — each of whom Arniel appears to value as a fourth-centre option? Not without something spectacular from Lambert, in my opinion. Even then, I expect the 20-year-old Lambert to get the same treatment that Kyle Connor got at the same age — an AHL assignment, the ask that he handles it well, and, eventually: an injury-induced opportunity that he exploits to full effect.

I don't think there's a catastrophe in that, even as Winnipeg's projected waiver wire — Anderson-Dolan, Toninato, Jonsson-Fjallby and Shaw — conveys that there are more Gustafsson and Kupari type players than there are prospects of Lambert's ilk. Time could prove Arniel was right to make his "don't make it more than what it is" warning. The Jets could waive

Gustafsson or Kupari, despite my guess that they won't. And Lambert could make the team outright.

All the running you can do to keep in place

Speaking to other Jets players, there seems to be a perception that rosters are crowded throughout the NHL.

"It seems like every team seems to think that they have a ton of depth," Morgan Barron said. "Every team seems to think that there's a ton of (capable) guys and that's just the reality of our game right now. You see kids coming straight out of college, kids coming straight out of junior and lifetime NHL guys working their way up."

Barron's roster spot is more assured than Lambert's is; what's not assured is a bigger role, despite Barron's high quality relative to his spot on the depth chart. The 6-foot-4, 25-year-old forward is a player who was once described to me as "too good for the AHL" when he played in that league and Arniel speaks about him highly now too. Still, it's hard to believe there's a minutes explosion or breakout season coming from Barron; there are just too many good players in the way.

"There's always going to be competition for those minutes (but) that's just something you lean into," Barron said. "If I keep playing my game the way that I know I can, those things will come in time. But you definitely have to manage your timeline and when you're going to get there."

You may have noticed that I'm projecting very little change to the Jets' line deployment to start the season. My sense is that Mark Scheifele and Connor are a duo that Arniel will run with at great length and that Arniel wants to see what Vilardi can do on that line for a longer stretch than the 198 minutes it got last season.

A final thought on duos: Arniel believes in Ehlers and Perfetti as two-thirds of a secondary scoring line. I believe Vladislav Namestnikov wins the battle to centre them, giving the Jets a line that succeeded coming over the bench third last year. There may also be a simple way to give those players more shifts this season; with Connor and Scheifele set to kill penalties, Winnipeg will need a different line to attack with after a successful penalty kill. Remember that a successful PK often means that the other team's top players are back on the bench at the end of a long shift; Arniel can get aggressive with players like Ehlers and Perfetti, among others, if Connor and Scheifele are not an option.

A positive note for the sake of a positive note: I don't see him displacing anybody on the depth chart I've given but I've really liked Anderson-Dolan's camp.

Defence

Josh Morrissey

Dylan DeMelo

Dylan Samberg

Neal Pionk

Logan Stanley

Colin Miller

Haydn Fleury

Ville Heinola

Projected IR: Ville Heinola

Projected waivers: Dylan Coghlan, Simon Lundmark

Projected AHL assignments: Elias Salomonsson, Dmitry Kuzmin, Tyrel Bauer

The injuries to Winnipeg's blue line continue to pile up. Heinola has undergone surgery to remove the pin from his infected ankle. Arniel estimates that Heinola is four weeks away at "minimum." Now Logan Stanley is battling injury, too.

Stanley was supposed to play Wednesday night but tweaked something, according to Arniel. There's a concern that it's not a day-to-day situation, although Stanley is still being evaluated for the undisclosed ailment. Our roster projection errs on the side of optimistic, leaning toward Stanley being able to recover in time to play Winnipeg's season-opening game in Edmonton on Oct. 9. If his injury lasts longer than that, Stanley will start the season with Heinola on injured reserve and the job I've given Haydn Fleury above will expand to include Coghlan, too.

"I don't have to say anything to those two. They're seeing the injuries and all of a sudden now their eyes are probably getting a little bigger," Arniel said of Fleury and Coghlan. "I wasn't hoping it would happen this quick but now for those two, it's a chance. Go and put your best foot forward, show us what you're good at, be consistent in what you do and, hopefully, the results will help you make our hockey team."

As we've written, by committee will be the name of the game.

Goalies

Connor Hellebuyck

Kaapo Kähkönen

Projected waivers: Eric Comrie

Projected AHL assignments: Thomas Milic, Dom DiVincentiis

Connor Hellebuyck will play his first preseason game on Friday against Minnesota. After last season's exit interview wherein an emotional Hellebuyck wondered aloud about needing a new approach to his game, the Jets' star goaltender is doubling down on what's worked for him in the past.

"Honestly, when I actually had some time to think about it, I really liked my game, I really liked my mindset," Hellebuyck said of his summer soul searching. "There's two different ways to go about it: try and do it yourself or try and rely on a team. The way that I've gotten to where I am today is really digging into myself and doing everything I can, which really helps the team in the long run."

Hellebuyck is the ultimate trust-the-process sort of athlete, elevating his game at multiple times throughout his career by doubling down on his own plan. On Thursday, the Vezina Trophy winner said that his summer realization was that his process doesn't need an overhaul.

"I just kind of realized what (I'm) doing is right and stick to it. Don't deviate from the plan I've given myself. Just continue to get better every single day at my details and make sure my game is as consistent as possible. That's going to help this team win."

A quick thought on the backup job

The battle behind Hellebuyck is compelling — Comrie has played his best hockey in a Jets jersey — but I don't think it's controversial to say that Kaapo Kahkonen has the inside track. Kahkonen has improved throughout camp, looking particularly sharp through most of Wednesday's game against the Oilers. That might be the end of the audition, though, or close to it. Hellebuyck wants to play roughly two and a half preseason games and the Jets have three of them left on the schedule.

This lets the air out of one mystery but allowed Hellebuyck to shed some light on another: What's his preseason mental checklist as he works to re-establish his elite level of play?

"I'm looking for my structure. How does it feel? How quickly can I get into it and how many times can I repeat getting into the same feeling, the same structure, and the same triggers? That's been really good right from the get-go, right from the middle of summer," Hellebuyck said.

"Then the next thing I'm looking for is my hands. How are my hands tracking? How are they reacting to pucks? Are they falling back? Are they attacking? Are they sitting in the right spots? Am I getting pieces of pucks that I'm expecting to get pieces of? So far, I have. The next thing is just how my reads are in a game and that doesn't really come from practice. It comes from games and scrimmaging. We had a bit of a team scrimmage earlier and I liked where a lot of things were. It's just going to be a matter of getting into a game and getting the real pressure on."

This 22-player roster would begin the season with approximately \$2.5 million in cap space. It is possible that the Jets carry 23 active players instead, opening up space to keep Lambert, Anderson-Dolan or another player on the NHL roster. I suspect that Winnipeg would prefer to maximize its cap space, accruing it throughout the season. If all goes well, this would give the Jets plenty of opportunity to add talent midseason or at the trade deadline.

Either way, it seems reasonable to project a playoff spot. The only mystery is whether or not Winnipeg can get over that first-round hump.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10777757/injuries-adding-up-on-winnipeg-jets-blueline/>

Injuries adding up on Winnipeg Jets blueline

By Russ Hobson Global News

With less than two weeks until the start of the regular season, the Winnipeg Jets blueliners are dropping like flies.

Three of their defencemen are currently dealing with injuries of various degrees after just a week of training camp with Ville Heinola, Dylan Samberg, and Logan Stanley all missing from Thursday's practice.

Heinola has the most serious injury of the three as he already underwent another surgery on his previously surgically repaired ankle. Heinola was experiencing swelling in his ankle last week and it was determined he had an infection in the area surrounding the pin that was inserted into his ankle a year ago.

Doctors have since removed the pin and he'll miss the next month at a minimum as his streak of bad luck continues.

"He had the surgery and hopefully it's a quick recovery," Jets head coach Scott Arniel told reporters after Thursday's practice. "It's a minimum four weeks that we'll see where it goes from there. I'm not 100 per cent how long it will be because he took the pin out of his ankle.

"So, I'm not a doctor, so I'm not 100 per cent how long that will take. I think it'll obviously depend on as long as there's no swelling and infection and go from there."

Samberg missed Thursday's skate for maintenance after getting a bump in Wednesday's pre-season victory over the Edmonton Oilers. It's not considered serious though and head coach Scott Arniel is hoping he can play as soon as Friday.

Stanley was a late scratch on Wednesday after he "tweaked something" and he'll be sidelined for at least the next few days.

The Jets depth on defence will be tested, but the injuries open the door for players like Haydn Fleury and Dylan Coghlan to make the team out of camp.

"We wanted to have depth in all positions so that just in case," said Arniel. "I really wasn't hoping it was going to happen this quick, but now for those two, that's a chance. Go put your best foot forward, show us what you're good at, be consistent at what you do, and hopefully the results help you make our hockey team."

The Jets play the fourth of their six pre-season games on Friday in Minnesota.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/09/26/training-camp-intrigue-as-battle-for-blue-line-jobs-heats-up>

Training camp intrigue as battle for blue-line jobs heats up

By: Ken Wiebe

If the door was slightly ajar before, it's been thrust wide open now.

The Winnipeg Jets entered training camp knowing there would be an interesting battle on the blue line, with some jockeying for position expected when it came to rounding out the third pairing and the depth spots beyond that.

An ankle issue for Ville Heinola early in camp created another initial vacancy, while an additional spot on the opening-day roster looks like it's been created after Logan Stanley "tweaked something" and suffered an undisclosed injury that looks like it will extend the standard day-to-day classification.

Jets head coach Scott Arniel said he would provide a more thorough update on Friday after the results of the latest tests were available, but the early indications weren't good.

As the Jets prepare to play their fourth of six preseason games on Friday against the Minnesota Wild at Xcel Energy Center, that puts the spotlight on players such as Haydn Fleury, Dylan Coghlan, Simon Lundmark and top defence prospect Elias Salomonsson.

“You don’t know where you’re at day to day or where we’re going to be next week,” said Arniel. “Like I said at the very beginning, there are opportunities, they come in different ways, and those guys are doing a great job of taking advantage of it.

As for Heinola, he underwent surgery earlier this week to remove the pin from the ankle that was operated on last fall after he sustained a fracture in the final preseason game against the Ottawa Senators.

The timeline for Heinola’s possible return remains up in the air.

“It’s a minimum of four weeks and we’ll see where it goes from there. I’m not 100 per cent on how long it will be,” said Arniel. “I’m not a doctor, so I’m not 100 per cent sure how long it will take. It will depend on there being no swelling or infection. Then we go from there.”

Dylan Samberg also missed Thursday’s workout, though Arniel said it was just a maintenance day for him.

The revamped defence corps was already under the microscope coming into training camp and now the battle for jobs just got even more interesting.

Time will tell if Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff puts in a waiver claim at some point over the next week or so or decides to pursue a trade to bolster the blue line, but for the time being it’s up to those remaining in camp to show that they can handle the increased responsibility.

THE NEXT LOOK

One day after scoring a goal and adding an assist against an inexperienced Edmonton Oilers lineup, centre Brad Lambert found himself in the second group skating alongside Nikita Chibrikov and Colby Barlow — rather than getting an extended look between Nikolaj Ehlers and Vladislav Namestnikov.

Ehlers and Namestnikov were playing with Cole Perfetti and that trio figures to get into Friday’s tilt against the Wild as Perfetti gets his first game action of the preseason.

Arniel was quick to reiterate observers shouldn’t put too much stock into the groupings for Thursday’s on-ice sessions.

“Don’t make more than what it is,” said Arniel. “He’s learning as he goes here. From two years ago, to last year, to now, everyday in camp here has been a growth day and a learning day. We’ll just put the next obstacle in front of him and see how he handles it.”

Lambert’s speed and skill are undeniable and now it’s a matter of him showing he can handle the rigours of the daily grind and earning the trust of the coaching staff by his play without the puck.

“He’s way stronger than he was last year. You can see it. And that isn’t by going in and throwing a barbell around. That’s more by leverage, more by getting body position,” said Arniel. “He’s getting there. He really is getting there, and that’s all you want to see with young kids.”

BIDING HIS TIME

Jets forward Morgan Barron would love to see an increase in his workload and put in the work this offseason to put himself in the best position to be ready for whatever comes his way.

The early indications are that Barron is likely to start the campaign once again on the fourth line with Alex Iafallo and either Rasmus Kupari or David Gustafsson — unless Lambert wins the second-line centre duel and Namestnikov slides down.

“You need to be ready for it. You never know when it’s going to happen, but you need to prove that,” said Barron, who had 11 goals and 18 points in 80 games last season while averaging 10:30 of ice time. “You see kids coming straight out of college, kids coming straight out of junior and lifetime NHL guys working their way up. There’s always going to be competition for those minutes. That’s just something you lean into. I have a belief in myself. If I keep playing my game the way that I know I can, those things will come in time.”

The Jets missed Barron’s size, speed and tenacity in the opening round of the Stanley Cup playoffs as he was out with a knee injury he sustained while crashing awkwardly into the boards during the first period of a game against the Seattle Kraken on April 16.

Barron hoped to be ready to play in the second round, had the Jets advanced past the Colorado Avalanche and not been eliminated in five games.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/09/26/hellebuyck-locked-in>

Hellebuyck locked in

By: Ken Wiebe

Connor Hellebuyck has always been a stickler for the details.

That’s been part of the foundation that has allowed the Winnipeg Jets netminder to grow into a two-time Vezina Trophy winner and four-time finalist for the trophy honouring the top goaltender in the NHL.

Hellebuyck, 31, captured the award last season after putting together one of the best seasons of his nine-year NHL career.

Reaching 60 starts for the fifth time in his career, Hellebuyck finished with a 2.39 goals-against average and .921 save percentage to go along with five shutouts and 37 wins, while leading the league in goals-saved above expected (33.1, according to MoneyPuck).

The Stanley Cup playoffs didn’t go as smoothly for Hellebuyck, who allowed 24 goals in five games against the Colorado Avalanche.

There’s no doubt the Jets didn’t play anywhere near well enough defensively in front of him, but when you’re a bona fide No. 1 netminder, raising your game when the team isn’t always at its best comes with the territory.

Following the exit meetings last spring, Hellebuyck spoke of the importance of trying not to put too much pressure on himself and simply doing his part within the team.

With the benefit of a lengthy offseason to organize his thoughts, Hellebuyck decided to stick with what's working.

"The way that I've gotten to where I am today is really digging into myself and doing everything I can, which really helps the team in the long run," said Hellebuyck.

"I didn't really do a whole lot of changing or digging or mental (reflection). I just kind of realized what (I'm) doing is right and stick to it. Don't deviate from the plan I've given myself. Just continue to get better every single day at my details and make sure my game is as consistent as possible. That's going to help this team win."

Hellebuyck's impact on the Jets since the organization chose him in the fifth round (130th overall) of the 2012 NHL Draft is undeniable.

He's a true workhorse and he's constantly been referred to as the backbone of the Jets.

His confidence, coupled with his ability, is something that allows the Jets to play a bit more freely in front of him.

"I feel so much better and I look so much better now than I did a year, or two, three years ago," said Hellebuyck. "Not letting a couple of bad goals really bother you because you know it's not you and it's not your game. If you feel good and mentally you just know you're going to be good, it's going to translate on the ice. I think at this point, the mental side is kind of locked in."

Hellebuyck is always looking for ways to improve and part of his evolution includes his ability to anticipate the play in front of him.

"Not only has my structure become second nature, but I think it's the mind. It's the mental game, and the way you read the game," said Hellebuyck. "I've seen a lot of shots and a lot of plays go down, so recognizing what's going to happen next is becoming more and more second nature.

"So, the biggest thing that I've kind of learned is how to recognize instantly and then being able to be ahead of the game and jump ahead a little bit."

With that in mind, Hellebuyck came to training camp with a plan on what he needed to do to be ready for the regular season opener against the Edmonton Oilers on Oct. 9.

That included getting into about two-and-a-half preseason games, something Jets head coach Scott Arniel revealed to reporters after the first day of on-ice sessions.

With only three games to go, Hellebuyck isn't planning to deviate from that plan — which means he'll be starting each of them, including Friday night at Xcel Energy Center against the Minnesota Wild.

What are some of the things Hellebuyck has on his checklist?

“I’m looking for my structure,” said Hellebuyck. “How quickly can I get into it and how many times can I repeat getting into the same feeling, the same structure, and the same triggers? That’s been really good right from the get-go, right from the middle of summer.

“Then the next thing I’m looking for is my hands. How are my hands tracking? How are they reacting to pucks? Are they falling back? Are they attacking? Are they sitting in the right spots? Am I getting pieces of pucks that I’m expecting to get pieces of? So far, I have (been).”

Having spent time around Henrik Lundqvist with the New York Rangers, Arniel recognizes the benefit of not needing to worry about his No. 1 goalie, knowing how driven he is to succeed.

“Helly wants to play 82 games and he takes a lot of the responsibility for what happens,” said Arniel, noting he had several discussions with the franchise puck stopper throughout the summer. “We talked about him staying at that level that he’s been at — and winning us games when maybe we shouldn’t (win). That’s just him. He’s done that ever since he’s been in the league.”

With the departure of Laurent Brossoit to the Chicago Blackhawks in free agency, Hellebuyck is going to have a new backup this season in Kaapo Kahkonen or Eric Comrie, who returns to the Jets after spending the past two seasons in the Buffalo Sabres system.

While there’s plenty of familiarity with Comrie, Hellebuyck took the high road when asked about the battle for the No. 2 spot on the depth chart.

“They’re both good guys. At this point, just letting it happen. It’s fun to watch,” said Hellebuyck. “I’m here to help in any way I can. End of the day, I’m more focused on myself and getting ready. I know those are two pros over there, they’re going to be doing the same thing. Kind of let the business side of things handle itself.”

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/jets-defensive-depth-tested-as-logan-stanley-falls-victim-to-injury-bug>

Jets' defensive depth tested as Logan Stanley falls victim to injury bug

By Scott Billeck

Scott Arniel sure is happy the Winnipeg Jets went out and acquired some depth this summer.

What he’s not so thrilled about is having to lean on it so early in the season.

The head coach’s blue line took another hit on Thursday, with Arniel announcing that Logan Stanley is expected to miss some time after being the latest to pick up an injury.

Arniel said Stanley tweaked something, and the prognosis is longer than day-to-day after he was a late scratch for Wednesday’s 6-1 win over the Edmonton Oilers at Canada Life Centre.

Stanley was not listed among the team’s two groups that practiced on Thursday.

“Right now, it’s not good,” Arniel said, delivering the ominous news.

The left side of Winnipeg's defence corps was already reeling after blood work from Ville Heinola's medical last Wednesday answered some unexplained swelling in his ankle and revealed an infection for the young Finn.

Heinola, who had his ankle surgically repaired last year around this time after breaking it in a preseason game, went under the knife again recently to have the pin taken out.

Arniel didn't have a definitive timeline on Heinola's return, suggesting it would be at least four weeks. He even couched that time frame by suggesting he's not a doctor.

"It will depend on there being no swelling or infection," Arniel said. "Then we go from there."

The injuries have ignited a battle for spots when the season gets underway on Oct. 9 in Edmonton.

"I don't have to say anything to (Haydn Fleury and Dylan Coghlan), they're seeing the injuries and all of a sudden now their eyes are probably getting a little bigger," Arniel said.

"We wanted to have depth in all positions just in case. I wasn't hoping it would happen this quick, but now, for those two, it's a chance. Go and put your best foot forward, show us what you're good at, be consistent in what you do and, hopefully, the results will help you make our hockey team."

Dylan Samberg was also absent for Thursday's sessions, but Arniel had better news to report.

"That was more maintenance after (Wednesday night)," Arniel said, adding that Samberg would be in the lineup in St. Paul, Minn. on Friday when the Jets clash with the Minnesota Wild.

Winnipeg's defensive pairings on Thursday looked like this:

Josh Morrissey-Dylan DeMelo
Simon Lundmark-Neal Pionk
Hadyn Fleury-Colin Miller
Dylan Coghlan-Elias Salomonsson

Lundmark, who Arniel referred to as his swing guy after being thrust into action on short notice on Thursday, was Samberg's placeholder.

"He's the one that we call out of the bullpen," Arniel said.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10775484/veteran-heavy-jets-squad-dominates-edmonton-6-1-for-first-preseason-win/>

Jets' Connor Hellebuyck sticking to same script heading into new season

By Scott Billeck

Upon reflection, Connor Hellebuyck isn't going to attempt to reinvent the wheel.

When he spoke at Winnipeg's exit interviews a few months back, the 31-year-old wore his heart on his sleeve.

The emotions that flowed from getting yanked in Winnipeg's 5-1 Game 4 loss to the Colorado Avalanche led to a moment of clarity for the two-time Vezina winner.

He couldn't do it alone.

"That was my mindset — I needed to do this alone," Hellebuyck said in early May. "That was the realization that I need to be part of this team more than I am, and to take everything onto my shoulders — and that's, I'm talking me personally, that's not me talking against the team — it's just the way my mentality is, I'm trying to put everything on my shoulders."

Those comments came just a few days after another disappointment for his Jets in the playoffs.

It was still raw.

His numbers weren't good in the series, but the team around him crumbled against the Avs.

He was right that he couldn't do it alone. Not when it all fell apart.

But after some time to consider it, there seemed no need to fix what wasn't broken.

"I really liked my game, I really liked my mindset," he said Thursday. "There's two different ways to go about it: Try and do it yourself or try and rely on a team. The way that I've gotten to where I am today is really digging into myself and doing everything I can, which really helps the team in the long run."

Don't deviate from the plan was Hellebuyck's conclusion.

"That's going to help this team win," he said.

It has for years.

You don't become a four-time Vezina nominee by losing, and Hellebuyck has, at times, single-handedly pushed, pulled, and dragged this team to the playoffs.

Last year, arguably, was the first of his career where he didn't have to be otherworldly.

Winnipeg's team defence increased tremendously, helping Hellebuyck capture the William M. Jennings trophy for the fewest goals allowed in the regular season.

He was elite, no question. Adding his second Vezina to the trophy cabinet proves that.

That's his norm now. It's part of his evolution as the world's best netminder.

Given that much of the position can be viewed as voodoo, Hellebuyck explained his own progression in as simple terms as he could on Thursday.

"Not only has my structure become second nature, but I think it's the mind," he said. "It's the mental game, and the way you read the game. I've seen a lot of shots and a lot of plays go

down, so recognizing what's going to happen next is becoming more and more second nature. So the biggest thing that I've kind of learned is how to recognize instantly and then being able to get ahead of the game and jump ahead a little bit."

His explanation didn't stop there.

It's not always going to go his way. The playoffs are the most recent example, highlighted by being pulled from that game—an ultra-rare occurrence for the Michigan product.

"The other side is the mental side of things, where if things don't go to plan, which the more and more I play, the less and less they don't go as planned, but being able to handle and toss it out the window and not think about it twice is really important in this league and this sport," he said. "That's a big jump that I've made in the last couple of years."

Hellebuyck's been saying for a few seasons now that his only goal is the Stanley Cup.

No matter where you lay the blame for his playoff performances, improving those is the next level for him.

"We talked about him staying at that level that he's been at, and winning us games when maybe we shouldn't," Arniel said of offseason conversations he and Hellebuyck had. "That's just him. He's done that ever since he's been in the league. Once we eliminate eight teams and get into the playoffs, now it's the next level for him. Now, he has to make sure that he beats that goaltender at the other end of the rink.

"That's something we'll leave for another day. We did talk about when we get to that point, there's another level he has to go to as well."

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/brad-lambert-still-in-the-running-for-jets-roster-spot-scott-arniel-says>

Brad Lambert still in the running for Jets roster spot, Scott Arniel says

By Scott Billeck

Brad Lambert is still in with a chance, so you can stop sharpening up those pitchforks.

Lambert's placement in Thursday's second group session, populated by junior and AHL players—guys not poised to make the big club—raised a few eyebrows and delivered a dose of anxiety to the Winnipeg Jets' fan base.

After both of the day's sessions ended, head coach Scott Arniel said it was all part of the plan.

"Don't make more than what it is," he said. "I told you before that the veterans weren't playing in the first two games, they have to get their reps. These are the guys, and he may be part of it at the start of the season on October 9, the big guys have to get their reps."

After scoring on the power play in Winnipeg's 6-1 win over the Edmonton Oilers on Wednesday, Arniel said Lambert will be right back in the lineup on Friday in Minnesota.

“He didn’t need to have what those guys got today,” Arniel said. “He’s been great on everything he’s been doing.

“It’s all part of making sure I get the reps out of our big guys, and those guys are giving me lots of opportunities to see them play. They’re going to continue moving forward. There’s nothing other than the fact I wanted a bit of a lighter load for them.”

Arniel is expecting a higher-calibre lineup from the Wild.

Winnipeg’s first three games, in which Lambert has featured in two, have been predominantly against AHL-level squads.

“We’ll just put the next obstacle in front of him and see how he handles it,” Arniel said.

With Lambert in the second group, Winnipeg’s second line featured Nikolaj Ehlers and Cole Perfetti flanking Vladislav Namestnikov down the middle.

Where Lambert slots in on Friday is not yet known.

Arniel, meanwhile, was complimentary of the 20-year-old Finn’s progression.

“He’s way stronger than he was last year,” he said. “You can see it. And that isn’t by going in and throwing a barbell around. That’s more by leverage, more by getting body position.

“He’s gotten a little bit smarter. The longer these guys are around the pros, the longer they are in situations where they’re facing these things, those battles—good players learn to take the next step. He’s getting there. He really is getting there, and that’s all you want to see with young kids.”