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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/regular-season-just-around-the-corner>

***Regular season just around the corner
Winnipeg will wrap up their preseason schedule in Calgary on Friday***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Five preseason games in the books, one to go. The 2024-25 season is less than a week away for the Winnipeg Jets and for veteran players like Josh Morrissey, it's starting to get exciting.

"There's one game left. Usually, most teams dress close to their opening night roster. And I don't know what the plan is here, but you can feel the regular season right around the corner," said Morrissey after Thursday's practice.

"So, I'd say the sort of dog days, if you will, hopefully the coaches aren't watching this interview. But that was maybe last week. So, I feel like now these last couple days, getting close to opening night, guys start to get excited."

The Jets star defenceman has played in two preseason games, both at home. The Oilers didn't bring Leon Draisaitl or Connor McDavid, and the Flames left Nazem Kadri and Yegor Sharangovich back in Alberta. Morrissey would like to see some NHL competition before things get real on October 9th in Edmonton.

"Hopefully an NHL lineup tomorrow (in Calgary). NHL players, and some top end guys, we haven't really seen a lot of top six players so far in my two games. So, it felt for me, it was my first game and then a week off before the next game," said Morrissey.

"It almost felt like last night was the first one again, but started to settle in as it went on, and now I'm excited to get two games in three days here, and hopefully an NHL team on both sides tomorrow."

Another reason for excitement in the Manitoba capital is the new look power play. It connected in the first period as Nikolaj Ehlers finished off a beautiful passing play. The man advantage had numerous other scoring chances as the night wore on against Calgary.

"I'm sure you guys have seen it. There's a lot more pace to it, a lot more structure in the sense that once we have the puck, it's obviously you've got to make plays, but we know where to expect each other, it makes the reads a lot easier," said Kyle Connor.

"Guys are supporting each other. It's been really fun. Obviously, it's just beginning to build towards it, but we've laid the foundation."

The Jets lost some games last season because the power play couldn't deliver in big moments. In the end, Winnipeg was 22nd in the league with the man advantage at 18.8%. Baffling when the team has the likes of Mark Scheifele, Gabe Vilardi, Nikolaj Ehlers, Morrissey and Connor.

However, it is not about last season anymore.

"I'm not going to compare us so much to last year. I think I'm going to be more about what I saw from the start of camp to now is the details. Picking up on the details. Whether that's faceoffs or entries, when the puck gets to a certain spot, if it gets to Mo (Morrissey) at the top, the other guys have motion and movement that they have to do," said head coach Scott Arniel.

"That's part of it. We started seeing it in the first game and we saw it again last night. Some of the finished product is nice to see. You're going to get heavier and heavier competition. Tomorrow is going to be another big test against I'm sure close to Calgary's top line."

The Jets made some cuts on Thursday and there are more to come. Ordinarily, the final preseason contest is where you see the opening night roster, but Arniel and the coaching staff haven't decided what it will look like tomorrow night in Calgary.

"We'll talk as an organization here in the next couple of hours and move forward. That doesn't mean that what you see tomorrow is what you're going to see next week," said Arniel.

"Most of the top end veterans are going to be there because they need their reps to get going and to continue to get ready for next week."

INJURY UPDATES

David Gustafsson and Jaret Anderson-Dolan did not take part of practice today and their availability for Friday's game remains to be seen.

"JAD, he got hit with a shot there, I think it was on the penalty kill or five-on-five he got hit. Just pretty sore, swollen up today," said Arniel.

"Gus, actually good news. He'll be OK. Just going day-to-day, I think, to see where he's at each day. More than likely, both of them will be out for tomorrow night but we'll see if they skate in the morning."

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/10/03/jets-whittle-away-at-training-camp-roster-expose-four-players-to-waivers>

Jets trim training camp roster Four players exposed to waivers on way to Moose

By: Ken Wiebe

The Winnipeg Jets are down to the short strokes when it comes setting to the opening-day roster.

Although a few important decisions remain, the Jets made their latest round of cuts Thursday morning.

They included placing defenceman Simon Lundmark on waivers along with forwards Mason Shaw, Dominic Toninato and Axel Jonsson-Fjallby and assigning goalie Thomas Milic and defencemen Tyrel Bauer and Dmitry Kuzmin to the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

That leaves the Jets with three goalies, 11 defencemen and 16 forwards in training camp, though that includes injured blue-liners Ville Heinola and Logan Stanley — who are expected to open the season on injured reserve and won't count towards the opening-day roster, which can be a maximum of 23 players and is due by 4 p.m. CT on Sunday afternoon.

Forward David Gustafsson, who suffered a lower-body injury in the second period of Wednesday's 5-2 win over the Calgary Flames and winger Jaret Anderson-Dolan, who blocked a shot in the third period of the fifth preseason game, skipped Thursday's on-ice session — though Jets head coach Scott Arniel wasn't expecting either of those players to be out longer than day-to-day.

The Jets finish the preseason Friday night in Calgary with a rematch against the Flames in what represents a final audition for players on the bubble.

Arniel reiterated he's expecting to dress most of his veterans since the Jets open the regular season next Wednesday against the Edmonton Oilers.

Thursday's line combinations may have provided some clues as to which way the Jets are leaning for the final roster spots, though the injuries to Gustafsson and Anderson-Dolan (both of whom aren't expected to play on Friday) could cloud things somewhat.

Neither Brad Lambert nor Nikita Chibrikov require waivers, so the path of least resistance would be to assign those players to the AHL.

However, Lambert's play has forced the Jets to strongly consider keeping him around, especially if they end up keeping 14 forwards.

On the back end, the Jets are down to one decision. While Haydn Fleury was back with Colin Miller on what is projected to be the third pairing, that left Elias Salomonsson on the left side with Dylan Coghlan on the fourth pair.

Salomonsson has shown well throughout the preseason and continues to get better as the competition is getting tougher, so the Jets will need to determine whether he sticks around or would be better served by getting more puck touches and increased ice time with the Moose as he continues his adjustment to the North American game.

The Jets aren't expected to carry three goalies, though Arniel didn't rule out the possibility when asked about the battle for the backup job behind Connor Hellebuyck, who will make a third consecutive start on Friday.

"Not my department," said Arniel, who was chuckling before he got back to the issue at hand. "We have to figure it out. We have two injured defencemen, we have to have a spot for projecting when they might be back. As it is today, we have some injured forwards. We have to see where we are health-wise.

"Can you afford to keep three? Do you have to keep cap space open? We'll get to Sunday and Monday and go from there."

Let's just say Arniel has been around the game long enough to know you need to have a plan in place, but things can change quickly when it comes to this time of the year when all 32 teams

have roster decisions pending and occasionally some unexpected options reveal themselves either on the waiver wire or via trade.

Barlow on the move

Jets forward prospect Colby Barlow was involved in a blockbuster deal in the Ontario Hockey League on Thursday as he was acquired by the Oshawa Generals from the Owen Sound Attack for a haul that included two players and six OHL draft picks.

Barlow scored a goal late in the third period of his Jets' preseason debut, but had a relatively quiet camp.

In what is an important development year for the high-scoring winger, Arniel urged Barlow to make every day count in what will be his final taste of junior hockey and ending up with a team that's considered to be a true contender in the OHL should be beneficial.

"Good for him," said Arniel, noting he has a relationship with Attack general manager Dale Degray that dates back to their time as teammates in three different spots, including the Moose. "When (Barlow) was heading home there, we said go back there and play at an elite level, go win something. Go down there and have success as a team and be part of that. The other thing is do everything possible to get on that World Junior team and continue to gain growth that way. He has an opportunity with a good team and hopefully he makes the most of it."

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/after-showing-struggles-has-time-run-out-for-lambert-to-make-jets-roster/sn-amp/>

Scrappy Swede turning heads on Jets' blue line Salomonsson making case to stay with big club

By: Mike McIntyre

It was one of those "did that really just happen" moments in the middle of an otherwise routine Winnipeg Jets training camp session.

With battle drills underway, Elias Salomonsson had Adam Lowry lined up along the boards. Rather than let up or shy away, the 20-year-old rookie defenceman took a healthy run at the respected team captain and sent him crashing against the glass.

The smile on coach Scott Arniel's face said it all.

"He has a little bit of a history of liking that stuff," the first-year bench boss said Thursday of Salomonsson, a reference to the fact he was suspended on three different occasions last year for questionable hits (twice in Sweden, once at the World Juniors).

"At the end of the day he's not afraid to mix it up and go into people and play the body, which is always nice. He has his other instincts as a defenceman — his ability to get back and read the next play, make a first pass, he has good feet — for him, that's putting it all together. That's what I thought he's done in this camp."

He's far from a goon, but there's a fearlessness to Salomonsson's game — and practice habits, obviously — which has opened plenty of eyes as the Jets get down to the final tough decisions

about roster composition. The 55th-overall pick from the 2022 draft is one of eight healthy defencemen still with the big club.

Is it possible he breaks camp and makes the 23-man opening-night roster instead of starting his North American pro career with the Manitoba Moose as expected? What once would have been a longshot has become an intriguing possibility, thanks to Salomonsson's strong play and a pair of injuries to blue-liners Ville Heinola and Logan Stanley.

"I feel bad for them. But it's opened up opportunity for me and some other guys. Of course you get the feeling that you have a better chance," Salomonsson told the Free Press.

"It feels good. I'm just trying to work hard every day, get better. Work on some details in my game with the smaller ice. I'm happy to still be here and competing for a spot."

The smooth-skating, puck-moving rear-guard with a bit of snarl to his style has appeared in four of Winnipeg's five pre-season games so far, with Arniel saying he's getting better with each outing. That has included playing parts of the last two on the left side of the ice rather than his traditional right side.

"I think I've felt more comfortable each game I've played. I'm getting used to the systems and stuff like that," said Salomonsson, who carries himself a lot bigger than his 6-2, 195-pound frame would suggest.

He's skated between 17:02 and 20:24 each contest and is a combined plus-one with 10 shot attempts and four shot blocks along with a pair of minor penalties.

The Jets could opt to begin the year with eight healthy defencemen on the roster along with Heinola and Stanley, who are both expected to be out at least three more weeks, on injured reserve. If they decide to go with seven, it would appear the final decision is down to Salomonsson or Dylan Coghlan, who requires waivers in order to be sent to the Moose. (Salomonsson does not).

"I know we've talked a lot about all the kids there, but that's the thing with each and every one of them, they've all improved as the 10 or 12 days have gone on here. He's one that's really taken it from last year to this year," said Arniel.

"He's gaining confidence. Some of the drills we're doing in practice, the battle drill if you saw that one — the net-front battle — he's catching on how we need to play and what he needs to do to play here. You love to see growth like that with young guys."

You can put the team's undisputed No. 1 defenceman down as a big fan of what the new kid has brought to town.

"His first full year now coming over to North America. I feel like you see maturity one year later," Josh Morrissey said.

"He's a bigger guy, strong guy, and moves with some power. He's looked more comfortable as the games have gone on, which is natural at that stage in your career. It's getting reps, getting into situations that you maybe haven't been in before.

Morrissey described Salomonsson as a "cerebral player" who also has plenty of talent.

“The game gets easier, one, as you start to play with better players and against better players, but also as you see something develop in front of you multiple times and get some experience,” he said. “He’s looked great.”

Salomonsson is coming off a terrific year in his native Sweden in which he had 11 points (two goals, nine assists) in 31 regular-season games with Skelleftea AIK, then stepped up in the playoffs with six points (one goal, five assists) in 16 games on the way to capturing a league championship.

Now, the next step in his development may be happening quicker than expected.

“That’s the ultimate test, to show you can play against the top guys in the league,” said Salomonsson, who was paired in Thursday’s practice with Coghlan. It remains to be seen if they dress for Winnipeg’s sixth and final pre-season game on Friday night in Calgary.

He’s also getting more comfortable off the ice. After spending the last few weeks living out of a suitcase in a Winnipeg hotel, Salomonsson moved into his own apartment on Wednesday. He’ll be joined this weekend by his girlfriend, who is en route from Sweden.

He’s also enjoying spending time with several other Swedes in the organization, such as David Gustafsson, Axel Jonsson-Fjallby, Simon Lundmark and Daniel Torgersson, but is quick to point out “everybody has been great to me and very welcoming.”

“It’s nice to have them here and get to know them better. It’s fun to be able to compete with each other,” he said.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-power-play-makeover-already-producing-desired-results>

Jets' power-play makeover already producing desired results

By Scott Billeck

There was a sight to behold Wednesday night in downtown Winnipeg.

Flow. Speed. Skill. And, of course, a pretty goal to tie it all together.

If the Winnipeg Jets’ power play looks like that when the regular season hits next week, put the league on notice. It’s going to do a lot of damage.

Nothing encapsulated Winnipeg’s improved work on the power play more than Nikolaj Ehlers, the goalscorer on the play. The shot was typical Ehlers — quick and accurate. It was his movements leading up to the goal that made it all work.

“Two things: He got far enough over so the weakside winger couldn’t get over and collapse on him, and he also got away from the (defence),” head coach Scott Arniel said Thursday.

Ehlers has never really played what's often referred to as the bumper position in the slot. But he seems tailor-made for it.

Davis Payne, one of Arniel's new assistants who runs the power play, likes to call it the "pop," and the goal they scored is seen as a "pop play."

What's required of Ehlers is quick movements, from hash marks to hash marks and dot to dot. Ehlers also moved quickly from the goal line to the hash marks on a subsequent power play attempt that resulted in a scoring chance.

"When you have the ability to move quick like he can, that gives you that split-second to find that hole, to find that chance to get the shot off," Arniel said.

Ehlers was positioned perfectly on the goal, allowing Gabriel Vilardi to quickly pick him out with enough time to make the uncontested shot.

It happened so quickly, starting with Mark Scheifele feeding it down low to Vilardi, that Calgary's penalty killers only began to react when the puck was in the back of the net.

And that was just one look.

Winnipeg's top power-play unit generated many on their three attempts at 5-on-4. Vilardi and Ehlers would work an interchange, and a couple of backhand passes out to Kyle Connor weren't far from being goals, too.

"I'm real excited about it," Connor said. "We can be lethal from both sides."

What's stood out, along with the finesse, is just how snappy it all looks.

Winnipeg's power play last season was largely stagnant and lethargic. Their bottom-third ranking was reflective of it.

Payne's got this group moving. They're aggressive.

"There's a lot more pace to it, a lot more structure in the sense that once we have the puck," Connor said. "You've got to make plays, but we know where to expect each other, it makes the reads a lot easier. Guys are supporting each other. It's been really fun. It's just beginning to build towards it, but we've laid the foundation."

Connor said it is predictable for Winnipeg's players, which makes it unpredictable for opposing penalty killers.

"Attack in different ways," he said. "It's not going to be the same play every night, and that's what we stress. It's going to be somewhat different, whether that's Nik in the slot or going back door to me, someone's going to be open. We gotta find it. That's where you need to adjust and have a play, but it might not be there sometimes."

Josh Morrissey, who anchors the point on the top unit, referred to the power play this year as more dynamic.

“We’re trying to be a more dynamic unit,” he said. “It’s probably the best way to put it without giving away all the secrets, but I’ve liked the way we’ve moved the puck in a couple games, like the way we’ve done it in practice.”

Ehlers has become the linchpin in that. He’s the new addition to this year’s unit, something many fans had been begging for in the past.

The 28-year-old, who is set for unrestricted free agency next summer, has embraced a role he’s never played before.

“He wanted to know, ‘If I’m going to play that, how do I play it? Tell me what I need to do,’” Arniel said.

“Some of the guys that play that position... there’s some top-end guys They do get to touch the puck a lot and they are a big part of what happens. A lot generates through those guys.

“It’s more about just teaching them what we need them to do. Each time Scheif has the puck, where does he go? If Gabe has it, if it ends up with Mo, what’s his route? If we don’t have the puck and we’re on the recovery or on the entry, what’s your next play? Where does he gotta get to? He’s picking it up pretty good and we want to make sure that we’re giving him lots of reps in that spot.”

The Jets have one more opportunity to get those reps in when they travel to Calgary to face the Flames for their preseason finale on Friday.

Injury report

With the Jets making seven cuts before Thursday’s practice, the team was down to 14 forwards for the hour-long session.

Missing, apart from those trimmed from the team, were forwards David Gustafsson and Jaret Anderson-Dolan.

Gustafsson left Wednesday’s game in the second period and didn’t return after Calgary’s Walker Duehr drilled him near the penalty boxes.

The good news is that Gustafsson is just day-to-day nursing a lower-body injury after undergoing further evaluation on Thursday.

Anderson-Dolan, meanwhile, blocked a shot in the game and had both soreness and swelling to contend with, keeping him away from the on-ice session.

The Jets are already without defensive duo Ville Heinola (ankle) and Logan Stanley (knee), who underwent surgical procedures last week and are expected to be out for at least four weeks.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10794244/points-in-division-winnipeg-jets/>

ANALYSIS: ‘Points in division’ crucial for Jets facing competition this season

By John Shannon CJOB

The term “pucks in deep” is a fun poke at the hockey speak every coach and every player blurts out with every interview.

But as the regular season begins, I would suggest that teams really do have a new “PID” stat to pay attention to — a stat that might just determine whether a team makes it to the postseason.

Story continues below advertisement

Nowhere is that more important than the brutally tough Central Division. My “PID” is “points in the division.” And in looking at all the teams in the Central, winning inside the division will be daunting this year.

Of the other seven teams, there are a couple of Cup contenders in this grouping. Dallas is still viewed as the most complete team: a great young goaltender in Jake Oettinger, a deep D corps led by Miro Heiskanen, and a group of forwards that are relentless.

Colorado is still Colorado: Mackinnon, Rantanen, Makar ... a core of players that is the envy of the whole league.

But it's the rest of the division that will create a much bigger challenge for “points in the division” for the Jets, or any team in this group of eight.

Utah will wear new colours and be much tougher out with a stronger defence led by John Marino and Mikhail Sergachev. Nashville has spent a lot of money on big names: Marchessault, Stamkos, and Skjei. The Blackhawks, with Connor Bedard and a boatload of veterans, will be better, as will the Wild, who always give the Jets fits.

The Jets lost just five games in regulation of the 26 they played in the Central last season — by far the best of all eight teams. They were the best at the Central's proverbial four-point games. It was a big factor for the team winning 52 games and placing second in the division.

That number, “PID” or “points in the division,” is one to monitor. It's hard to imagine that any team can mirror that 20-5-1 record again. Therefore, the challenge of maintaining the team's position in the standings, and a playoff position, will be tough for this version of the Jets.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10792601/winnipeg-jets-reduce-training-camp-roster-7-players/>

Winnipeg Jets reduce training camp roster by 7 more players

By Sam Thompson Global News

With the 2024-25 regular season only days away, the Winnipeg Jets have reduced their training camp roster by seven more names.

The team announced Thursday that three players — goalie Thomas Milic and defencemen Tyrel Bauer and Dmitry Kuzmin — have been assigned to their AHL affiliate, the Manitoba Moose.

Four others are also slated to join the Moose, but must clear waivers first: defenceman Simon Lundmark and forwards Axel Jonsson-Fjallby, Mason Shaw and Dominic Toninato.

Of the seven, Toninato (99 games) and Jonsson-Fjallby (76 games) have spent the most time with the Jets, while Shaw has 82 games of NHL experience, all with the Minnesota Wild.

Jets Head Coach Scott Arniel says the conversations with players following these roster decisions are never easy, especially with Toninato and Jonsson-Fjallby. "They're popular guys, the young guys are different. They're just kind of part of the process of becoming veterans. The older guys who have to go through waivers, they've got family and stuff – it's a hard couple of days for them. But they also know it's part of the business."

Thursday's player assignments leave the Jets with 29 names still on the training camp roster. That group includes injured defensemen Logan Stanley and Ville Heinola. Forwards David Gustafsson and Jaret Anderson-Dolan did not skate in Thursday's practice after getting hurt in the 5-2 win over Calgary the night before.

Gustafsson left Wednesday's game in the second period with a lower body injury that Arniel says is of the "day to day" variety.

The Jets bench boss said Anderson-Dolan was "pretty sore, swollen up" Thursday morning after getting hit with a shot during the game.

The Jets practiced with three goalies, eight defensemen and 14 forwards on Thursday in advance of Friday Night's preseason finale in Calgary.

All 32 NHL teams must be down to a maximum 23 players on the active roster by 4 p.m. CT Monday, October 7.

Winnipeg opens their 2024-25 regular season schedule on Wednesday, Oct 9 in Edmonton.