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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-give-up-late-goal-in-loss-to-vegas>

***Three things - Jets give up late goal in loss to Vegas  
Jets lose Ehlers, and fall 4-3 to Vegas***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets lost a hard-fought game at T-Mobile Arena on Friday night losing 4-3 to the Vegas Golden Knights. Cole Perfetti had his second multi-goal night of the season and Neal Pionk scored the other goal for the Jets who will close out their six-game road trip in Dallas on Sunday afternoon. Eric Comrie made 26 saves and is now 3-3-0 on the season.

The Jets made some changes to their lineup bringing in Logan Stanley and Dylan Coghlan replacing Colin Miller and Ville Heinola on the blue line. Stanley played 14:30 and Coghlan played 14:38 in his Jets regular season debut.

***GOOD OMEN***

Winnipeg got off to a good start this evening when Cole Perfetti tipped a Josh Morrissey shot past Adin Hill for his first goal since November 3, a span of 12 games. Winnipeg is 10-1-0 when scoring first and were the last team to lose a game this year when scoring first.

Unfortunately for the Jets, Vegas would close out the first period with goals 1:31 apart with Brett Howden (18:13) and Ivan Barbashev (19:44) to take a 2-1 lead. Eric Comrie was busy making 12 saves on 14 shots in the opening 20 minutes.

***MULTI-GOAL NIGHT FOR PERFETTI***

Dylan DeMelo said he felt the Jets got through the neutral zone and got in on the forecheck a lot better in the second period. His defence partner Morrissey was a huge part of the game tying goal, as he picked up a loose puck in the Jets zone, raced up the right side of the ice, fired a low shot on Hill and the rebound ended up on the stick of Perfetti, who scored his second of the night. Morrissey hit the 20-assist mark in 24 games, the second-fastest pace to 20 helpers in a season by a Jets/Thrashers defenseman and three shy of his own franchise mark (21 GP in 2022-23).

I just went to the net and then it just hit my stick," said Perfetti.

"I mean, that's kind of what it was, what I figured it was going to be like after the drought it was. I figured it was going to be a greasy one, and it was."

***NO EHLERS***

The Jets began the third period minus Nikolaj Ehlers and also fell behind 3-2 when Barbashev scored his second goal of the evening at 4:43. Neal Pionk would tie the game up again at 8:55 as the Jets defenceman would send a seeing eye shot past Hill. Vegas took the lead again at 15:55, Howden tapped in a Karlsson pass. Winnipeg had two good scoring chances to tie it up as Vlad Namestnikov and Pionk couldn't find a way to beat Hill. The Golden Knights earned their seventh straight win against the Jets dating to Oct. 20, 2022 and tied their longest active run versus one opponent (also 7 GP vs. MTL).

**NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-vegas-golden-knights-game-recap-november-29>

***Howden scores twice, Golden Knights edge Jets  
Barbashev also gets 2 goals for Vegas; Winnipeg has lost 5 of 8***

By Paul Delos Santos

LAS VEGAS -- Brett Howden scored twice, including the go-ahead goal at 15:55 of the third period, for the Vegas Golden Knights in a 4-3 victory against the Winnipeg Jets at T-Mobile Arena on Friday.

Howden tapped in a backhand, backdoor pass from William Karlsson at the left post.

"I had the easy job of just trying to find the open ice, just trying to find a quiet area," Howden said. "[Alexander Holtz] did a good job of going through to the net. He took two or three guys with him, so it kind of left me open, and then [Karlsson is] the one that makes the play. So, it was pretty easy for me to just put it into an empty net. It was a really good play by them."

Ivan Barbashev also scored twice, and Jack Eichel and Pavel Dorofeyev each had two assists for Vegas (15-6-3), which is 4-0-1 in its past five games. Adin Hill made 22 saves.

"I liked our energy. I thought we played really well for the game, which, sometimes, you do expect the worst," Golden Knights coach Bruce Cassidy said. "But you just know there's going to be a bit of a hurdle there (after Thanksgiving), but our guys obviously balanced their taking care of business at home and taking care of business at the rink."

Cole Perfetti had two goals, Neal Pionk also scored, and Eric Comrie made 26 saves for Winnipeg (18-6-0), which has lost two straight and is 3-5-0 since starting the season 15-1-0.

"There were a few things we want to clean up in the zone, off the rush. A couple of reads," Perfetti said. "We worked hard, we battled. The effort was definitely there. It's been a grind of a road trip. We knew it was going to be a hard game. ... It was a good effort all around."

Perfetti gave the Jets a 1-0 lead at 6:57 of the first period when he redirected Josh Morrissey's shot from the left circle over Hill's glove.

"It felt really good to score," said Perfetti, who ended an 11-game goal drought. "I just went to the net and it just hit my stick. That's what I figured it would be like after the drought it was. I figured it would be a greasy one, and it was."

Howden tied the game 1-1 at 18:13. He intercepted an errant pass from Morgan Barron in the defensive zone, skated in on a breakaway, and slid the puck underneath Comrie's outstretched right pad.

"I felt like I had a step on [Jets defenseman Logan Stanley], so I just tried to keep going and take it to the net," Howden said.

Barbashev gave the Golden Knights a 2-1 lead at 19:44 of the first, scoring on the rebound of Dorofeyev's shot while falling down.

Perfetti's second of the game tied it 2-2 at 14:28 of the second period. Hill made a save on Morrissey with his right pad, but the rebound went right to Perfetti, who shot past the goalie's outstretched blocker from the left circle.

Barbashev put Vegas back in front 3-2 at 4:43 of the third period, scoring blocker side from the high slot.

"I feel like we had a lot of energy today," Barbashev said. "We still let them back in the game a few times today, but overall, I think we stuck with it and got a huge two points."

Pionk tied the game 3-3 at 8:55, roofing a shot from the point through traffic.

"Our compete and battle was really good," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "Lots of stretches there where we hemmed them in their end of the rink. We had some really good opportunities. We got down and came back."

*NOTES:* Karlsson played in his 700th NHL game. He had an assist, went 11-for-13 on face-offs, and was plus-2 in 19:20 of ice time. ... Howden has 10 goals this season, an NHL career high. He scored eight goals in 72 games last season. ... Barbashev extended his point streak to five games (four goals, six assists). ... The Golden Knights have won seven straight against the Jets.

### **Associated Press**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/howden-and-barbashev-score-twice-golden-knights-beat-nhl-leading-jets/>

### ***Howden and Barbashev score twice, Golden Knights beat NHL-leading Jets***

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Brett Howden's second goal of the game late in third period proved to be the winner as the Vegas Golden Knights defeated the NHL-leading Winnipeg Jets 4-3 on Friday night.

Howden's goal with 4:05 remaining broke a 3-all tie and came seven minutes after the Jets had tied the game.

Ivan Barbashev also had two goals, and Adin Hill made 22 saves for Vegas, which won for the fourth time in five games.

Cole Perfetti scored twice and Neal Pionk added a goal for Winnipeg, which lost for the third time in four games. Eric Comrie made 26 saves.

### ***Takeaways***

Jets: Perfetti and Pionk snapped extended goal droughts and helped keep Winnipeg in the game with their goals. Perfetti snapped an 11-game goal drought, while Pionk ended a 13-game span without a goal.

Golden Knights: Barbashev, who has at least one goal in three of the last four games, extended his point streak to five games. During the five-game stretch, Barbashev has four goals and six assists. He's tied with Pavel Dorofeyev for the team lead with 12 goals.

#### *Key moment*

Just before Howden's go-ahead goal, William Karlsson took a pass in the neutral zone, and rather than push the puck ahead, skated cross ice into the offensive zone and shifted to the right side before passing to Howden. It was Karlsson's patience in holding the puck before his perfect no-look, backhand pass through the slot that led Howden to the one-timer.

#### *Key stat*

Now in his 11th season, Karlsson played in his 700th career game. The 31-year-old Swedish-born skater is an original member of the Golden Knights, who entered the league in 2017. He has now played in 517 games for Vegas, ranking second in franchise history.

#### *Up next*

Winnipeg visits Dallas on Sunday, while Vegas host Utah on Saturday.

#### **TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/corrado-jets-depth-will-be-tested-if-ehlers-misses-time%7E3038458>

#### ***Corrado: Jets depth will be tested if Ehlers misses time (VIDEO)***

TSN Hockey analyst Frankie Corrado joined Sportscentre to break down what went wrong for the Winnipeg Jets in their loss to the Vegas Golden Knights, and the impact that losing Nikolaj Ehlers could have on the Jets, as he was forced to leave the game with an injury.

#### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10895538/oakbanks-howden-scores-winner-as-golden-knights-edge-winnipeg-jets-4-3/>

#### ***Oakbank's Howden scores winner as Golden Knights edge Winnipeg Jets 4-3***

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

Like many a downtrodden gambler, the Winnipeg Jets just can't seem to solve Vegas.

The Golden Knights scored the go-ahead goal with just four minutes left in regulation for a 4-3 win over the Jets Friday to mark the seventh straight regular season defeat for Winnipeg at the hands of Vegas. If you include the first-round playoff defeat in 2023, Winnipeg is now just 1-11 in their last 12 against the Golden Knights.

Oakbank's Brett Howden scored a pair for the Knights in the victory including the game winner in third period. Ivan Barbashev also had two markers in the Jets fifth loss in their last eight games.

While the Jets were badly outplayed for the most part in their previous three games, this time they hung tight with the Vegas right to the end.

"I thought our compete and our battle tonight was really good," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "Lots of stretches there where we hemmed them in their end of the rink, had some real good opportunities. We got down and came back.

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"Just three rush goals against and this is one of the best rush teams in the league. Our reads off those rushes certainly need to be a little bit better how we handle those."

Cole Perfetti scored two goals for the Jets in the loss, while Neal Pionk had their other tally. Perfetti's first period goal ended an 11-game goal scoring drought.

"It felt really good to score," Perfetti said. "I just went to the net and it just hit my stick. That's kinda what I figured it was going to be like after the drought it was. I figured it was going to be a greasy one and it was."

It was the first time all season the Jets lost when getting the first goal of the game.

Eric Comrie stopped 26 of 30 shots in falling to 3-3 in his first six appearances of the season.

"It's one you want to get at least a point in," said Comrie. "It's unfortunate we couldn't get it and move on from there."

Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers left the game in the second period with a lower-body injury after falling awkwardly near the boards.

"He's day-to-day," Arniel said. "Not good obviously. We'll just wait and see, get him looked at. We'll get to Dallas and go from there, see where we're at. Obviously, I don't know 100 per cent. Lower-body right now and just see how he is tomorrow."

The Jets made a pair of lineup changes as Logan Stanley returned from injury and Dylan Coghlan made his long awaited Jets debut. Ville Heinola and Colin Miller went up the press box to make room for them.

"The biggest thing is some fresh legs," said Arniel. "Just because it's been such a grind here and just came off the four (games) in six (days) and the long travel from Minny and just, it was really Stan was back ready to go and we need him to be apart of our group and Cogs, he had played here before. I just wanted to gets some fresh legs in there."

After some rough first periods of late, the Jets got on the board first in this one thanks to Perfetti. He tipped home a Josh Morrissey point shot at the 6:57 mark for his first goal since Nov. 3 and first non-empty net goal since scoring the winner in Calgary Oct. 26.

Vegas failed on a pair of first period power plays before Winnipeg had a chance late in the period, but during the power play Ehlers left the game with an injury and did not return.

Coming out of the failed power play look, Winnipeg kept possession in the offensive end but things went awry went Morgan Barron tried to make a blind pass near the blue line. It was picked off by Howden, who sped past a flat-footed Stanley and skated in on Comrie, outwaiting the Jets' backup and tucking it home to level the score with 1:47 to go in the period.

Vegas grabbed the lead with just 16 seconds to go in the period when Barbashev banged home a rebound to make it 2-1 heading to the second.

The Golden Knights outshot the Jets 14-6 in the first but Winnipeg had a better middle frame, edging Vegas 9-7 in shots on goal and tying the game in the process.

Morrissey led the Jets up the ice on an odd-man rush and fired a hard shot that was kicked out by Adin Hill, but the rebound went right to the stick of Perfetti and he buried it for his second of the night at the 14:28 mark of the second.

The game remained tied until the 4:43 mark of the third. Vegas was cycling the puck around Winnipeg's zone when it bounced off the skate of Alex Iafallo in the slot to the stick of Jack Eichel. Iafallo got turned around as Barbashev skated loose into the slot, where he took a pass from Eichel and buried it for his second of the night.

Winnipeg answered back at the 8:55 mark when a point shot from Pionk found its way through a screen and past Hill to make it 3-3.

But with just over four minutes left, William Karlsson skated the puck into the Winnipeg end and drew the attention of multiple Jets before sending a perfect backdoor pass to a wide-open Howden, who tapped it home to make it 4-3.

Winnipeg had a late power play look and pulled Comrie late in that opportunity but they weren't able to find the equalizer as they fell to 1-3 in their last four games.

Winnipeg will wrap up this six-game road swing Sunday afternoon in Dallas.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/11/29/jets-finding-ways-to-lose-2>

#### ***Jets finding ways to lose Defensive breakdowns hand victory to Golden Knights***

By: Mike McIntyre

LAS VEGAS — Now the Winnipeg Jets are finding ways to lose hard-fought hockey games after a torrid start to the season where we came to expect the opposite.

Take Friday night, for example, when several self-inflicted wounds — including a late-game dagger — ultimately proved costly in a 4-3 defeat to the Vegas Golden Knights at T-Mobile Arena.

Manitoba's Brett Howden scored his second of the night with 4:05 left in regulation, taking advantage of some blown coverage to break a tie and send the home team on its way to victory.

It was the third goal the Jets surrendered off the rush, which isn't exactly a recipe for success.

"I'm not taking anything away from their ability to make plays. But we had all our numbers there. We had everybody there, we just picked up the wrong people and easy tap-in, empty-net goal," said coach Scott Arniel, who was still trying to view the glass as half-full, rather than half-empty.

“So learn from that and make sure that we’ll talk about it and move on. But I liked a lot of what we did. I liked our compete and I liked the way, no matter how sort of the score changed, we kind of kept coming and kept coming.”

Winnipeg falls to 18-6-0, including 2-3-0 on this season-long six-game road trip. Vegas improves to 15-6-3.

*DROUGHT ENDS AT A DOZEN:* Cole Perfetti was certain his luck was about to change.

Speaking with the Free Press earlier this week in Los Angeles, the young Jets forward said he wasn’t discouraged by a scoring drought that had entered double digits in games since he was still getting quality chances. Later that night, facing the Kings, he hit yet another post and came away empty for an 11th straight outing.

There was nothing but net for Perfetti on Friday as he got a stick on a Josh Morrissey shot, beating Vegas goaltender Adin Hill for his long-awaited fifth goal of the year 6:57 into the game to make it 1-0 for the visitors. Nikolaj Ehlers drew the other assist, making a great zone entry with the puck, getting his own rebound off an initial shot attempt and then passing off to Morrissey.

“It felt really good to score. That’s kind of what I figured it was going to be like after the drought. I figured it was going to be a greasy one, and it was,” said Perfetti.

He really appeared prophetic when he struck against at 14:28 of the second period to tie the game 2-2. Vlad Namestnikov won a defensive zone faceoff, and Morrissey immediately grabbed the puck with speed to create a three-on-two rush.

With Alex Iafallo driving the net, Morrissey took a shot which was stopped by Hill. However, a juicy rebound ended up right on the suddenly red-hot stick of Perfetti, who buried it for his sixth of the year.

“One, the confidence. Two, sometimes just the puck luck kind of goes your way,” Perfetti explained.

“You’re on that in the last 10 games, nothing comes to you. But then tonight, you’re feeling yourself, and the puck comes right to you, and then you don’t even think twice. On a personal note that feels good, but it sucks to lose when you play that strong as a team and everyone’s working really, really hard.”

*OH MY, FLY:* It was an innocent-enough looking play, with Ehlers throwing a bodycheck on Vegas forward Pavel Dorofeyev in the second period. It had an awkward result, with Ehlers falling back on his left leg and appearing to injure something.

He immediately left the ice — the Jets were on the power play at the time — and slammed his stick in frustration, sitting on the bench for a minute hunched over before going down the tunnel with team trainers.

Iafallo took his spot on the second line with Perfetti and Namestnikov, when Ehlers did not return. Any extended absence would be a big loss for a team already without shutdown

defenceman Dylan Samberg, who suffered a broken foot last Saturday in Nashville blocking a Steven Stamkos shot.

“He’s day-to-day. Not good, obviously,” said Arniel. “We’ll just wait and see and get him looked at. We’ll get to Dallas and see where we’re at. I don’t know 100 per cent. Lower body right now and we’ll just see how he is (on Saturday) and after that.”

**BOLD MOVES:** Arniel gave his blue-line a major makeover, replacing the third pair by inserting Logan Stanley and Dylan Coghlan into the lineup and making Ville Heinola and Colin Miller healthy scratches. Stanley hadn’t played since suffering a mid-body injury on Nov. 9, while Coghlan was making his Jets debut after being parked in the press box for the first 23 games.

Safe to say the moves had mixed results.

Coghlan didn’t look out of place and made a great play early in the game to swat away a loose puck in the Winnipeg crease that was likely going to end up as a Vegas goal. Stanley, however, struggled at times with his reads and his speed, especially late in the opening frame when a Morgan Barron turnover in the Golden Knights zone ended up on the stick of Howden, who blew past a flat-footed Stanley for a breakaway and beat Eric Comrie on the deke.

Winnipeg had been pressing to make it 2-0, but in the blink of an eye it was a 1-1 game.

Still reeling from that turn of events, the Jets allowed an all-too-easy Vegas zone entry that ended up with Ivan Barbashev scoring with 16 seconds left before the intermission. Comrie had stopped the initial one-timer from Dorofeyev, which came off a nice Jack Eichel feed.

“The biggest thing is some fresh legs, just because it’s been such a grind here and just came off the four-in-six and the long travel from Minny,” said Arniel.

“Stan was back, ready to go, and we need him to be a part of our group. And Cogs had played here before, just wanted to get like I said some fresh legs in there. I thought those two were fine. The one goal, but not so much them on that one. It had a lot more to do with our turnover. But liked a lot of what they did. Anytime guys go in they’re a little bit rusty but I thought they got stronger as the game moved along.”

**CALM IN NET** – Seeing him get the start may have come as a surprise, but it speaks to both the faith the Jets have in Comrie and also their desire to ensure Connor Hellebuyck is adequately rested during the season.

Hellebuyck had faced plenty of rubber this week — 44 shots in Minnesota and then 33 in Los Angeles — so it made sense to give him the night off especially with two more divisional games coming up next.

Comrie made several outstanding stops, including a reflexive toe save off a deflected puck in the first period and a great glove denial of a William Karlsson tip late in the second period. Another grab of a Dorofoyev shot with exactly five minutes left in regulation was significant, too.

However, he couldn’t cover for all the faults of his teammates as he suffered the hard-luck loss, his third in a row after starting the season with three consecutive victories.



"I felt okay. I felt like I stuck to my process pretty well. It's one you want to get at least a point in," Comrie said of his game, which involved stopping 26 of 30 shots.

As for the game-winner?

"It's just an unfortunate play," said Comrie. "Karlsson made a good pass (to Howden), made a good play. Maybe I could have read it a little better and got over. It's a good play."

*THIRD PERIOD SWINGS:* With the game up for grabs in the final frame, the Jets were guilty of some puck watching as Eichel fed Barbashev all alone in the slot for his second of the night to make it 3-2 Vegas at 4:43.

Back came the Jets, as Neal Pionk's wrist shot made its way through traffic and beat a surprised Hill at 8:55 to tie it 3-3. It's the fourth of the year for the Jets defenceman, who is in the final year of his contract and on pace for career offensive highs. A classic example of why it's never a bad idea to put pucks on the net.

Ultimately it went for naught as Howden played the role of hockey hero to seal the deal. Namestnikov failed to get to him in time.

"I thought our compete and our battle tonight was really good," said Arniel. "Lots of stretches there where we hemmed them in their end of the rink, had some real good opportunities. We got down and came back. We had some unreal looks there at the end with the goalie out, and their goaltender made some big stops."

*SPECIAL PLAYERS, SPECIAL TEAMS:* No doubt Kyle Connor is looking forward to having Eichel as a teammate, rather than an opponent. Connor, who may be projected to be a linemate of Eichel's on Team USA at the upcoming 4 Nations Face-Off, took two minor penalties in the opening period while trying to chase down Eichel, who can protect the puck as well as anyone in the league.

Fortunately for the 2022 Lady Byng winner, the Jets killed both off.

Winnipeg then got its first chance with the man advantage later in the period, while enjoying the 1-0 lead, but couldn't build on it. Another chance in the middle frame came up empty, too, as did a final attempt late in the third period with Comrie out for an extra attacker and the Jets with a six-on-four advantage.

The Jets began the game with the top power play unit in the league, but it failed to come through on this night.

*KEY PLAY:* Howden's backdoor tap-in late in the third period was the difference.

*THREE STARS:*

Vegas C Brett Howden: 2 goals;

Winnipeg F Cole Perfetti: 2 goals;

Vegas C Ivan Barbashev: 2 goals.

*EXTRA, EXTRA:* Forward David Gustafsson was a healthy scratch for the 23rd time in 24 games.

The Jets flew to Texas following the game and will practice on Saturday to prepare for Sunday afternoon's meeting with the Dallas Stars.

"Going into this road trip. I think that would have been the bare minimum, going .500," said Perfetti.

"And we have a chance to do it, so we've got to make sure that we are ready come Sunday afternoon, and I think we will be I think we know how much that game is going to mean and then, carry the momentum going home."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/11/29/connor-about-to-get-his-due>

***Connor about to get his due  
Underrated and often overlooked Jets sniper a shoo-in for Team USA at 4 Nations Face-Off***

By: Ken Wiebe and Mike McIntyre

LAS VEGAS — Kyle Connor is no stranger to being snubbed.

If you go back to December of 2015, the high-flying forward was somehow left off of Team USA for the World Junior Hockey Championship team that was led by longtime NHL bench boss Ron Wilson and Hall of Fame defenceman Chris Chelios.

That was a swing and a miss by a USA Hockey coaching staff and management group that underestimated what the current Winnipeg Jets' left-winger could have brought to the table and in the end, it may have cost them a gold medal, taking home bronze instead.

One year later, at the end of his dominant freshman season with the University of Michigan Wolverines, Connor was overlooked for the Hobey Baker Award, despite posting far superior statistics (35 goals and 71 points in 38 games) than eventual winner Jimmy Vesey (24 goals, 46 points in 33 games during his senior season at Harvard University).

Never mind the old and somewhat tired narrative that Connor is still an underrated player in some NHL circles.

Although the 17th-overall pick in the 2015 NHL Draft has never craved the spotlight and may not get as much air time as he deserves for his elite finishing ability, teams around the league have known for a long time that he's been one of the most consistent goal scorers since becoming a full-time player in 2017-18.

He's a bonafide sniper, but his profile is expected to get a boost next week when he's officially named to the Team USA roster for the 4 Nations Face-Off.

During a recent conversation, Connor reacted the way he always has when discussing previous disappointments — with a shoulder shrug.

"That's so long ago," said Connor. "You can look throughout my career and there are certain scenarios where I might have gotten shafted or not. It doesn't bother me.

"It's all something to talk about, I guess. You move on."

It's abundantly clear Connor doesn't sweat the small stuff, nor does he sweat what looks to others to be big stuff.

When asked specifically for his thoughts about the prospect of taking part in the upcoming best-on-best event, Connor shed a little light on his thought process.

"I mean, every time you get a chance to play for Team USA, it's pretty cool," he said. "At the same time, it's not the end all, be all. I focus on the day-to-day here and being the best I can be and if I'm lucky enough to be one of those guys, I'm going to cherish it and it's going to be a pretty cool moment."

Connor was being his modest self and that 'if' will soon be replaced by 'when'.

Then the if will shift to whether it will be Vegas Golden Knights star Jack Eichel or Toronto Maple Leafs captain Auston Matthews operating in the centre position with Connor riding shotgun on the left side.

The first edition of best-on-best hockey since the 2016 World Cup of Hockey should produce plenty of storylines and subplots, one of them featuring Connor and goaltender Connor Hellebuyck going up against longtime teammate Josh Morrissey and possibly Mark Scheifele with Team Canada.

It's also a reminder that this event is the appetizer to the main course that isn't far down the road.

"It's a teaser for the Olympics, right?" said Connor, referring to the winter games scheduled for Italy in 2026. "It's such a weird circumstance that we have here, it's two or three games in the middle of February. But it's kind of building up the hype for the Olympics. This is the first step, but the goal would be the Olympics."

Connor entered Friday's tilt against the Golden Knights with a team-leading 13 goals and 28 points in 23 games.

Hellebuyck left a lasting impression with Team USA general manager Bill Guerin earlier this week, making 43 saves against the Minnesota Wild. Guerin caught up with Hellebuyck in the hallway after that game and you can be sure he'll be happy to have him wearing the red, white and blue in February.

After weeks and months of speculation and mock lists, the actual rosters are set to be revealed on Dec. 4, which means we're only a few days away from the navel gazing and hearty debate when it comes to who made the team and who didn't.

That's part of the beauty of the build-up for the tournament which will also include Finland and Sweden.

Tampa Bay Lightning captain Victor Hedman was among the first six players unveiled as part of Team Sweden in late June and he's eager to see how things come together.

“It’s been a while. Obviously a different format, but it’s always fun to play in those games,” Hedman said before facing the Jets earlier this month. “It’s a great feeling to represent your country and to go up against some of the best (players) in the world.

“For us, as Swedes, it’s always been about the camaraderie and the team effort. It’s going to be the same mentality going into this one. It’s a short tournament, so you’ve got to click on all cylinders and role acceptance is going to be big. You’ve got to buy into your role right away and hit the ground running.”

#### *Around the glass*

*Looming Laine:* It’s always special when the Jets host the Montreal Canadiens, with a raucous atmosphere inside Canada Life Centre. The looming Dec. 14 matchup could have some extra sizzle, considering there’s a strong chance Patrik Laine will be playing.

Winnipeg’s second-overall pick from 2016 has yet to make his Habs debut after suffering a knee injury in training camp, but he’s getting closer to a return and is currently on the road with Montreal.

There was a bit of a scare Friday as Laine and Canadiens defenceman Justin Barron — brother of Winnipeg forward Morgan Barron — collided knee-on-knee during a drill.

Fortunately, Laine seemed to shake it off and finished practice. Montreal has seven games left before they travel to Winnipeg, and you hope the hockey gods will be working overtime to ensure Laine can be in the lineup that night.

*Magic Monty:* The St. Louis Blues got the new head coach bump after the arrival of Jim Montgomery, winning their first two games, 5-2 over the New York Rangers and 3-0 over the New Jersey Devils.

Montgomery got some stability after being dismissed by the Boston Bruins, just over one season after leading that team to the best record in modern-day NHL history (65-12-5), inking a five-year deal with the Blues.

Montgomery suited up for the Blues during the 1993-94 season, recording six goals and 20 points in 67 games in what turned out to be his most productive NHL campaign. He also got his second chance in the NHL as an assistant coach with the Blues with Craig Berube for two seasons (2020-21 and 2021-22), so his roots with the organization run deep.

The former Manitoba Moose forward interviewed for the Jets’ head coaching job when Rick Bowness was hired in the summer of 2022, but was hired by the Bruins before Winnipeg’s search was completed.

Montgomery suited up in 67 games with the Moose in the International Hockey League during the 1999-00 season and finished fourth in team scoring, notching 18 goals and 46 points on a team that finished 37-31-0-14.

The Blues are back in action on Saturday against the Philadelphia Flyers in what will be Montgomery’s first home game since taking over from Drew Bannister. Montgomery will then lead his group into a Central Division battle on Tuesday in Winnipeg.

*Boffo Binny:* Winnipeg hockey fans have seen plenty of Jordan Binnington over the years, including the 2019 playoff series in which helped stick a dagger in their Stanley Cup aspirations.

He'll be back in the city next week, wearing the label of the winningest goalie in Blues' franchise history after posting the 32-save shutout against the Devils last Wednesday.

Binnington, who has appeared in 298 games with the organization that chose him in the third round (88th overall) of the 2011 NHL Draft, moved past Mike Liut, who recorded 151 victories during his six seasons between the pipes with the Blues. Rounding out the top-5 goalies on that list are: Jake Allen (148), Curtis Joseph (147) and Grant Fuhr (108).

Binnington became the fourth active goalie to lead their team in career wins, joining Hellebuyck, Andrei Vasilevskiy of the Tampa Bay Lightning and Phillip Grubauer of the Seattle Kraken.

Binnington took the long road to winning the starting job, spending most of the 2013-14 season with the Kalamazoo Wings of the ECHL, where he posted a record of 23-13-3 with a .922 save percentage and 2.35 goals-against average in 40 appearances before graduating to the Chicago Wolves of the AHL the following season.

There's a decent chance Binnington could be the starter for Team Canada at the upcoming 4 Nations, perhaps even staring down Hellebuyck for all the glory.

### **Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-takeaways-perfetti-shows-growth-with-two-goal-effort-against-golden-knights/>

### ***Jets Takeaways: Perfetti shows growth with two-goal effort against Golden Knights***

By Jacob Stoller

Nobody needed a goal more than Cole Perfetti.

The 22-year-old was in the midst of an 11-game goal drought. While he was generating a healthy dose of scoring chances, Perfetti appeared passive throughout his dry spell, and his confidence was in the gutter. Goals aside, he wasn't impacting the game in the way that you expect a top-six forward to. It drew parallels to last spring, when Rick Bowness healthy scratched the Winnipeg Jets 2020 first-round pick several times and dressed him just once in the playoffs.

But on Friday night — as the Jets fell 4-3 to the Vegas Golden Knights — Perfetti got the monkey off his back.

It all started near the midway point of the first period, when Perfetti tipped a point shot from Josh Morrissey to give Winnipeg a 1-0 lead. Goals like that will never make the highlight reel, however, a five-foot-11 forward gaining inside position on a six-foot-three defender like Noah Hanifin is no small feat.

"I figured it was going to be a greasy one, and it was," Perfetti told reporters post-game.

From there, the pep was back in his step.

He was assertive as he carried the puck through the neutral zone, generating a handful of entries that led to Winnipeg sustaining offensive zone time. He didn't become invisible in a tight-checking affair against the NHL's heaviest team, delivering three hits of his own. And he was in the right place at the right time for his second goal of the game, capitalizing on a rebound via a rush chance from Morrissey to tie the game up at two.

"Sometimes, the puck luck kind of goes your way. I mean, you run that route in the last 10 games, nothing (comes) to you. But then tonight, you're feeling yourself, and the puck comes right to you, and then you don't even think twice, and you don't dust it, and it goes in," he said.

Not to hyper-focus on the goals — as mentioned, they weren't the only things that made him noticeable — but the way in which Perfetti lit the red lamp was encouraging. Even amidst the poor puck luck, Perfetti was still driving hard to the slot — something that young, undersized forwards struggle with in their formative years — which was what created the first goal. Perfetti's not the fastest skater, and creating in transition has never been a strong suit of his. But he leveraged his strengths and, on top of hustling down the ice and filling a lane, positioned himself perfectly to benefit from a rebound.

Those goals exemplified growth.

And the timing of that kind of effort couldn't have been better for a Jets team reeling from injuries. Dylan Samberg broke his foot on Monday. Mark Scheifele is clearly battling something, having deferred all faceoff responsibilities to Gabriel Vialdi over the last few games. And Nikolaj Ehlers left Friday's game with what looked to be an ankle injury (Arniel says he's day-to-day).

Perfetti was vaulted up to the first power-play unit after Ehlers left the game, and chances are that will continue if the speedy Danish forward misses Sunday's contest against the Dallas Stars.

The table is set for Perfetti to build on this game and prove he can be a driver — not just a passenger.

#### *New-Look Bottom Pair*

Scott Arniel opted to scratch Ville Heinola and Colin Miller and swap in Logan Stanley and Dylan Coghlan on the bottom pair.

In the midst of such a gruelling road trip, Arniel said the move was motivated by a desire to get fresh legs in the lineup.

For someone who was playing in his first NHL game since April, Coghlan looked pretty solid. The 26-year-old made a clutch stick check on William Karlsson to nullify a grade-A scoring chance in the first period, generated six shot attempts and even took some reps on the second power-play unit.

Stanley had been sidelined since Nov. 9th with what Arniel characterized as a "mid-body" injury.

While Heinola and Miller looked excellent in their first two games together, chances are Stanley will still be rotating in-and-out on that bottom pair. Especially given Arniel's post-game comments.

“We need him to be a part of our group,” Arniel said of the hulking six-foot-seven defencemen.

### *Other Thoughts*

- Based on Arniel’s post-game comments, Ehlers won’t return back to Winnipeg and will join the team en route to Dallas. So that’s a good sign. While we just lauded Perfetti’s chance to prove he can be a driver, a second line sans Ehlers — who has recorded 25 points in 24 games — would be a huge blow for the Jets. His rush entry and chance that led to Perfetti’s goal tonight was a perfect example of what makes Ehlers so beloved in this market. His ability to make something out of nothing.

“It’s a one-on-one, and he puts it through the defender, and then creates so much space for the speed that he finds a late guy coming through,” Perfetti said as he praised Ehlers’ individual skillset.

- If Ehlers can’t go on Sunday, I expect Alex Lafallo to slot in alongside Vladislav Namestnikov and Perfetti. Lafallo took shifts with those two after Ehlers was hurt, and his puck-retrieval abilities would complement the two offensive creators well.

- The Jets’ second pairing needs a face-lift. Since Samberg got hurt, the Jets’ second pairing of Haydn Fleury and Neal Pionk hasn’t been very inspiring. One ought to wonder if Arniel is considering experimenting with a Heinola-Pionk pairing. No coach loves having one, let alone two, undersized pairings in your top four, but if it means both Heinola and Stanley can play — as opposed to the two rotating — it could be worth a shot.

### **Las Vegas Review Journal**

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/sports/goldenknights/howdens-late-goal-lifts-knights-past-league-leading-jets-3220746/>

### ***3 takeaways: Howden, Karlsson connect on goal to beat Jets***

By Danny Webster Las Vegas Review-Journal

Brett Howden had the easy part of the assignment. He just had to find the soft spot in the offensive zone and put the puck in the net.

It was William Karlsson who had to fire a backhand pass through three Winnipeg Jets players to land at the tape of Howden’s stick for the game-winning goal.

That connection with 4:05 left gave the Golden Knights a 4-3 win over the Jets on Friday at T-Mobile Arena.

Karlsson, playing in his 700th NHL game, picked up the primary assist by threading the needle from the right faceoff with a backhand to a cutting Howden for the tap-in deflection.

“I had a lot of ice to skate into,” Karlsson said when entering the neutral zone. “I had (Alexander Holtz) on the right side, drove the net and opened up that seam. I knew Howie was on my left. I was hoping he was there, and he was.”

The goal was Howden's second of the night and a career-high 10th of the season to help the Knights (15-6-3) get back on the winning track after securing seven of 10 points on a season-long five-game road trip.

Left wing Ivan Barbashev also scored twice, and center Jack Eichel had two assists to reach 36 points in 24 games. Goaltender Adin Hill finished with 22 saves.

"I had the easy job just trying to find the open ice, just trying to find a quiet area," Howden said. "Karly's the one that makes the play. It was pretty easy for me to put it into an empty net."

The Jets (18-6-0) still have the best record in the NHL despite their third regulation loss in four games, but Winnipeg wasn't at full strength in this game.

It wasn't due to injury. It was the goalie choice. The Jets started backup Eric Comrie instead of reigning Vezina Trophy winner Connor Hellebuyck.

That decision was likely due to the Jets playing two upcoming division games — at Dallas on Sunday and against St. Louis on Tuesday. Comrie played well with 26 saves, but the Knights couldn't get the satisfaction of beating the Jets at their absolute peak.

They won't complain about this win, and there should be no need to.

The Knights had an answer each time against the Jets. Winnipeg center Cole Perfetti scored twice, including the first goal of the game, but Howden tied it 1-1 at 18:13 after forcing a turnover and using his speed to crash the net.

Barbashev gave the Knights a first-period lead with 16 seconds left on a shot while lying on his stomach.

Perfetti tied it at 14:28 of the second period, but the Knights had the response again with Barbashev finishing a behind-the-back pass from Eichel 4:43 into the third for the 3-2 lead.

Howden's winner came after Winnipeg defenseman Neal Pionk tied it at 8:55.

"I think they brought back a sense of purpose," coach Bruce Cassidy said of his group going 3-1-1 on the road trip. "Taking care of business. That's what we've always been about."

Just like the Knights had hardly any time for rest on the road, there won't be any coming at home. They play the second leg of a back-to-back Saturday against the Utah Hockey Club in the final meeting between the teams this season.

It may not have been quite the signature win the Knights were hoping for, but a win like that should energize a group for another game in 24 hours.

"The boys have done a tremendous job," Karlsson said. "I think we looked pretty good today. Hopefully we come out looking the same tomorrow."

Three takeaways from the win:

1. *Domination on the draw*



The Knights had no problem winning battles in the faceoff circle. They went 33-15 when the puck dropped, with Karlsson going 11 for 13 and center Tomas Hertl finishing 11 for 12.

Three of Karlsson's faceoff wins came on the penalty kill. The Knights killed both of Winnipeg's power plays.

Faceoffs don't normally dictate the pace of the game, but the Knights won crucial draws to ensure they controlled the action.

### *2. Holtz stands out*

Holtz continues to search for a home in the lineup. What might be clear is Karlsson is the right center for him.

Holtz has played his best when Karlsson is his center, and it showed Friday. Though he had no points and just one shot, he forced a turnover in the first that led to a dangerous chance for Karlsson in front.

His linemates credited him for his presence of mind to draw the Winnipeg defenders away from Howden on his game-winning goal.

The good has come with the bad for Holtz this season, but the little things showed up in this game. That's how a young player can continue to build trust with his coaching staff and teammates.

### *3. Wild finish*

The Knights had to fight off a hectic end to secure the two points.

Defenseman Brayden McNabb was called for tripping with 2:44 remaining to give the Jets a power play. Comrie was pulled for the extra attacker with 25 seconds left.

The Knights killed the short six-on-four, then shut down some transition chances to prevent the tying goal.

Shorthanded situations late in games have been the Knights' Achilles' heel. The penalty kill, given the situation, came up with the biggest sequence of the game.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/opponents-and-the-road-catching-up-to-winnipeg-jets>

### ***Opponents and the road catching up to Winnipeg Jets***

By Paul Friesen

For just the second time this season the Winnipeg Jets have dropped back-to-back games, not enough to set off alarm bells on its own.

But in the bigger picture the Jets have now lost five of their last eight, falling to the rest of the NHL pack after a record-breaking, 15-1 start.

Don't look now, but the division-rival Minnesota Wild are just two points behind the Jets with a game in hand, while Vegas is just three back.

The league's other front-runners aren't the only things catching up to the Jets.

It appears the road is, too.

Friday's 4-3 loss in Vegas was the eighth road game in the Jets' last nine, and Sunday afternoon in Dallas they'll make it nine out of 10 living out of suitcases, catching flights and busing to the rink.

"We battled," forward Cole Perfetti told reporters on the scene in Las Vegas. "The effort was definitely there. It's been a grind of a road trip... you play that strong and everyone's working really, really hard – it sucks when you don't get the results you want."

Perfetti broke out of an 11-game scoring slump with two goals and his team got a strong performance from backup goalie Eric Comrie.

But the Jets were victimized by coverage breakdowns and a bad giveaway, with a Manitoban playing a prominent role for the Golden Knights.

No, not Winnipeg's Mark Stone. He remains on injured reserve.

Oakbank product Brett Howden scored his second goal of the game to break a 3-3 tie with 4:05 to go and the Knights held off a late Jets charge that included a power play with a pulled Comrie and a two-man edge for half of it.

"Our compete and our battle was really good," head coach Scott Arniel said. "Lots of stretches there where we hemmed them in their end of the rink, had some real good opportunities. We got down and came back.

"Just three rush goals against. And this is one of the best rush teams in the league. And our reads off those rushes certainly need to be a little bit better."

As improved as the Jets were from two nights earlier in Los Angeles, they still broke down one too many times, Howden left unchecked for a far-too-easy, back-door tap-in that left Comrie no chance.

"I'm not taking anything away from their ability to make plays," Arniel said. "But we had all our numbers there. We had everybody there, we just picked up the wrong people and easy tap-in."

Of course the Jets aren't alone in having tough stretches in their schedule.

Vegas was coming off its own lengthy road trip, making this a fairly even game. The Knights out-shot Winnipeg, 30-25, 14-6 in a first period in which the Jets had to kill off a pair of Kyle Connor minor penalties.

As Arniel said, not the way you want to start off a road game.

While they killed off both, the Jets were still down 2-1 after one on Howden's first and the first of two from Ivan Barbashev.

Howden went the length of the ice after stealing a drop-pass from Morgan Barron, catching Jets defenceman Logan Stanley flat-footed and going in all alone to beat Comrie.

Stanley was back in the lineup for the first time in three weeks, paired with former Golden Knight Dylan Coghlan in his first game as a Jet.

The duo replaced Ville Heinola and Colin Miller, after Heinola had played his first two games of the season.

The reason: fresh legs, Arniel said.

“It’s been such a grind here and (we) just came off the four-in-six and the long travel from Minny,” the coach explained. “Stan was back, ready to go, and we need him to be a part of our group. And Cogs had played here before... those two were fine. Anytime guys go in they’re a little bit rusty but they got stronger as the game moved along.”

Winnipeg’s other goal came from defenceman Neal Pionk, his wrist shot through traffic making it 3-3 midway through the third period.

All signs pointed the Jets’ way when they were first on the board. In 10 previous games scoring first, they had yet to lose

Perfetti’s deflection of a Josh Morrissey wrist shot came some seven minutes into the game.

“It felt really good,” Perfetti said of ending his slump. “It just hit my stick... what I figured it was going to be like after the drought. I figured it was going to be a greasy one, and it was.”

The Knights got that one back, and more, late in the first.

Howden’s first came with 1:47 to go, and if that wasn’t a bad enough time for the Jets to give one up, they did it again with 16 seconds left in the period, Barbashev using a rebound to cap a Vegas rush through a leaky Winnipeg defence.

The 2-1 score held up until the latter part of the second, when Perfetti snapped a rebound past Adin Hill for his sixth of the year.

Some solid work from Comrie kept it deadlocked at two going into the third.

Comrie got the call because Arniel wanted to save Connor Hellebuyck for Sunday’s divisional game against Dallas.

A .500 record on this season-high, six-game trip will be on the line, as the Jets are just 2-3.

“Going into this road trip, that would have been the bare minimum,” Perfetti said. “And we have a chance to do it. So we’ve got to make sure that we are ready come Sunday afternoon, and I think we will be. We know how much that game is going to mean and then carry the momentum going home.”

#### *Ehlers goes down*

The Jets lost winger Nik Ehlers to what appeared to be a foot injury in the second period.

“Not good, obviously,” Arniel said. “We’ll just wait and see and get him looked at. We’ll get to Dallas and see where we’re at. I don’t know 100%.”

### *Odds and ends*

The league’s top two power plays were stymied in Vegas, the Jets on three tries, the Knights on two ... Connor’s two penalties gives him a whopping 15 minutes already this season, nine more than he had all of last year ... After neither recorded a shot on goal in L.A., Connor had one in Vegas, Mark Scheifele two. Perfetti, Gabriel Vilardi and Mason Appleton led the team with three each ... Winnipeg was manhandled in the faceoff circle by the Knights, who won 69% of the draws. Vilardi and Adam Lowry won four of 14, each ... Morrissey collected a pair of assists to push his point total to 22 in 24 games ... After Dallas on Sunday the Jets are home for just one game, against St. Louis on Tuesday, before hitting the road for two more.