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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-ehlers-three-point-night-leads-jets-past-sens>

Three things - Ehlers three point night leads Jets past Sens Ehlers, Scheifele and Connor with multi-point nights in win over Ottawa

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Nikolaj Ehlers had three points as the Winnipeg Jets beat the Ottawa Senators 4-2 on Saturday at Canada Life Centre. Mark Scheifele (1G, 1A) and Kyle Connor (1G, 1A) also had multi-point nights for the Jets. Connor has 9G, 11A for 20 points in the month of December. Only three other players have 20-plus points this month: Nathan MacKinnon (7-17—24 in 12 GP), Leon Draisaitl (7-14—21 in 11 GP) and Brayden Point (8-13—21 in 10 GP). Connor Hellebuyck made 33 saves for his league leading 23rd win of the season, the Jets will host Nashville on Monday.

USUAL SUSPECTS

Ottawa kept the Jets top line off the scoresheet for almost 33 minutes on Saturday. Winnipeg was down 2-0 when Mark Scheifele spotted Kyle Connor in the high slot, Connor delivered a low shot past Mads Sogard to cut the deficit to one at 12:46.

At 15:01, it was Nikolaj Ehlers with some magic, as he hit Scheifele with a nice pass at the Sens blueline and Scheifele beat Sogard with a backhand to tie the game at two. Scheifele now has 10 goals in the month of December.

"It's the Christmas month so you gotta enjoy it. But it's been great obviously," said Scheifele.

"Just happy to play with the guys that I play with, they're absolutely fantastic and we just have to keep it going."

In the third period, the Jets went to the power play Nikolaj Ehlers found Gabe Vilardi at the far post and the Jets scored their league leading 37th power play goal.

Ehlers then got his second goal in three games after taking a beautiful pass from Logan Stanley in the neutral zone, hit the Sens blueline and cut into the middle before beating Sogard low blocker side to make it 4-2.

SENS PP

The Sens were leading 1-0 in the second period when Gabe Vilardo caught Jake Sanderson in the face with a high stick and was given a double minor. 1:30 in the power play, Ridley Grieg redirected a Thomas Chabot point shot past Connor Hellebuyck to make it 2-0 at 4:03. It was the first time since November 18 that Winnipeg had allowed two power play goals in a game.

DEFENSIVE SHUFFLE

With Logan Stanley playing his first game since December 18, Jets head coach Scott Arniel said that he was going to lean heavily on his top three defencemen against the Senators. True to his word, Josh Morrissey (25:48), Neal Pionk (22:58) and Dylan DeMelo (22:04) led the way in ice time for the Jets defencemen tonight. Stanley (19:14) looked pretty solid in his return to the lineup.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2024/12/28/winnipeg-jets-ottawa-senators-game-recap/>

Ehlers, Scheifele, Connor Lead Winnipeg Jets to 4-2 Win Over Ottawa Senators

By Jim Bender, The Canadian Press

Nikolaj Ehlers on Jets' road trip, red-hot power play

Nikolaj Ehlers scored a goal and had two assists to lead the Winnipeg Jets to a 4-2 victory over the Ottawa Senators on Saturday.

Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor each had a goal and an assist and Gabe Vilardi contributed a power-play goal for Winnipeg (26-10-1).

Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck made 33 saves at Canada Life Centre.

Ridley Greig and Tim Stutzle both scored power play goals and Mads Sogaard stopped 19 shots for Ottawa (18-5-2).

Ehlers scored at 11:19 of the third period and assisted on Vilardi's at 9:47 for the go-ahead goal.

Ottawa led 2-0 early in the second period, but Winnipeg countered with two goals just two minutes 15 seconds apart to draw even.

Scheifele set up Connor at 12:46 and then Ehlers sent Scheifele in alone on Sogaard to beat the Senators' goalie with a backhand shot at 15:01.

Connor's goal extended his point streak to six games.

Ottawa's Greig tipped a Thomas Chabot point shot past a screened Hellebuyck at 4:03 of the second period. Stutzle converted a Drake Batherson pass at 10:40 of the first.

Takeaways

Jets: After a slow start, Winnipeg's top line came to life with three goals, including on scored on a power play.

Senators: Jumped on the Jets early for a lead, but Hellebuyck held the Sens off after that.

Key moment

Ehlers' goal scored on a wrist shot less than a minute and a half after Vilardi gave the hosts the lead helped seal the victory.

Key stat

Hellebuyck's 33 saves, including 17 in the third period.

Up next

The Jets host the Nashville Predators on Monday.

The Senators visit the Minnesota Wild on Sunday.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/ottawa-senators-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-december-28>

***Jets score 4 straight goals, rally past Senators for 3rd win in row
Ehlers has 3 points, Hellebuyck makes 33 saves for Winnipeg***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Nikolaj Ehlers had a goal and two assists, and the Winnipeg Jets scored four straight goals to come back to win 4-2 against the Ottawa Senators at Canada Life Centre on Saturday.

“That’s one of the things where this group has really grown over the last few years, is that as we get down two, we don’t panic, we don’t start cheating, we don’t start trying to do things that are away from sort of our structure,” Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. “We kind of stick to what we do best, and our offense always comes from that.”

Ehlers’ one-touch pass set up Gabriel Vilardi’s go-ahead goal on the power play at 9:47 of the third period to give the Jets a 3-2 lead.

“Our power play, when we play it the right way and play it fast, get pucks to the net and get some chaos going, that’s when we’re at our best,” Ehlers said. “When we work it around slow, it’s not very good. ... I think with the skill that we have on both our power plays, things will open up once you get that chaos going.”

Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele each had a goal and an assist for the Jets (26-10-1), who have won three straight and have points in seven of eight (6-1-1). Connor Hellebuyck made 33 saves.

“We didn’t try to chase it, I think that was the biggest thing,” Scheifele said. “When we got down 2-0, there was still lots of game left. Sometimes you can go and try to chase offense, but we just tried to stick to our game. We knew that if we did the right things over and over, good things would happen. It showed.”

Tim Stutzle, and Ridly Greig scored for the Senators (18-15-2), who lost a second game after winning six straight. Mads Sogaard made 19 saves.

“I thought we played really well,” Ottawa defenseman Thomas Chabot said. “Honestly, we were facing, what, the best team in the League? And obviously we made a few mistakes and they’re probably most likely going to end up in the back of your net, unfortunately. So that’s something we got to take away from this game and make sure that when we get to Minnesota tomorrow night, we make sure that we’re better at that.”

Stutzle made it 1-0 Senators at 10:40 of the first period, scoring on the power play on a cross-slot setup by Drake Batherson.

“I think [Winnipeg] came out really hard, and obviously the power play got us going,” Stutzle said. “I think there’s some stretches we maybe want back, but in the end, I think we just gotta keep playing the way we want to play, keep playing simple and I think good things will happen.”

Greig made it 2-0 when he tipped Chabot's point shot on the power play at 4:03 of the second period.

"I thought in the first period we didn't give them any time to breathe out there [or] any chances to make plays," Chabot said. "I thought in the second we got away from that a little bit, and they took advantage of it. They made some nice plays, they got some momentum, and their top players started feeling good."

Connor cut it to 2-1 at 12:46 when Scheifele circled behind the net and found him for a quick shot from the high slot.

"We just tried to stay [with] what we were doing, get Ottawa to make a mistake, and they did," Arniel said. "We capitalized, and once we got the first, the crowd got into it, it kind of changed our bench, which got going, and we had some guys who didn't play a whole lot with all the power plays on both sides, so it really got us back into kind of rhythm and we got going, and it was a really solid second."

Scheifele scored with a move to the backhand on a breakaway at 15:01, tying the game 2-2.

Just 1:32 after Vilardi's go-ahead goal, Ehlers pushed it to 4-2 when he cut to the middle on the rush and scored with a wrist shot that beat Sogaard under his blocker at 11:19.

"They got a dangerous team that can score on the rush," Ottawa coach Travis Green said. "I thought we lost our forecheck a few times which allowed them to get some momentum off the rush, which all good players want. But anytime you go on the road and outshoot a team 35-23, you've done some good things. But that's a tough loss."

NOTES: Connor has 13 points (six goals, seven assists) on a six-game point streak. ... Claude Giroux's assist on Greig's goal is his 400th career power-play point. ... Stutzle (12 goals, 28 assists in 34 games) became the first Senators player since Matt Duchene (35 games in 2018-19) to reach 40 points in 35 games or fewer in a season. ... Scheifele has 10 points (six goals, four assists) in his past five games. His 10 goals in December tied with Edmonton Oilers forward Zach Hyman for the most among all skaters. ... The Jets had their third multigoal comeback win of the season. Only the Seattle Kraken (five) and Vegas Golden Knights (four) have more.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/12/28/ehlers-sparks-jets-to-comeback-win-over-sens>

Ehlers sparks Jets to comeback win over Sens

By: Mike McIntyre

Nikolaj Ehlers is a hockey unicorn, with a special mix of speed and skill that can bring fans — and teammates — out of their seats.

That was certainly the case on Saturday night at Canada Life Centre, where the guy known as "Fly" took over in the third period and played a starring role in a 4-2 victory over the Ottawa Senators.

Ehlers, playing in his fourth game since returning from a three-week injury absence, set up Gabe Vilardi's go-ahead power-play goal with just over 10 minutes left in regulation, then found the back of the net 92 seconds later to give his group some valuable insurance.

Just like that, the Jets had completed the comeback after falling into an early 2-0 deficit in the first game back after the Christmas break.

"I think that's one of the things where this group has really grown over the last few years, is that as we get down two we don't panic, we don't start cheating, we don't start trying to do things that are away from sort of our structure," said Jets coach Scott Arniel.

"We kind of stick to what we do best, and our offence always comes from that."

Ehlers, a pending unrestricted free agent after this season, is now up to 30 points, including 11 goals, in 28 games, which puts the 28-year-old Dane on pace to shatter his career-best of 64 points set back in the 2016-17 season.

"He's a guy that, when the opposition defence see him coming, they're not really keen on keeping a tight gap. They don't want to get embarrassed by getting beat wide," Arniel said of the threat Ehlers poses on the rush, which was evident on his goal.

"When he does it enough, when he does it consistently, exactly. All of a sudden, the sea parted there and he had the big wide open ice to get inside the blue line and get even closer to the goalie. His speed is a weapon and when he uses it, he's so effective."

Winnipeg improves to 26-10-1, which puts them alone on top the NHL standings in terms of points (and second overall to Vegas in terms of point percentage). Ottawa, which began the night having won six of its last seven, falls to 18-15-2.

Let's break this one down further:

GETTING CLOSER TO ANOTHER MILESTONE: There are only 40 NHL goaltenders to hit the elusive 300-win mark, but that's going to soon expand as Connor Hellebuyck recorded career win No. 298.

The reigning Vezina Trophy winner seemed to be fighting the puck a bit early in the game, including a few occasions where his trademark "big and boring" style was a bit more "fish out of water" in the crease. Chalk that up to the four-day holiday hiatus between games.

But after Tim Stutzle (10:40 of the first period) and Ridly Greig (4:03 of the second period) both scored on the power play to give the visitors a two-goal lead by the 4:03 mark of the second period, Hellebuyck was unbeatable.

He finished the game with 33 saves on 35 shots, improving his personal record to 23-5-1, lowering his league-leading goals-against-average to 2.06 and upping his league-leading save percentage to .928.

"It's one of those games where you feel like you have a chance to win the whole game. I think we just had some good looks, but their goalie made some huge saves for them," Stutzle told reporters.

“Obviously, he’s a great goalie. So we got to do a better job getting in front of him and don’t give him those easy saves.”

Of the 40 goalies with at least 300 wins, only 29 of them have at least 40 shutouts. Hellebuyck, with 41 already, will become just the 30th member of that club.

Who knows where the 31-year-old will ultimately end up on the all-time lists, considering he’s just in the first year of a seven-year contract extension with the Jets.

DYNAMIC DUO: Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor are engaged in a friendly competition that is certainly benefiting the entire organization. The dynamic duo began the night tied for the team scoring lead with 21 goals — the only set of teammates around the league to each have at least 20 — and finished it deadlocked once again at 22.

Scheifele played a major helping hand in Connor’s tally against the Senators, with a terrific pass that came a few seconds after he banked the puck off the boards — to himself — in order to evade an Ottawa defenceman. The goal, at 12:46 of the second period, cut Winnipeg’s deficit in half.

“I was going to shoot it and then it kind of hit their stick. It got in the lane. But I just wanted to keep the possession going,” Scheifele explained of his slick play.

“KC does what he does best and got open. He’s obviously fantastic, and I’m always happy to find KC in the slot.”

Connor’s solo perch atop on the goal-scoring leaderboard lasted just 2:15, as Scheifele was sprung on a breakaway by Ehlers and beat Ottawa goaltender Mads Sogaard with a backhand — his 10th goal in 13 December games.

“It’s the Christmas month, so you’ve got to enjoy it,” said Scheifele. “But it’s been great, obviously. Just happy to play with the guys I play with; they are just absolutely fantastic.”

Just like that, the game was tied and Winnipeg had all the momentum.

“We didn’t try to chase it. I think that was the biggest thing,” said Scheifele. “When we got down 2-0, there was still lots of game left. Sometimes you can go and try to chase offence, but we just tried to stick to our game. We knew that if we did the right things over and over, good things would happen. It showed.”

SPECIAL TEAMS: Although they got stung for a pair of early power-play goals against, the Jets killed two subsequent penalties — one when they were down 2-0, and another early in the third period when it was a 2-2 game.

“At the end of the day it’s all about timing,” said Arniel. “And the timing for us, we got a kill at the right time in the third period and that was the big difference.”

Same goes for Winnipeg’s power play, which didn’t do much on the first two attempts but came through with Vilardi’s game-winner in the third.

“I knew I needed to get it there quick,” Ehlers said of finding Vilardi on the backdoor for the tap-in. “He’s unbelievable in front of the net, so I told him that it was coming and he was ready for it. So it worked out.”

Vilardi, who has found a home on that top line with Scheifele and Connor, is now up to 15 goals.

BLUE-LINE SHUFFLE: With Haydn Fleury (lower-body, week-to-week) joining Dylan Samberg (broken foot, has resumed skating) on the injured list, Arniel shuffled up his blue-line by moving Neal Pionk to his off-side on the second pair and elevating Colin Miller.

Logan Stanley — who was on for both power-play goals against and had a rough night — and Ville Heinola — who took the third period tripping penalty and didn’t see the ice much after that — were the third pairing. Dylan Coghlan, called up on Friday from the Manitoba Moose, was the lone healthy scratch on the blue-line but should work his way into game action soon. Forward David Gustafsson was the other player parked in the press box.

At the end of the game, Josh Morrissey (25:48), Pionk (22:58) and Dylan DeMelo (22:04) all logged big minutes as the clear-cut top three, with Stanley (19:14), Miller (13:36) and Heinola (12:59) behind them.

COOKING AT HOME: The Jets are a sizzling 13-3-1 at Canada Life Centre, where they’re really going to get the chance to make themselves comfortable in the coming weeks.

Saturday’s game began a stretch where they’ll play 10 of 11 games at the downtown rink, and 14 of the next 20 leading into the 4 Nations Face-Off break in early February.

“We love playing at home, it seems. But it’s no surprise. We’ve got great fans,” said Ehlers. “The schedule has been a little crazy. It was nice with a little break. And it’s going to be nice to be at home for a little bit. So we’re excited.”

A crowd of 14,734 took this one in, which is just under 500 people short of what would have been a third straight sellout and sixth of the season.

Winnipeg returns to action on Monday night when they host the Nashville Predators.

KEY PLAY: A sweet Nikolaj Ehlers feed to Gabe Vilardi led to the go-ahead near the midway mark of the third period.

THREE STARS: 1. Winnipeg left-winger Nikolaj Ehlers: one goal, two assists; 2. Winnipeg centre Mark Scheifele: one goal, one assist; 3. Winnipeg left-winger Kyle Connor: one goal, one assist.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/jets-storm-back-to-beat-senators-for-third-straight-win>

Jets storm back to beat Senators for third straight win

By Paul Friesen

If in the first you don’t succeed, try again in the second and third.

Nikolaj Ehlers on Jets' road trip, red-hot power play

Article content

That formula worked for the Winnipeg Jets at home against Ottawa on Saturday.

Coming off the Christmas break, the Jets spotted the Senators the first two goals before storming back with four in a row in a 4-2 win over the Senators.

Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele scored second-period goals to tie it, Gabe Vilardi and Nik Ehlers struck in the third to win it, Vilardi's coming on the power play.

"That's one of the things where this group has really grown over the last few years," head coach Scott Arniel said. "As we get down two we don't panic, we don't start cheating, we don't start trying to do things that are away from our structure. We stick to what we do best, and our offence always comes from that."

"We got after them," is how Ehlers put it. "We started well, and then they took over in the first period. From then on, we deserved to win this game. We played well."

With a third straight win, the Jets move to 26-10-1, while the Senators fall to 18-15-2.

The Jets' first lead came when Ehlers set up Vilardi with a one-timer pass to the slot on the power play midway through the third, a play the two talked about on the previous shift.

"I knew I needed to get it there quick," Ehlers said. "He's unbelievable in front of the net, so I told him that it was coming and he was ready for it."

Ehlers extended the lead less than two minutes later, cutting to the middle and firing a wrist shot past Mads Sogaard, who was filling in for Ottawa's top two goalies, both of whom were injured.

In the Winnipeg net, Connor Hellebuyck picked up his league-leading 23rd win of the season, as his team was outshot, 35-23.

"Their goalie made some huge saves for them," Senators forward Tim Stutzle said. "He's a great goalie. So we've got to do a better job getting in front of him and don't give him those easy saves."

The only damage done in the first was by the Sens on a power play, Stutzle burying a pretty pass from Drake Batherson.

Another power-play goal, this one a tip by Ridly Greig early in the second, made it 2-0 Ottawa.

The Jets were generating nothing of their own in the second, when Scheifele took over.

Passing to himself off the end boards, Scheifele skated behind the Ottawa net and fed Connor in the slot for his 22nd of the year.

Barely two minutes later, No. 55 jumped off the bench, took a tip-pass from Ehlers, who was about to get off the ice, went in on Sogaard, bobbled the puck for a moment then beat him with a backhand for his 22nd.

“I was actually pretty pissed at myself that I bobbled it,” Scheifele said. “I don’t think the goalie was expecting a little chip backhand short side, so sometimes you have to be lucky.

“I wouldn’t be where I was without the guys who dished it to me.”

It was Scheifele’s 10th goal in 13 games in December.

“It’s the Christmas month,” he said. “So you’ve got to enjoy it. But it’s been great, obviously. Just happy to play with the guys I play with. They are just absolutely fantastic.”

Like that, the Jets had life.

“He does that pretty often,” Ehlers said. “So it’s not a surprise to us in this room.”

Some magic from Connor early in the third — he set up Vlad Namestnikov on a shorthanded rush — nearly gave the Jets their first lead, but Namestnikov hit the goal post.

Up next, a couple of Central Division battles on back-to-back nights. The seventh-place Nashville Predators pay a visit on Monday, followed by a one-game trip to third-place Colorado on New Year’s Eve.

After that: Eight straight home games to kick off 2025.

With their record on home ice now 13-3-1, January should see this team hold onto its overall NHL points lead, if not extend it.

“We love playing at home, it seems,” Ehlers said. “But it’s no surprise. We’ve got great fans. The schedule has been a little crazy. It was nice with a little break. And it’s going to be nice to be at home for a little bit. We’re excited.”

Ottawa Citizen

<https://ottawacitizen.com/ottawa-senators/takeaways-ottawa-senators-miss-injured-linus-ullmark-in-loss-to-winnipeg-jets>

TAKEAWAYS: Ottawa Senators miss injured Linus Ullmark in loss to Winnipeg Jets

By Tim Baines

For half a game, the Ottawa Senators did just fine without injured goalie Linus Ullmark.

It didn’t last.

Helped by a couple of soft goals that should have been stopped by Ullmark’s replacement Mads Sogaard, the Winnipeg Jets, the National Hockey League’s top team, dumped the Senators 4-2.

“We played a good game, but it wasn’t good enough. I’m not happy we lost,” Senators coach Travis Green told TSN 1200’s Gord Wilson. “I’m not taking a lot of positives out of it. We need to be a little better in certain areas.”

"It's one of those games where you feel like you had a chance to win the whole game," Senators centre Tim Stutzle, who scored one of the Ottawa goals," said.

Ullmark, whose back tightened up during Ottawa's 3-1 loss to Edmonton Dec. 22, didn't make the road trip with the Senators. He had been spectacular in the past few weeks. In his absence, Ottawa's netminders are going to need to step up ... and be better.

Both Ottawa goals came on the power play.

Ottawa took a 2-0 lead and looked good doing it. But the Jets, especially their top line of Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor and Gabriel Vilardi, came on strong.

The Senators opened the scoring with 9:20 left in the first period on a cross-crease pass from Drake Batherson to Stutzle.

Sogaard was tested late in the period with sustained pressure by the Jets.

Vilardi took a dumb double-minor penalty for high sticking 2:33 into the second period and Ottawa capitalized, taking a 2-0 lead when Thomas Chabot's shot from the point was deflected into the net by Ridly Greig.

The Jets made it 2-1 with 7:14 left in the period on a one-timer by Connor.

With 4:59 left in the second, Scheifele fought off a backcheck to backhand the puck past Sogaard.

After Sogaard took a tripping penalty 9:07 into the third period, the Jets made the Senators pay. After a beautiful tic-tac-toe play, Vilardi banged a shot into the net on the power play.

Winnipeg took a two-goal lead with 8:41 left, when Nikolaj Ehlers beat Sogaard stick side after some bad defensive play by Ottawa.

"We were playing the best team in the league," Chabot said. "We made a few mistakes, those are most likely to end up in the back of your net, unfortunately.

"Everybody's pissed off we lost. Twenty-four hours later we get a chance to play again and face another good team. So, we move on and get ready for Sunday."

A SHOW STOPPER: Sogaard's stats with Belleville of the American Hockey League look rather meh; he had a 0-3-1 record in six appearances with a 3.24 goals-against average and .877 save percentage.

In his only NHL appearance of the season heading into Saturday, he allowed four goals in a bit more than half a game in Ottawa's 8-7 win over the Los Angeles Kings.

Ottawa outshot Winnipeg 34-23. Sogaard made some good saves, but he was outplayed by Winnipeg's Connor Hellebuyck.

"I thought he was fine," Green said. "It's easy to critique a goalie when you lose, I'm not going to do that."

ROADIES: Remember a year ago when the Senators did a big belly flop in December, losing six straight at one point, with head coach D.J. Smith fired in the midst of the skid?

Yeah, despite Saturday's defeat, it's been a different story this December as Ottawa tries to chase down a playoff spot in the NHL's Eastern Conference.

The Senators play Game 6 of their nine-game road swing Sunday in Minnesota.

TURN UP THE POWER: The Senators went into the game ranked eighth in the NHL on the power play (23.7-per-cent conversion rate), but had been struggling. They went 2-for-4 with the man advantage Saturday.

"I like that they scored, it's been a long time coming," Green said. "But we had to find a goal 5-on-5."

"We wanted to get another one when it was 2-2 and we had another power play," Stutzle said.