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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-hellebuyck-records-42nd-career-shutout>

Three things - Hellebuyck records 42nd career shutout Hellebuyck makes 22 saves, DeMelo scores GWG in 3-0 win

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – Connor Hellebuyck recorded his fifth shutout of the season as the Winnipeg Jets blanked the Nashville Predators 3-0 at Canada Life Centre. The Jets have won four straight and improved to 27-10-1 on the season. Gabe Vilardi scored two power play goals and Dylan DeMelo scored had his first of the season for the Jets who will travel to Denver to play the Colorado Avalanche on Tuesday.

ONE MORE TO 300

Connor Hellebuyck pointed out earlier this year that he wanted to reach three career milestones, 500 appearances, 40 shutouts and 300 wins. Tonight, he recorded the 42nd career shutout and career win 299. Hellebuyck (9) passed Jonathan Quick (8 in 2014 & 2010) and Tim Thomas (8 in 2011) for the most regular season shutouts in a calendar year by a U.S.-born goaltender. Hellebuyck has now shutout Nashville four times in his career, he has also done that against Colorado, Minnesota and St. Louis.

TOP POWER PLAY VS. TOP PK

Coming into Monday night the Jets power play had gone 13-for-33 (39.3%) in their last nine games. Meanwhile, Nashville's PK ranked top in the NHL at 86.9%.

The Preds had containing the Jets power play up until the third period when Winnipeg had a two-man advantage. After Mark Scheifele won the offensive zone faceoff, Nikolaj Ehlers found Gabe Vilardi and he one-timed his first of the night past Saros to make it 2-0.

1:02 later, the Jets power play struck again. Kyle Connor fired a shot that ended up hitting Vilardi who simply put in the puck into a wide-open net as Winnipeg finished two-for-five on the power play.

"We did have some good looks actually in the other power plays, even before the third period. So there's some opportunities there, just like the way, our group doesn't get rattled," said Scott Arniel.

"Just kind of stay in it, stand, wait for their opportunities. And obviously took advantage of five on three, which is big."

GOOD TIMING FOR FIRST OF THE SEASON

The game was scoreless late in the second period when the Jets fourth line went to work. After some nice work along the wall by Morgan Barron, the Jets forward spotted a wide-open Dylan DeMelo who walked in and lifted a shot over Juuse Saros' glove to make it 1-0 at 17:18. It was DeMelo's first goal of the season and his first goal since April 9, 2023, which also came against Nashville.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2024/12/31/winnipeg-jets-nashville-predators-game-story/>

Jets Having Fun Soaring to New Heights on Special Teams

By Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

There were a lot of reasons for the Winnipeg Jets to be happy after they blanked the Nashville Predators 3-0 for their fourth consecutive win on Monday.

Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves to record his fifth shutout of the season and 42nd of his career.

Gabriel Vilardi scored twice on the power play in a 62-second span.

And veteran defenceman Dylan DeMelo registered his first goal of the season in front of a sixth sellout crowd of the season at Canada Life Centre.

“Everyone played fantastic and bought into our details and played great,” Hellebuyck said.

He agreed he was part of it, which led to his NHL-leading 24th win of the season (24-5-1) and the 299th of his career.

“It’s fun to be in this locker room and play behind this group of guys. I’m having a lot of fun,” said the 31-year-old Hellebuyck, who’s in his 10th NHL season.

When Hellebuyck registers his 300th career win, he’ll become only the 41st goalie in league history to reach that mark.

“That’s definitely one of the milestones you’re going for — 300 wins, 40 shutouts and 500 games played. Two of them down, one to go,” Hellebuyck said.

The two-time Vezina Trophy winner is also proud of the team’s accomplishments.

For example, DeMelo scored at 17:18 of the second period to give the Jets (27-10-1) a 1-0 lead.

“I mean, it was a beauty, too. A snipe,” Hellebuyck said. “What can you say about the guy? He does it all now.”

Vilardi smiled when asked about DeMelo’s goal.

“It was awesome. He’s so fired up, it was fun to see him,” Vilardi said. “It’s always fun to see him score and (celebrate), that’s for sure.”

Juuse Saros stopped 25 shots for Nashville (11-19-7), which dropped its second straight game.

Predators defenceman Jeremy Lauzon took his third penalty of the game with 7:43 remaining in the third. Nashville was then called for too many men to send the Jets on a two-man power play for 48 seconds.

Vilardi scored 15 seconds later to make it 2-0 and added another one with the man advantage.

“When we play to our structure and our identity, I think we’re really tough to beat, really tough to score on,” Vilardi said. “And part was (Hellebuyck), obviously. It’s fun to win. Got to keep going, though.”

Nikolaj Ehlers and Kyle Connor each had a pair of assists.

The Jets went 2-for-5 with the man advantage and have scored a power-play marker in a season-high seven consecutive games.

The Predators went into the game with the NHL’s best penalty kill at 86.9 per cent. They were 0-for-2 on the power play.

“We’ve talked a lot about (Connor) and (Mark Scheifele), and I keep reminding everybody there’s a third guy on that line,” Jets head coach Scott Arniel said of Vilardi.

“And whether that’s five on five or on the power play, he’s a big body guy that has some great hands on him, and he doesn’t stray too far away from that net. And doesn’t need much time, and it doesn’t take much. They just get it close to his blade and he’s going to get it, usually get a shot off.”

Predators head coach Andrew Brunette said Winnipeg’s league-best power play starts with the players’ skills.

“I feel like they’re really good down low making those little plays around the net,” Brunette said. “And, obviously, Connor and Scheifele, they’re great at finding each other, and Morrissey moves very well on the blue line.

“So just a really complete power play and making some really good plays.”

He was disappointed a tight game through two periods didn’t tilt their way in the third.

“Going to (the) third, 1-0, we got to find a way to get some points and we kind of give it away, giving them the final three there and two power-play goals,” Brunette said.

“It’s the best power play in the league, so yeah, it’s frustrating because you’re right there, but you’re finding a way to lose, not finding a way to win, so that’s what’s frustrating.”

NOTES: The Jets are 7-1-1 in their past nine games. ... Connor extended his point streak to seven games with six goals and nine helpers. ... Hellebuyck has held an opponent to three or fewer goals in 16 consecutive games.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/nashville-predators-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-december-30>

***Vilardi scores twice, Jets shut out Predators
Hellebuyck makes 22 saves for Winnipeg, which wins 4th straight***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Gabriel Vilardi scored twice in the span of 1:02, Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves for his NHL-leading fifth shutout, and the Winnipeg Jets won 3-0 against the Nashville Predators at Canada Life Centre on Monday.

"You've got to have good special teams to win in this league," Vilardi said. "These games are so tight against other top teams and a lot of times it comes down to special teams, and we won that battle tonight and that's a big reason we won that game."

Dylan DeMelo also scored for the Jets (27-10-1), who have won four straight and are 7-1-1 in their past nine. Kyle Connor and Nikolaj Ehlers each had two assists.

"Hey, it's always fun winning," Vilardi said. "I think we have a really good team. When we play to our structure and our identity I think we're really tough to beat, really tough to score on. And part was [Hellebuyck], obviously. It's fun to win. Got to keep going, though."

Juuse Saros made 25 saves for the Predators (11-19-7), who have lost two straight coming out of the holiday break.

"It was a close hockey game, kind of low-event, tight-checking. Both teams didn't give up a whole lot," Nashville coach Andrew Brunette said. "We kind of made a mistake there in the second, and then obviously the power play in the third. (We) kind of mismanaged the puck a few times and got caught a little bit. So, margins are small and we found a way to lose it tonight."

DeMelo gave the Jets a 1-0 lead at 17:18 of the second period, taking Morgan Barron's cross-slot pass from the bottom of the circle and scoring with a wrist shot over Saros' glove.

"That was great for [DeMelo] to come in that weak side," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "Great play by Barron to find him. We've talked about all year, getting different people chipping in and helping offensively. ... When your defense can be part of that offense, that's big."

Vilardi made it 2-0 at 13:44 when he found space in the slot during a 5-on-3 power play. He then scored another power-play goal during the 5-on-4 at 14:46, jamming the puck in at the left post after Connor's one-timer hit him in the skates to make it 3-0.

"We've talked a lot about [Connor and Mark Scheifele] and I keep reminding everybody there's a third guy on that line," Arniel said of Vilardi. "And whether that's 5-on-5 or on the power play, he's a big body guy that has some great hands on him and he doesn't stray too far away from that net. (He) doesn't need much time and it doesn't take much. They just get it close to his blade and he's going to get it (and) usually get a shot off."

Winnipeg, which went 2-for-5 with the man-advantage, ranks first in the NHL on the power play this season (32.5 percent).

"First of all they've got a lot of skill, obviously," Predators captain Roman Josi said. "I feel like they're really good down low making those little plays around the net, and obviously Connor and Scheifele, they're great at finding each other, and [Josh] Morrissey moves very well on the blue line. Just a really complete power play and (they're) making some really good plays."

NOTES: In addition to his five shutouts, Hellebuyck also leads the NHL in save-percentage (.930), goals-against average (2.00), and wins (24-5-1). ... Connor has 15 points (six goals, nine assists) on a seven-game point streak. ... DeMelo's goal is his first since April 9. ... Predators forward Filip Forsberg's six-game assist streak (11) ended.

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/video/domino-s-that-s-hockey-is-hellebuyck-playing-too-much-for-the-jets%7E3048117>

Domino's That's Hockey: Is Hellebuyck playing too much for the Jets? (VIDEO)

Connor Hellebuyck leads the NHL in wins, goals against and save percentage all while playing the most games and seeing the most shots. Is Hellebuyck playing too much for the Jets? How important is winning the Central Division for Winnipeg? TSN Hockey analyst Bruce Boudreau joins Domino's That's Hockey to weigh in.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/12/30/hellebuyck-on-verge-of-joining-exclusive-club>

Hellebuyck on verge of joining exclusive club

By: Mike McIntyre

Connor Hellebuyck is on the cusp of joining an exclusive hockey club.

The two-time Vezina Trophy winner recorded his 299th career win — and his 42nd career shutout — on Monday night against the Nashville Predators with the Jets 3-0 victory.

One more triumph and the 130th-overall pick from the 2012 draft will become the 30th masked man in NHL history to have at least 300 under his belt in addition to at least 40 clean sheets.

"That's definitely one of the milestones you're going for. Three hundred wins, 40 shutouts and 500 games played. Two of them down, one to go," Hellebuyck told the Free Press, while being careful not to count his proverbial chickens before they hatch.

"I don't want to jinx anything. I don't believe in jinxes but let's let it happen and enjoy the moment then."

Fair enough. That could come as early as Thursday when the Jets open an eight-game homestand by facing the Anaheim Ducks at Canada Life Centre.

Hellebuyck will return to the net that night, as backup goaltender Eric Comrie is expected to make his ninth start of the season today in Denver when the Jets ring in the new year by facing the Colorado Avalanche in the second half of a back-to-back.

Hellebuyck is well on his way to earning a third trinket as the best goaltender in the league over the course of the regular season. His numbers so far this year are absurd — a 24-5-1 record, a sizzling 2.00 goals-against-average and an eye-popping .930 save percentage. All of those marks are tops in the league, and by quite a margin

“I’m having a lot of fun,” Hellebuyck said following his latest 22-save effort, which gives him five shutouts this year and more than half a season left to play. His career-high is six, set on two occasions (2017-18 and 2019-20).

“Everyone played fantastic and bought into our details and played great. It’s fun to be in this locker room and play behind this group of guys.”

If you’re just looking at wins, Hellebuyck’s next one will make him the 41st goaltender to hit the 300 mark. Hall of Famer Martin Brodeur tops them all with 691, while Marc-Andre Fleury of the Minnesota Wild is second all-time with 567 (and counting).

In terms of active players, only Fleury, Sergei Bobrovsky of the Florida Panthers, Jonathan Quick of the New York Rangers and Andrei Vasilevskiy of the Tampa Bay Lightning are ahead of Hellebuyck.

Who knows how high on the list he could end up, considering this is just the first year of a seven-year contract extension. There’s no question the Michigan product believes the best is still to come, with the ultimate goal of a Stanley Cup driving him more than anything.

“Winning is so much more fun in this league. You can really get into good rhythms and enjoy coming into the rink every day,” said Hellebuyck.

“Just knowing you’re going to give it your all every day and that the guy next to you is going to do the same, that’s what you dream to be a part of.”

As an example, he cited a very painful sliding block of a Roman Josi slapshot from veteran forward Vlad Namestnikov in the third period Monday which helped preserve the shutout.

“That’s why it’s so fun in this locker room. Everyone’s paying the price and everyone’s digging in,” said Hellebuyck.

He’s also enjoying not having to try to stop the likes of Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Gabe Vilardi, Nikolaj Ehlers and Josh Morrissey on Winnipeg’s potent, league-leading power play which struck for two goals against the Predators to pave the way to victory.

“Those guys are incredible, aren’t they? It is fun watching. I’m going to keep saying it. It’s fun to play right now and it’s fun to watch,” he said.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2024/12/30/jets-keep-on-rolling>

***Jets keep on rolling with 3-0 shutout over Preds
Hellebuyck gets shutout, DeMelo nets game-winner, Vilardi notches power-play pair***

By: Ken Wiebe

The Winnipeg Jets are hitting their stride once again.

Thanks to a 3-0 shutout over the Nashville Predators on Monday before the sixth sellout crowd of the season at Canada Life Centre, the Jets are riding a four-game winning streak.

After posting victories over the Minnesota Wild, Toronto Maple Leafs and Ottawa Senators, the Jets delivered a tidy defensive effort, scored first and then won the special-teams battle as they continued their domination in the Central Division this season and evened up the season series with the Predators.

“We just stuck with it. That’s just our group,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “Our group doesn’t get too fazed by things and they stay in the moment.”

The Jets, who improved to 27-10-1 and continue to lead the NHL in wins and points, close out the month and the calendar year on Tuesday night in Denver against the Colorado Avalanche.

Let’s take a closer look at this one:

IRRESISTIBLE FORCE VS IMMOVABLE OBJECT

This matchup featured the top power play in the NHL (Jets) and the No. 1 ranked penalty kill (Predators).

Through the first two periods, the Predators had successfully killed off three minor penalties, limiting the Jets’ opportunities with the man advantage.

With the Jets up 1-0 and Predators defenceman Jeremy Lauzon in the penalty box serving his third minor of the contest, an extra player jumped onto the ice and Nashville received a bench minor for having too many men on the ice.

That gave the Jets a two-man advantage for 48 seconds, so Arniel called a timeout to give his top power-play unit a quick breather.

It didn’t take long for the Jets to strike.

After Mark Scheifele won the draw, Kyle Connor got the puck down low to Nikolaj Ehlers and he found Vilardi in the slot for a one-timer.

Then with 43 seconds to go in the bench minor, Vilardi scored his second on the contest, posting up on the far post and finding the loose puck after a shot by Connor.

Ehlers showed off his soccer skills on the play, kicking the puck over to Connor.

“Yeah, that’s my spot, I guess,” said Vilardi, responding to a question about the goals coming from his office. “They do a good job of getting me the puck. So, (I) don’t want to go anywhere else.”

Vilardi is up to 17 goals and 34 points in 38 games this season.

THE PROMOTION

Arniel said after the morning skate that a few Jets were banged up and that led to a late scratch for right-winger Mason Appleton, who is out week-to-week with a lower-body injury, according to Arniel.

Alex Lafallo was bumped up to the line with Adam Lowry and Nino Niederreiter. Combined with his work on the second power-play unit and the penalty kill, it made for a busy night.

Lafallo took 23 shifts for 18:28.

David Gustafsson returned to the lineup and was back at centre on the fourth line.

With Appleton on the shelf, the Jets recalled forward Dominic Toninato from the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League.

A corresponding move had the Jets place defenceman Haydn Fleury on injured reserve with a suspected knee injury.

THE PROMOTION II

After playing just more than 19 minutes in Saturday’s win over the Ottawa Senators, Logan Stanley started Monday’s game on the second pairing with Neal Pionk.

It was another heavy workload for Stanley, who finished with 23 shifts for 18:21 of ice time.

Stanley made a smart play at the offensive blue line on Dylan DeMelo’s goal, getting the puck down on the half wall to Morgan Barron before opening up to give Barron another passing option.

Barron was able to thread the needle to DeMelo instead and he buried his shot for his first goal of the season — and first in 42 games, dating back to April 9 when he scored against — you guessed it — the Predators.

“I mean, it was a beauty, too. A snipe,” said Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck, who recorded his fifth shutout of the season and 42nd of his career by making 22 saves. “What can you say about the guy? He does it all now.”

Defenceman Dylan Coghlan drew back into the Jets’ lineup for his second game of the campaign, skating alongside Colin Miller on the third pairing, as Ville Heinola was a healthy scratch.

Coghlan, whose last game came on Nov. 29 against the Vegas Golden Knights, made several smart reads and did precisely what you need to do when you’re trying to petition for more opportunities.

“I liked a lot of what he did,” said Arniel. “Obviously, he had to come in and play the left side. He has played there before, he’s had experience there and liked a lot of what he did. I think that he kept it simple, first and foremost, and that kind of led to a solid game.”

KEY PLAY

Morgan Barron found Dylan DeMelo with a perfect seam pass and the Jets defenceman scored his first goal in 42 games for the eventual game-winner.

THE THREE STARS

Gabe Vilardi, Jets – Two power-play goals, nine shot attempts.

Connor Hellebuyck, Jets – Records a 22-save shutout to post his fifth goose egg of the season.

Kyle Connor, Jets – Two assists, eight shot attempts.

EXTRA, EXTRA

Connor extended his point streak to seven games and he’s up to 22 goals and 51 points this season.

The Jets got a scare when centre Vladislav Namestnikov left the game with just over 12 minutes to go in the third period after he blocked a shot from Predators captain Roman Josi with his right arm/hand. Namestnikov briefly went to the dressing room for further evaluation but returned to finish the contest.

Jets centre Mark Scheifele was named the NHL’s first star of the week after producing four goals and six points in two games. Scheifele is up to 22 goals and 44 points in 38 games this season. Buffalo Sabres defenceman Rasmus Dahlin and Columbus Blue Jackets blue-liner Zach Werenski were the second and third stars.

Jets defenceman Dylan Samberg was on the ice in a non-contact jersey on Monday for an optional skate, but Arniel didn’t say anything to suggest his return to the lineup was imminent. The timeline is for Samberg to return in early January, but the next step for him will be to participate with the full group. Once he sheds the non-contact jersey, then it won’t be long until he’s back in game action.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/jets-blank-preds-as-connor-hellebuyck-inches-toward-milestone>

Jets blank Predators as Connor Hellebuyck inches toward milestone

By Paul Friesen

It was closer than the standings would have suggested going in, with all the big guns going silent through 40-plus minutes.

So what do the Winnipeg Jets do to collect an NHL-leading 27th win of the season against the seventh-place Nashville Predators?

Get a second-period goal from defenceman Dylan DeMelo, his first of the season, cash in two power-play goals from Gabe Vilardi in the third and get 22 saves in Connor Hellebuyck’s fifth shutout of the season.

The 3-0 win was Winnipeg's fourth straight, sixth in their last seven games, left them 9-2-1 in their last dozen and boosted their record to 27-10-1.

"When we play to our structure and our identity we're really tough to beat, really tough to score on," Vilardi said. "And part was Bucky, obviously. It's fun to win. Got to keep going, though."

Ditto from Mr. Vezina.

"Everyone played fantastic... I was part of it," Hellebuyck said. "It's fun to be in this locker room and play behind this group of guys."

The win left Hellebuyck one shy of 300 for his career.

"We'll have to talk about it once it happens," he said. "I don't want to jinx anything. That's definitely one of the milestones you're going for: 300 wins, 40 shutouts, and 500 games played. Two of them down, one to go."

Vilardi's first goal came with two Predators in the penalty box some six minutes into the third, his second with a one-man edge 1:02 later.

That's numbers 16 and 17 on the season for him.

"We've talked a lot about with KC (Kyle Connor) and Scheif (Mark Scheifele), and I keep reminding everybody there's a third guy on that line," head coach Scott Arniel said. "Whether that's five-on-five, or on the power play."

The Jets will ring in the New Year and renew old acquaintances with the Avalanche in Denver on Tuesday night, then return for eight straight at home, beginning with Anaheim on Thursday.

Winnipeg's top-ranked power play, facing the league's top penalty-killing team, fired blanks on one chance in the first period, two more in the second.

"Just like the way our group doesn't get rattled," Arniel said. "Just stay in it, stand, wait for their opportunities."

Less than a minute after the third one, DeMelo found the net for the first time since last April, also against the Preds.

"It was awesome," Vilardi said. "He's so fired up, it was fun to see him."

Set up by Morgan Barron, DeMelo's short-side snipe came with 2:42 left in the second, carrying some Winnipeg momentum into the third.

The Jet got some bad injury news going into the game, as winger Mason Appleton is out week-to-week with a lower body injury.

His spot on the third line was taken by Alex Iafallo, with David Gustafsson added to the fourth.

On the blue line, Dylan Coghlan replaced Ville Heinola to make just his second appearance of the season.

The Tennessean

<https://www.tennessean.com/story/sports/nhl/predators/2024/12/30/predators-jets-loss-bench-minor-penalty-too-many-men-andrew-brunette/77259605007/>

Another late bench minor penalty haunts Nashville Predators in loss to Winnipeg Jets

By Alex Daugherty

The Nashville Predators lost their second straight game on Monday, falling 3-0 to the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre.

Unlike Friday's 7-4 loss to St. Louis — when poor goaltending prevented a comeback — the Predators could not find the score sheet against the Jets. Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves in the shutout, the sixth time this season the Predators were kept scoreless, a problem they have had all season.

They are now at 2.37 goals per game, down from 3.24 last year.

But also returning was a familiar problem with bench minor penalties.

While the Predators (11-19-7, 29 points) were killing a penalty (Jeremy Lauzon was called for hooking) midway through the third period, they were called for having too many men on the ice. As they made a line change after clearing the puck, five players came on the ice instead of four, resulting in the penalty.

The last player on the ice was forward Mark Jankowski. With forwards Colton Sissons and Michael McCarron already on the ice, Jankowski was the odd man out. After about five seconds, Jankowski realized his mistake and headed for the bench, but it was too late.

It was the Predators' eighth bench minor penalty this season, tying the league lead with Washington and Colorado.

That put the Predators in a 5-on-3 penalty kill situation with 6:31 remaining in the game. The Jets capitalized immediately — Gabe Vilardi scored two quick power play goals to make it 3-0 Jets.

"You can't give that power play a 5-on-3 late in the game like that," coach Andrew Brunette said.

It was a costly mistake and an inexplicable one, given Brunette's comments earlier in the season on bench minor penalty problems.

On Dec. 4, after the team's seventh bench minor penalty, he addressed the issue, saying the team was having problems assessing certain situations and letting panic set in.

"(Too many men penalties) are something we've talked about at length. We're having to learn the hard way," he said.

Six of the team's bench minor penalties have been for having too many men. Brunette said the issue is players are being too aggressive coming off the bench, which seems to be what happened with Jankowski on Monday.

"The onus is on the guy jumping on the ice," Brunette said. "Before you jump on, it's the oldest rule of thumb, it's something you learn when you're 6 years old playing youth hockey, you don't jump on until your guy comes off."

The Predators have a quick turn after the loss in Winnipeg. They face the Minnesota Wild on Tuesday (7 p.m. CT, FanDuel Sports Network).

ANOTHER TRADE: Nashville Predators trade Juuso Parssinen to Colorado Avalanche for 3rd-round pick in 2027

Yahoo Sports

https://ca.sports.yahoo.com/news/jets-star-forward-named-first-191304910.html?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlMmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAHUvGY9BJyfDhdDenfmsdTtO1kL1CD_6OBRM_5WJbeswQVn9R8lcev4T9nSK90kHMR0sU-BOCCLM5-8UQLXM6_N7MaKJEUbgAA9FEGkif7PtAEQcmmJCgafyfKgBeUIMtHRzffjNb0T8Z0mVeachHCbLdoyEapun_ndphwVvXyq4g

Jets' Star Forward Named First Star Of The Week

By Julian Gaudio

Winnipeg Jets star forward Mark Scheifele has been named the NHL's first star of the week.

The 31-year-old was dominant against the Toronto Maple Leafs and the Ottawa Senators, recording four goals and six points in those two games.

Against the Maple Leafs, Scheifele recorded a hat-trick and reached the 20-goal mark for the 10th consecutive season. He was the catalyst behind the Jets' extension of their Central Division lead over the Minnesota Wild.

Here's what the NHL's press release had to say about his tremendous week.

"Scheifele registered 4-2—6 in two games to lift the Jets (26-10-1, 53 points) to a perfect week and an 8-2-1 record in their past 11 contests dating to Dec. 5. He posted 3-1—4, including his 10th career hat trick (all w/ WPG) and sixth game-winning goal of the season, in a 5-2 victory against the Toronto Maple Leafs Dec. 23. Scheifele became the second player in franchise history to accumulate at least 10 career hat tricks, following Ilya Kovalchuk (11), as well as the fifth different Jets/Thrashers player to score three goals in a single period (doing so in the final frame). He followed that with 1-1—2, his 13th multi-point performance of 2024-25 through 37 total appearances, in a 4-2 triumph over the Ottawa Senators Dec. 28. The 31-year-old Scheifele has compiled 22-22—44 overall this season, placing among the League leaders in game-winning goals (t-2nd; 6), shooting percentage (minimum: 1 SOG/GP – 5th; 25.9%), goals (t-5th; 22) and points (14th; 44). He and the Jets will face the Nashville Predators tonight on "Prime Monday Night Hockey."

Joining Scheifele as the stars of the week were Buffalo Sabres defenseman Rasmus Dahlin, who poured in seven assists in three games and Columbus Blue Jackets defenseman Zach Werenski, who also notched seven assists in three games.

The Jets have been rolling through the first half of the 2024-25 season and will need Scheifele to continue his excellent play as the season goes on.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10937440/hellebuyck-pitches-shutout-vilardi-scores-twice-as-winnipeg-jets-blank-preds-3-0/>

Hellebuyck pitches shutout, Vilardi scores twice as Winnipeg Jets blank Preds 3-0

By Christian Aumell Global News

It was a matchup between perhaps the best goalie in the world and the lowest-scoring team in the NHL.

It went about exactly as you'd think it would.

Connor Hellebuyck turned aside all 22 shots he faced as the Winnipeg Jets took down the Nashville Predators 3-0 in their final home game of 2024.

Both teams failed to score in the opening period with each managing to get nine shots on goal and each failing on one power play chance.

The Jets nearly opened the scoring on their second power play look of the game midway through the second. Gabriel Vilardi got the puck down low and tucked the puck around Juuse Saros in the crease but somehow missed the net.

Winnipeg got a third chance to try and crack Nashville's league-best penalty kill with 5:32 to go as Jeremy Lauzon picked up his second infraction of the night, but once again the Preds got the job done.

The Jets finally cracked the goose end with less than three minutes remaining in the second after a bad giveaway in the Nashville end.

Jonathan Marchessault had the puck in the corner and sent a weak clearing attempt up the boards that was easily handled at the point by Logan Stanley. He slid the puck down the wall to Morgan Barron, who waited patiently as the slot cleared for Dylan DeMelo, who drifted into the open space, received a pass from Barron and ripped it high over Saros for his first of the season at the 2:42 mark of the period.

Winnipeg carried that 1-0 lead into the third but the Predators began the third on the power play as Stanley was called for slashing as time expired in the second.

The Jets killed it off and a few minutes later nearly doubled their lead but Saros made a great cross-crease save to stymie Mark Scheifele on a partial 2-on-1.

A third penalty to Lauzon put the Jets back on the power play with 7:43 as they searched for an insurance goal and with 43 seconds left in the man advantage, the Predators were called for having too many men on the ice.

Winnipeg called a timeout to rest their top power play unit before the 5-on-3 and the move paid off. Kyle Connor fed the puck to the corner to Nikolaj Ehlers, who fanned on a cross-ice pass but it landed right on the stick of Vilaridi in front and he buried it just 15 seconds into the 5-on-3 to expand the Jets' lead.

That trio wasn't done.

With Winnipeg still on the man advantage, Ehlers slid a one-touch pass to the right faceoff dot where Connor one-timed it. His shot rang off the crossbar and caromed off Vilaridi, who knocked the loose puck down to the ice and into the net for his second goal in 62 seconds.

The Jets cruised home from there to secure their 27th win of the season and regain first place alone in the NHL standings with 55 points in 38 games.

Winnipeg now heads to Denver to face the Avalanche Tuesday night. Pregame coverage on 680 CJOB begins at 5 p.m. with the puck dropping just after 7.