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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-another-game-another-shutout-for-hellebuyck>

***Three things - Another game, another shutout for Hellebuyck
Hellebuyck records 6th shutout, Ehlers scores twice in 3-0 win***

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets shut out the red-hot Colorado Avalanche 3-0 at Canada Life Centre. Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves for his sixth shutout of the season and 43rd of his career. Nikolaj Ehlers scored twice, and Mark Scheifele had the other goal for Winnipeg who have beaten Colorado 11 times in the last 15 meetings in the Manitoba capital. The Jets will host Vancouver Tuesday night.

ANOTHER GAME, ANOTHER SHUTOUT

Connor Hellebuyck was given a well-deserved night off on Friday so the organization could celebrate his recent milestones (300 wins, 40 shutouts and 500 games). The Jets starting netminder rewarded his team with a solid performance and now has shutouts in three straight regular season starts against the Avalanche going back to last season. Hellebuyck tied the franchise record for the most in a season, a mark he set in 2019-20 (58 GP) & 2017-18 (67 GP). Of note, Hellebuyck only required 34 games to reach the mark this season.

NO VLAD, LINE BLENDER

Vladislav Namestnikov could not play because of an upper body injury tonight so Scott Arniel made some changes to his lineup. Veteran forward Dominic Toninato would play his first game of the season, playing with David Gustafsson and Morgan Barron. Adam Lowry moved up between Alex Iafallo and Nikolaj Ehlers and Rasmus Kupari centred Nino Niederreiter and Cole Perfetti.

The Lowry line opened the scoring when Dylan Samberg hit Nikolaj Ehlers in full stride, Ehlers then cut past Cale Makar before beating Mackenzie Blackwood top corner at 1:08.

The Jets checking line held the MacKinnon line in check all night long and then with Winnipeg up 2-0 and the Avalanche net empty, Ehlers finished off the scoring with his second of the night.

“Our line was going in every single zone,” said Ehlers.

“We didn’t create a bunch of chances, but we didn’t give up anything against a pretty good line in this league.”

BIG LINE IMPACT

Winnipeg carried their 1-0 lead into the second period realizing that they needed some breathing room with the firepower that Colorado has. So, the Jets top line did their part in the win when Mark Scheifele scored his team leading 25th goal of the season and reached the 50-point mark in 2024-25 (25-25—50 in 44 GP). He collected his 50th point in fewer than 45 games for the third time in his career (also 41 GP in 2018-19 & 44 GP in 2020-21) - tied with Ilya Kovalchuk for the most in franchise history.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2025/01/12/winnipeg-jets-colorado-avalanche-game-recap/>

Jets Keen to Lean on Solid Defence, Hellebuyck

By The Canadian Press

Connor Hellebuyck stepped into the limelight again on Saturday, but the Winnipeg Jets' goaltender had a strong supporting cast in a 3-0 blanking of the Colorado Avalanche.

Hellebuyck made 22 saves to register his NHL-leading sixth shutout of the season and 43rd of his career. It was also his league-leading 25th win of the season and 301st of his career (301-179-43).

Jets head coach Scott Arniel smiled when saying Hellebuyck "had an easy night," but then gave his goalie the praise he deserved.

"Never, ever discredit a guy that gets a shutout," Arniel said. "I mean he had to make stops. He knew that they were trying to get their (shot) volume.

"And that's another thing we did a really good job of tonight, was get in shot lanes. We did a really good job of making sure that not all those pucks got to the net front. But when stuff happens, he's there."

This week already saw Hellebuyck become the third-fastest NHL netminder to reach 300 wins in his 538th regular-season game after a 5-2 victory over the Nashville Predators. The only other goaltenders to accomplish the milestone faster are Andrei Vasilevskiy (490 games played) and Jacques Plante (521).

Nikolaj Ehlers scored twice, including one into an empty net, and Mark Scheifele had the other goal for the Jets (29-12-3), who are 2-1-2 in their eight-game homestand.

Winnipeg's defensive play helped Hellebuyck earn the shutout by not allowing Colorado a lot of scoring chances.

After the visitors put up 10 shots on goal in the first period, they were outshot 12-5 in the second. The Avs tipped the scales 7-6 in their favour in the third, including a power play with three shots that Hellebuyck turned aside.

Winnipeg blocked 18 shots compared to Colorado's nine. The Avalanche also only won 39.1 per cent of faceoffs.

"Against a team like that, they're going to get a few chances," Ehlers said. "I think we kept that number very low today, so we're happy with that."

Hellebuyck has shut out the Avalanche in three consecutive regular-season games, dating back to April 13 last year, Nov. 7 and the latest.

Colorado head coach Jared Bednar acknowledged the combo of Hellebuyck and Winnipeg's defence.

"It was rock solid," Bednar said. "So one thing you can't do, is that we came out a little soft and they got that early goal, and then we kind of picked it up a little bit in the second half of the first period (which) I like.

"But you spot them one, it's tough enough to try and find the offence, and then they're digging in. ... It just didn't look like we had the energy and the determination to kind of get through some of their checking. We had some opportunities. We checked hard. We played hard, but the offence just wasn't coming tonight for us."

Mackenzie Blackwood stopped 26 shots for Colorado (26-17-1), which finished a three-game road trip going 1-2-0.

"They play good defence, tight," Blackwood said of the Jets. "They don't give you a lot of chances so you know it's going to be a close game and another close one today."

Winnipeg led 1-0 after the first period following Ehlers' high shot over the glove side of Blackwood at 1:08.

Kyle Connor almost gave the Jets a two-goal lead twice midway through the second. His close-in, low shot on a breakaway was stopped by Blackwood, then a backhand shot a minute later hit a post.

But Connor did set up Scheifele's goal, putting a short pass to the open side of the net for Scheifele to flip in his team-leading 25th of the season at 15:53.

Ehlers notched his empty-net marker with 57 seconds remaining.

He also tipped his hat to Hellebuyck.

"Bucky is the best, there's no way around it," Ehlers said.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/hockey/jets/2025/01/11/hellebuyck-helps-jets-roll-over-avalanche-3-0>

Hellebuyck helps Jets roll over Avalanche 3-0

By: Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

WINNIPEG – Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves to register his sixth shutout of the season and 43rd of his career in the Winnipeg Jets' 3-0 victory over the Colorado Avalanche on Saturday.

The performance also marked Hellebuyck's NHL-leading 25th win of the season and 301st of his career (301-179-43).

This week already saw Hellebuyck become the third-fastest NHL netminder to reach 300 wins in his 538th regular-season game after a 5-2 victory over the Nashville Predators. The only other goaltenders to accomplish the milestone faster are Andrei Vasilevskiy (490 games played) and Jacques Plante (521).

Hellebuyck has shut out the Avalanche in three consecutive regular-season games, dating back to April 13 last year, Nov. 7 and the latest.

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TAKEAWAYS

Jets: Winnipeg changed three of its four lines because of an injury to second-line centre Vladislav Namestnikov in Thursday's overtime loss to Los Angeles. Adam Lowry moved up to fill the spot. It took a bit of time for the adjustments, but flow improved in the second.

Avalanche: The Jets weren't allowing Colorado a lot of scoring chances. After the visitors put up 10 shots on goal in the first period, they were outshot 12-5 in the second. The Avs also had a tough time in the faceoff circle, winning only 39.1 per cent.

KEY MOMENT

The Avalanche got their second power play of the game early in the third period, but Hellebuyck turned aside three tight-in shots.

KEY STAT

The Jets are 21-0-1 when leading after the second period, while the Avalanche are now 4-17-0 when trailing after two.

UP NEXT

Avalanche: Host the New York Rangers on Tuesday.
Jets: Host the Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/colorado-avalanche-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-january-11>

Hellebuyck shuts out Avalanche for 3rd straight time in regular season in Jets win Goaltender makes 22 saves, Ehlers scores 2 goals for Winnipeg

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG — Connor Hellebuyck made 22 saves for his NHL-leading sixth shutout and the Winnipeg Jets won 3-0 against the Colorado Avalanche at Canada Life Centre on Saturday.

“He [Hellebuyck] had an easy night,” Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said jokingly. “We only gave up five five-on-five chances, so easy night. No — never, ever discredit a guy that gets a shutout. I mean he had to make stops. He knew that they were trying to get their (shot) volume, and that's another thing we did a really good job of tonight was get in shot lanes. We did a really good job of making sure that not all those pucks got to the net front. But when stuff happens, he's there. Their second power play they... attacked it a little bit more, and he certainly had to be big.”

Hellebuyck has earned a shutout in three straight regular season meetings with Colorado. The two-time Vezina Trophy winner had 35 saves in a 1-0 win on Nov. 7 and 30 saves in a 7-0 win on April 13.

He is 15-7-4 with five shutouts in 26 regular-season games against the Avalanche, including 8-1-0 in his past nine.

“He's been fantastic all year,” Colorado coach Jared Bednar said. “And not just this year. For me, he's been one of the top guys in the League for a while. I think that that is earned. It's consistency over time, giving your team a chance to win, which is kind of what we're seeing out of our guy now. He gives you the chance every night if guys are playing and committed in front of him. When there's a breakdown, he's there to save it so you've got to try to make it as difficult as you can on him.”

Nikolaj Ehlers scored two goals and Mark Scheifele also scored for the Jets (29-12-3), who had lost four of five (1-2-2).

“He's rolling,” Ehlers said of Hellebuyck. “All the years I've played with him he's been unbelievable. We've had some really good goalies, been really lucky with the goalies we have... 'Bucky' is the best, there's no way around it.”

Mackenzie Blackwood made 26 saves for the Avalanche (26-17-1), who had points in nine of their past 10 (8-1-1).

“(Winnipeg’s team defense) was rock solid,” Bednar said. “One thing you can’t do; is that we came out a little soft and they got that early goal. And then we kind of picked it up a little bit second half of the first period. But you spot them one, it’s tough enough to try and find the offense, and then they’re digging in... It just didn’t look like we had the energy and the determination to kind of get through some of their checking. We had some opportunities. We checked hard. We played hard. But the offense just wasn’t coming tonight for us.”

Ehlers scored 1:08 into the first period, taking the puck at the red line and beating Blackwood with a wrist shot from the slot to make it 1-0 Jets.

“I think I felt good out there, our line was going in every single zone,” Ehlers said. “We didn’t create a bunch of chances, but we didn’t give up anything against a pretty good line in this league.”

Scheifele made it 2-0 at 15:53 of the second. Josh Morrissey began the play by circling behind the net and delivering a saucer pass to Kyle Connor in the slot, who then jammed it to Scheifele for a one-timer from the net side.

“I feel like we did a really good job against them,” Jets defenseman Dylan Samberg said. “The past two games have been really good, defensively as a team. We held them to minimal scoring chances, which is what you’ve got to do against teams like this.”

Scheifele nearly scored again when he was alone in front at 18:59, but his backhand attempt was denied by Blackwood.

“They play good defense — tight,” Blackwood said. “They don’t give you a lot of chances so you know it’s going to be a close game, and another close one today.”

Ehlers scored into an empty net at 19:03 of the third for the 3-0 final.

NOTES: Hellebuyck’s sixth shutout of the season ties his career high and the franchise record, which he set in 2017-18 and matched in 2019-20. It was his 43rd career shutout, tying him with Craig Anderson for the third most by a United States goaltender, behind Jonathan Quick (62) and Ryan Miller (44). He leads the NHL with 26 wins (26-6-2). ... Colorado is 12-4-1 in its past 16, and 7-3-0 in its past 10 road games. ... Jets forward Vladislav Namestnikov was a game-time decision and did not play after blocking a shot in the third period of a 2-1 loss against the Los Angeles Kings on Friday. ... Scheifele has six points (three goals, three assists) in a five-game point streak. ... Connor has 19 points (seven goals, 12 assists) in his past 13 games.

Sportsnet.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/trying-to-push-for-cup-jets-hellebuyck-on-winning-accolades/>

‘Trying to push for Cup’: Jets’ Hellebuyck on winning accolades (VIDEO)

Sean Reynolds is joined with Winnipeg Jets netminder Connor Hellebuyck to discuss the next step after his 300th career win, and being in a Hart Trophy conversation.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-line-shuffle-unleashes-ehlers-in-all-around-performance-vs-avalanche/>

Jets' line shuffle unleashes Ehlers in all-around performance vs. Avalanche

By Jacob Stoller

WINNIPEG — Scott Arniel may have uncovered the best way to maximize Nikolaj Ehlers.

It's no secret that Ehlers has been bogged down by a second line that's stayed intact all year despite being a black hole offensively. But when Vladislav Namestnikov was ruled out of Saturday's game against the Colorado Avalanche, Arniel had no choice but to give Ehlers a different centre. The Winnipeg Jets coach shuffled the deck entirely, pairing Ehlers with Adam Lowry and Alex Iafallo. On the surface, those two hard-nosed, defensive-oriented forwards may not seem like the two most optimal linemates for the Danish speedster.

But Ehlers wound up having arguably his best all-around game of the season — registering two goals (the game-winner and the empty netter to seal the game), three shots and three hits en route to Winnipeg's 3-0 win over Colorado.

"It's intriguing now. It's got me thinking," Arniel said with a smile. "I liked a lot of what I saw."

It started right from his first shift, where Ehlers split the Avs defence and ripped a wrist shot bar down over Mackenzie Blackwood's right shoulder to give the Jets an early 1-0 lead.

The quick strike was just the start for Ehlers. All game long, he weaved through traffic seamlessly, used his world-class speed to create space for his linemates and appeared poised in the neutral zone — an area where he's often prone to making head-scratching mistakes. He didn't have as many — or any, frankly — defensive zone mishaps. It seemed like he wasn't trying to do too much. His game was simplified. And playing with Lowry was a big reason for that.

"He wins a lot of battles and I think he wants to use my speed as much as possible," Ehlers said.

But what exactly did Lowry do to maximize Ehlers' speed?

"He wins a battle and I get open and he throws it into either an area or right on my tape and I'm in open space to be able to use that speed. And then he gets into areas where he thinks I can get into," Ehlers explained.

It's something Namestnikov hasn't been able to do. It's no slight on Namestnikov, a perfectly serviceable utility forward in his own right. It's just that he's miscast as a second-line centre.

"[Lowry] does a great job in our end coming from underneath on the breakouts, supporting pucks," Arniel said. "And when that happens it allows the wingers to blow out, that allows them to get early speed. If it's a contested puck and you're slow and the centreman isn't there for

support, you've got to stop, too. [Lowry] was so good at underneath support for our defence, that it allows that winger, especially if he's on the weak side, to just take off and go.”

It should also be noted that, when playing with Lowry, Ehlers was tasked with going toe-to-toe with Nathan MacKinnon (and at times, Mikko Rantanen was skating on his wing as well). It presented a unique opportunity for Ehlers.

“There's two things for me. One, he's on the ice a little bit more in key situations,” Arniel said. “D-zone draws where maybe I would throw [Lowry's] line out there or it might be a situation where he's starting in our end of the rink, but not a lot of time he's doing that. The other side is the responsibility. He knew he was going against the MacKinnon line and he took a lot of pride in that, in making sure he did his part to keep those guys off the scoresheet.”

Now, let's get one thing straight. In a perfect world, Lowry's not an ideal second-line centre. You want him as your shutdown third-line centre – a role he's exceptional at. But the way he got Ehlers up and running can't be ignored.

Ehlers is too important of a player to have rotting away on an ineffective second line. Since breaking into the league, Ehlers ranks 26th in even-strength goals (166) and on a per minute basis, he's one of the NHL's most efficient point producers during five-on-five play.

For all Ehlers' flaws — namely his unpredictability — we're talking about a player who's recorded 35 points through his first 36 games and is on pace for a career-high 75 points despite missing nine games this year.

Ehlers has been second-fiddle here for most of his career. Not only has he seldom been given ample opportunity alongside Mark Scheifele on the top line, but before this season, he wasn't a staple on the team's first power-play unit (and now, he's one of the main reasons Winnipeg has the NHL's best power play).

If the Jets are serious about making a legitimate run at the Stanley Cup, they can't just rely on Scheifele's line for offence. Ideally, Jets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff goes out and finds an upgrade on Namestnikov to give that line a facelift.

But for the time being — why not keep him with Lowry?

It's hard to argue with what he did Saturday night.

Stoller Says

- Arniel said Vladislav Namestnikov would be re-evaluated tomorrow. It doesn't seem like he'll be out long-term.
- Dylan Samberg hasn't looked rusty at all since being activated off IR. The 25-year-old logged a team-high 24:47 on Saturday — 2:25 of that was on the penalty kill — and he made an impact in every area of the ice.

“Yeah, we didn't really want him to play that much,” Arniel admitted. “But again, I wasn't sure how, after last night being 22 minutes, it was going to go. But man, he just built on last night's game. They saw an awful lot of MacKinnon.”

- Samberg's defensive ability will always be the bread-and-butter of his game, but it's pretty crazy to see how he's evolved as a puck-mover. He's not flashy, but he's effective, especially on zone exits.
- Mark Scheifele scored his 25th goal of the year in his 44th game. Last year, it took him 74 games to reach that mark.

Scheifele, who prides himself as a pass-first player, is producing 4.45 five-on-five individual high-danger shot attempts per 60 minutes — that places him in the 89th percentile among NHL forwards that have played at least 200 minutes. Over the previous three years, Scheifele recorded 3.56 per 60 minutes.

- Speaking of smashing last year's totals, how about Connor Hellebuyck tying his career-high in shutouts (six) tonight. And we're in January.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/01/11/hellebuyck-records-sixth-shutout-in-3-0-win-over-avalanche>

Hellebuyck records league-leading sixth shutout in 3-0 win over Avalanche

By: Ken Wiebe

This was precisely why Scott Arniel decided to change things up and save Connor Hellebuyck for this battle of Central Division heavyweights.

After backup Eric Comrie helped the Winnipeg Jets get to overtime and salvage a point against the Los Angeles Kings on Friday, Hellebuyck stood tall and made 22 saves to record his league-leading sixth shutout of the season in what was a 3-0 victory over the Colorado Avalanche on Saturday before a crowd of 14,782 at Canada Life Centre.

Hellebuyck was at his big and boring best, but also benefitted from an incredibly impressive defensive effort in front of him.

“He had an easy night,” said Arniel, who was smiling but quickly got serious.

“No. Never, ever discredit a guy that gets a shutout. I mean he had to make stops. He knew that they were trying to get their (shot) volume. And that's another thing we did a really good job of, was get in shot lanes. We did a really good job of making sure that not all those pucks got to the net front.

“But when stuff happens, he's there.”

The commitment to structure, puck management and attention to detail was among the best we've seen all season long as the Jets took a 2-1 lead in the four-game season series — with the final meeting scheduled for Jan. 22 in Denver.

It was the fifth time this season that the Jets have played games on consecutive days, but the first time travel was not involved and the first time Arniel changed the goalie order.

After going 4-0 in the front end of those games, the Jets dropped four consecutive outings on the tail end.

Hellebuyck, who was celebrated on Friday for hitting the goalie triple crown of 500 games, 300 wins and 40 shutouts, is on a nonsensical heater against the Avalanche in the regular season — blanking them on three consecutive occasions during the past two seasons.

“Yeah, he’s been fantastic all year. And not just this year, for me he’s been one of the top guys in the league for a while,” said Avalanche head coach Jared Bednar.

“That is earned. It’s consistency over time, giving your team a chance to win.”

With the win, the Jets extended their lead over the Avalanche in the Central Division to eight points.

The Jets, who improved to 29-12-3 for the season, are back in action on Tuesday against the Vancouver Canucks as they continue an eight-game homestand.

The Jets have collected six of a possible 10 points so far.

Let’s take a closer look at what transpired in this one:

THE ERASER

Arniel was treating this latest Jets vs Avalanche battle as if it was a playoff game, complete with altering two of his lines after the pre-game warmup.

With Vladislav Namestnikov out after blocking a shot in the third period of Friday’s game against the Los Angeles Kings, Jets captain Adam Lowry moved up onto the second line with Nikolaj Ehlers and Alex Iafallo, while Rasmus Kupari got a promotion to the third line with Nino Niederreiter and Cole Perfetti.

Not only did Ehlers score a goal to open the scoring, the Lowry line handled plenty of the heavy minutes against the Avalanche top line of Nathan MacKinnon, Mikko Rantanen and Jonathan Drouin — and held them in check.

“Yeah, of course,” said Ehlers, who is up to 14 goals after adding an empty-netter with 57 seconds to go in regulation.

“But you know, they’re really good players, too. When they buzz, they buzz. But like I said, I think you can see that I enjoyed that challenge and I tried to do my best not to give up anything. And we worked as a line not to give them anything. I loved it.”

Arniel liked the way Ehlers handled the additional responsibility and had him thinking about future permutations and combinations.

“He knew he was going against the MacKinnon line and he took a lot of pride in that, in making sure he did his part to keep those guys off the scoresheet,” said Arniel.

“It’s intriguing now. It’s got me thinking. I liked a lot of what I saw.

THE ERASER PART II

It’s a five-man job every time MacKinnon steps onto the ice and Arniel chose to lean on the defence pairing of Dylan Samberg and Neal Pionk to handle a good chunk of the job — with Josh Morrissey and Dylan DeMelo providing some support as well.

Samberg had another strong showing in what was just his second game back from a broken foot he sustained while blocking a slapshot from Nashville Predators forward Steven Stamkos back on Nov. 23.

It’s not difficult to quantify the boost that Samberg provided to the defence corps as a whole and to Pionk, who has cycled through a revolving door of defence partners during the past seven weeks.

Samberg had three shots on goal, a hit and three more blocked shots and also chipped in an assist on the Ehlers goal that gave the Jets a 1-0 lead early in the first period, though he was quick to downplay his contribution — a calm cross-ice zone exit.

“I didn’t do a whole lot, to be honest,” said Samberg. “Just get the puck to the right players, let them do their magic. That’s pretty much what it was.”

Samberg was north of 23 minutes of ice time — including plenty of taxing minutes — in each of the two games played on consecutive days.

“It actually feels pretty good. I’m just a little tired,” said Samberg.

“I’m ready to take a nice long nap. It was fine. Good to get back out there.”

THE PASS(ES)

In order to extend the lead late in the second period, the Jets completed a series of smart passes in the offensive zone.

The first saw Jets Morrissey find Kyle Connor in the slot with a nifty saucer pass.

With a pair of Avalanche defenders applying pressure on Connor, he noticed Mark Scheifele all alone on the backdoor and ensured that his pass found him — when most thought he might be trying to get a shot of his own off.

For Scheifele, it was his team-leading 25th goal and moved him to 50 points for the season — joining Connor — who has 23 goals and 55 points in 44 games.

Scheifele also moved into a tie for 2nd in the NHL in goals, trailing only Leon Draisaitl of the Edmonton Oilers.

THE KEY PLAY

Nikolaj Ehlers set the tone by taking a pass from Dylan Samberg, accelerating through the neutral zone and ripping a shot past Mackenzie Blackwood 72 seconds into the contest.

THE THREE STARS

Connor Hellebuyck, Jets, 22 saves for his league-leading sixth shutout of the season.

Nikolaj Ehlers, Jets. Two goals, three shots on goal, three hits, two blocked shots

Dylan Samberg, Jets. One assist, team-leading 24:47 of ice time.

EXTRA, EXTRA

Jets defenceman Logan Stanley left the game with 5:29 to go in the first period after taking a puck in the face. He returned to start the second and finished the game with 12:43 of ice time on the third pairing with Dylan Coghlan.

With Namestnikov scratched with a lower-body issue and officially listed as day-to-day, Dominic Toninato suited up for the Jets for the first time this season. In what was the 185th NHL game of Toninato's career, he took 13 shifts for eight minutes and 20 seconds of ice time, including 1:27 while shorthanded.

According to Natural Stat Trick, the Jets held a decisive 14-3 edge in high-danger chances at five-on-five.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/connor-hellebuyck-earns-shutout-as-jets-smother-avalanche>

Connor Hellebuyck earns shutout as Jets smother Avalanche

By Gordon Anderson, Winnipeg Sun

Fresh off celebrating his 300th win in a pre-game ceremony laden with commemorative gifts on Friday night, Connor Hellebuyck gifted those in attendance.

Hellebuyck turned in a 22-save performance as the Jets beat the Colorado Avalanche 3-0 on Saturday night.

The rangy netminder earned his league-leading sixth shutout and league-best 26th win. Hellebuyck was named the first star.

“He had an easy night (smiling),” Jets head coach Scott Arniel said, his voice dripping with sarcasm. “Yeah, we only gave up five five-on-five chances, so easy night. No. Never, ever discredit a guy that gets a shutout. I mean he had to make stops. He knew that they were trying to get their (shot) volume. And that’s another thing we did a really good job of tonight, was get in shot lanes. We did a really good job of making sure that not all those pucks got to the net front. But when stuff happens, he’s there. Their second power play, they seemed to throw a lot more pucks at our net, attacked it a little bit more, and he certainly had to be big.”

It might be a little bit early to study the standings earnestly, but the way the Jets earned an important win over a division foe cannot be oversold.

“We put it all together,” Arniel said. “It was a real solid game against a different opponent ... [Colorado], there’s a transition and speed game that they have. I thought we did a fantastic job of eliminating that.”

Ehlers scored twice, his 13th and 14th goals of the season. He is averaging slightly more than a point per game against Colorado with 14 goals and 14 assists in 27 career games.

Not only did the Jets increase their central division record to 12-4-0, but they pushed their advantage over the Avalanche to eight points with one game left to play in the four-game series.

“Obviously, four-point games are huge,” Avs goaltender Mackenzie Blackwood said. “You give a team you’re chasing a four-point lead on you or you take a four-point head start of them. They’re important games and it’s usually why they’re hard checking, hard fought.”

Blackwood (14-11-4) turned aside 26 shots. Blackwood is 8-2-1 since he joined Colorado via a trade with the San Jose Sharks on Dec. 9.

The Avalanche (26-17-1) was shut out for the second time this season, both games against the Jets. The local side won 1-0 at home on Nov. 7 and then lost 5-2 in Colorado on Dec. 31.

“I feel like we did really good job against them,” Jets d-man Dylan Samberg said. “The past two games have been good, defensively as a team. We held them to minimal scoring chances, which is what you’ve got to do against teams like this.”

Mark Scheifele also scored for the Jets (29-12-3). Winnipeg is 16-4-3 at home and 21-0-1 when leading after two periods of play.

The Jets started brightly, converting with their third shot on goal as Ehlers manoeuvred around two Avs defenceman and beat Blackwood to the glove side with a shot from the right face-off circle for his 13th of the season at 1:08 of the first period.

“At first I should have probably not skated away from him,” Ehlers said of the pass from Dylan Samberg. “He was getting pressured a little bit and I probably should have come over and

maybe he could have chipped it. But at the end of the day, he skated, made a great pass to me and I saw some room in the middle. But again, it was also (Cale) Makar skating on my left side, so I knew I wasn't going to be able to just skate through on a breakaway. So tried a little stop and just ripped it"

The Jets were credited with four shots in the first period against the Kings on Friday. Seven minutes into this contest, the Jets had five shots.

Cole Perfetti had a chance to double the lead not long after the Ehlers goal, but Blackwood slid left to right across the crease to make a right-foot save.

Kyle Connor went in alone on Blackwood just past the halfway mark of the second period but fanned on the shot, the puck flipping harmlessly onto the left pad of The Avs netminder. Connor had another gilt-edged opportunity to score a minute later but backhanded the puck off the left post.

Connor finally got on the scoreboard when he picked up the primary assist on Scheifele's 25th of the season at 15:53 of the second period.

Josh Morrissey circled the net and passed the puck Connor in the slot. The winger pushed the puck to Scheifele alone to the right of Blackwood. The one-timer was a mere formality for the Jets second leading scorer with 50 points.

Ehlers scored into the empty net at 19:03 of the third period to seal the deal for the home side.

Denver Post

<https://www.denverpost.com/2025/01/11/avalanche-jets-blackwood-hellebuyck-shutout/>

Jets' Connor Hellebuyck shuts out Avalanche in Winnipeg again

By Corey Masisak

If Colorado has another trip to Winnipeg this season, it will be during the Stanley Cup Playoffs. The Avalanche will have to hope it can find its mojo from the 2024 postseason.

The Avs made the second of two regular-season appearances at Canada Life Centre on Saturday, and for the second time, they did not score a goal. Connor Hellebuyck pitched his third straight regular-season shutout against Colorado, helping the Jets to a 3-0 victory.

While the Jets were playing in a back-to-back, both games were at home, while the Avalanche was playing for the third time in four nights spanning three cities. The Avs scored 17 goals across three games in this building during the 2024 playoffs but had trouble generating chances in the final 40 minutes Saturday night en route to a second loss in three games on this road trip.

Colorado's top guys got a little pass-heavy. Winnipeg's defensive structure also did a great job of limiting great chances for the Avs. There were some, but Hellebuyck had a great look at most of the best ones and rebound opportunities were hard to come by.

It was a big four-point swing in the Central Division. The Jets' lead on the Avs is now back up to eight points. Colorado had drawn within five before this trip started. The Avs will get one more game against the Jets, on Jan. 22 at Ball Arena. They'll need that one in regulation, or the chances of chasing down the Jets will look pretty small.

Here are some observations from another long night in Manitoba for the Avs:

1. Another early hole to dig out of at Canada Life Centre felt very familiar. Nikolaj Ehlers collected a pass in the neutral zone and was able to get past Devon Toews and Cale Makar in a 1-on-2 situation before snapping a shot into the top-right corner behind Mackenzie Blackwood. Ehlers' goal was just 1:08 into the game.

The last time Colorado came to Winnipeg, Gabe Vilardi scored 1:06 after puck drop on Nov. 7. That one came on a 2-on-1 and was the only goal in a 1-0 win for the Jets.

2. Blackwood hasn't been beaten cleanly on many shots since arriving in Denver, but Ehlers wired that one. Colorado's goaltender settled in after the first goal. He faced tougher chances than his counterpart at the other end, particularly in the second period. He finished with 26 saves.

If this is a "down" game for Blackwood — one goal on a great shot, one after a fortunate bounce that he had no chance on — the Avalanche will certainly be happy with that.

3. The Avs controlled things for a decent chunk of the first period after falling behind. Given that Winnipeg played the night before, it felt like there was a chance for Colorado to take advantage of a tired team. But the second period was a bit of a dud for the Avs.

The Jets had a 12-5 advantage in shots on goal, but more glaring was 9-0 in high-danger scoring chances, per Natural Stat Track.

4. It doesn't get more dangerous than a puck finding its way to Mark Scheifele alone near the left post. The Avs had the play defended well until Josh Morrissey sent the puck from Blackwood's right into the slot. Two Avalanche players — Calvin de Haan and Artturi Lehkonen — left Scheifele and darted toward the puck.

Kyle Connor touched the puck first in a clatter of sticks, and Scheifele swung around the other side of the net to find a layup waiting for him.

5. The Avs had two power-play chances. One was pretty forgettable. The second, early in the third period, was much better. Colorado generated six shot attempts and three shots on goal, but it was another empty night with the man advantage.

That's five games in a row without one, just when it seemed like the power play was getting hot again. Colorado is now 4 for 41 with the extra man, dating back over the past 17 games.