

## **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/sports/2025/01/21/jets-gm-stands-up-for-stanley>

### ***Jets GM stands up for Stanley Injuries have affected towering blue-liner's development, says Cheveldayoff***

By: Mike McIntyre

DENVER — Logan Stanley doesn't need anyone to fight his battles. The 6-7 defenceman for the Winnipeg Jets is no stranger to dropping his gloves when required.

However, his general manager wanted to make a few things clear Tuesday as he spoke with the Free Press about a number of topics — including the polarizing player he drafted 18th-overall in the 2016 NHL draft.

"I've never told a coach who to put in the lineup," said Kevin Cheveldayoff.

That should put to rest the theory many have floated that he is ordering Jets coach Scott Arniel to keep rolling out Stanley, despite some tough nights of the office which have made him a target of vitriol for at least a vocal portion of the fan-base.

"Specifically to Logan and the roster in general, coaches makes decisions on the roster. Who's in. who's out. We have eight defencemen. It's (Arniel's) choice who to play," said Cheveldayoff.

"Coaches make decisions. I've never seen a coach make a decision not with the best interest of trying to win."

Arniel has done plenty of that in his rookie year, with a 31-14-3 record that has the Jets on top of the Central Division and Western Conference. Stanley has appeared in 34 of those 48 games, putting up eight points (1G, 7A), a team-leading 61 penalty minutes and a plus-six.

The 26-year-old Stanley has also made some costly mistakes, including one last week against the Vancouver Canucks in which his turnover led to the only goal to beat Connor Hellebuyck in what turned into a 6-1 Jets victory. Some of the fans in attendance at Canada Life Centre booed Stanley on his next shift when he touched the puck.

"There's not a lot of perfect players in this league," said Cheveldayoff.

"If you go back to the playoff series against Edmonton (in 2021), everyone seems to forget the role that he played there in winning four straight against Edmonton. He was a regular shift player, he played all the games. So he's on a pretty good trajectory as a developing player at that point in time. Now he ends up having a bunch of injuries there. Does his development get changed? Or stalled or whatever? Those are things you don't know, you can't prognosticate."

It was suggested Stanley's presence could be a sign his team could use an upgrade or two when it comes to team toughness, which can be a big factor in the playoffs.

"You look at what's available out there on the marketplace. Sitting here today I can't tell you who or what is really going to be on the market at this point yet," said Cheveldayoff.

“Sometimes you’ll have opportunities to maybe look at something different, but this is the group we have here right now. It is interesting, because how many games did he play in the 15-1 run? He played quite a few. He played, and he’s part of a group of players that have gotten to this point. Whether he’s a bigger part or smaller part moving forward, we’ll see.”

It was also suggested to Cheveldayoff some of the angst about Stanley might be due to the fact the Jets have lost two defencemen — Johnathan Kovacevic and Declan Chisholm — to waivers in the past two years, with both now playing prominent roles with their new clubs (New Jersey and Minnesota).

“One thing I do know for sure is developing in the National Hockey League is a very unforgiving thing. It’s either unforgiving for the player or the coach or the management. At the end of the day the mindset is to win. And that’s what it’s always been here,” said Cheveldayoff.

“Sometimes there’s collateral damage along the way and we wish things wouldn’t have gone in certain directions or other directions.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/01/21/chevy-interested-in-toews-comeback-starting-with-jets>

### ***Chevy interested in Toews comeback starting with Jets ‘We would hope to be in the mix,’ says Jets GM***

By: Mike McIntyre

DENVER — Kevin Cheveldayoff typically doesn’t show his cards, especially as we get closer to the NHL trade deadline. The tight-lipped Winnipeg Jets general manager was willing to tip his hand on Tuesday when asked by the Free Press about one potential target.

That would be three-time Stanley Cup champion and local product Jonathan Toews, who has made it clear he wishes to resume his decorated career after missing the past year and-a-half dealing with serious immune-system issues and related illnesses.

The Jets are absolutely interested in his services and have already had some preliminary talks in that regard.

“Knowing Jonathan and knowing what standard he holds himself to as an athlete, and what impact he wants to have in games when he plays, I think it will be an interesting journey to watch how things unfold with him,” Cheveldayoff said as he sat down with travelling media at his team’s hotel in downtown Denver for a wide-ranging, 65-minute discussion.

“Certainly if he’s progressing to that point in time, it would be a real welcome conversation to see if there’s a fit both ways. I think it would be a great story for his career, too. Not that he needs another story to his career. But I think he’s proud of his roots and would be an interesting fit.”

Not only do the Jets have a need up the middle, which Toews might be able to help fill, but they’re also well positioned to take a legitimate post-season run with a 31-14-3 record that has them leading both the Central Division and the Western Conference.

The connections run deep, including between Toews — who captured his first championship in the 2009-10 season with the Chicago Blackhawks — and Cheveldayoff, who was the assistant GM of that team.

“There’s lots of things to unfold there. He’s an honest player, he’s not going to put himself in a situation...he’s going to want to play to win,” said Cheveldayoff.

“These guys don’t want to just say they want to play. He knows the standard he would have to be at, and we would certainly hope to be in that mix.”

The 36-year-old centre, who has played 1,067 career regular-season games, recently documented his recovery and healing process which has included a lengthy stint in India that he believes will pave the way for him to make a comeback.

“For him it’s going to come down to getting back skating on a regular basis and getting that level of conditioning,” said Cheveldayoff.

“I think he’s going to have to push himself to get his body to respond and see how it responds. I think there’s a lot of layers yet from that standpoint. We haven’t chatted in the last little while, but I certainly had some conversations with his representatives with respect to where things were.”

#### *Trade deadline looming*

Cheveldayoff was fairly coy about what other avenues he might pursue to bolster his roster but made it clear an aggressive approach will be taken by the March 7 deadline. Last year it was a couple big swings in forwards Sean Monahan and Tyler Toffoli along with defenceman Colin Miller. This time around?

“I think the bigger question is the assessment of the market. Are there the right plugs to fill those holes?” Cheveldayoff said.

“Can you make one move? Can you make two moves? Do you want to make one big move, do you want to make two other moves? And again, who’s out there. Everyone wants to say you need this. OK, if that is not out there, you may have to focus on going at it in a different direction. I think that’s where you have to have that kind of flexibility.”

With core players such as Connor Hellebuyck, Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Nikolaj Ehlers, Josh Morrissey and Adam Lowry all have outstanding years, the window remains wide open — and the Jets also have been banking valuable cap space they might be able to weaponize.

#### *Pending free agents*

Winnipeg also has a number of pending unrestricted free agents such as Ehlers, Neal Pionk, Vlad Namestnikov, Alex Iafallo and Mason Appleton, plus pending restricted free agents in Gabe Vilardi, Dylan Samberg and Morgan Barron who will need new deals as well.

Last year, Cheveldayoff took care of some of that business by signing potential UFAs Hellebuyck, Scheifele and Nino Niederreiter to extensions and didn’t rule out some similar activity here in the coming weeks.

“I’ve had conversations with them but I wouldn’t categorize them as negotiations,” is how he described the general state-of-affairs with all parties.

Ehlers is the most notable player who could potentially go to another team on July 1, and Cheveldayoff admitted the drafted-and-developed winger is a major part of the present.

“Nik’s someone that, obviously when you watch them grow up, they do kind of become like your kids, so to speak. It’s great to see the career that he’s had and having,” he said.

“At the end of the day, there’s nothing more that I’d love to do than raise a Cup with him. The business side will be the business side. Where that goes... That story’s still unfolding.”

### *Bar raised*

One thing is clear — the bar has been raised, which was evident by the fiery post-game reaction on Monday night from coach Scott Arniel after the Jets opened this quick two-game road trip with a sloppy 5-2 loss to Utah. Arniel, speaking with the Free Press after the game, cut the session short after calling his team’s performance “embarrassing” and “horses—t.”

“It’s one of those things where you set a standard and you preach the standard, you talk about a standard. And if you don’t adhere to the standard on Tuesday, it’s gone by Friday,” said Cheveldayoff.

“It’s one of those things as a coach, you have to nip things right in the bud right away and you move on from it.”

All eyes now turn to Wednesday, when the Jets will face the surging Colorado Avalanche. Winnipeg was set to practice here on Tuesday, but Arniel opted to cancel it.

That means there was no detailed update on Lowry, who didn’t return to Monday’s game following the first period with an undisclosed injury.

“It’s always a concern when you leave the game. It’s not one of those late in the third period, either,” is the extent of an update Cheveldayoff could provide.

Winnipeg also lost a potential call-up in second-year pro Nikita Chibrikov, who suffered a serious injury last weekend while playing a game with the Manitoba Moose and is now out long-term.

“Just devastating. You feel for kids like that when they have major injuries and they’re out for a long time,” said Cheveldayoff.

Winnipeg’s historic 15-1-0 start to this year has been followed up with a 16-13-3 since, which has some fans and pundits believing the Jets are on track to once again crash and burn in the playoffs as they have the last two seasons.

“I think if you look at all the teams they have different points in time where they do go through something like that,” said Cheveldayoff.

“I do just think that it’s about trying to set that standard and hold that standard. The story is going to unfold as the story unfolds. It’ll go chapter by chapter. We’re on chapter 48 right (as in game 48) now.”

Time will tell if this one has a happy ending.

“It’s a group that you want to win so badly for and it’s a group that, for me, when I walk through the room, I feel indebted to them for what they’ve given the organization, the community, and that and I feel that it’s my obligation to try to help them achieve their goals of trying to win the Cup,” said Cheveldayoff.

“And the fans as well. When I’m filling up gas or getting a coffee or whatever, and people start talking, you get reminded many, many, many times over how important the game is to the people.”

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-stung-by-loss-of-captain-lowry-in-utah>

### ***Jets stung by loss of captain Lowry in Utah***

By Gordon Anderson, Winnipeg Sun

What is more important at this time of the season, a 5-2 loss to the Utah Hockey Club or the status of Adam Lowry?

The Jets captain left the game in the first period and did not return.

“(Lowry is) a huge, huge part of this team and a special guy,” Nicolaj Ehlers told reporters in Utah after the three-goal defeat. “You don’t want to see anyone get injured, but every injury stings.”

Keep in mind, outside of the Jets’ inner sanctum, nobody knows the extent of the injury. Or the timeline.

Lowry played 5:18 seconds before he was shut down for the evening.

“Our captain, our leader,” d-man Dylan DeMelo said. “We did miss him out there for sure. And when Gabe was out for a bit, we missed him as well. I was happy to see him come back. Obviously, a bit of a scary play, you know, an inadvertent (collision) – guys kind of run into each other, but happy to see that he was back.”

Gabriel Vilardi collided with Alex Kerfoot eight minutes into the second period. He temporarily left the bench but did return. Vilardi logged 15:36 of ice time over 19 shifts.

Head coach Scott Arniel didn’t shed much light on the Lowry injury.

“I don’t know yet,” he said, exiting stage left. “I don’t know anything that way.”

DeMelo was practical with his thoughts when Lowry left for the room.

“I mean more, it’s opportunity for guys to play, and you hope that you can kind of take that chance and run with it,” he said. “And unfortunately, we weren’t able to do that tonight.”

DeMelo scored his third goal of the season at 11:48 of the third. Nino Niederreiter also scored a third period goal for the Jets, his 13th. Nikolaj Ehlers picked up two assists.

Connor Hellebuyck (28-7-2) turned aside 23 of 27 pucks.

### *Too many zeroes*

The Jets continue to lead the league in powerplay efficiency at 32.1%, heading into Tuesday night league action, despite a recent downward trend.

On Monday the club didn't get to show off the league's best five-on-four. In fact, the Jets are 4-14 with the man advantage in their last 10 games.

"There are things that we can do better, to draw penalties," DeMelo said. "We can drive our feet a little bit more, maybe take more pucks to the net, to cause some holds or things of that nature. I don't know, just kind of spit balling, but at the end of the day, you have to always look internally first and see what you can do. You know, we haven't scored a ton of bulls either."

In three games during that 10-game stretch, they didn't get a single man-advantage opportunity.

"We've got to find a way to score goals, or at least be more threatening in certain areas," Ehlers said. "First and foremost, we got to look in the mirror, and we know deep down and in that room that we've got a lot more to give on that front. And we've shown it for most of the year."

"We can't control what the refs are going to do," DeMelo added. "Refs miss calls all every game both ways. I mean, it's just the nature of the business. They're doing the best they can. But it's a fast game. Things happen there."

### *Inside information*

Jets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff was interviewed on TSN during the first intermission against Utah.

He revealed a couple of tidbits to get the masses chattering.

With the club knocking on the penthouse door of the NHL standings with less than two weeks remaining in January, would the GM entertain the idea of bolstering the squad for a playoff run?

He seemed non-committal.

"We have always been aggressive (at the trade deadline), if the opportunity is there," Cheveldayoff said. "One thing is for sure, for 47 games this group has earned what they have got, has shown a lot of passion in trying to do things right."

Perhaps it is a bit early to delve into contract status, but the Jets have several key players who are either RFAs or UFAs heading into next season.

A partial list of notables includes Nikolaj Ehlers, Neal Pionk Alex Iafallo, Gabe Vilardi, Dylan Samberg Mason Appleton and Vladislav Namestnikov.

"I haven't had any negotiations with any of the free agents yet, as far as sitting down and talking to them about nitty-gritty of contracts, but I have had conversations with many of the RFA and UFA free agents," Cheveldayoff said.

Cheveldayoff briefly commented on Arniel's performance. The former NHL player is the first coach in league history to win his first eight games.

“The time Arniel had with our organization over the last couple of years has been invaluable, but I really believe the opportunity that he has had to run the bench himself, when Rick Bowness had to take his leaves of absence, I think it gave him a real understanding of this group,” the GM said.

The ex-Jet was appointed head coach on May 24 of last year.

“We are not trying to be a carbon copy as he has strong beliefs,” Cheveldayoff said. “When a guy gets another opportunity to be in charge of an NHL team, they learn over time. When I sat down with him, I guess three years ago now, to interview for the job at that point you could tell he had been taking notes and learning from so many different people along the way. And to understand today’s player has been important.”

#### *Up next*

The Jets (31-14-3) are in Colorado (28-19-1) on Wednesday night. The two teams last knocked heads during the recent eight-game homestand, with Connor Hellebuyck earning his league-leading sixth shutout, as the Jets won 3-0 on Jan. 11.

Heading into league action on Tuesday night the Avalanche are in possession of the first wildcard spot in the West. They are fourth in the Central Division and eight points in arrears of the first-place Jets.

The Jets have won two of three versus the Avs this season. They won 1-0 on Nov. 7 and lost 5-2 on New Year’s Eve.

Since the loss to Winnipeg, the Avs are 2-2-0, with wins coming against the New York Rangers and the Dallas Stars. They lost to the Edmonton Oilers and the Minnesota Wild.

Speaking of the Jets, after winning three straight games, the locals have now dropped two in a row.

Puck drop is 8:30 p.m. CST at the Ball Arena

#### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10970554/analysis-kevin-cheveldayoff-winnipeg-jets-trade-deadline/amp/>

#### ***ANALYSIS: What moves will Winnipeg Jets GM Cheveldayoff make at deadline?***

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

Winnipeg Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff is pretty adept at holding his cards close to his vest. His poker face in local circles is notorious for keeping fans, media and even his players wondering about his plans.

And to be fair, in a passionate hockey market like ours, there’s probably no other shrewd way of doing business in deflecting rumours and innuendo.

So it wasn't without surprise that his brief summit on 680 CJOB before his club's last game in Utah provided a great conversation, but very little in understanding the team's path to potential improvement at, or prior to, the NHL's trade deadline.

Cheveldayoff — the only GM the franchise in Winnipeg has ever known — understands and excels at the game's administration. He has never been afraid to push his chips in, roll the dice and take a gamble on making his team better.

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And with his Jets leading their division and flirting with top spot overall, this year will probably be no different for him as an active player in the annual sweepstakes the trade deadline creates. One would suggest that based on Cheveldayoff's stack of chips — in this case, cap space, draft picks and prospects — jumping through the wide-open window to win with an upgrade here or there would be astute.

That is why most believe Cheveldayoff will almost certainly make a deal leading up to March 7 to improve his team, either up front, on the back end or both. And how that looks remains to be seen, whether it's a big name like centre Brock Nelson, for instance, or an important depth piece to help the penalty kill or provide toughness.

Now, Cheveldayoff's coyness the other day does leave a lot to speculation, but he did say sometimes the trades that do happen are the ones you've never even talked about.

But for the next six weeks, trade talk will dominate the conversation around his team and we know that Cheveldayoff will be working to play the right cards to improve his club without — to us at least — ever tipping his hand.

## **The Score**

<https://www.thescore.com/nhl/news/3197383/amp>

### ***Cheveldayoff wants Jets in mix if Toews succeeds in comeback***

by Sean O'Leary

Winnipeg Jets general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff is intrigued by the idea of adding Jonathan Toews to the club if the veteran center's comeback plan comes to fruition.

"Certainly if he's progressing to that point in time, it would be a real welcome conversation to see if there's a fit both ways," Cheveldayoff told Mike McIntyre of the Winnipeg Free Press. "I think it would be a great story for his career, too. Not that he needs another story to his career. But I think he's proud of his roots and would be an interesting fit."

Toews is a Winnipeg native and has connections with Cheveldayoff dating back to their time with the Chicago Blackhawks.

Toews stepped away from the sport to get healthy after dealing with the effects of chronic inflammatory response syndrome and symptoms of long COVID. The illness forced him to miss the entire 2021-22 campaign and two months of the following season. He hasn't played since 2022-23.



The 36-year-old recently opened up about his desire to play again, and Cheveldayoff thinks his first-place club could be attractive.

"There's lots of things to unfold there," Cheveldayoff said. "He's an honest player, he's not going to put himself in a situation ... he's going to want to play to win."

Cheveldayoff added, "These guys don't want to just say they want to play. He knows the standard he would have to be at, and we would certainly hope to be in that mix."

Toews won the Stanley Cup three times as captain of the Blackhawks and has registered 119 points in 137 career playoff games. He would need to be on a team's reserve list by March 7 to be eligible to play in the 2025 postseason.

### **Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/report-jets-hope-to-be-in-mix-for-jonathan-toews/>

### ***Report: Jets 'hope to be in mix' for Jonathan Toews***

By Sportsnet Staff

In late December, three-time Stanley Cup champion Jonathan Toews revealed in an interview with GQ that he hasn't ruled out giving his NHL career another shot.

And his potential comeback story could end up being a homecoming one, as well.

Speaking with Jets media Tuesday in Denver, general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff shared that Winnipeg would be more than open to adding the former Chicago Blackhawks captain into its mix down the middle.

Cheveldayoff served as the assistant general manager in Chicago from 2009-2011, capturing the Stanley Cup with Toews in the 2009-10 season.

"Knowing Jonathan and knowing what standard he holds himself to as an athlete, and what impact he wants to have in games when he plays, I think it will be an interesting journey to watch how things unfold with him," Cheveldayoff said, according to The Winnipeg Free Press's Mike McIntyre.

"Certainly if he's progressing to that point in time, it would be a real welcome conversation to see if there's a fit both ways. I think it would be a great story for his career, too. Not that he needs another story to his career. But I think he's proud of his roots and would be an interesting fit."

A Winnipeg native, Toews attended the University of North Dakota to play his amateur hockey before being selected third overall by Chicago in 2006.

He went on to spend 15 seasons with the franchise before stepping away from hockey in August 2023 "to give [himself] the time and space to fully heal and enjoy life to the fullest once again." That came shortly after he missed the entire 2020-21 bubble season while recovering from COVID-19 and chronic immune response syndrome.

After stepping away from hockey, Toewes travelled to India for an Ayurvedic Panchakarma detox and later detailed his experience in an Instagram post. The detox has seemingly helped him recover physically and return to a position where resuming his NHL career is even a possibility.

He told GQ as much, saying that "there's a part of me that really doesn't feel like my career is over yet, and who knows what this next part of the journey looks like, as far as getting back on the ice and trying to make a return to the NHL. There's never any guarantees in life, but I'm going to give it my best shot."

So, with the door seemingly open to a return, what would it take for a team to present itself as the right situation for the 36-year-old?

"There's lots of things to unfold there. He's an honest player, he's not going to put himself in a situation... he's going to want to play to win," Cheveldayoff said Tuesday.

"These guys don't want to just say they want to play. He knows the standard he would have to be at, and we would certainly hope to be in that mix."

The Jets, at least on paper, make an obvious fit. They currently sit atop the Western Conference with a 31-14-3 record — as of Tuesday night — and have a need for a middle-six centreman. Adam Lowry recently got a bump up to Winnipeg's second line to replace Vladislav Namestnikov, but the Jets captain's status is currently up in the air after he left Monday's loss to Utah early.

On Jan. 2, Daily Faceoff's Frank Seravalli listed Winnipeg as one of three teams that he thought could be of mutual interest to Toews, with the other two being the Toronto Maple Leafs and Colorado Avalanche.

However, while giving his atypical peek behind the curtain on Tuesday, Cheveldayoff straight out said that he has already been having conversations with Toews and his camp.

"I think he's going to have to push himself to get his body to respond and see how it responds. I think there's a lot of layers yet from that standpoint," Winnipeg's GM shared.

"We haven't chatted in the last little while, but I certainly had some conversations with his representatives with respect to where things were."