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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-comrie-records-first-shutout-of-season>

***Three things - Comrie records first shutout of season
Comrie makes 29 saves in 3-0 win over Carolina***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG - Eric Comrie made 29 saves for his first shutout of the season as the Winnipeg Jets beat the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0 at Canada Life Centre. The Jets pushed their win streak to seven games and improved their record to 38-14-3. Nino Niederreiter, Neal Pionk and Rasmus Kupari scored for Winnipeg who will host the Islanders on Friday in their final game before the 4-Nations Face-Off break.

PP2

The Jets have been focusing on good starts and for the third straight game it was the power play that helped them open the scoring. Alex Lafallo did all the work before dishing over to Nino Niederreiter and the Swiss forward scored his 14th of the season to make it 1-0 Jets at 19:18 of the first period. It was also the third straight game that the Jets second power play unit opened the scoring. Even more impressive is the fact that Carolina came into the night leading the NHL in penalty-kill percentage at 86.3%.

Winnipeg would expand their lead in the second period at 3:13, Neal Pionk had a clear lane to the slot and unload a slapshot that beat Pyotr Kochetkov over the glove for Pionk's 8th of the season. It was the first time that the Hurricanes had given up two power play goals in a game since November 30, 2024, and Carolina had allowed just two power play goals (25-for-27) COMBINED in their last 12.

TWO-FOR-TWO ON GOAL CHALLENGES

Carolina thought they had opened the scoring on the power play in the first period when Jackson Blake fired a shot past Eric Comrie. The Jets challenged the call saying there was goaltender interference, and the replay showed that Mikko Rantanen's stick made contact with Comrie's and that was enough to have the goal called back. Later in the game, Rasmus Kupari appeared to give the Jets a 3-0 lead, but the officials ruled that he interfered with Kochetkov. Again, the Jets challenged and again it worked in their favour. Huge credit went out to video coach Matt Prefontaine after the game.

"So Matty is the best in the business. When I was in Buffalo, our video coach there we were talking about Matty like he's the greatest thing ever," said Comrie.

"He's the Connor McDavid of video coaches."

BACK-TO-BACK WINS FOR COMRIE

Eric Comrie has now won back-to-back starts and recorded his first shutout since March 25, 2023, when he was a member of the Buffalo Sabres. The 29-year-old has got the run support he was lacking for a stretch as the Jets have scored eight goals in his last two starts. Winnipeg also extended their franchise record to 16 games where they have held the opponent to under 30 shots. The Jets are 27-5-2 this season when they hold their opponent to under 30 shots.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/carolina-hurricanes-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-february-4>

***Comrie makes 29 saves, Jets shut out Hurricanes for 7th straight win
Niederreiter gets goal, assist for Winnipeg; Carolina drops 2nd in row after 7-game point streak***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG — Eric Comrie made 29 saves to help the Winnipeg Jets win their seventh straight game, 3-0 against the Carolina Hurricanes at Canada Life Centre on Tuesday.

“It feels great. It’s always fun to get a shutout,” Comrie said. “Once again, the team was awesome in front of me. This is a fun group of guys to play with. I mean, this is unbelievable. Every single night they just battle as hard as they can, give it everything they’ve got and it’s just a special team to be part of it. And I think myself and [goaltender Connor Hellebuyck] are very happy to play with this group we have.”

Nino Niederreiter had a goal and an assist, and Neal Pionk and Rasmus Kupari also scored for the Jets (38-14-3), who have won seven straight for the third time this season.

“It’s a tough league to win in, and it takes what it takes to get a win,” Niederreiter said. “Obviously, we knew how good Carolina is. They’re a high shot volume team, so we knew we had to get some blocks. I’m glad we found a way to win.”

Pyotr Kochetkov made 27 saves for the Hurricanes (32-18-4), who have lost two straight after earning a point in their previous seven (6-0-1).

“I mean, they got two on the power (play). We didn’t get any,” said Carolina forward Sebastian Aho, who will represent Finland in the 4 Nations Face-Off from Feb. 12-20. “The first one, goalie [interference] and all kinds of stuff, so I don’t know. I feel like, yeah, special teams for sure cost us the game. It’s a tough loss. But 5-on-5 — that’s a good team, they don’t give up too much, but we had our looks for sure [and] enough chances to win the hockey game. But obviously we’re not able to cash in and that’s kind of been the trend as of late here. It’s got to be better.”

Carolina appeared to take a 1-0 lead when it scored on the power play at 15:37 of the first period, but Winnipeg challenged for goaltender interference, and the call was reversed following a video review.

“It definitely changes, not the outcome, but the outlook of the game,” Hurricanes coach Rod Brind’Amour said. “If it goes in, we’re up one, we’re feeling pretty good. But obviously, we know how those go. Sometimes you win them, sometimes you don’t.”

Niederreiter then gave the Jets a 1-0 lead on the power play at 19:18 of the first when Alex Iafallo’s cross-slot pass set him up for a one-timer from the bottom of the circle.

“This was one of [Niederreiter’s] better games,” Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. “He’s played some good ones, some strong ones, but I thought tonight in all areas... His wall battles, when he’s really on his game, he wins those whether it’s on the breakouts or whether it’s on the offensive side. He had a lot of situations where he was net front, had some rebounds, had some

tips, created sort of the chaos that's around there, from just his big body being there. I think on Pionk's goal, he was the one battling on the wall to dig that out of there. So that's a lot of good things that you'd like to see from a guy like him, a big power forward."

Pionk made it 2-0 at 3:13 of the second. He picked up a loose puck, skated down the slot and beat Kochetkov with a slap shot over his glove.

"Carolina is extremely aggressive, one of the most aggressive teams in the League on the PK," Arniel said. "That came down to a three against three battle and we came up with the puck. [Hurricanes defenseman Dmitry] Orlov blocks a shot, but Pionk was ready to pounce on the next one and that's the stuff we need to do."

Winnipeg went 2-for-4 on the power play. Entering Tuesday, the Jets held the NHL's top power play at 33.3 percent, while the Hurricanes had the best penalty kill at 86.3 percent.

"We knew that the power play was going to be a big part of their game, and that was the difference," Brind'Amour said. "So, it really just came down to that. I thought both teams kind of had their opportunities at different times, but that was the difference in the game."

Kupari jammed in his own rebound at 16:17 of the third for the 3-0 final.

"It's something that you're trying to implement, the buy-in from everybody, that everybody plays the same way when we don't have the puck," Arniel said. "The skillset is different for everyone but we try to do a lot of similar things. Our D-zone and how we play without the puck, there is no one way for one group and another way for another. That's the buy-in part that happens from everybody."

NOTES: The Jets became the fourth team in the past 20 years to record at least three seven-game winning streaks in the same season, joining the Boston Bruins (five in 2022-23), St. Louis Blues (three in 2019-20), Tampa Bay Lightning (four in 2018-19) and Anaheim Ducks (three in 2013-14). ... Winnipeg's seven shutouts are the second most in the NHL this season, trailing only the Ottawa Senators, who have eight. ... Winnipeg holds an NHL-best 21-5-3 record on home ice this season. ... The Jets have held opponents to fewer than 30 shots in 16 consecutive games. ... Carolina defenseman Scott Morrow had two shots in 10:42 of ice time in his season debut after he was recalled from Chicago of the American Hockey League on Monday.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2025/02/05/winnipeg-jets-carolina-hurricanes-game-story/>

Comrie Thrilled with 3-0 Shutout Over 'Canes as Jets Win Seventh Straight Game

By Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

Eric Comrie finally got what he deserved on Tuesday — in a good way.

The Winnipeg Jets' backup goalie made 29 saves for his first shutout of the season in a 3-0 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes that extended the team's win streak to seven games.

The performance moved Comrie's record to 5-7-1 in a campaign in which his teammates have often blamed themselves for not helping him out enough.

"It's always fun to get a shutout. I mean, I'm never going to complain about that," Comrie said. "Once again the team was awesome in front of me. This is a fun group of guys to play with."

It was the third shutout of Comrie's career. His last one was March 25, 2023, when he played for the Buffalo Sabres in a victory over the New York Islanders.

"We're always worrying about the process to get the result," Comrie said. "When you get the results you've got to make sure you celebrate results ... make sure you understand you worked hard for that and can achieve that and did the best you can."

Nino Niederreiter and Neal Pionk both scored with the man advantage, giving the Jets an NHL-best 51 power-play goals this season.

Rasmus Kupari also scored and Niederreiter added an assist for Winnipeg (38-14-3) in front of 13,802 fans at Canada Life Centre.

Pyotr Kochetkov stopped 27 shots for Carolina (32-18-4).

Carolina went into the match with the league's best penalty kill, and were on a run of seven straight games without giving up a power-play goal.

The Hurricanes had the game's first power play late in the opening period and Jackson Blake scored, but a successful Winnipeg coach's challenge wiped it off the board for goaltender interference.

"It changes the outlook of the game," Hurricanes head coach Rod Brind'Amour said of the disallowed goal. "If it goes in, we're up one, we're feeling pretty good. But obviously we know how those go. Sometimes you win them, sometimes you don't."

Jets forward Vladislav Namestnikov also had a goal disallowed for kicking the puck into the net with six minutes left.

Kupari's goal was initially ruled no good because of goaltender interference, but a coach's challenge overturned the decision to make it 3-0 at 16:17.

Comrie threw heavy praise at Winnipeg video and analytics coach Matt Prefontaine for his role in challenges.

"He's the Connor McDavid of video coaches," Comrie said.

Comrie also thanked Niederreiter for blocking a shot.

"He's awesome. He does it every single night. I have a lot of respect for Nino," he said.

Niederreiter helps him before practices so he can stay tuned up for the few games he plays when star netminder Connor Hellebuyck gets a rest.

“I’m so thankful that I have a guy like (Niederreiter) to come out on the ice and shoot on me before and get me ready for my games,” Comrie said. “Because with a guy like Connor I don’t play as much as some guys, so I have to stay ready in a different way.”

Niederreiter downplayed his assistance.

“It’s nice, but at the end of the day he’s the goalie and he made some terrific stops tonight,” Niederreiter said. “I’m very happy he had a chance to get another win and, obviously, a shutout is great. I’m happy for him.”

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11002957/comrie-records-first-shutout-in-almost-two-years-as-winnipeg-jets-blank-carolina-3-0/>

Comrie records first shutout in almost two years as Winnipeg Jets blank Carolina 3-0

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

With a long break for the Four Nations Faceoff looming, the Winnipeg Jets continue to play some of their best hockey of the season.

The latest example was a 3-0 win over the Carolina Hurricanes on Tuesday night in which their second power play unit scored twice, and backup goalie Eric Comrie earned his first shutout since Mar. 25, 2023 to extend the Jets win streak to seven games.

The Jets became one of just five teams in the last 20 years to have at least three – seven-game win streaks in the same season.

Nino Niederreiter had a goal and an assist for Winnipeg, while their league’s top ranked power play scored multiple goals for the 13th time this season.

The Jets won a pair of coach’s challenges in the win. One to take a Hurricanes goal off the scoreboard in the first period for goalie interference and another one to put a Jets goal on the scoresheet in the final frame that was originally disallowed, also for interfering with the netminder.

“Anytime those challenges go your way, they boost you,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “If they get off and get a one-nothing lead, they’re on the road and they can shut down with the best of them.

“But I like the way we responded. Our second power play scoring both those power play goals. I thought they did a great job, like they’ve done most of the year. So, those were big moments and it led to that win.”

It’s the second time in as many games the Jets have beaten a top-five team in the overall standings after defeating the Washington Capitals in overtime on Saturday.

The Jets now have an NHL best 38 wins and a league-leading 79 points.

Comrie made 29 stops for just his third career shutout, and the seventh of the season for the Jets. He's now won in back-to-back appearances after suffering losses in eight straight starts from November to mid-January.

"It's always fun to get a shutout," said Comrie. "I'm never going to complain about that. Once again, the team is awesome, awesome in front of me. This is a fun group of guys to play with. I mean, this is unbelievable. Every single night they just battle as hard as they can, give it everything they got, and it's just special for a team to be a part of."

The Jets held their opponent to under 30 shots on goal for the 16th straight game to extend their franchise record. The Jets were credited with 22 blocked shots.

"It's a tough league to win," said Niederreiter. "It takes what it takes to get a win and obviously we knew how good Carolina is as a team. They are a high shot volume team, so we knew we have to get some blocks and glad we found a way to win."

Carolina was given the game's first power play when the Jets were called for having too many men on the ice and thought they opened the scoring at the 15:37 mark.

Jackson Blake's shot beat Comrie through a crowd but Winnipeg challenged the play, believing there was goalie interference. Replays showed Mikko Rantanen entering the crease and making contact with Comrie's stick, impeding his ability to make a save, so the goal was taken off the board. Winnipeg then killed the remainder of the penalty.

With 1:05 to go in the first, Dmitry Orlov was called for tripping, pitting Carolina's league-best penalty kill against Winnipeg's top-ranked power play, and it didn't take long for the Jets to win that battle.

Alex Lafallo made a nice move along the wall to create some space for himself before sending a pass to Niederreiter for a one-timer that beat Pyotr Kochetkov with 42 seconds to go in the first.

Carolina nearly tied it with a late flurry but Comrie stood tall as Winnipeg carried a 1-0 lead and a 12-8 edge in shots on goal into the second.

The Hurricanes received their second penalty of the night 2:12 into the second when Taylor Hall was called for hooking, and once again Winnipeg's second power play unit took care of business.

A shot by Cole Perfetti was blocked by Orlov but the puck bounced to Neal Pionk as Orlov slid out of the picture. With lots of time and space, he walked in and walloped a slapshot over the shoulder of Kochetkov to make it 2-0.

Just 27 seconds later, Carolina got a power play when Parker Ford was called for tripping for his first NHL penalty. Rantanen almost scored but his attempt hit the post and sat loose in the crease for a moment before the Jets cleared it to safety.

With 51 seconds remaining in Ford's penalty, the Hurricanes had six players on the ice and were assessed a bench minor. Winnipeg's top PP unit actually got to see the ice after the 4-on-4 expired but couldn't get anything set up.

Carolina wound up outshooting the Jets 12-6 in the second, but Winnipeg carried their 2-0 lead into the third.

The game rolled along with not a whole lot happening but with six minutes left and a delayed penalty to Carolina pending, Vladislav Namestnikov scored to make it 3-0. However, upon review it was deemed that he kicked the puck in, so the goal was waved off. Winnipeg did not score on the ensuing power play.

Winnipeg had a second goal disallowed just over two minutes later. Rasmus Kupari got into the blue paint before jamming home a rebound past Kochetkov. It didn't seem like Kupari impeded Kochetkov but the goal was immediately waved off for goalie interference. The Jets decided to challenge the play and upon review, the call was overturned, giving Kupari his fifth goal of the season.

The only thing left to determine at that point was whether Comrie could get to the finish line with the clean sheet, and he did for his third career shutout.

Winnipeg will play their final game before the Four Nations Faceoff on Friday against the Islanders.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11004319/analysis-mark-scheifele-next-goal-winnipeg-jets-history-books/>

ANALYSIS: Scheifele's next goal puts him in Winnipeg Jets history books

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

It's been rare of late for Mark Scheifele to not find the scoresheet in a game for the Winnipeg Jets, but Tuesday night was one of those occurrences.

With much anticipation leading up to the team's return home before the 4 Nations break, and Scheifele on the cusp of delivering a franchise-record 329th goal, it seemed like the perfect spot for the stars to align and history to unfold.

As it sits, the record-setting will now need to wait until at least Friday, when the Jets next hit the ice, but what's another few days or even a week or two when you've waited 14 years for an organizational goal-scoring milestone to be owned by a Winnipeg Jet?

And therein lies the most important part of the record that's about to fall, as the further the Jets push on in Winnipeg, the more distant the franchise's beginnings in Atlanta become.

In other words, when Scheifele officially surpasses Ilya Kovalchuk for the all-time goal-scoring record — they are currently tied with 328 — Winnipeg's stamp on the franchise certainly becomes even more prominent.

For obvious reasons, it's difficult to even acknowledge the previous history of the team, but respectfully, the annals of the former Atlanta Thrashers did make the move north from Georgia to Manitoba almost 15 years ago.

And the fact that a player like Scheifele – Winnipeg’s first-ever draft pick and exclusively a Jet for 852 games and counting — is about to top the list for career goals speaks to the ownership this city has now secured of the team and vice versa.

It’s simple: Winnipeg Jets records are now being owned by Winnipeg Jets — and that is significant.

Sure, Mark Scheifele didn’t score a goal Tuesday night to break the record but the next time he does, it will probably be one of the most important goals in the franchise’s history to find the scoresheet.

TSN.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/they-were-dangerous-jets-second-line-drives-offensive-attack-in-overtime-win/>

Comrie blanks Hurricanes to help Jets win seventh straight (VIDEO)

Eric Comrie made 29 saves for his first shutout of the season. Dan Robertson and Kevin Sawyer breakdown the Jets' seventh straight win and why depth scoring shined against the Hurricanes.

Sportsnet.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-grateful-for-help-from-the-connor-mcdavid-of-video-coaches/>

Jets grateful for help from 'the Connor McDavid of video coaches'

By Jacob Stoller

WINNIPEG — While goalies are always quick to credit the players in front of them after a shutout, Eric Comrie went a different route on Thursday night.

The praise went to Matt Prefontaine, the Winnipeg Jets' video coach. Not a defenceman that made a painful blocked shot, or a forward that scored a couple of goals to provide run support.

Yes, the video coach.

Having orchestrated two successful coach's challenges — stripping the Carolina Hurricanes of a 1-0 lead in the first period and then later extending the lead to 3-0 in the third period — Prefontaine was the unofficial first star of the night.

And to those within the club, it was nothing out of the ordinary. Prefontaine, who is lauded within his industry and has given presentations at coaching conferences, has helped Winnipeg succeed on all but one of its seven challenges this season. The lone unsuccessful bid was that head-scratching missed goaltender interference call against Tampa Bay in November.

“Matty's the best in the business,” Comrie said after his 29-save shutout. “When I was in Buffalo, our video coach there (was) talking about Matty like he's the greatest thing ever. He's the Connor McDavid of video coaches. This is an actual conversation with (Buffalo Sabres) video

coach Justin White. He goes, 'You know Matty Prefontaine? What's he like as a guy, how good is he?' I was like, OK, now I understand how good he is."

The first challenge saw Winnipeg challenge for goaltender interference on Jackson Blake's power-play goal with just under four and a half minutes remaining in the first period.

"Anytime those challenges go your way, they boost you," Scott Arniel said. "If they get off and get a 1-0 lead, they're on the road and they can shut down with the best of them."

Typically, Prefontaine and hockey video coordinator James Cochrane only have half a minute, or so, to make a judgment call on a challenge. That's not a lot of time to decide on a challenge, which, if unsuccessful, results in a minor penalty

"There's a lot of pressure on them," Nino Niederreiter said.

That's what made the Jets' second challenge — where they contested that Rasmus Kupari had not interfered with Pyotr Kochetkov when scoring a goal in the third period — all the more risky. Granted, the Jets got a bit of love from the hockey gods, as a TV timeout after the goal allowed Prefontaine to take more time than usual to review the play.

"There are a bunch of different angles you have to look at," Arniel said. "That one, (specifically), the above (angle) wasn't really helping us because the referee had mentioned that it was interference on the goalie before the puck hit the goalie but it wasn't after we saw what we needed.... we didn't know that was the call. The referee did tell us it was goaltender interference prior to the puck hitting the goalie and once we saw all the video, it wasn't. We felt pretty confident that we were going to move forward."

Although they may not earn seven-figure salaries or have the type of notoriety that other members of the coaching staff do, video coaches are on the front lines of the team's game-planning. Prefontaine and Cochrane shoulder a tireless workload in an industry where work-life balance is already nonexistent. Before games, they're preparing pre-scout reports on opponents — going as far back as the last four games to get a good read on the team and then divvying up the game footage for the coaches. During the game, they monitor every single zone entry for offside, every puck touch for a high-stick, all the while tracking analytics and system trends to relay to the coaching staff during intermission.

On Tuesday, their around-the-clock efforts paid off.

Power play comes in waves

Lately, Winnipeg's power play prowess has extended beyond their first unit.

The team's second unit — which consists of Niederreiter, Cole Perfetti, Vladislav Namestnikov, Alex Iafallo and Neal Pionk — has scored four goals over the last three games. Two of which came on Thursday via Niederreiter and Pionk.

"Our first unit is elite, it's a lot of great players making great passes. It definitely looks a lot prettier than what we do," Niederreiter said. "We definitely have the mindset of getting pucks to the net and creating some chances that way."

The numbers back that up, with the second unit combining for four goals, six shots and seven chances over the last three games.

That bump in production is a direct result of them becoming more assertive, as was the case on Niederreiter's power play marker with 41.1 seconds remaining in the first period. It wasn't your typical tic-tac-toe goal but rather an entry play that created an odd-man situation and allowed Lafallo to feed a wide-open Niederreiter for a one-timer.

"Nino got a great pass (from Lafallo). The mindset is that if it's a faceoff, we're attacking, if it's an entry, we're trying to attack," Arniel explained. "Once you get set, then you're sort of going into the sequence. That group, they all can make plays and that's what you're seeing. I like that their mindset is to attack and that's what they did off that entry."

In an era where second power play units are becoming somewhat extinct, the Jets have found a way to carve out a second layer on the man advantage. And that's a big reason why their power play, as a whole, is on pace to post historic results.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/why-the-jets-need-to-go-all-in-and-what-that-could-look-like/>

Why the Jets need to go all-in, and what that could look like

By Jason Bukala

The Winnipeg Jets are one of the best stories this NHL season.

After getting off to a 15-1 start, the Jets still lead the league with 77 points after 54 games and are riding a six-game winning streak. They have the best goalie in the league in Connor Hellebuyck (33 wins, 2.04 GAA, .925 save percentage) and their top players have bought into a system that allows for creativity in the offensive zone, with an expectation that every skater has a role to fulfill defensively. Their combination of size, skill and compete leaves opponents with everything they can handle when they game plan playing against the Jets.

The organization has put itself in a position to contend for a Stanley Cup this spring, and I believe the Jets should take the opportunity to go all-in at the trade deadline. They have plenty of cap space (\$5.4 million today that could grow to \$9.6 million at the trade deadline) and enough draft capital and organizational prospect depth that trading partners will value.

But also, I believe it's imperative for the Jets to push their chips into the middle of the table now because the economics of the game are about to change in the coming years. With the current \$88 million salary cap set to rise to \$95.5 million next season, \$104 million in 2026-27 and \$113.5 million in 2027-28 I don't see how the Jets can come close to being a cap team in the future. Three years from now, the salary floor will be nearly what the current ceiling is. The Winnipeg Jets aren't the New York Rangers or Toronto Maple Leafs who will always be able to afford to spend to the cap ceiling. Their local revenue streams aren't as robust. There's little doubt Winnipeg will have an internal cap that might be slightly higher than the floor, but not close to the ceiling every year.

Leaning on my reasoning, here's my trade deadline strategy for the Jets:

WHAT ARE THEIR NEEDS?

The Jets don't have any glaring weaknesses as a team, but the penalty-kill has room for improvement and special teams success can be the difference in a playoff series. Here's a look at the statistical breakdown for the Jets:

The most important penalty-killer on at team is obviously the goaltender. Hellebuyck's save percentage overall is elite, but drops to .867 when the Jets are shorthanded. For comparison, Dallas Stars goaltender Jake Oettinger has an .875 save percentage on the PK, while Logan Thompson from the Washington Capitals has posted an .887 save percentage.

These comparisons fall in line with what I expected. The Jets aren't as proficient at killing penalties as the Capitals (83.4 per cent) or the Stars (84.4 per cent), but Hellebuyck isn't the issue. His save percentage is in range of the leading goalies in the category. So, we have to identify what needs to be done for them to improve their execution when down a man.

Here's a look at the Jets' forwards who are usually deployed in a PK role, along with their average ice time, number of hits and shot blocks for the year, and their winning percentage in the faceoff circle:

Here's a look at the Jets' defencemen who are deployed in a PK role, along with their average ice time, hits and shot blocks for the year:

Breaking down the above information leads to a simple conclusion: Winnipeg has a need to add a middle-six, and at worst bottom-six, forward and another defenceman to solidify their roster. The current group scores enough, executes on the power play, and keeps the puck out of their net at even strength. Adding a couple of cost-effective players, hopefully ones with term remaining on their contracts, will round out their roster nicely.

DRAFT CAPITAL

Before I present some trade targets for the Jets let's take a look at what they have to work with from a draft capital perspective. Here's what Winnipeg's draft grid looks like for the next three years:

TRADE PROSPECTS OR DRAFT PICKS?

I don't recommend the Jets trading one of their top prospects unless they absolutely have to. I would, however, consider moving their first-round pick in this draft cycle in the right deal. That pick is going to be a late first-round selection and knowing what I do about this draft class I value forwards already in the system like Brayden Yager and Colby Barlow more than the pick.

I would consider moving off forward Dmitri Rashevsky (146th overall in 2021) in the right scenario, especially if it looks like he isn't going to arrive in Winnipeg from Russia any time soon. Rashevsky is a solid prospect, but the 24-year-old still plays in the KHL for Dynamo Moscow and I haven't heard he is prepared to sign an NHL contract. Maybe he will, maybe he won't, but he has value and another team might believe they can convince him to come to the NHL.

Rashevsky has taken a bit of a step back from his 24G-19A season last year. He's produced 16G-12A in 2024-25, but he's still capable of providing moments like this:

TRADE PROPOSALS

Now comes the fun part, debating trade scenarios! Here are some targets for the Jets and what the deals could look like:

To Winnipeg: Noel Acciari, 5-foot-11, 209 pounds, right shot centre
To Pittsburgh: 2025 third-round pick, 2026 fifth-round pick

Acciari is signed through next season with a \$2 million cap hit. He won't move the needle a great deal offensively (Acciari only has 4G-4A this season) but he would improve the Jets' penalty-killing unit and add another layer of physicality to the lineup. Acciari averages 2:27 per game on the penalty-kill in Pittsburgh and has been credited with 115 hits and 64 shot blocks. He also wins 52 per cent of his draws.

To Winnipeg: Mario Ferraro, 6-feet, 209 pounds, left shot defenceman
To San Jose: 2026 first-round pick, 2027 third-round pick

Ferraro is only 26 years young. I'm not sure the Sharks are interested in moving him, but I'd be making the call and stepping up to pay for his services. Ferraro is under contract until the end of next season as well with a very affordable \$3.25 million cap hit. He would round out the Jets' defence corps nicely and can be deployed on the first penalty-killing unit. Ferraro averages 20:28 of ice time, with 2:24 coming on San Jose's PK. He's posted 115 hits and 77 shot blocks so far this season.

If the Jets were to pull off these two trades, they would have both Acciari and Ferraro under team control through next season and they both fit under the available cap space Winnipeg currently has to work with. If the players aren't interested in signing extensions, the Jets would have the option to move them in trade next year and recoup some of their assets in the process.

Those two trades would be my preferred route to acquire the needed forward and defenceman, but if they go a different route the Jets could also consider...

To Winnipeg: Colton Sissons, 6-foot-1, 201 pounds, right shot centre
To Nashville: 2026 third-round pick, 2027 third-round pick

Sissons' offence has fallen off this season (5G-8A) but he has a history of providing some secondary scoring (15G-20A last year). He's a mostly bottom-six forward who averages 14:25 of ice time with 2:08 coming on the penalty-kill in Nashville. Sissons has been credited with 68 hits, 50 shot blocks and wins 56 per cent of his draws. He has one more year left on his contract that costs \$2.857 million against the cap, but only has \$1.825 million in actual dollars remaining in the last year of the deal.

To Winnipeg: Jamie Oleksiak, 6-foot-7, 256 pounds, left shot defenceman
To Seattle: 2025 first-round pick, 2026 second-round pick, Kieron Walton

Oleksiak would also arrive in Winnipeg with another season left on his contract, with a cap hit of \$4.6 million but only \$3.75 million due in actual dollars in the final year. His contract does come with a 16-team no-trade list so Oleksiak will have to agree to being dealt to Winnipeg. He's a towering defenceman who averages 18:55 of ice time in Seattle with 2:40 coming on the penalty-kill. Oleksiak is proficient at getting in shooting lanes and blocking shots. He's been credited with 113 shot blocks this season.

- If the Jets were to target Sissons and Oleksiak they would require some assistance from the Predators and the Kraken in the form of salary retention if the trade was agreed to early enough. But if they wait until closer to the trade deadline, the Jets would accrue enough cap space to take both of them on this season (and still have room left). If there are further cap implications for next season, the Jets could navigate those in the summer.
- I was originally planning on giving the Predators a fourth-round pick in 2027, but upgraded it to a third-rounder hoping Nashville will absorb \$500,000 of Sissons' cap hit for the rest of this season and all of next. If no salary retention is required, perhaps we roll that pick back.
- In the same light I'm asking Seattle to retain \$1.5 million of Oleksiak's contract in what I believe is a healthy return for his services. Again, that may not be necessary depending on when a trade like this is agreed to.
- The Sissons-Oleksiak deals together, without retention, would end up counting for \$7.457 million against the Jets' cap for this year and next. The Jets are on pace to have over \$9 million of cap space available on March 7.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/02/04/comrie-tames-hurricanes>

Comrie tames Hurricanes

Video review key to victory as Jets backup records first shutout of season

By: Ken Wiebe

Take a bow, Matt Prefontaine.

The Winnipeg Jets video coach was a perfect two-for-two on Tuesday, utilizing two successful coach's challenges — one that took a goal off the board and a second that overturned a disallowed goal in what became a 3-0 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes.

That gives the Jets seven victories in a row, including consecutive wins over Eastern Conference powerhouses as they improved to 38-14-3 for the season.

"Matty is the best in the business, he's the Connor McDavid of video coaches," said Jets goalie Eric Comrie, who made 29 saves to record his first shutout of the season. "We're lucky to have him."

For the season, the Jets are six-for-seven on coach's challenges and there's little doubt the ability to be correct on both of them on Tuesday had a massive impact on the outcome of the game.

"It's not easy making those calls because there's a lot of pressure on them," said Jets forward Nino Niederreiter. "I'm glad it worked out."

The Jets face the New York Islanders on Friday in the final game before the break for the 4 Nations Face-Off.

Let's take a closer look at how things unfolded:

CLEAN SHEET

After struggling to provide much run support for Comrie during the goalies's eight-game winless skid (0-7-1), the tables have turned significantly, with Winnipeg putting up eight goals during his past two starts.

On this night, Comrie didn't need much offence in front of him as he recorded the first shutout of the season and the third of his career.

It's the first shutout for Comrie since March 25 of 2023, when he blanked the New York Islanders as a member of the Buffalo Sabres.

"It feels great. It's always fun to get a shutout," said Comrie, whose first NHL shutout came against the Philadelphia Flyers as a member of the Jets on April 27 of 2022. "The team was awesome in front of me. This is a fun group of guys to play with."

POWERFUL STUFF

In the battle between the top-ranked power play and the No. 1 penalty kill in the NHL, the Jets were able to score a pair of goals on the man-advantage.

The first one featured a slippery move just inside the offensive blue-line by Alex Lafallo to walk around Brent Burns before making a perfect pass to Niederreiter, who ripped home a one-timer.

"That was spectacular," said Niederreiter. "I saw him dance around and then I was like 'OK, he's going to dance one more' and he sure did. Then he passed it over and I'm glad it found the net."

For Niederreiter, it was his 14th goal of the campaign — which leaves him on pace to reach 20 goals for the eighth time in his career.

Then early in the second period, Neal Pionk stepped into a slapper after Cole Perfetti had his shot blocked by Dmitry Orlov.

For Pionk, it was his eighth goal of the campaign, which leaves him on the doorstep of becoming the eighth member of the Jets to hit double digits this season.

As for Perfetti, he's up to eight points in his past six games and has recorded 33 in 55 games this season.

The Hurricanes had not surrendered a power-play marker in seven consecutive games, so scoring twice against them in an outing is a big accomplishment.

All season long, the Jets are getting contributions from both of their power-play units and that was evident once again as the second unit delivered two more goals.

THE CHALLENGES

With the game scoreless and the Hurricanes on the power play, it looked like the Jets were going to kill the penalty when Jackson Blake fired a seeing-eye shot through traffic and past Comrie.

Just after the red light went on, with 4:23 to go in the first period, Comrie reacted emphatically, suggesting goalie interference may have occurred.

After careful consideration, Jets head coach Scott Arniel waved a referee over to the bench and opted to use a coach's challenge on the play.

Pionk and Hurricanes winger Mikko Rantanen were battling in front of the net and while Rantanen was inside the blue paint of the crease, Rantanen made contact with the goal stick of Comrie — which prevented him from being able to stay set.

Then with 3:41 to go in the third period, the Jets thought they had extended their lead to 3-0 when Rasmus Kupari took a pass from Mason Appleton and jammed in a loose puck on the doorstep.

As the Jets were celebrating, one of the referees immediately waved the goal off, saying Kupari had pushed the left pad of Pyotr Kochetkov into the net along with the puck.

After careful consideration, the Jets used another coach's challenge and after video review, the call on the ice was overturned and Kupari was credited with his fifth goal of the season.

The replay showed the puck was never fully covered by Kochetkov and Kupari pushed the puck into the net, he didn't actually push the goalie's pad.

"Anytime those challenges go your way, they boost you. If they get off and get a 1-0 lead, they're on the road and they can shut down with the best of them. But I like the way we responded.," said Arniel. "Yeah, that (first) one we were pretty sure on. Because we didn't push Rantanen in. He kind of went through the blue paint and got (Comrie's) stick.

"The second one, that's a little trickier. Just because of where the score was. I'm not sure if it's a 1-0 game if we're going to make that call, just because it was overturned on the ice and those are tough ones, when the referee overturns them like that. But we looked at enough video and saw enough that Matty (Prefontaine) decided that it would be the right call."

The Jets had another goal taken off the board on a review that was initiated by the NHL situation room and it was deemed that Vladislav Namestnikov used a distinct kicking motion to score a goal with six minutes to go in the third period.

THE KEY PLAY

A pair of successful coach's challenges proved to be pivotal as the Jets won a seventh consecutive game.

THE THREE STARS

- 1) Eric Comrie, Jets, 29 saves to record first shutout of the season.
- 2) Nino Niederreiter, Jets, Scored a goal, added an assist.
- 3) Neal Pionk, Jets, Scored one goal, had six hits, two blocked shots.

EXTRA, EXTRA

After the morning skate, Arniel provided a quick update on the status of captain Adam Lowry and forward Morgan Barron, noting neither player has been on the ice yet and is not expected to until close to the end of the break for the 4 Nations Face-Off.

Lowry has missed the past seven games with an upper-body issue he sustained against Utah Hockey Club and Barron sat out the past three games after he sustained an upper-body against the Montreal Canadiens when he delivered a heavy check on Kirby Dach.

“You don’t ever want to see it happen, but this break will certainly help them, help us a little bit, not having them miss so many games,” said Arniel. “Yeah, (the) timing is right.”

Both players officially remain week-to-week.

“We’ll look at it,” said Arniel. “(Barron) is a little farther behind. We’ll see where (Lowry) is. They haven’t started to skate, so I don’t have an idea on that (timetable), yet. Comfort, conditioning and then go from there.”

The healthy scratches for the Jets were defencemen Haydn Fleury and Ville Heinola and forward Brad Lambert.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/02/04/smattering-of-boos-from-jets-fans-during-u-s-anthem>

Smattering of boos from Jets fans during U.S. anthem

By: Mike McIntyre

The Star-Spangled Banner was given a not-so-Friendly Manitoba reception inside Canada Life Centre on Tuesday night.

A steady smattering of boos greeted the beginning of the U.S. anthem, sung by Stacey Natrass, prior to puck drop between the Winnipeg Jets and Carolina Hurricanes.

The jeers slowly subsided, then picked back up again near the end. To be clear, the majority of fans in attendance were silent, but the vocal minority certainly made themselves heard both inside the rink and to those watching on television on both sides of the border.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the cheers for O Canada seemed louder than usual, especially when fans jumped in for the usual “True North” chant.

All of this is centred around the simmering trade war between Canada and the United States, which reached a boiling point over the weekend with U.S. President Donald Trump vowing to implement sweeping tariffs on imported goods, and then Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announcing retaliatory sanctions.

The result was politics entering the sporting arena.

The first booing occurred Saturday afternoon in Ottawa just prior to the Senators game against the Minnesota Wild. A few hours later, fans in Calgary responded loud and clear as the Flames hosted the Detroit Red Wings.

On Sunday, it was Toronto’s turn as the American anthem was jeered prior to the Raptors NBA game against the Los Angeles Clippers. And then later that evening, the faithful at Rogers Arena in Vancouver got in on the act just before puck drop against Detroit.

The noise level in Winnipeg didn’t quite reach the levels of the other Canadian cities, perhaps due to Monday’s announcement of a 30-day pause on tariffs.

It's also worth noting two of the Jets most beloved players come from the land of Uncle Sam in goaltender Connor Hellebuyck and forward Kyle Connor, who both hail from Michigan. Other American players include forwards Mason Appleton, Alex Iafallo and Parker Ford and defencemen Neal Pionk and Dylan Samberg.

Tuesday was the start of a two-game homestand for the Jets, which concludes Friday with a visit from the New York Islanders.

It will be interesting to see if this boozing spills over into the upcoming 4 Nations Face-Off, in which NHL players from Canada and the United States (along with Finland and Sweden) will compete starting next week in a best-on-best tournament being held in Montreal and Boston.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/eric-comrie-perfect-as-jets-make-it-seven-in-a-row-against-carolina-hurricanes>

Eric Comrie perfect as Jets make it seven in a row against Carolina Hurricanes

By Paul Friesen

Eric Comrie pumped his arms and found himself on the end of a hug line, fresh off his first NHL shutout in nearly two years.

The Winnipeg Jets backup goalie had just stopped 29 shots, backstopping the NHL's hottest team to a 3-0, home-ice win over the Carolina Hurricanes on Tuesday.

A crowd of 13,802 watched the Jets ride Comrie and hockey's hottest power play to their seventh straight win, improving to 38-14-3.

It wasn't the usual suspects providing the fireworks, either, as Nino Niederreiter, Neal Pionk and Rasmus Kupari scored the Winnipeg goals.

Comrie's last shutout came in March, 2023, when he was with Buffalo.

"It feels great. It's always fun to get a shutout," Comrie said. "Once again the team was awesome in front of me. This is a fun group of guys to play with. I mean, this is unbelievable. Every single night they just battle as hard as they can, give it everything they've got and it's just a special team to be part of."

Carolina had come into town on a 6-1-1 run in their last eight, but were no match for a Jets team that has found a myriad of ways to win this season.

Winnipeg went 2-for-4 with the extra man, while killing off both Carolina power plays. Final shots were 30-29 for the Jets.

There were nearly as many goals disallowed as counted in this one, head coach Scott Arniel going 2-for-2 in challenges and improving his record to 6-1 this season.

Comrie tipped his cap in the direction of video coach Matt Prefontaine, saying his reputation was well-known already in Buffalo when the goalie played there.

“Our video coach there, we’re talking about Matty like he’s the greatest thing ever,” Comrie said. “This is an actual conversation with video coach Justin White. He goes, ‘You know Matty Prefontaine? What’s he like as a guy, how good is he?’ I was like, OK, now I understand how good he is.

“He’s the Connor McDavid of video coaches. The best in the business. We’re lucky to have him.”

The first period produced some early wild scrambles and chances at both ends, but it took until the 19:18 mark for anybody to get on the board.

That’s when Niederreiter took a nifty pass from a shifty Alex Lafallo and beat Pyotr Kochetkov for his 14th of the season with the Jets on their first power play.

“That was spectacular,” Niederreiter said of Lafallo’s play. “I saw him dance around and then I was like, okay, he’s going to dance one more, and he sure did. Then he passed it over and I’m glad it found the net.”

Niederreiter was heavily involved at both ends, robbed by Kochetkov early then throwing his backside in the way of a late Carolina chance.

“I just said thank-you and nice block,” Comrie said, also crediting Niederreiter for helping to keep him sharp between starts by giving him extra work after practices.

What looked like an earlier Hurricanes goal was called back when Arniel challenged for goalie interference, and won.

“Anytime those challenges go your way, they boost you,” the coach said. “If they get a 1-0 lead... they can shut down with the best of them. When you get into pressure situations, those are big moments.”

Arniel called it one of the best games Niederreiter has played.

“He’s played some good ones, some strong ones, but tonight in all areas,” he said. “His wall battles, when he’s really on his game, he wins those whether it’s on the breakouts or whether it’s on the offensive side. He had a lot of situations where he was net-front, had some rebounds, had some tips, created the chaos... that’s a lot of good things that you’d like to see from a guy like him, a big power forward.”

The Jets cashed in on their second power play, too – using their second unit again — Pionk blasting it over the goalie’s shoulder barely three minutes into the middle frame.

His team held its 2-0 lead into the third.

Vlad Namestnikov appeared to make it a three-goal spread with 6:00 to go, but a review showed he’d kicked it in.

On another scramble some two minutes later, Rasmus Kupari took a shot at upping the lead, jamming a loose puck across the goal line.

That one was initially waved off but eventually counted, after a lengthy video review to see if he'd pushed Kochetkov's pad into the net.

The Jets can go into the 4 Nations Face-off break on an eight-game roll if they beat the New York Islanders at home on Friday.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/check-politics-at-the-door-not-in-the-winnipeg-jets-dressing-room>

Check politics at the door? Not in the Winnipeg Jets dressing room

By Paul Friesen

It's as divisive a topic as any these days, causing splits in families and among friends.

The last few days it's spilled into sports arenas across North America, causing fans in Canada to boo the American national anthem, fans in the U.S. to boo O Canada.

The subject of politics has become more and more polarizing. Many online, special-interest forums ban discussions about it altogether, along with religion.

So how do teammates navigate the issue in a pro sports locker-room, particularly a team as tight-knit as the Winnipeg Jets?

It seems checking your politics at the door is not a requirement.

"Sure, we'll talk politics. If it calls for it," forward Mason Appleton was saying, Tuesday. "Nobody's going after each other's necks ever. We're more of a family, and best friends. We can chat about it. But it's not going to wreck anyone's day, being on the opposite side of someone.

"There's conservatives and there's liberals, and at the end of the day it's irrelevant to what we're out here to do and what we are as a team."

Appleton, from Green Bay, is one of eight Americans on the current Jets roster. There are 10 Canadians.

Tensions between the countries are the highest they've been in nearly a century. Players' heads aren't in the sand. They're paying attention.

A dressing-room chat after practice these days could easily veer from who's going to win the Super Bowl to who's going to win the trade war that's brewing.

"It's something you never want to see," Appleton said of the cross-border rough stuff. "You have a new power in office in Trump, and obviously he's trying to do certain things how he believes they should be approached. And sometimes it can create a small division. But at the end of the day there was a pause on the tariffs and hopefully it can get cleaned up and we can get back to a strong relationship between the U.S. and Canada."

Appleton wasn't overly concerned with whether or not his national anthem was going to get booed by Jets fans on Tuesday night, as happened at NHL games in Ottawa, Calgary and Vancouver on the weekend.

Hoops fans at a Toronto Raptors game did the same, while a hockey crowd in Nashville returned the favour for the Canadian anthem.

“It’s a Canadian fan base,” Appleton said. “They can do whatever they please. I believe in free speech and if you want to do something... then go ahead. It’s not something that’s going to carry too much weight with Americans in the room, I don’t believe.

“It’s two minutes before a hockey game, and that’s what our job is.”

Across the room and across the line, London, Ont.’s Dylan DeMelo wasn’t thrilled with the idea of either anthem getting dumped on.

“I would be hurt both ways,” DeMelo said. “I view the anthem as a sacrifice for all those people that have lost their lives and all the people that fought for our freedom. I find it’s a little bit disrespectful in that regard. But if people want to do it, I’m not going to lose any sleep over it.”

It turned out some fans did greet the Star-Spangled Banner with boos as the Jets and Carolina Hurricanes lined up before Tuesday’s game.

It wasn’t the entire crowd, but going in Appleton didn’t seem concerned even if it had been.

“If you care what 15,000 people think at all times,” he said. “You’re going to be a pretty frustrated man, almost 24-7.”

These new hostilities could be here to stay, at least for a while.

Depending on what else Donald Trump does while he’s in office – he’s said Canada has nothing to offer the U.S. and should become the 51st state — it could well be the start of a fraying relationship, or worse.

The Jets are determined not to let anything fray what they have going, no matter what the guy skating alongside them stands for, politically.

“Guys have their own viewpoints,” DeMelo said. “It’s a free country. You don’t have to love it. Everybody has an opinion, and we can voice it. You’re not going to get ridiculed here. We’re just going to have civil conversations about it.”

Even with someone who might applaud the 47th President of the USA.

“If you’re a Trumper, you’re a Trumper,” DeMelo said. “Whatever. You’re wearing a Jets logo, you’re part of this family, no matter what. You’re not going to love every single member of your family, their viewpoints, but they’re still family, and that’s how we treat them.”

A family with an Uncle Sam who seems hell-bent on causing trouble.

DeMelo says he’s never been on a team where political differences caused friction in the dressing room.

“No. That’s all talk,” he said. “I don’t know, maybe hockey’s different than other sports, but guys are pretty level-headed here. Everybody comes from the same backgrounds, culture, stuff like that, where it’s not too divided.”

Things seem to be changing, though, division the name of the game.

Now, even at the games.

“Not an issue with us,” Appleton vowed.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/im-chasing-another-guy-pursuit-of-jets-legend-close-to-scheifeles-heart>

'I'm chasing another guy': Pursuit of Jets legend close to Scheifele's heart

By Paul Friesen

Never mind Ilya Kovalchuk and goal No. 329 of his career.

Winnipeg Jets centre Mark Scheifele has something closer to his heart in mind than becoming the No. 1 scorer in Winnipeg/Atlanta franchise history.

“I’m chasing another guy,” Scheifele said before the Jets took on Carolina, Tuesday. “I’m chasing Dale, as well.”

Scheifele was referring to the late Dale Hawerchuk, his former junior coach, friend and mentor.

The 31-year-old is reminded of Hawerchuk every day he drives to the downtown rink, past the statue of the former Jets captain at True North Square.

“He was such a big part of my life,” Scheifele said. “I know he’s up there watching and I just want to go out there and play my best. It’s a huge honour and I’m just very, very lucky to be part of this group of guys and this organization.”

Going into Tuesday’s game, Scheifele needed just one goal to pass Kovalchuk.

He needed 52 to pass Hawerchuk’s totals as a Jet. That could come as early as next season.

Hawerchuk did it in 713 games over nine seasons, averaging 42 per season, with a career low of 26, a high of 53.

Scheifele has averaged 27 per year, with this season’s total still climbing. His lowest output was 13 in 63 games as a rookie, his highest 42, two years ago.

He was on pace for 47 this season.

“With the power play being as good as it has this year, that helps,” he said, pointing to power-play teammates Kyle Connor, Gabe Vilardi and Josh Morrissey. “They’ve been absolutely phenomenal this year. I’ve been so lucky to play alongside them and to get to know their games and continue to work together.”

Scheifele recalls playing against Kovalchuk a couple of times after Kovalchuk moved to other teams, never playing for Winnipeg.

As a junior, Scheifele chose a similar stick as the Russian star, something his brother recently reminded him of.

“It was funny to think that back in the day you were using a Kovalchuk curve, you have a Kovalchuk stick back in Kitchener, and now you’re chasing the goals leader. A humbling thing to think about.”

Gear nerd

Morrissey and goalie Connor Hellebuyck were trying out some of their 4 Nations gear at Tuesday morning’s skate: Morrissey a pair of Team Canada gloves and pair of pants, Hellebuyck a Team USA mask.

“I’m a hockey gear nerd,” Morrissey said. “So it’s cool to get the new stuff in. If you ask the trainers I’m pretty particular with my equipment. I don’t actually like new gear very much. In this case, it’s nice we’re able to have a couple practices to try and break it in before we head over there.”

After taking on Carolina, the Jets have just one game before the tournament break, Friday against the New York Islanders.

The event pits Canada against the U.S., Sweden and Finland.

CTV Winnipeg

[Winnipeg Jets fans boo U.S. national anthem](#)

Hockey fans boo U.S. national anthem at Winnipeg Jets game

By Kayla Rosen

Winnipeg hockey fans joined in on the trend of Canadian sports spectators booing the U.S. national anthem amid a looming trade war.

During Tuesday night’s Winnipeg Jets game against the Carolina Hurricanes, some people in the stands could be heard heckling during the U.S. anthem.

This booing is part of a growing movement at Canadian sporting events in response to U.S. President Donald Trump’s tariff threats.

Anthem singer Stacey Natrass said she didn’t take the boos personally, adding that she was expecting some sort of reaction to the U.S. anthem.

“It was still a little bit difficult, but I totally understand where people are coming from,” she said.

Natrass added that she understands the jeering is just a way for people to express their frustrations with the tariff threats, and she doesn’t judge anyone for taking part.

She noted she wouldn’t be surprised to hear the booing again at future games.

“I pride myself on being professional and being the vessel through which these anthems occur, and I can’t control anything outside of that,” she said.

“So that is my job to just keep going. It’s part of the tradition of sporting events and anthems, in particular to hockey, seem to hold a really dear spot for so many people, including myself.”

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6107392/2025/02/05/winnipeg-jets-salary-cap-ehlers-pionk/>

What the skyrocketing cap means for the Jets, Nikolaj Ehlers, Neal Pionk and more

By Murat Ates

Kevin Cheveldayoff’s hockey team has more points than anyone in the NHL. That’s the good news.

Sort through the team standings on PuckPedia and you’ll find only 11 teams that project to finish the season with more cap space than Winnipeg will. Of those 11 teams, only two hold a playoff spot, but Calgary and Columbus are wild card teams. Winnipeg is a near-lock to make the playoffs and a legitimate Stanley Cup contender; the Jets’ blend of quality and opportunity is unique among the NHL’s 32 teams.

The Jets didn’t arrive at this intersection of quality and opportunity by accident, nor did they get here by focusing on the step in front of them. There is a long-term approach that works in concert with day-to-day management. When Winnipeg sent Brad Lambert and Parker Ford to the AHL Moose for 24 hours this week, the \$9,500 cap savings were made with the trade deadline in mind.

But Winnipeg’s trade deadline is only a small part of how Cheveldayoff will navigate an enormous change in NHL economics.

The salary cap is about to skyrocket — from \$88 million right now to \$95.5 million next season, then \$104 million in 2026-27 and \$113.5 million in 2027-28. Those numbers are essentially fixed, according to The Athletic’s Chris Johnston, although the sides can agree to make minor adjustments up or down if circumstances warrant. This would be a big deal for any team with players like Nikolaj Ehlers, Neal Pionk, Alex Iafallo, Mason Appleton, Vladislav Namestnikov, and Haydn Fleury eligible for unrestricted free agency. Winnipeg has those contracts to sort out, along with Gabriel Vilardi and Dylan Samberg headed for big raises as restricted free agents.

The rising cap means rising free agent prices: The Jets probably won’t retain all of their unrestricted free agents. They should still be able to chart a course to a quality, cap-compliant team, but most Jets free agents are outperforming their initial contract projections. This summer’s decisions will be high stakes.

None of this is a surprise to Cheveldayoff. It’s something he, his cap guru Larry Simmons, and the rest of Jets management have been planning for.

But there’s one more factor at play here — that of the falling Canadian dollar. In 2013, when the current CBA was first negotiated, the Canadian and U.S. dollars held approximately equal value.

The Canadian dollar was worth 0.70 USD on Feb. 4, meaning that teams who collect their revenue in Canadian dollars and pay their players in American dollars are taking a 30 percent hit that didn't exist when the NHL's revenue sharing model was designed. Jets' attendance is up to 92.9 percent this season but play in the smallest building in the league; in terms of raw attendance, Winnipeg plays to the third smallest crowds in the NHL. It is clear that the Jets would benefit from a more robust revenue-sharing system in the next CBA, but that won't come into effect until the 2026-27 season.

How will the skyrocketing cap change the way Winnipeg does business? That's a big question, with significant variables that have yet to be determined. Here's what we know for now.

The 2025 trade deadline: The rising value of contracts with term

Winnipeg wasn't surprised by the rising salary cap, nor do its biggest strengths — Cheveldayoff's trades, a lack of albatross contracts, and successful development of homegrown cornerstones like Connor Hellebuyck, Josh Morrissey, and Mark Scheifele — change because the cap is going up. The Jets' core is largely signed, with Ehlers' contract (or his departure) due this summer and Kyle Connor a big priority after that.

The Jets' weaknesses are also clear. Winnipeg shows up on a majority of no-trade clauses in a league that gives up a disproportionate amount of trade protection compared to the NFL, NBA, and MLB. That tends to be a challenge on July 1 and on the trade market; some players' only impression of Winnipeg is the stretch of road from the airport to the rink and the downtown hotel they stay in.

The rising salary cap doesn't change the NHL's no-trade clause landscape. Instead, it ratchets up a familiar pressure on Cheveldayoff as he does his business. Winnipeg's short- and long-term success will be defined by his ability to acquire players with term left on their contracts. Some players do waive their no-trade clauses to come to Winnipeg. Paul Stastny did for his spectacular 2018 run, with his friend Blake Wheeler making part of the pitch and the Jets' status as a Cup contender doing the rest.

Think of Cheveldayoff's highlight reel. In 2023, he acquired Nino Niederreiter and Namestnikov at the deadline — and eventually extended them — before acquiring Gabriel Vilardi, Alex Iafallo, and Rasmus Kupari for PL Dubois that summer. Before that, pending UFA Andrew Copp was moved in a down year to acquire Morgan Barron and the draft picks which became Elias Salomonsson and Thomas Milic. Retention is a baked-in component of Cheveldayoff's best moves.

In an immediate sense, Ryan O'Reilly should be worth more to Winnipeg than Brock Nelson because of the extra year left on his \$4.5 million contract. The same applies to defencemen like Rasmus Ristolainen and Connor Murphy, whose contracts look closer to ideal as free agent prices rise in concert with the cap. It would apply to Jamie Oleksiak, the declining best-case version of Logan Stanley, or to O'Reilly, Scott Laughton, and Jean-Gabriel Pageau, who we discussed in our forward targets piece. Acquisition costs will reflect that.

But the Jets have found that players who make it to Winnipeg — and then stay a little while — often buy-in to the city and its community. Hellebuyck, Morrissey, and Scheifele chose Winnipeg. Connor, Ehlers, Pionk, and Dylan DeMelo have all signed long-term extensions in Winnipeg at various points in their careers. Cole Perfetti would have been willing to do the same last summer. The opportunity to win is a big part of that but, for some players, the way Winnipeg's community grows on a person has played a role. The Jets have a group of ice-

fishers who head for the shack when off days allow, making the cold — a weakness for most — a unique strength for the Jets. It is obvious that not every player will value outdoor activity the same way that Hellebuyck does. Each player comes with their own preferences and may have their reasons to value playing in other places, like PL Dubois or Jacob Trouba did.

The importance of fit goes well beyond vibes in an ice-fishing shack. The salary cap is going up a little over eight percent per year for at least three straight years. This makes every contract with term beyond this summer at least an eight percent savings compared to the open market. (That estimate assumes an otherwise equal UFA playing field. We know Winnipeg is at a disadvantage with free agents, adding to the importance.)

Cheveldayoff has a harder job than some of his rivals do. He does have a wealthy ownership group backing him — one that has spent to the cap maximum in search of consistent playoff opportunities. How will the rising cap affect Winnipeg's offseason?

The 2025 offseason: Salary and cap hit are not the same thing

A player's cap hit is based on the average annual value of their total contract, but the amount of money they get paid each season can vary. Scheifele and Hellebuyck carry an \$8.5 million cap hit each, for example, but they're making \$10 million in salary this season.

They're not the only players who make more money than their cap hit right now: Winnipeg's player payroll is approximately \$5 million higher than the team's cap hit. Next season, that figure drops to approximately \$2 million. If the Jets are concerned with limiting their expenditures prior to the 2026 CBA, they're in a decent place to do so. They also have a lot of work to do to build out their team.

This Jets roster comes without any of its UFAs and has \$39.5 million in cap space before signing its RFAs.

Ehlers' absence hurts the forward group and Scheifele and Adam Lowry need help down the middle.

I've picked Salomonsson, Nikita Chibrikov, Parker Ford, Brad Lambert, and Jaret Anderson-Dolan to become full-time NHL players. Their odds of vindicating this choice obviously changes if Ehlers, Appleton, Namestnikov, or Winnipeg's other free agents stand in their way. Meanwhile, I haven't made any trades or changed Winnipeg's depth chart, so feel free to continue the Logan Stanley vs. Ville Heinola debate as you see fit.

The forwards depend on big leaps from Rasmus Kupari, Perfetti, and Lambert. The defence needs help on the right side, unless Samberg's development is so pronounced that Winnipeg is comfortable with Colin Miller (or Salomonsson) in that spot.

If you assign \$7.5 million to Vilardi, \$4.5 million to Samberg, \$1.5 million to each of Kupari and Barron, and \$1 million to Ford, this Jets team has \$23.5 million to commit to unrestricted free agents. This seems to leave room for most but not all of Ehlers, Pionk, Appleton, Iafallo, Namestnikov, and Fleury.

That number obviously goes down if Winnipeg is able to acquire players with term at this year's trade deadline. Not to overstate my blue-sky suggestion of O'Reilly, but his \$4.5 million looks all the more valuable now with Appleton projected to make \$3.7 million next season, doesn't it?

The 2026 offseason: More robust revenue sharing would help

By the summer of 2026, parameters for the next CBA — set to take effect to start the 2026-27 season — should be more clear.

Expect the Jets to be advocates for a more robust revenue-sharing system. A rising tide is meant to flow all boats and playing to 92 percent capacity crowds should mean a sustainable business. Winnipeg's ownership group is wealthy, it's seen its franchise value rise dramatically since purchase, and it would still benefit from better protection against the currency discrepancy.

Winnipeg will also have a massive contract to add to the following roster.

Connor's absence looms large here. Lowry's does too, highlighting the challenges facing Winnipeg's long-term outlook at centre. The Jets will work to retain them both, while ideally having signed its 2025 RFAs like Vilardi and Samberg to long-term extensions.

I've also made some more promotion decisions — Brayden Yager — and omissions (Colby Barlow) even though it's too soon to be sure. There are new RFAs to sign now — Perfetti, Chibrikov, Heinola, assuming that none are traded in the meantime — although Perfetti is the only one likely to receive a big raise. Nate Schmidt's buyout is over, clearing up more space under the \$104 million cap ceiling.

The Jets' 2026 outlook involves a ton of cap space and a ton of uncertainty. Connor's contract could be the first to surpass Hellebuyck and Scheifele, perhaps rising over \$10 million. More robust revenue sharing and/or a stronger Canadian dollar would help encourage spending, while the importance of acquiring players with term by trade is made ever more clear. These Jets might be as competitive as they are today if Salomonsson, Perfetti, Lambert, Yager, Kupari, and others all develop by leaps and bounds — and if Ehlers can be convinced to stay — but that's an enormous, optimistic bet. A more reasonable conclusion is that Cheveldayoff and his management team are already thinking about their 2026-27 roster here and now. It seems clear that they need to be, lest this season's success be an outlier for what looks like a well-managed club.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6109298/2025/02/05/nhl-player-poll-best-worst-facilities-bettman/>

NHL player poll: Best/worst facilities? NBA-style tournament? Season too long? Should Bettman retire?

By The Athletic NHL Staff

Everyone's allowed to complain about their job from time to time, even those who are making millions of dollars playing a game. Spend enough time in NHL locker rooms, and you'll hear gripes about facilities, about coaches, about teammates, about a city's nightlife or lack thereof, about escrow, about the relentless grind of an NHL season.

To give the league's rank-and-file a chance to air out their wants and wishes and complaints, The Athletic polled 111 players in recent months on a variety of topics, granting them anonymity so they could speak freely.

On Monday, we highlighted their thoughts on the 4-Nations Face-Off.

Today, we look into more everyday topics.

If you have a no-trade list, what's the first team on it?

<i>Winnipeg Jets</i>	48.8%
<i>Buffalo Sabres</i>	19.51%
<i>San Jose Sharks</i>	8.54%
<i>Calgary Flames</i>	3.66%
<i>Ottawa Senators</i>	3.66%
<i>Anaheim Ducks</i>	2.44%
<i>New York Rangers</i>	2.44%

Poor Winnipeg. All the Jets have done is put themselves atop the league standings while playing in arguably the best in-game atmosphere in the NHL. Things are good enough up north for Connor Hellebuyck and Mark Scheifele to sign eight-year deals when the hockey world assumed they'd walk.

And yet, the Jets "win" this category running away. Every time.

"There's not much to do out there," one player said. "It's f—ing cold. I haven't heard a guy go to Winnipeg and be like, 'This is going to be my forever home.'"

"Nothing to do, bad food, freezing," another said.

Here's one Jets player's defense of his city, noting that the drive from the airport to downtown isn't exactly the scenic route: "I remember when I first did it, it was underwhelming. There are parts of the city that are great, but you don't see that (as a visiting player). I always wish that they'd stay down at the Forks or somewhere like that. I don't think that hotel meets the criteria for the league, but it would be better than staying downtown."

A few players offered a blanket rejection of the seven Canadian teams, given the weather and the taxes and the scrutiny. But just across Niagara Falls is another frequently cited spot, as the Sabres hurtle toward their 14th straight season without a playoff appearance.

"The way it's going there, Buffalo — it's just been kind of mucky there forever," one player said. "And for me right now in my career, I don't really need that. It's not gonna help me."

"High taxes, the organization hasn't been that strong recently," another player said. "They haven't made the playoffs in like 14 years. In saying that, I have some friends there and they love playing there."

"All they do is lose," another player said.

One player just really, really, really disliked Philadelphia, to the point where you have to wonder if Gritty picked on him as a child.

"Honestly, I wouldn't even mind Winnipeg," he said. "It's not that nice, but I just hate Philly. I just hate Philly. I can't stand it. I can't stand the city, everything. It's the rink. It's just one city that I absolutely despise. I can't stand it. I'd be sick if I got traded there. If I had a one-team no-trade list, they'd be on it in a second."

Not everybody is so picky, though.

“I’d feel lucky to play anywhere,” one player said.

https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6107818/2025/02/04/2025-nhl-trade-deadline-perfect-fits/?utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=nhlw&source=nhlw&onboarded=true

2025 NHL trade deadline perfect fits: Proposals for Brock Nelson, Ryan O’Reilly and more

By Max Bultman and Harman Dayal

The 2025 NHL trade deadline has some fascinating, unique dynamics at play.

Firstly, there’s a lack of motivated sellers. In the Eastern Conference, the Buffalo Sabres are the only team more than seven points back of a playoff spot, which means fewer clubs are waving the white flag as sellers. There are more teams out of the playoff race in the West, but many of those clubs lack the high-end pieces contending teams would be attracted to.

Secondly, many teams are rushing to get their business done before the two-week 4 Nations break. Buyers see the value of giving players they acquire a chance to acclimate to their new cities and settle in before important stretch runs.

Third, the upcoming NHL Draft class is weaker than usual. That’s likely played a factor in teams’ willingness to give up 2025 first-round picks for the top names on the market.

With just over a month left before the March 7 deadline, we picked five contenders and assigned each of them a perfect fit. We didn’t duplicate any “perfect fits,” since only one team can ultimately trade for a player.

Big names like Mikko Rantanen, J.T. Miller, Marcus Pettersson, Joel Farabee/Morgan Frost and Mikael Granlund have already been dealt. Because the remaining trade board is thin, we had to shift our focus and target some middle-of-the-lineup and depth fits for many of these teams rather than go big-game hunting.

Without further ado, let’s dive into this season’s perfect fits.

Winnipeg Jets

The perfect fit: Brian Dumoulin

The trade: Dumoulin for a 2025 third-round pick

The Jets’ biggest roster need is a second-line center behind Mark Scheifele. That’s nothing new — general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff has traded for 2C rentals Sean Monahan, Paul Stastny and Kevin Hayes in years past.

We searched for realistic, fair 2C trades that would make sense for both sides, but there weren’t any obvious fits. Nelson is the only top-six UFA center left on the market, but we already matched him with Colorado, plus can the Jets really afford to trade another first for a rental given all the draft capital they spent at last year’s deadline?

O'Reilly would be the "perfect" target for the Jets because he has term left beyond this season, but reports say Trotz would only move O'Reilly to a spot he was comfortable with, which could be a stumbling block, and we've already matched him with the Leafs in this exercise.

Winnipeg could also use an upgrade on the blue line. Logan Stanley, the club's left-side third-pair defenseman, is the clear weak link.

The hulking 6-foot-7 defender is physical and can kill penalties, but his lack of puck skills and footspeed make him a liability at times. Stanley's only helped the Jets control 46.7 percent of five-on-five shot attempts during his shifts, which is the worst mark among the team's defensemen. And that's despite him playing sheltered matchups.

This is where Dumoulin could be an attractive upgrade.

The 33-year-old is a savvy, experienced stay-at-home defenseman. Dumoulin's analytical profile doesn't look great on the surface this season, but context is massive here. He's played the most minutes against "elite" competition of any Ducks defenseman this year according to PuckIQ and has averaged nearly 20 minutes per game. By the eye, Dumoulin has handled that exceptionally challenging workload better than the underlying numbers give him credit for. And if you go back as recently as last season, he drove quality two-way results in Seattle.

In Winnipeg, Dumoulin would be able to settle into a reduced third-pair role and play significantly easier matchups. He'd be far steadier and more reliable than Stanley on the bottom pair. Plus, he's got championship pedigree from his time in Pittsburgh.

A third-round pick is in line with what the Canucks got from the Leafs for Luke Schenn two years ago. Schenn's age, stylistic profile (big defensive defenseman) and the season he was having (quietly succeeding in Vancouver's top four, but probably best suited to a third-pair role on a contender) line up pretty similarly with Dumoulin's situation now. Maybe the Jets would have to add another mid- or late-round pick to sweeten the pot because the defense market has been expensive lately, but we feel we're in the right ballpark for a depth defenseman.

The modest acquisition cost for Dumoulin would also keep the Jets' assets ready to take a run at a 2C if the right player becomes available.

ESPN.com

https://www.espn.com/nhl/story/_/id/43678315/nhl-awards-ranking-ballots-hart-norris-calder-vezina-selke-jack-adams

NHL Awards Watch: Who's leading for Hart, Norris, Calder?

By Greg Wyshynski

The NHL's most valuable player award winners usually have one thing in common: They aren't goaltenders or defensemen.

There are all sorts of justifications for the Hart Trophy almost exclusively going to forwards: Like the fact that goalies and defensemen have their own awards or the classic "a goalie could be MVP every season!" harangue. The bottom line is that of the past 30 Hart Trophies, four went to goaltenders and one went to a defenseman.

That trend could be bucked this season, however. Not only is a goaltender leading the pack for the Hart, two defensemen are getting some MVP consideration as well.

Welcome to the NHL Awards Watch for February. We've polled a wide selection of Professional Hockey Writers Association voters anonymously to get a sense of where the wind is blowing for the current leaders. We've made sure it's a cross-section from the entire league, trying to gain as many perspectives as possible.

Keep in mind that the PHWA votes for the Hart, Norris, Calder, Selke and Lady Byng; broadcasters vote for the Jack Adams; and general managers handle the Vezina.

All stats are from Hockey-Reference.com, Natural Stat Trick and Evolving Hockey.

Hart Trophy (MVP)

Leader: Connor Hellebuyck, Winnipeg Jets

Finalists: Leon Draisaitl, Edmonton Oilers; Nathan MacKinnon, Colorado Avalanche

What a difference a long-term injury makes.

The front-runner for the Hart Trophy in last month's Awards Watch was Kirill Kaprizov of the Minnesota Wild with 37% of the first-place votes. But he played only three games in January and is currently on long-term injured reserve after surgery on a lingering lower-body issue. He's still the Wild's leading scorer with MVP numbers (23 goals and 52 points) but his 37 games played isn't enough to keep pace in this highly competitive race. Kaprizov didn't receive a first-place vote in this month's balloting.

The new leader is Hellebuyck, the Jets' starting goaltender and last season's Vezina Trophy winner. While he didn't receive a first-place vote last month, he was a close second for a few voters. This time, he has earned 25% of the first-place votes, which is indicative of how tightly packed the MVP race is right now.

"Who has been more consistent and more vital to his team's success?" asked one voter.

"He's the best goalie by a long shot and on the best team in the league," said another.

The Jets have 37 wins this season. Hellebuyck has 33 of them. He leads all goalies (minimum 20 appearances) in save percentage (.925) and goals-against average (2.04). Hellebuyck leads all goalies in minutes played and shots faced, the latter of which he has done four times in his career.

The NHL hasn't had a goalie win MVP since Montreal's Carey Price in 2014-15.

MacKinnon was a runner-up last month and is once again this month, capturing just over 20% of the vote. He leads the NHL with 80 points in 54 games. There's a 22-point gap between MacKinnon and Cale Makar on the Colorado scoring leaderboard.

MacKinnon won the Hart last season. The NHL hasn't had back-to-back MVPs since Alex Ovechkin won the award in 2008 and '09.

"Nathan MacKinnon for the back-to-back, but let's not sleep on Leon Draisaitl," said one voter.

Draisaitl was the other runner-up last month and remains just slightly ahead of Quinn Hughes in this month's vote. Draisaitl had roughly 20% of the first-place ballots. Hughes was around 15%.

Draisaitl leads the NHL in goals (36) and is second to MacKinnon in points (77). He won the Hart once previously, in 2019-20.

According to Evolving Hockey, Draisaitl leads the NHL in goals scored above replacement (17.8) and wins above replacement (2.9). Teammate Connor McDavid is second in both categories. McDavid has also nearly matched Draisaitl in points per game (1.46 to 1.48), playing 46 games to Leon's 52. McDavid, who didn't receive a first-place MVP vote, has 67 points.

"I'm torn between Leon Draisaitl and Quinn Hughes but ultimately I will go with Hughes," said one voter. "He is completely dominating on the ice in all phases and the Canucks wouldn't be anywhere close to the playoffs without him."

Hughes has a slim lead over Makar in the scoring race among defensemen with 59 points in 47 games, skating 25:18 per game. There's a 25-point gap between Hughes and the next-highest scorer on the Vancouver roster (Conor Garland). Hughes is third in the NHL in goals scored above replacement (16.5) and wins above replacement (2.7), right behind Draisaitl and McDavid.

Only one other player received multiple Hart Trophy first-place votes in our survey: Tampa Bay Lightning star Nikita Kucherov, who won the award in 2018-19.

Kucherov has 24 goals and 76 points in 49 games. That's 22 points better than the Bolts' second-leading scorer, Brandon Hagel. Kucherov's 1.55 points per game leads the NHL. If he stays on that pace, it would be the ninth-best average over the past 20 seasons.

"While Kucherov is far from alone on his team, he does not have the elite support most of the other candidates have," said one voter.

"The NHL's preeminent playmaker -- who should've won this last year -- is averaging a whopping 0.78 primary assists per game," said another voter. "While others can debate MacKinnon vs. Leon Draisaitl vs. Connor Hellebuyck for the league's ultimate individual prize, Kucherov will go about his usual business of potting a point and a half per night while helping his club into a comfortable playoff position in the East -- again."

Two other players earned votes for the Hart. Toronto Maple Leafs winger Mitch Marner's 70 points in 52 games put him fourth in scoring. He is also tied for fourth among forwards with Kucherov in goals scored above replacement (16.1). Columbus Blue Jackets defenseman Zach Werenski leads his team in scoring (57 points) while skating an NHL-high 26:48 per game.

"If Columbus makes the playoffs, Zach Werenski will be a compelling candidate for the same reason as Kucherov -- he does not have the elite support," said one voter.

Vezina Trophy (top goaltender)

Note: The NHL's general managers vote for this award

Leader: Connor Hellebuyck, Winnipeg Jets

Finalists: Logan Thompson, Washington Capitals; Dustin Wolf, Calgary Flames

It's not exactly a shock to see a goalie leading the MVP race also leading for the NHL's top goaltending prize. A goaltender has won the Hart Trophy four times since the criteria for the Vezina Trophy was adopted in 1981-82. All four times, they also won the Vezina.

Through 42 games, Hellebuyck led the NHL in wins (33), shutouts (6), save percentage (.925) and goals-against average (2.04) in propelling the Jets to the top of the Western Conference. He earned 80% of the vote from our panelists.

"This isn't particularly close," said one voter.

"Just put his name on it already," said another voter.

"The gap is widening in what was already becoming a runaway race, and that's saying something because Logan Thompson has been spectacular," said another voter.

Ah yes, the Logan Thompson of it all. The Washington Capitals goalie had a 23-2-4 record through 29 games. Again, that's two regulation losses in 29 appearances. You have to go back only two seasons to find a goalie who had stellar stats but was an undeniable Vezina winner because of his record: Linus Ullmark of the Boston Bruins, who went a remarkable 40-6-1.

Thompson is right there with Hellebuyck in save percentage (.924) and just a shade behind in goals against average (2.15). He actually has a slightly better analytics case than Hellebuyck according to StatSheet with 0.38 goals saved above expected per 60 minutes to Hellebuyck's 0.26.

Thompson received 15% of the votes.

"Logan Thompson has entered the chat, and rightfully so. He doesn't take on the same workload as Connor Hellebuyck, but my goodness he's been an absolute brick wall," said one voter.

The only other goalie to receive a first-place vote was Wolf. He doesn't have the stats that Hellebuyck and Thompson have, either traditionally or analytically, but he has arguably done more with less in front of him.

Leaving the top three is Jacob Markstrom of the New Jersey Devils. His record (21-9-5) and stats (.912 save percentage, 2.20 goals-against average) are solid, but he has been out with a knee injury since Jan. 22 and should remain out through the 4 Nations Face-Off break.

Jack Adams Award (best coach)

Note: The NHL Broadcasters' Association votes on this award.

Leader: Spencer Carbery, Washington Capitals

Finalists: Scott Arniel, Winnipeg Jets; Dean Evason, Columbus Blue Jackets

The Washington Capitals remain near the top of the NHL, and Carbery continues to get the credit for it. The second-year NHL head coach earned 85% of the first-place votes from our panel. That's down from his unanimous claim to the top spot last month, but it makes him the heaviest favorite for any award on the ballot.

"It's not even close," said one voter.

Some of this love comes from the preseason expectations for the Capitals, which the team has thoroughly transcended.

"Show of hands: Who had the Capitals in a legit battle for the Presidents' Trophy by early February?" asked one voter. "When it's all going right, you have to credit the common denominator behind the bench."

Said another voter: "He's extracting every drop from that Caps team, and it's been a lot of fun to watch. Curious how their style adapts when the postseason arrives, but we'll cross that bridge when we get there."

The Blue Jackets' playoff push has resulted in Evason's candidacy for the Jack Adams. Evason, in his first year in Columbus, has helped lead his team through palpable grief in the preseason to an unexpected run to the Eastern Conference bubble. He earned 10% of the vote.

The only other coach to earn a first-place vote is Arniel, who has the Jets tangling with the Capitals for best record in the league. But even one of his supporters couldn't resist the job that Carbery has done.

"I've changed my vote from Scott Arniel to Spencer Carbery," said one voter. "Even when his team was in an offensive slump, Carbery got the most out of his team and now they are scoring again and winning, a lot. He's galvanized the group and gotten the most out of every player."