

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-hellebuyck-s-shutout-leads-jets-to-50th-win>

***Three things - Hellebuyck's shutout leads Jets to 50th win
Hellebuyck sets franchise mark with seventh shutout of the season in 4-0 win over Devils***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets got two goals from Alex Iafallo and Connor Hellebuyck recorded his league leading seventh shutout of the season in a 4-0 win over the New Jersey Devils at Canada Life Centre. The Jets reached 50 wins this season in 72 games, besting their previous record of 80 games in 2023-24 and 2017-18. The last time a Canadian-based team was the first to 50 wins in a season was the Canucks in 2010-11. The Jets top line of Mark Scheifele (1G, 1A), Kyle Connor (2A) and Iafallo (2G) combined for six points, Winnipeg will finish this four game homestand Sunday afternoon against the Vancouver Canucks.

ANOTHER FRANCHISE RECORD FOR HELLEBUYCK

Hellebuyck made 24 saves to get his seventh shutout of the season, breaking his own franchise mark of six set back in 2017-18 and 2019-20. He became the ninth American goaltender in NHL history with seven shutouts in a season, the last one with more was Jonathan Quick (10 in 2011-12).

“Yeah, it feels great. I think it was a complete team effort. Perfect way to put it,” said Hellebuyck.

“Everyone was playing their game, snapping it around, playing quick, hitting. Our details were great tonight.”

BANG BANG

Following their impressive win over the Washington Capitals on Tuesday, the Jets went right to work in the first period against the Devils. It took them all of 58 seconds to get on the board when Alex Iafallo finished off a fantastic passing play that went Mark Scheifele to Kyle Connor to Iafallo.

Less than a minute later, David Gustafsson jumped on a loose puck in the Devils crease and tapped in his second of the season. Winnipeg had a 2-0 lead just 1:58 into the game and have scored nine tallies within the first two minutes of a contest this season which is tied with the Sabres for the most among all teams.

MULTI-POINT MARK

After Iafallo gave the Jets a three-goal lead in the second period with a power play goal, Scheifele took advantage of a nice bounce off the boards and beat Jake Allen for his 36th goal of the season and his second point of the night. It was Scheifele's 201st

career multi-point game which pushed him past former linemate Blake Wheeler (200) for sole possession of the most in Jets/Thrashers history.

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/new-jersey-devils-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-march-28>

Hellebuyck gets NHL-high 7th shutout, Jets defeat Devils Winnipeg scores twice in opening 1:52, sends New Jersey to 4th loss in 5 games

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- Connor Hellebuyck made 24 saves for his NHL-leading seventh shutout of the season, and the Winnipeg Jets defeated the New Jersey Devils 4-0 at Canada Life Centre on Friday.

"I think it was a complete team effort -- perfect way to put it," Hellebuyck said. "Everyone was playing their game, snapping it around, playing quick, hitting. Our details were great tonight. ... I just love shutouts, to be honest with you. That's why I play the game."

Hellebuyck set a Jets/Atlanta Thrashers record for most shutouts in a season.

"[Hellebuyck] might be the best goalie in the in the world," Devils defenseman Brett Pesce said. "He made some huge stops for them. I thought we had some opportunities - - Timo [Meier] hits a post on the power play, which could have made it 2-1. But they just don't give you much. They stick to their structure, they don't beat themselves. You know, it's a good hockey team."

The Jets (50-19-4) became the first team to reach 50 wins this season and took a one-point lead on the Washington Capitals for first place in the NHL standings. Winnipeg, which has clinched a Stanley Cup Playoff berth, also widened its lead on the Dallas Stars to six points for first place in the Central Division and Western Conference.

Alex Iafallo scored twice, Mark Scheifele had a goal and an assist, and Kyle Connor had two assists for the Jets.

"I think we're realizing we're really close to [the] playoffs, and we want to bring our playoff game every single night," Hellebuyck said. "And this time of year is when you want to be playing your best hockey, and you feel your best when you play your best."

Jake Allen made 15 saves for the Devils (38-29-7), who have lost four of five (1-3-1). They lead the Columbus Blue Jackets by eight points for third place in the Metropolitan Division.

"I didn't hate our game. You know, I thought our guys were right there," New Jersey coach Sheldon Keefe said. "We only give up under 20 shots against a really good team."

But the sequences of the first two goals, and even the fourth one, too – we've got to do a better job there and then [we've] got to create more offense. That's the bottom line."

Iafallo gave Winnipeg a 1-0 lead 58 seconds into the first period when he took a Connor pass in the low slot, spun and sent a backhand past a sprawling Allen.

"[Iafallo] is a really smart player. I think you can see it out there," Jets forward David Gustafsson said. "He adapts really good to what kind of situation he is in. He is always aware of what is the best play to make and he usually makes it too."

Gustafsson made it 2-0 less than a minute later at 1:52. He jammed the puck in after Allen couldn't control the rebound of a Brandon Tanev shot following a Devils turnover in their defensive zone.

"We gave them a couple of gifts early, and you're playing against a team that gives up the least amount (of goals) in the NHL," Keefe said of the Jets, who allow an average of 2.34 goals per game. "And you're spotting them a 2-0 lead. It's tough sledding from there."

Iafallo pushed it to 3-0 on the power play at 15:45 of the second period with his second of the game. He knocked down Nikolaj Ehlers' pass with his glove at the edge of the crease and quickly banged the puck in.

"He's taken advantage of the opportunity," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said of Iafallo, who has moved up in the lineup with forward Gabriel Vilardi out because of an upper-body injury. "Getting the chance ... to play a lot more, play in that top line, and then [Gustafsson] getting in the lineup, those are just situations of guys taking advantage of opportunities that have been put out in front of them. I think our group has done that all year, and that's helped with our success."

Scheifele then extended it to 4-0 at 19:18, tucking the puck behind Allen at the left side of the net off the rebound of Connor's shot that banked off the end boards.

"One of the best teams, if not the best team in the League," Pesce said. "[We] kind of handed them two (goals) there and, well, that's the difference. ... You give any good team a lead like that, they lock it down and they don't hurt themselves. And we did tonight."

Devils defenseman Luke Hughes was scratched with a lower-body injury for precautionary reasons. He did not take part in the morning skate but did take the warmup.

"He wanted to play here today, but he's not at 100 percent," Keefe said. "And there was a good chance that playing again today would have made it worse. With another game tomorrow (at the Minnesota Wild) and obviously games still to come, I just felt it was the

right thing for him and our team to give him the night off. We'll reevaluate him tomorrow and see where he's at, but just call it day to day at this point."

NOTES: Hellebuyck became the ninth United States-born goaltender in NHL history with at least seven shutouts in a season. The last with more was Jonathan Quick (10 for the Los Angeles Kings in 2011-12). With 44 shutouts, Hellebuyck moved past Craig Anderson and into a tie with Ryan Miller for the second-most by U.S.-born goalie, behind Quick (63). ... The Jets reached 50 wins in 73 games, the fastest they've achieved the milestone. ... Scheifele had his 201st career multipoint game, passing Blake Wheeler for the most in franchise history. ... Scheifele has an assist in each of his past four games. He ended a nine-game goal drought. ... Connor (37 goals, 51 assists) became the third player in Jets/Thrashers history with at least 30 goals and 50 assists in a season, following Marian Hossa (2005-06 and 2006-07) and Scheifele (2016-17).

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2025/03/29/winnipeg-jets-new-jersey-devils-game-recap/>

Jets' Hellebuyck Earns MVP Chants After Franchise-Record Seventh Shutout This Season

By Jim Bender, The Canadian Press

The chants have already started for Connor Hellebuyck: "MVP! MVP! MVP!"

The Winnipeg goalie recorded a career-best and franchise-best seventh shutout this season as the Jets blanked the New Jersey Devils 4-0 before a sold-out crowd of 15,225 fans at Canada Life Centre on Friday night.

"That's really cool," Hellebuyck said. "They really believe in me and I'm really grateful to have them around and spend my career here. It means a lot."

Hellebuyck is the reigning Vézina Trophy winner but was asked if he has given any thought to the possibility of winning the Hart Memorial Trophy, awarded to the NHL's MVP.

"A day at a time," he responded. "It would be cool, but whatever happens, happens."

Hellebuyck's teammates would certainly support the MVP idea.

"I feel like they're well-deserved," said David Gustafsson of the MVP chants after scoring in the game. "I mean, he's been a huge part for us in getting to where we are in the standings right now, so I feel like that's well-deserved."

The Jets, by the way, became the fastest Canadian team to record 50 wins in a season since the Vancouver Canucks in 2010-11.

Hellebuyck, who leads the NHL with 42 wins, was relishing yet another clean slate after stopping 24 shots.

"I just love shutouts, to be honest with you," he said. "That's why I play the game.

"I think our details are right. Our positioning was right, and we're reading the game and jumping them when we had a chance. And it takes everyone, including me when I need to make a save. And when guys are tight and around me, and I can see pucks, things get a little bit easier."

They also get tougher for their opponents.

"He might be the best goalie in the world," said Devils defenceman Brett Pesce. "He made some huge stops for them. I thought we had some opportunities.

"But they just don't give you much. They stick to their structure, they don't beat themselves. It's a good hockey team."

Hellebuyck's shutout celebration song is "Gangnam Style" by K-pop singer Psy. It was played at the end of the contest.

"I do know the dance, so maybe one day I'll do the dance out there," he said with a smile.

Hellebuyck said the way the Jets played was a continuation of the type of hockey they displayed against Washington, when they scored an overtime victory in the previous outing.

"I think we're realizing that we're really close to playoffs, and we want to bring our playoff game every single night," he said. "So, I think that was a continuation of it. And this time of year is when you want to be playing your best hockey, and you feel your best when you're playing your best."

With a goal and an assist, Mark Scheifele recorded his 201st multi-point game to pass Blake Wheeler for sole possession of the most in Jets/Thrashers history. Scheifele is now the Jets 2.0 all-time points leader with 797 points in 870 games, also passing Wheeler.

Kyle Connor had two assists and became the third different player in Jets 2.0 history to record 30 goals and 50 helpers in a season, following Marian Hossa and Scheifele.

Alex Iafallo scored the other two Winnipeg goals.

“He’s a phenomenal player,” Hellebuyck said of Iafallo. “You can play him anywhere in the lineup and he’s going to be a huge difference-maker. I’m glad that he got on the board tonight and I’m not shocked by it.”

Nikolaj Ehlers recorded one assist to extend his point streak to five games. He’s now just two points short of tying his career-best season of 64 points.

NOTES: The Jets are now 38-1 when leading after two periods, the best in the NHL ... Kyle Connor’s wife gave birth to a daughter, Willa, on Wednesday night ... David Gustafsson drew in to replace forward Rasmus Kupari, who aggravated a previous injury in his last game ... The shutout snapped Nico Hischier’s eight-game point streak.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11104109/hellebuyck-gets-the-shutout-iafallo-scores-twice-as-winnipeg-jets-dump-devils-4-0/>

Hellebuyck gets the shutout, Iafallo scores twice as Winnipeg Jets dump Devils 4-0

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

Coming off an impressive overtime win over the Washington Capitals, there would be no letdown for the Winnipeg Jets on Friday against New Jersey.

The Jets wasted no time putting to bed any worry of a letdown, scoring twice in the opening two minutes en route to a 4-0 win that moved them in front of the Washington Capitals for first place in the NHL’s overall standings with 104 points.

The Jets scored twice in the first, added two more in the second and cruised the rest of the way as they became the first team in the NHL to 50 wins.

“I think we’re realizing we’re really close to playoffs and we want to bring our playoff game every single night,” said Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck. “I think that was a continuation of it and this time of year is when you want to be playing your best hockey, and you feel your best when you’re playing your best.”

Hellebuyck made 24 saves for his career-best seventh shutout of the season in front of a sellout crowd.

Alex Iafallo notched a pair of goals for Winnipeg in the win. Mark Scheifele had his first goal in his last 10 games, and David Gustafsson scored less than two minutes into his first game in more than three weeks after he replaced Rasmus Kupari in the lineup.

“That felt good,” said Gustafsson. “To get an early one the first shift there after being out for awhile – it definitely felt good.”

Scheifele also had an assist for his 201st career multi-point game to pass Blake Wheeler for the most in franchise history.

Kyle Connor also hit a milestone with two helpers as he went over the 50-assist mark for the first time of his career.

The Jets swept the season series against the Devils for the fifth time in the last 10 seasons. The win gives the Jets a six point lead on the Dallas Stars for first place in the Central Division.

“Couple weeks ago after the Dallas game, we went into Seattle and weren’t very good for the first period and a half,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “I really liked the way we came out tonight, obviously it was a fantastic start to get up two quick.”

The first goal came from Lafallo just 58 seconds into the contest. Scheifele started the play by skating the puck from the Winnipeg end all the way down to the New Jersey zone before sending a cross-ice pass to Connor. He then sent it to Lafallo in the slot who backhanded the puck into an open net as Jake Allen overcommitted to Connor.

The assist for Connor, who was playing in his first game after his wife gave birth to their daughter, gave him 50 for the first time in his career.

Just 54 seconds later, it was 2-0 thanks to Gustafsson, playing in his first game since March 6.

New Jersey had the puck safely in their own end as players from both teams changed but Simon Nemec couldn’t handle a simple pass, coughing it up to Brandon Tanev. Tanev then drove to the net and was denied by Allen, but Gustafsson knocked home the rebound for his second of the season and just his sixth goal in 143 NHL games.

The Devils got the game’s first power play later in the period but failed as they controlled possession for the bulk of the first, holding the Jets to just one shot in the 13 minutes that followed the Gustafsson goal.

For a very brief moment, the Devils thought they had cut the lead in half when Erik Haula banged home a rebound with 5:34 left in the first, but it was immediately waved off. Haula had bumped Hellebuyck before jamming home the rebound and New Jersey did not challenge the call on the ice.

Thanks to a late flurry of shots, Winnipeg wound up with a 9-8 advantage in shots in the first but for most of the second, the shot counter barely moved.

Over the first 11:40 of the middle frame, there was only one shot on goal. New Jersey registered their first with 8:20 to go and Winnipeg didn’t get their second of the frame until there was 7:31 remaining.

New Jersey got some decent looks on their second power play of the night, but Winnipeg killed it, and just after he stepped out of the box, Colin Miller drew a penalty to give the Jets their first PP look of the evening.

Winnipeg's man advantage has been struggling, but they took advantage on this one. Allen stopped a one-timer from the point off the stick of Josh Morrissey, but Nikolaj Ehlers chipped the rebound to the right of Allen where Lafallo was standing. He gloved the puck down and whacked it into the net to make it 3-0 with 4:15 to go in the second.

With less than a minute to go in the period, the Jets made it 4-0. Scheifele made a slick play at the Jets blueline to take the puck away from Brian Dumoulin and skated up the ice with it. After taking it into the Devils' end, he dropped it off to Connor whose shot went wide but after the puck bounced hard off the end boards, Scheifele chipped it into the net from the side of the crease.

Winnipeg carried a 15-13 edge in shots on goal into the third where Hellebuyck turned aside all 11 shots he faced to clinch the 4-0 win.

Allen made 15 saves in defeat for New Jersey.

Winnipeg will wrap up their homestand Sunday afternoon against Vancouver.

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/can-the-jets-new-top-line-find-quick-chemistry%7E3106305>

Can the Jets' new top line find quick chemistry? (VIDEO)

The Jets enter tonight's contest with the Devils, one point back of the Capitals for top spot in the league. John Lu and Craig Button preview tonight's game and why Winnipeg is focused on clinching the red-hot Central.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/sawyer-samberg-is-one-of-the-most-important-players-for-the-winnipeg-jets%7E3105356>

Sawyer: 'Samberg is one of the most important players for the Winnipeg Jets' (VIDEO)

TSN's Dan Robertson and Kevin Sawyer break down the Jets fast start that led to their dominant win over the Devils Friday night, and discuss how Dylan Samberg has become such a key piece to the Jets success this season.

Sportsnet.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-takeaways-hellebuyck-continues-to-build-case-for-hart-trophy/>

Jets Takeaways: Hellebuyck continues to build case for Hart Trophy

By Jacob Stoller

WINNIPEG — Whether it's a jeer or a cheer, Winnipeg Jets fans always hit the mark.

"Who's your captain?"

"Silver medal."

"Crosby's better."

"Where is Rutger?"

During Friday's 4-0 win over the New Jersey Devils, the crowd's chant was simpler, as a sold-out Canada Life Centre serenaded their franchise player with the ultimate praise.

"M-V-P."

"M-V-P."

"M-V-P."

The NHL's wittiest fanbase doesn't hand out compliments like that just to be nice.

"They really believe in me and I'm really grateful to have them around and spend my career here," Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck said after posting a 24-save shutout. "It means a lot."

And it's the truth.

Hellebuyck has unequivocally been the NHL's most valuable player this year.

While the 31-year-old is a virtual lock to win his third Vezina, shouldn't the same be said about this year's Hart Trophy?

Hellebuyck leads the NHL in wins (42), goals-against average (2.02), save percentage (.925) and shutouts (seven). According to Sportsnet Stats, only two goalies in history — Jacques Plante in 1958-59, Bernie Parent in 1973-74 — have finished a season as the outright leader in all four of those categories. Both Plante and Parent won Stanley Cups those years, by the way.

Nobody will say it out loud, but most of the time, the Hart Trophy goes to the player that we all declare as the most “valuable” unanimously, while we secretly just mean “best.” We end up making a case that they’re the most valuable for reasons X, Y and Z, and the perception of value is sometimes skewed in these conversations — you can’t reduce it to, “Which team’s performance would suffer the most without a particular player.”

It’s not the With or Without You Trophy.

That said, there’s something to be said about putting a team on your back. Remember back in 2018 when Taylor Hall won the Hart after dragging the Devils to a post-season berth? Hall, virtually single-handedly, propelled the Devils to success. Hellebuyck, too, has been instrumental in the Jets upholding their juggernaut status all year. He may not be dragging Winnipeg into the fight like Hall was, but he’s the backbone of the NHL’s most efficient defensive team.

What’s more valuable: Getting just over a point-per-game from a superstar skater — Connor McDavid, Leon Draisaitl, Nathan MacKinnon, etc. — or 60-plus regular-season games of high-end goaltending?

Hellebuyck has posted a save percentage above .900 in 72.7 per cent of his 55 starts this year. Since the 2014-15 season, only Igor Shesterkin in 2021-22 (75 per cent) and Pekka Rinne in 2017-18 (72.9 per cent) have posted a better single-season rate (minimum 50 games).

As for Hellebuyck’s thoughts on winning the Hart? The netminder doesn’t seem all too fixated on it.

“It would be cool, but whatever happens, happens,” he said.

He’s chasing a different piece of hardware.

Donnie Does

Whether it’s on the fourth line, penalty kill, power play or on the top line — Alex Iafallo always rises to the occasion.

His two goals Friday were a much-deserved reward for the Jets’ Swiss Army knife, who has filled in admirably for Gabriel Vilardi, alongside Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor.

“He’s a phenomenal player,” Hellebuyck said. “You can play him anywhere in the lineup, and he’s going to be a huge difference-maker. I’m glad that he got on the board tonight, and I’m not shocked by it.”

Neither is head coach Scott Arniel.

"The thing about Al, if you notice, he's first over the boards on the PK," Arniel said. "I know he's on our second power play, now he's been bumped up (to the top unit) with the injury. He's already been playing all year long on two of our specialty teams in key spots.

"To add more ice time, being with that top (line), he knows what he has to do to help that line have success."

Stoller Says

- They don't call Luke Schenn the human eraser for nothing. The 35-year-old defenceman moved up to fourth all-time in career hits (3,636). Keep in mind, the stat has only been recorded by the NHL since 2005-06.

- I thought this quote from Devils defencemen Brett Pesce was telling.

"They just don't give you much," he said of the Jets. "They stick to their structure. They don't beat themselves."

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/03/28/a-complete-team-effort>

A complete team effort

Hellebuyck notches seventh shutout, Lafallo scores twice as Jets dominate Devils

By: Mike McIntyre

Just keep winning.

It's easier said than done, of course. With little to no help coming from the out-of-town scoreboard lately, it may be the only way for the Winnipeg Jets to ensure they don't get passed during the final sprint to the NHL's regular-season finish line.

The hockey club took another big stride Friday night, relying on all the elements that have made them a legitimate Stanley Cup contender to beat the New Jersey Devils 4-0 at Canada Life Centre.

"A complete team effort," said goaltender Connor Hellebuyck, who stopped all 24 shots he faced for his league-leading seventh shutout of the season which also breaks his own franchise record.

"Everyone was playing their game, snapping it around, playing quick, hitting. Our details were great tonight."

Chants of "MVP" repeatedly rained down from inside the sold-out rink late in the game, and there's no question he's going to get some Hart Trophy votes this year in addition to being a shoo-in for his third Vezina.

"They really believe in me and I'm really grateful to have them around and spend my career here. It means a lot," said Hellebuyck, who also leads all goalies in starts (55), wins (42), goals-against-average (2.02) and save-percentage (.925).

Winnipeg improves to 50-19-4 and moves six points ahead of idle Dallas in the race for top spot in the Central Division and Western Conference. The Jets have nine games remaining, the Stars 10.

"I think we're realizing we're really close to playoffs, and we want to bring our playoff game every single night," Hellebuyck said of following up an impressive 3-2 victory Tuesday over the Washington Capitals, who now trail the Jets by one point for top spot overall in the league.

"So I think that was a continuation of it. And this time of year is when you want to be playing your best hockey, and you feel your best when you play your best."

HOT START

Alex Iafallo scored his first of two goals, and the game-winner, 58 seconds into Friday night's game.

First up was Alex Iafallo on a spinning backhand after nice feeds from new linemates Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele 58 seconds into the opening period. Iafallo was skating on the top line for a second game in a row taking the spot of the injured Gabe Vilardi, who remains week-to-week with an upper body injury.

With the rink still buzzing from the tally, David Gustafsson made it 2-0 only 54 seconds later. Brandon Tanev intercepted a Devils pass and took a shot which Jake Allen stopped. Morgan Barron got to the rebound and poked it to Gustafsson, who scored his second of the year (and sixth of his career).

"That felt good to get an early one there first shift after being out for a while," said Gustafsson, a frequent healthy scratch of late who was replacing the injured Rasmus Kupari in the lineup.

The Devils (38-29-7) are firmly locked into third place in the Metropolitan Division, with no real ability to move up or down, so this was exactly the start the Jets were looking for against an opponent that wouldn't have felt the same urgency as them.

CREASE CRASHING

Coaches want their players going hard to the net, but there's such a thing as taking it too far. We saw two examples in this one.

Jets forward Vlad Namestnikov had a nice rush which ended with him bowling over Allen and getting penalized in the first period. Devils defenceman Brenden Dillon was on the scene but showed some restraint — perhaps due to the fact Namestnikov had been his Winnipeg teammate for two years.

Later in the opening frame, New Jersey forward Erik Haula looked to have got the visitors on the board when he swept home a loose puck, but officials immediately waved it off due to incidental goalie interference. Haula was clearly in the blue paint and making contact with Hellebuyck as he scored. The Devils opted not to challenge the call.

PLAYING WITH POWER

Iafallo is also filling Vilardi's spot on the top power play unit, and he cashed in his second of the night with just over four minutes left in the second period to really break this one open.

The 31-year-old pending unrestricted free agent, who recently told the Free Press he hopes to sign a contract extension with Winnipeg, is now up to 13 goals this year, which surpasses the 11 he scored last season with the Jets. He'll need a red-hot finish to match or surpass his career high of 17, set on two previous occasions with the Los Angeles Kings.

"He knows what to do. He does it whether he's on the fourth line or does it on the first line," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "He's a smart hockey player but he's also competitive, he goes into the hard areas. And wins a lot of his puck battles."

SLUMP BUSTER

Goals have been hard to come by lately for Scheifele, who entered the night on a nine-game drought. So you know his rebound goal late in the second period on Friday felt good.

Scheifele beat Allen to a loose puck that was created by Connor's initial shot going wide, which led to a lively bounce off the back boards.

His first tally since March 6 in Philadelphia gives him 36 on the year and has him up to 80 points for the third time in his career. Scheifele is now four away from matching his career high of 84 he had in 2018-19. (He had 82 in 2016-17).

With a goal and an assist, Scheifele also passed former Jets captain and linemate Blake Wheeler for most multi-point games in franchise history (201 and counting).

BABY BUMP

It was a busy couple days for Connor and his wife, Ally, who welcomed a healthy baby girl into the world on Thursday.

“A pretty life changing experience,” is how Connor described becoming a father for the first time. “We couldn’t be more excited about it.”

Despite likely being a bit sleep-deprived, Connor recorded a pair of assists — hitting 50 for the first time in his career — and is now up to a team-leading 88 points. He’s closing in on his career-high of 93 (set in 2021-22) and could ultimately challenge the franchise record of 100 set by former Atlanta Thrashers forward Marian Hossa in 2006-07.

CRANKING OUT THE HITS

Defenceman Luke Schenn has made a significant impact since joining the Jets at the trade deadline. He dished out six more hits on Friday to lead his team to pass retired Los Angeles Kings forward Dustin Brown into fourth-all time in NHL history.

Schenn is now up to 3,636 which trails only Cal Clutterbuck (4,029), Matt Martin (3,922) and, believe it or not, Alex Ovechkin (3,732), who is about to become the NHL’s all-time leading goal scorer.

KEY PLAY

Gustafsson’s goal at 1:52 of the first period gave the Jets a two-goal lead and really set the tone for the rest of the night.

THREE STARS:

1. Winnipeg G Connor Hellebuyck: 24 save shutout.
2. Winnipeg LW Alex Iafallo: 2 goals
3. Winnipeg C Mark Scheifele: 1 goal, 1 assist

EXTRA, EXTRA

Friday was the 12th sellout of the year and fourth in a row for the Jets.

Healthy scratches were defencemen Haydn Fleury and Ville Heinola. In addition to Vilardi and Kupari sidelined with injuries, defenceman Neal Pionk missed a seventh consecutive game with a lower-body issue.

Winnipeg went a perfect three-for-three on the penalty kill in addition to converting on their only power play chance.

The Jets will practise on Saturday at Hockey For All Centre (noon, open to the public), then close out the four-game homestand on Sunday afternoon against the Vancouver Canucks.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/03/28/dubois-given-clean-slate-with-capitals>

***Dubois given clean slate with Capitals
Fourth team a charm for former wantaway Jet***

By: Ken Wiebe and Mike McIntyre

A weekly lap around the NHL by Free Press hockey writers Mike McIntyre and Ken Wiebe

Spencer Carbery wasn't about to be bogged down by what happened in the past with Pierre-Luc Dubois.

Of course, the head coach of the Washington Capitals had interest in learning about why things had gone sideways in three other organizations for the talented centre.

After the former Winnipeg Jets pivot was acquired by the Capitals in an off-season deal with the Los Angeles Kings for goalie Darcy Kuemper, Carbery let it be known he not only believed in Dubois but would be counting on him to deliver in a variety of important situations.

"I didn't really focus on what had happened, we hardly talked about Winnipeg, L.A. or Columbus," Carbery said earlier this week before the Capitals faced the Jets in an entertaining matchup between the top two teams in the NHL.

"I want to learn about what happened and I wanted him to share his experiences there because that makes you who you are as a player, but it was very much so — a clean slate is sort of an easy way of putting it.

"We knew he had a great skillset. He's a big centreman, he's had success in this league and we felt he could be a big part of the future in our organization. He was going to get an opportunity and we needed him to do this, this and this. We think this is going to be a great fit. We got on the same page really early, he fit in with our group and he felt like he was being given responsibility and opportunity to thrive with what he does well. And then you just roll with it."

That's precisely what Dubois has been doing, quickly leaving the disappointment of last season in the rear-view mirror.

Clearly, things didn't work out the way Dubois had envisioned with the Kings, who acquired him from the Jets after he had agreed to an eight-year extension worth US\$68 million and carries an AAV of US\$8.5 million.

Dubois' production dropped to 16 goals and 40 points in 82 games with the Kings, but it was his lower engagement level that set off alarm bells for many observers.

That the Kings were ready to give up on Dubois one year into his long-term extension spoke volumes about how things needed to change for the talented but sometimes enigmatic player.

Carbery might not be taking any credit for helping to unlock the potential that made Dubois the third overall pick in the 2016 NHL Draft, but he deserves some.

Ultimately, the player must perform on the ice and implement the game plan, but it's obvious Carbery put him in a position to succeed.

He's also been blown away by his ability to recall plays and self-assess in video sessions.

"He's such a coachable (guy) and such a smart hockey player," said Carbery. "He's the type of player that when you talk to him and go through film with him and his individual clips, he knows exactly every single thing that happened on that previous night. Every spot on the ice, every player he went up against, every puck touch that he had. He can recite it for you before you even see it.

"You might think that's nothing, but as a coach, it tells you how intuitive he is and how much he cares about everything he does on the ice. I want to coach people like that all day long because he cares and he wants to be in the right spot. He wants to put pucks to good areas and he wants to get better. I think he'll continue to grow."

Often skating alongside Tom Wilson, Dubois is back to playing with a high motor. He's agitating opponents and using his strength for puck protection and winning battles all over the ice.

It hasn't hindered his offensive game either, as Dubois is already at 18 goals (including four game-winners) and 61 points — which leaves him two points shy of the career high he set with the Jets during the 2022-23 season.

"We've got a lot of guys that you could argue would be our MVPs, but he's right up there," said Carbery. "He's been instrumental in our success. He's able to play against other teams' top lines and chipping in offensively and doing a great job. He's been an every-situation player for us. He's played at a high level all year long. It's been consistent from Game 1 to where we are. It hasn't really dipped.

"I've deployed him and given him the toughest matchups I possibly can every single night and he thrives in them and appreciates them and wants it. I don't know another way to describe it. He's been instrumental to our success this year."

Credit also goes to the Capitals scouting staff, as they also had success bringing in Dylan Strome as an unrestricted free agent in the summer of 2022 on a one-year, show-me contract.

Strome has since signed a five-year extension worth US\$25 million and he certainly appreciates what Dubois has brought to the organization.

“He’s been incredible,” said Strome, noting Dubois has probably been the Capitals’ most consistent player this season. “The way that he holds onto the puck, wins faceoffs, plays on the power play, four-on-four and in all situations. I don’t think our management or our coaches could have asked for anything more from him this year.

“He’s hard to play against and those are the guys that you win with in the playoffs. He’s a huge part of the reason why we’ve had success this year.”

AROUND THE GLASS

Classy move by Ovechkin and the Capitals to meet at centre ice Thursday night in St. Paul to shake the hand of future Hall of Famer Marc-Andre Fleury in what could be the final meeting of his career.

With Fleury set to retire at the end of the season, Ovechkin felt it was important to show the guy affectionately known as Flower the type of respect that his career warrants.

Despite some heated battles with Fleury over the years when he was a member of the Pittsburgh Penguins, this was another great example of the type of bonds that are created through competition.

Fleury is universally loved and he would be a natural to stay involved in the game if that’s something he wants to do, whether that’s as a coach, broadcaster or executive, given his passion for the game and outgoing personality.

PRAISE FOR HISCHIER

It’s almost the time of year when ballots will be going out to members of the Professional Hockey Writers’ Association to vote on a number of NHL awards, which also means that it’s a good time to get some insight from players, coaches and executives on certain players you don’t see all that often in the Eastern Conference.

With that in mind, former Jets defenceman Brenden Dillon made a case Friday for New Jersey Devils captain Nico Hischier to be a candidate for the Selke Trophy as the best defensive forward.

“A guy that doesn’t get enough credit for how complete a player that he is,” said Dillon, whose club was in town to take on the Jets.

“Being in the Western Conference for most of my career, he’s a guy that you see the highlight-reel goals and you see that he’s a captain at a young age and all of this, but you kind of get to know the person. You see the practice habits, you see how he takes a million faceoffs and plays against other team’s top lines. He’s a guy you want on the ice

at six-on-five and five-on-six. One of those guys that is only growing and only getting better.

“You kind of forget that he’s as young (26) as he is. A fantastic player, for sure.”

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/alex-iafallo-connor-hellebuyck-lead-jets-to-romp-over-new-jersey-devils>

Alex Iafallo, Connor Hellebuyck, lead Jets to romp over New Jersey Devils

By Paul Friesen

Any worries about a Winnipeg Jets letdown after an overtime win over powerhouse Washington earlier this week evaporated before Friday night’s game was two minutes old.

The Jets scored on their first two shots of the game and sent the New Jersey Devils out of town with their tails between their legs, winning 4-0.

“We talked about it this morning and then again before the game, of not letting down on what we’d done the other night,” head coach Scott Arniel said. “Obviously it was a fantastic start to get up two, quick.”

A fourth straight sellout crowd watched Alex Iafallo score twice, Mark Scheifele end a nine-game scoring drought and Connor Hellebuyck pick up a league-leading and franchise-record seventh shutout of the season, breaking his own mark.

“I just love shutouts, to be honest with you,” Hellebuyck said. “That’s why I play the game.”

David Gustafsson had the other Winnipeg goal as the Jets improved to a 50-19-4, the first NHL team to reach the half-century mark in wins.

For one day at least they’re again a point up on Washington for first overall.

More importantly, they moved six points up on the Dallas Stars in the race for first place in the Central Division, Dallas holding a game in hand.

Hellebuyck won his league-leading 42nd game (42-10-3), leaving him six shy of tying the NHL record first set by Jersey’s Martin Brodeur in 2006-07 and matched by Braden Holtby nine years ago. The Jets have nine games left.

“It was a complete team effort,” the Jets goalie said. “Everyone was playing their game. It takes everyone, including me when I need to make a save. We’re realizing we’re

really close to playoffs, and we want to bring our playoff game every single night. And this time of year is when you want to be playing your best hockey, and you feel your best when you play your best.”

“He might be the best goalie in the world,” Devils defenceman Brett Pesce said of Hellebuyck. “He made some huge stops for them. But they just don’t give you much. They don’t beat themselves.”

Winnipeg got some action from its struggling power play, going 1-for-1, while killing off all three of their own penalties.

New Jersey, playing without 27-goal scorer Jack Hughes and top defenceman Dougie Hamilton, still has a good grip on third place in their division, at 38-29-7.

The Jets enjoyed a sinfully good start, beating goalie Jake Allen twice in the first two minutes.

Iafallo, filling in for the injured Gabe Vilardi for a second straight game, capped a nice first-line passing play with a spin-around backhand into an empty net. Allen was out of position, and Iafallo had his 12th of the season just 58 seconds in. Kyle Connor and Scheifele did the play-making.

“There’s things that he has to do as that linemate,” Arniel said. “Getting to the net... he does it whether he’s on the fourth line or does it on the first line. He’s a smart hockey player but he’s also competitive. He goes into the hard areas.”

Less than a minute later, the fourth line took advantage of a Jersey giveaway in their own zone, Gustafsson cashing a rebound for just his second of year. Morgan Barron and Brandon Tanev picked up the assists.

Gustafsson was playing his first game after nine straight healthy scratches.

“Yeah, that felt good to get an early one there, first shift after being out for a while,” he said. “That definitely felt good. We’ve got a really good fourth line now.”

“He’s had limited games this year, but every time he’s come in he’s been effective,” Arniel said of Gustafsson. “And you see him get rewarded. His teammates were pretty excited.”

The Devils thought they had one later in the period but it was waved off after an obvious case of goalie interference.

The second period was relatively uneventful until the last few minutes, New Jersey ringing the iron on a power play.

When they weren't hitting the post, Hellebuyck was doing his thing, drawing chants of M-V-P at one point.

"That's really cool," the 31-year-old said. "They really believe in me and I'm really grateful to have them around and spend my career here. It means a lot. You can tell the fans are feeling that playoff time is coming, too. They're ramping up, plus it's a Friday night, so they're probably having a good time."

Final shots were 24-19, New Jersey.

The Jets got their first power play of the night with some five minutes left in the second, a chance to begin work on a unit they'd like to see start clicking before the playoffs.

Sure enough, Lafallo, fresh off some work on the penalty kill, gloved the puck out of the air and onto his stick for his second of the night. Nic Ehlers had last made contact with it, swatting at a rebound from a Josh Morrissey point shot. They both got assists.

"He can do it all," Connor had said about Lafallo before the game, unaware he was predicting the immediate future.

With 42 seconds left in the first, Scheifele took a Connor rebound off the end boards and beat Allen for his first in 10 games, 36th of the season, and the rout was on.

His second point of the game gave Scheifele his 201st career multi-point game, passing Blake Wheeler on the Jets-Atlanta all-time franchise list.

Jets defenceman Luke Schenn hit a milestone of his own, quite literally, in that second period, reaching 3,631 career hits and moving into fourth place on the NHL's career list – behind Alex Ovechkin in third. It's a stat they've only been keeping since the 2005-06 season.

Schenn's team has one more home game before it hits the road, a Sunday afternoon clash with Vancouver. That'll be followed by a three-game trip through L.A., Vegas and Utah.