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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-play-well-but-still-lose-in-la>

***Three things - Jets play well, but still lose in LA
Jets lose 4-1 to Kings, still lead Stars by four points***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets dropped a 4-1 decision to the Los Angeles Kings at Crypto.com Arena. Cole Perfetti scored the Jets only goal and lost all three meetings with the Kings scoring just three times in the season series. Winnipeg (51-20-4) remains four points up on Dallas for first in the Central, but the Stars hold in a game in hand, the Jets will now head to Las Vegas to face the Golden Knights on Thursday.

MISTAKES COSTLY

The Kings are one of the best defensive teams in the NHL and part of their success is jumping on mistakes by their opponents. Their first three goals all came off errors by the Jets, starting with a giveaway by Winnipeg in their end that led to a goal by Trevor Moore at 8:28. Just over a minute later, David Gustafsson failed to get the puck in deep and that allowed the Kings to go back the other way with an odd man rush and Anze Kopitar finished off the play to make it 2-0. After Winnipeg had cut into the lead, Logan Stanley had his pocket picked by Andrei Kuzmenko and the Russian forward skated in and beat Connor Hellebuyck to restore the Kings two-goal lead.

"We turned the puck over three times and it ended up in the back of our net," said Scott Arniel.

"I liked a lot of what we did, our game plan against them. We did a good job of getting through the neutral zone. There were a few times we let them get out of the zone on some of the forecheck situations."

BIG KILL LEADS TO JETS GOAL

Winnipeg was down 2-0 and fought off a Kings power play that ended with a Morgan Barron blocked shot, Barron turned up the ice and spotted Cole Perfetti coming out of the penalty box. Perfetti grabbed the pass from Barron and skated in with Kyle Connor on a 2-on-1, Perfetti then wired a quick shot low blocker side past Darcy Kuemper for his second goal in as many games. It marked the first time the Jets have scored against the Kings this season at even strength.

JETS POWER PLAY MISSES

Winnipeg did not get a power play until the third period when they had two chances to pull within one, but unfortunately, they did not generate any shots on goal as the Kings PK smothered the second ranked power play.

"They're obviously a good kill team, and they actually, they come with a lot of pressure, and we knew that. And again, it was execution. I don't think it was a lack of effort or a lack of, we had the right intent and the right mindset," said Cole Perfetti.

"I think it was just we didn't execute the plays they were coming and we didn't move the puck fast enough."

NHL.com

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-los-angeles-kings-game-recap-april-1>

Kings defeat Jets to keep pace in Pacific Division race Kempe, Kuzmenko each has 2 points for Los Angeles, which remains ahead of Edmonton for 2nd

By Dan Greenspan

LOS ANGELES -- Anze Kopitar, Andrei Kuzmenko and Adrian Kempe each had a goal and an assist in the Los Angeles Kings' 4-1 win against the Winnipeg Jets at Crypto.com Arena on Tuesday.

The Kings are 11-3-0 since acquiring Kuzmenko in a trade from the Philadelphia Flyers on March 7. He has nine points (four goals, five assists) in his past seven games, and his presence has energized the top line of Kopitar and Kempe.

Kopitar has 14 points (five goals, nine assists) and Kempe has 12 (six goals, six assists) in 14 games with Kuzmenko.

"It's really hard to believe, to be honest with you," Los Angeles coach Jim Hiller said of Kuzmenko's impact. "I don't think, in our wildest dreams, could we expect him to come in and really get his -- he had the big year in Vancouver [39 goals, 35 assists in 81 games in 2022-23] -- but he really seems to have got his game back. ... He's quite a player right now."

Trevor Moore also scored for the Kings (42-23-9), who have won six of eight. Darcy Kuemper made 18 saves.

"I think all year when we've been playing against the top teams, we've really gotten up for those games," said Kuemper, who is 8-2-0 in his past 10 games. "We like to challenge ourselves, and those are great measuring sticks playing against a team like them. And I think the top teams bring out the best in us, make us play our best hockey, and I think that's why we've had so much success."

Los Angeles remained two points ahead of the Edmonton Oilers for second place in the Pacific Division and pulled to within five of the Vegas Golden Knights.

Cole Perfetti scored for the Jets (51-20-4), who had won three straight and seven of nine. Connor Hellebuyck made 16 saves.

"They're obviously a really good team in this building and don't give up much, but I thought we created some chances and had our looks," Perfetti said. "A couple self-inflicted wounds, and they capitalized on some of their chances. ... Obviously, you want to get a win, but we didn't play that bad."

Winnipeg remained four points ahead of the Dallas Stars for first in the Central Division. Dallas has a game in hand.

The Kings scored twice in a 1:22 span in the first period.

Moore gave the Kings a 1-0 lead at 8:28 of the first period, knocking down Joel Edmundson's long pass and causing the puck to go in off the toe of his left skate.

Kopitar made it 2-0 at 9:50 on a one-timer from the right circle set up by Kuzmenko off the rush. It was Kopitar's 300th career goal at even-strength to become the fourth Kings player to reach the mark, joining Marcel Dionne (369), Luc Robitaille (344) and Dave Taylor (304).

Perfetti cut it to 2-1 at 11:40 of the second period. He came out of the penalty box after serving Hellebuyck's tripping minor to score on a 2-on-1 break after keeping and shooting from the right circle.

Kuzmenko extended it to 3-1 at 16:07. He poke-checked the puck away from Jets defenseman Logan Stanley at the red line and looked off Hellebuyck before scoring on a wrist shot from the left circle off the rush.

"They're the type of team that if you make mistakes, they pounce on it," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "But they're real good. They clog the middle of the ice. They bottle up play a lot like us. They try to take the guts of the ice away. They do a good job that way."

Kuzmenko credited Kopitar and Kempe for helping raise his game as a defender.

"This is two superstars in the League, these are amazing players," Kuzmenko said. "I happy to work with (them). I happy enjoying the process, enjoying the game, and I like these guys."

Kempe scored an empty-net goal at 19:05 for the 4-1 final, his 32nd of the season.

NOTES: Jets defenseman Luke Schenn did not play because of an undisclosed injury and is day to day. ... Los Angeles has won nine of its past 10 home games and is 14-1-3 in its past 18 on home ice. ... Kempe recorded his 30th assist of the season on Kopitar's goal, making him the first Kings player with at least 30 goals and 30 assists

since Kopitar in 2017-18. ... Edmundson set a new NHL career high with his 14th assist in 70 games.

Sportsnet.ca

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/jets-measuring-stick-loss-vs-kings-no-cause-for-alarm-yet/>

Jets measuring-stick loss vs. Kings no cause for alarm — yet

By Jacob Stoller

Generally, getting swept in a season series against a non-divisional opponent doesn't matter.

Which explains why Winnipeg Jets coach Scott Arniel was taken aback when asked by a reporter if Tuesday's 4-1 loss to the Los Angeles Kings was a measuring-stick game.

He scoffed at the suggestion that his team needed to prove itself against the Kings.

"Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa," Arniel deadpanned to the reporter who mentioned that Winnipeg went 0-3 in games against Los Angeles this season. "We're sitting on top right now. So, I don't know if there's a measuring stick. We don't measure that way. We go about how we play hockey. How we go against each and every opponent."

There's something to be said about how Winnipeg has fared against teams cut from the same cloth as Los Angeles.

"They're extremely stingy; they don't give you a whole lot," Arniel told reporters. "The type of team that if you make mistakes, they pounce on it. No, they're real good. They clogged the middle of the ice. They play a lot like us, they take the guts of the ice away."

The Jets spent most of the game in the Kings' end, controlling 57.8 per cent of the five-on-five expected goals share.

"(When) we have that much puck possession, we've got to attack the net a little bit more," Arniel admitted to reporters.

The Kings, St. Louis Blues and Vegas Golden Knights — three potential playoff opponents for the Jets — have consistently out-duelled the Jets in net-front opportunities. In eight games against those three teams, Winnipeg has generated 26 high-danger shots during five-on-five play and surrendered 54. The other underlying numbers under the hood paint a similar picture.

Arniel has talked about the importance of creating chaos in front of the net, allowing his team to pounce on second and third opportunities. The Jets excel at sustaining

offensive-zone pressure — especially off the cycle — but they need to do a better job of getting in front of goalies. Remember how much of a difference-maker it was for Colorado when it got in Connor Hellebuyck's way last spring?

Now, give credit where it's due — those aforementioned teams excel at locking down the slot. But we all know that come playoff time, even more goals are scored near the crease. And it's that much harder to get into the blue paint in the post-season.

Thursday's tilt against Vegas — a team that has beaten the Jets in each of their two meetings this year — is their next measuring-stick game.

Stoller Says

- One too many moves from Jets defenceman Logan Stanley resulted in a goal against, with Andrei Kuzmenko stripping the puck in the neutral zone before scoring to give L.A. a 3-1 lead late in the second period. It goes without saying that the six-foot-seven defenceman can't be trying to dangle opponents. While Stanley has been playing some of his best hockey lately, I still think Haydn Fleury gets the nod for Game 1 of the playoffs. Fleury isn't leaps and bounds better than Stanley but he makes fewer mistakes and is more mobile, which is crucial in any partner complementing Luke Schenn on the Jets' third pair.

- Winnipeg didn't generate a single shot attempt on the power play during its two power plays. The man-advantage has gone cold since the 4 Nations Face-Off break, the unit converting on just 16.3 per cent of its opportunities (26th).

"Both units have to be better," Jets forward Cole Perfetti told reporters after the game. "I mean, it's not just on (the first unit), like (the second unit) had a minute on each one too and we didn't execute. They're obviously a good kill team, and they come with a lot of pressure, and we knew that. And again, it was execution. I don't think it was a lack of effort or a lack of, we had the right intent and the right mindset. I think it was just we didn't execute the plays they were coming and we didn't move the puck fast enough."

- Arniel said Schenn is day-to-day. The 35-year-old left morning skate early, which Winnipeg's coach attributed to him being "stiffened up."

Associated Press

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/kuzmenko-keys-kings-victory-over-nhl-leading-jets/>

Kuzmenko keys Kings' victory over NHL-leading Jets

By Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Andrei Kuzmenko, Adrian Kempe and captain Anze Kopitar each had a goal and an assist in the Los Angeles Kings' 4-1 victory over the NHL-leading Winnipeg Jets on Tuesday night.

Trevor Moore also scored for the Kings, who moved two points ahead of Edmonton for second place in the Pacific Division.

Darcy Kuemper made 18 saves as Los Angeles earned its 11th victory in 14 games while dominating this meeting of the NHL's top two defensive teams.

Cole Perfetti scored his 17th goal and Connor Hellebuyck stopped 16 shots for the Jets, whose three-game winning streak ended in the opener of a three-game road trip.

Kuzmenko's superb two-way performance highlighted his recent surge for the Kings, who acquired him last month. He has nine points in his last seven games after getting a goal and two assists in LA's 8-1 win over San Jose on Sunday.

Moore opened the scoring when his mid-air deflection of Joel Edmundson's puck to the net ricocheted in off his own skate for his 17th goal.

Just 82 seconds later, Los Angeles executed expertly in transition. Kuzmenko forced a mid-ice turnover by David Gustafsson and eventually fed Kopitar for his 19th goal.

Kempe put his 32nd goal into an empty net.

Takeaways

Jets: Luke Schenn sat out of the loss, which gives hope to the second-place Dallas Stars, who trail Winnipeg by four points with a game in hand.

Kings: With another superb defensive performance, Los Angeles extended its franchise record with the 28th home victory of the season. The Kings still have five home games left.

Key moment

Kuzmenko finished the second period by robbing Logan Stanley in the neutral zone and skating down for an electrifying unassisted goal.

Key stat

The Kings swept the clubs' season series (3-0-0) for the first time since the Atlanta Thrashers relocated to Winnipeg in 2011.

Up next

The Jets visit Vegas on Thursday, and the Kings visit Utah.

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/02/jets-fall-4-1-to-the-los-angeles-kings>

Jets fall 4-1 to the Los Angeles Kings

By: Ken Wiebe

LOS ANGELES — The self-inflicted wounds weren't necessarily plentiful, but they sure were costly.

Poor puck management proved to be the undoing of the Winnipeg Jets as they fell 4-1 to the Los Angeles Kings on Tuesday at Crypto.com Arena.

An errant breakout pass and a pair of neutral-zone turnovers all led directly to goals as the Jets had their three-game winning streak snapped by a Kings team that feasts on opponents that make mistakes in transition.

"A lot like us, they're really structured and they're really disciplined in their structure, so they make it difficult to create," Jets captain Adam Lowry said after the morning skate. "Sometimes it's a frustrating game. It's not one of those games where you have a lot of time or a lot of space with the puck on your stick and you're making clean plays.

"And they're very patient, so if you feel like the game isn't going your way, you start to try and push the envelope a little more and that's where they become very dangerous."

That's precisely what the Kings were when the Jets were unable to get the puck in deep.

First, it was David Gustafsson, whose dump-in was broken up, leading to a rush goal by Kings captain Anze Kopitar.

Then Logan Stanley had his pocket picked by Andrei Kuzmenko as the Jets defenceman tried to get around him just past the red line.

Stanley lost his balance and crashed into the boards in front of the bench, while Kuzmenko went in and scored to restore a two-goal cushion the Kings would not relinquish.

"They're one of the best analytic teams without the puck and in their end of the rink. They do a pretty good job of clogging up the middle of the ice," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said on Tuesday morning. "You've got to work for every inch of the inside to get any kind of scoring opportunities — or even speed in the neutral zone."

Los Angeles won all three games in the season series, with Winnipeg earning a single point in an overtime loss on Jan. 10.

The Jets, who slip to 51-20-4, continue a three-game road trip on Thursday at T-Mobile Arena against the Vegas Golden Knights.

Let's take a closer look at this one:

THE RACE – The Jets entered the contest with a four-point cushion over the Dallas Stars in the chase for top spot in the Central Division standings and failed to extend it.

That leaves the door open for the Stars to pull within two points on Thursday as they take on the Nashville Predators, who figure to be in a sour mood after getting thumped 8-4 by the Columbus Blue Jackets on Tuesday.

The sprint to the finish line figures to feature plenty of drama, but with the Stars riding a six-game winning streak, the Jets lead could be down to two points by late Thursday night.

The final head-to-head meeting of the regular season is scheduled for Apr. 10 in Dallas and the winner of that contest — provided it's not a three-point game that goes into extra time — figures to go a long way in determining the top seed in the Western Conference.

THE MOMENTUM SHIFTER — After Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck was called for tripping Kevin Fiala, Arniel had a decision to make regarding who would serve the bench minor from the players that were on the ice.

Since Cole Perfetti doesn't kill penalties, Arniel sent him to the box and after surviving the two minutes, Morgan Barron blocked a shot by Quinton Byfield and found a streaking Perfetti, sending him in on an odd-man rush with Kyle Connor.

Perfetti sold the passing option well enough to freeze Darcy Kuemper before beating him to the blocker side with a perfect shot.

The goal was the 17th of the campaign for Perfetti, who has pulled within two goals of his career high with seven games left in the regular season.

THE KEY PLAY — Kuzmenko restored a two-goal cushion late in the second period, stealing the puck from Stanley and sneaking his shot past Hellebuyck.

THE THREE STARS

Andrei Kuzmenko, Kings, The trade-deadline acquisition scored a goal, added an assist.

Anze Kopitar, Kings, scored a goal, added an assist.

Cole Perfetti, Jets, scored a goal, generated four shots on goal.

THE SIGHTING — Near the end of the morning skate, Jets' defenceman Neal Pionk made his way to the bench and waited patiently to skate onto the ice.

Although he tried his best to stay under the radar, Pionk's teammates greeted him with a hearty round of stick taps, coupled with a little hooting and hollering.

Pionk reacted by showing a bit of his personality, going with a polite wave to the crowd — even though the building was nearly empty.

"I thought he was just the social organizer for these trips," Arniel joked before getting serious. "It's nice to see him back. That was his first time on the ice and you heard the response. The boys were happy to see him — as are the coaches."

With Pionk hitting the next target on his road to recovery, is there any update on the timeline for his return?

"Now it's all conditioning and feel," said Arniel.

Pionk's return may not be imminent, but he's inching closer to getting back on the lineup and there's still time for him to suit up in the regular season to knock off the rust before the Stanley Cup playoffs arrive.

EXTRA, EXTRA — Jets defenceman Luke Schenn left the morning skate early after he stiffened up and was a late scratch. He was replaced by Haydn Fleury, who moved onto the third pairing with Stanley, who played on his off-side. Colin Miller was bumped up to the second pair with Dylan Samberg. There's no doubt the Jets missed Schenn's presence on the ice, especially in a game where real estate was tough to come by.

Manitoban Joel Edmundson, who was chosen in the second round (46th overall) of the 2011 NHL Draft by the St. Louis Blues, chipped in an assist in what was his 600th NHL game. The Kings defenceman found the errant pass at the left point and his shot was tipped home by Trevor Moore to open the scoring at 8:28 of the first period.

Jets goalie Eric Comrie is on the trip and dressed as the backup, but he remains on baby watch, so Winnipegger Chris Driedger is on the road trip as insurance after he was recently acquired in a trade with the Florida Panthers for fellow netminder Kaapo Kahkonen. Driedger has appeared in five games with the Manitoba Moose.

The Jets' other healthy scratches were defenceman Ville Heinola and former Kings forward Jaret Anderson-Dolan. Anderson-Dolan has seven goals and 19 points in 51 games for the Moose.

Former Moose sniper Jeff Malott was in the Kings' lineup for the fourth time this season, skating on the fourth line with Trevor Lewis and Samuel Helenius. Malott signed with the

Kings as an unrestricted free agent after spending four seasons with the Moose. Malott has 23 goals and 51 points in 61 games with the Ontario Reign.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/01/changing-on-the-fly>

Changing on the Fly ***Ehlers' versatility on show with added responsibilities***

By: Ken Wiebe

LOS ANGELES — Nikolaj Ehlers made sure that his actions have matched his words.

The Winnipeg Jets winger made it clear during training camp that his uncertain future wasn't going to be a topic of conversation that he cared to discuss much over the course of the season.

Although he's been asked about it on several occasions, the answer stayed the same.

His focus is entirely on the season at hand and the rest would take care of itself when the time is right.

Whether that means there is still time for an extension to be signed before July 1, or if Ehlers will hit the market as an unrestricted free agent for the first time in his career, remains to be seen.

But there is no denying the fact that it never became a distraction for himself or his teammates, since Ehlers — whose nickname is Fly — is playing some of the best hockey of his career and his team currently resides in first place in the NHL.

If there was a study done on the ability to compartmentalize an issue that can be tough for many to deal with, Ehlers is passing with flying colours.

"Easy. Super easy," Ehlers said on Tuesday, before the Jets faced the Los Angeles Kings in a game that was ongoing at press time.

"For me, I'm in the same exact position as everyone else in here. I don't think anybody else is thinking about next season or in two years or three years. We're thinking about what we're able to do with this team right now."

What the Jets and Ehlers have been able to do is flourish together.

Ehlers had 24 goals and 63 points in 65 games going into Tuesday's action and, were it not for the nine games he missed with a lower-body injury, it's a safe bet he would have already eclipsed his career-high for goals (29, which was set during the 2017-18 season).

In recent games, Ehlers has seen a shift in his role as he's been moved to a line with Adam Lowry and Mason Appleton by Jets head coach Scott Arniel in an effort to provide a bit more balance after top-line winger Gabe Vilardi was sidelined with an upper-body injury.

"We gave him some new responsibilities," said Arniel.

"Now he's going up against other teams' top lines. Not so much being checked, now he's one of the checkers. I like that look with him and he's grasped it. One thing for him is that he's been around for a while and he likes new things, new challenges and new opportunities and I like to think that he's making the most of it."

The other thing Ehlers has made the most of this season has been his promotion to the Jets' top power-play unit after the arrival of assistant coach Davis Payne.

After Ehlers had previously been used as the primary shooting option on the second unit, Payne envisioned the speedy Danish forward in the high slot in what he calls the pop position.

After going the entirety of last season without scoring a power-play goal, Ehlers already has six goals and 22 points with the man-advantage.

Ehlers admitted that he wasn't sure when the idea was presented to him, but he quickly got to work on researching what the position would entail, watching video and getting insight from players who did the job.

One of the people Ehlers solicited advice from was former Jets centre and frequent linemate Paul Stastny, and he's been a great resource.

"I will for sure do this, I'm excited for that challenge but I'm going to need help," said Ehlers. "They've been able to help me a lot and make it easier for me, with the reads that I need to make."

Appleton recently referred to Ehlers as one of the most dynamic players in the NHL and that's related to his explosiveness and ability to push back defenders with his blinding speed.

Combine that with his defensive awareness and you've got a pretty lethal combination.

"His transition offence and the way that he transports the puck is so elite. He can create things on his own, with his speed, with his vision, his deceptiveness and with his shot," said Lowry.

"He's underrated defensively, in terms of his reads and his positioning in the D-zone. That's something that he's really paid attention to over his career, being a coach's son helps. The attention to detail."

Ehlers has often been his harshest critic.

He holds himself to a high standard and isn't afraid to call himself out when he's not reaching that mark — giving a recent example when discussing Sunday's 3-1 win over the Canucks.

"Last game, I was terrible in the first two periods, throwing a lot of pucks away, and that doesn't play into the game we want to be able to play," said Ehlers. "Even though you play against those top lines, you want to have the puck in the O-zone.

"I think we're still feeling each other out, with where we're going to be and things like that. It's always exciting, trying to find that."

Part of the feeling-out process included Ehlers creating some chaos with a sharp-angle shot that became a rebound for Appleton and the game-winning goal.

So while the experiment is still in the formative stages, it's already yielded some important results.

Ehlers, who turned 29 in February, is trying to soak in every moment of the regular season, but he can't help but imagine what the Stanley Cup playoffs are going to be like when they arrive in the middle of this month.

"Absolutely. We haven't been happy with the way things have gone in the past couple of years," said Ehlers, who was chosen ninth overall by the Jets in 2014.

"That gives us a chance now to show that we're a team that deserves to be in the spot we are right now. But we believe in ourselves. We want to prove to ourselves that we have what it takes and we believe that we do. It's all about putting the pieces together and peaking at the right time. That's how it is in the playoffs.

"With the way we've been able to play this year, being able to bounce back after losses and win games, that's going to help us a lot."

Ehlers understands that this edition of the post-season also provides an opportunity for him to show what type of player he can be when the lights are brightest.

He knows full well that the numbers he's accumulated in the playoffs haven't matched his regular-season output over the course of his career.

That hasn't been from a lack of effort either.

There have been times over the years where Ehlers tried to do too much, rather than have the game come to him.

But whether it was injuries or the fact he hasn't previously had much first unit power-play time, Ehlers has recorded only four goals and 14 points in 37 playoff games.

He's the first person to acknowledge that there's another level for him to reach, though he was encouraged by his play last spring in the five-game series with the Colorado Avalanche.

"I haven't been happy," said Ehlers.

"Everybody goes through stuff in the playoffs. To me, that's not really an excuse that I want to use. I've got to be better. I know that. I actually think the last playoffs against Colorado, I played well. The points may not have shown it, but I played the way that I needed to.

"But obviously I want to take it a step further this year and just do my job as well as I can."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/03/31/impact-of-jets-bench-boss-undeniable>

***Impact of Jets' bench boss undeniable
Arniel steering club towards a place they've never been before***

By: Ken Wiebe

LOS ANGELES – As it turns out, Scott Arniel was more than ready for this close up after years of rebuilding his brand.

After waiting patiently for more than a decade to get his second chance as an NHL head coach, Arniel has not only led the Winnipeg Jets to first overall in the league through 74 games, he's also a leading candidate for the Jack Adams award.

Of course, there is competition from a number of others, including Spencer Carbery of the Washington Capitals, Pete DeBoer of the Dallas Stars and Dean Evason of the Columbus Blue Jackets, to name a few.

But the case for Arniel is a compelling one.

As the Jets prepare to open a three-game road trip on Tuesday against the Los Angeles Kings, Arniel's impact has been undeniable.

The Jets lead the NHL in fewest goals against and are in position to claim a second consecutive William Jennings Trophy, but they've also increased their goal production dramatically from last season.

One of the biggest gains for the Jets has come on special teams, specifically on the power play — where they've gone from the bottom third last season to leading the NHL for most of the season before a recent dip pushed them to second among the 32 teams.

There have also been modest gains on the penalty kill, with the Jets sitting in the middle of the pack after finishing in the bottom third last season.

Arniel has a hand in those special teams but also deserves credit for the job he did in hiring new assistants Davis Payne and Dean Chynoweth to augment the coaching staff that already included assistant Marty Johnston, goalie coach Wade Flaherty and video coaches Matt Prefontaine and James Cochrane.

Surrounding yourself with quality assistants is integral to having success and it's clear the staff understands the importance of their role and appreciate the ability to have a voice that is both heard and respected.

Arniel's ability to get his players to buy into an aggressive system that can be taxing to play over the course of an 82-game marathon is another testament to the job he's done.

The Jets commitment to structure has been a foundational piece in what has been a storybook season.

Whether it was the eight consecutive wins to start the campaign or the 15-1 start that supplied ample breathing room, the Jets haven't had too many lengthy dips in their level of play.

The 11-game winning streak in January and February should have alleviated any doubt that this team wasn't built for the high-pressure games that are right around the corner.

"We won in a bunch of different ways, which I keep saying is a real strength of this team as we are not a one-trick pony," Jets forward Cole Perfetti said on Sunday when asked to assess the 3-1 homestand that concluded with a 3-1 victory over the Vancouver Canucks. "We can play any style and be successful at it. And I think we showed that."

That's something the Jets have shown over the course of the season.

This is a team with depth at all positions.

They've got some star power to be sure — and those stars are having career seasons when it comes to production — but they've also got a bunch of players providing secondary scoring as well.

When Mason Appleton delivered the game-winner on Sunday, he became the 12th member of the Jets to hit double digits in goals. Even Brandon Tanev has had a double-digit season — scoring nine goals with Seattle before notching his 10th marker with Winnipeg.

It's a reminder that the Jets aren't reliant on one or two lines to carry the mail on a nightly basis.

Speaking of carrying the mail, Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck is having a season for the ages, with a third Vezina Trophy all but locked up with eight games remaining.

Although the Jets have done a great job at reducing the workload in front of Hellebuyck when it comes to the volume of quality opportunities that he faces during the past two seasons, he's on the verge of becoming just the third goalie in NHL history to lead the league in goals against average, save percentage and shutouts.

Jacques Plante and Bernie Parent are the others, and that's good company to be in.

"He's so steady Eddie back there," said Appleton. "He's so calm, he's so quiet. Sometimes you do forget how dominant he is to lead the league in everything he is. To have the success he is having and being the MVP odds-on favourite.

"That's a generational player. He's our backbone, he means everything to this team. We try to put our best foot in front and do what we can in front of him. But at the end of the day we know we've got the best goaltender in the world back there. He can save your bacon when you're a little bit off."

And that's the beauty of it.

There simply haven't been that many nights the Jets have been off and, even then, their B or C game often requires the opposition to deliver an A-game to beat them, thanks in part to Hellebuyck's dominance.

There are going to be potholes to navigate during the coming weeks, but the Jets have done an exceptional job of handling whatever adversity has come their way.

Whether it's a tidy effort or an uncharacteristic showing that features poor puck management or coverage errors, the Jets go through the same process of assessing and moving on to the next opponent.

While that seems like standard operating procedure, it's easy to get swept away on a winning streak and get an inflated ego on your press clippings, which can be a precursor to the details slipping.

On the flip side, it's not uncommon for teams to watch a losing skid spiral out of control, causing the additional stress that comes with battling tooth and nail for a playoff spot.

Back to the original premise revolving around the Jack Adams award, which is voted on by the NHL Broadcasters' Association.

There is a bit of a 'beauty is in the eye of the beholder' component to many past winners.

In some cases, it's gone to the head coach of the most improved team or one that wasn't expected to qualify for the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Could that hurt Arniel's chances of winning?

Perhaps, but it shouldn't.

Yes, the Jets finished fourth overall in the NHL last season when Arniel was the associate coach and had to fill in for Rick Bowness on a number of occasions.

But that doesn't take into account the further strides the Jets have taken this season — both individually and as a collective — that are related to Arniel having both hands firmly on the wheel and steering the group towards a place they've never been before.

Many out-of-market observers predicted a precipitous fall for the Jets, based on a mostly quiet off-season after the disappointment of another first-round exit.

The projected regression turned into improvement and the Jets seem poised to challenge the franchise record for wins and points.

Ultimately, this edition of the Jets will be judged by how things go in Game 83 and beyond, but what is abundantly clear is that hiring Arniel this past summer was much more than a safe choice.

He was the right choice.

Not only did Arniel earn this second chance, he's making the most of it.'

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/three-reasons-jets-scott-arniel-is-not-nhl-coach-of-the-year>

Three reasons Jets' Scott Arniel is not NHL coach of the year

By Paul Friesen

It's about all this talk of Scott Arniel deserving the NHL coach-of-the-year award.

At the risk of upsetting Winnipeg Jets fans around the globe – I'm guessing it wouldn't be the first time – the first-year Jets head man is not the most deserving choice for the Jack Adams Trophy this season.

Three pieces of evidence steer me to that unavoidable conclusion.

The first is the standard measuring stick for this award: improvement in the standings.

Arniel's work in this department has been pretty impressive. Going into Tuesday night's game against the Kings in Los Angeles, he had the Jets at 106 points in 74 games, 12 more than they had at the same time last year under Rick Bowness.

Bowness's Jets had lost six games in a row at this point, but they went on to win their last eight, so Arniel will be hard-pressed to keep his plus-12 bump.

Still, that's pretty good.

But it's not the best.

That distinction goes to Washington Capitals boss Spencer Carbery, whose team was 21 points better (103-82) than at the same point last season. Most polls to date have Carbery as the favourite for that very reason.

Second place goes to Dean Evason of the Blue Jackets, with a 17-point improvement. Evason's team has faltered of late and was below the playoff line.

Carbery's is on top of the Eastern Conference, jostling with the Jets for first overall.

Coming in at No. 3 on the "new-and-improved" list is Ottawa's Travis Green, with a 14-point edge over last year going into his team's 74th game. The Senators' solid hold of the first wildcard spot vaults him over Evason at this point.

You could even make a solid argument for others who've pushed their teams to better-than-expected results this season.

But Arniel is in that boat, too. After an off-season that didn't move the needle, most expected a drop-off from the Jets. Not only has that not come, they've improved.

That brings us to the other two pieces of evidence: Connor Hellebuyck and health.

The Jets have the best masked saviour in the NHL right now and that'll cover up more than the occasional sin in front of him. It's not a knock on Arniel. It's simply a fact.

So is his team's luck on the injury front, which is my closing argument.

The Jets haven't just enjoyed a decently-healthy season, they've been the team affected least by injury. No. 1 at dodging the bullet.

I've had this feeling for a while now, and the website nhlinjuryviz.blogspot.com confirms it.

The site uses a measurement called Cap Hit of Injured Players, factoring in not just man-games lost, but the dollar value of those man-games lost. Not a perfect measure, but it's the best we've got.

The Jet are at the very bottom of that list, the least hard-hit team in hockey.

They've had some injuries to important players – Dylan Samberg for 22 games, Nik Ehlers for nine, Neal Pionk missed his ninth on Tuesday, Adam Lowry for eight, Gabe Vilardi has reached four – but most of their best players have reached this point unscathed.

Top scorers Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele reached a perfect 75 games on Tuesday, while top defenceman Josh Morrissey was just one behind.

Dylan DeMelo, Alex Iafallo, Nino Niederreiter, Vlad Namestnikov, Cole Pefetti, Vilardi – all have played 70 or more.

Hellebuyck hasn't missed a start to injury, either.

At the opposite end of the injury scale, playoff-bound Colorado and surging St. Louis are the NHL's second- and third-hardest hit teams.

Minnesota and Dallas are fifth and sixth on the hit list. Toronto is ninth, Washington 10th.

I could listen to an argument for some of those coaches, the one making the most noise coming, again, out of Washington.

None of this is designed to take away from what Arniel has done in Winnipeg. It's been a sparkling coaching job by a man who waited a long time for his second shot at it.

He's obviously learned plenty since his first head job with the Manitoba Moose, and even more since an ill-fated stint in Columbus.

Eleven more years as an assistant/associate coach brought him back to where it all started in the 2000-01 season, when he took his first job as an assistant with the Moose, then in the IHL.

I covered that team, and if you'd told me I'd be covering the same coach with a Winnipeg team in the NHL 24 years later, I'd have said you'd lost your marbles.

Arniel has a real chance to win all the marbles.

With the long road behind him and everything he's been through, I'm not about to tell you he doesn't deserve that.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-gift-three-to-kings-drop-4-1-decision-as-la-sweeps>

Jets gift three to Kings, drop 4-1 decision as LA sweeps

By Paul Friesen

The Winnipeg Jets expected a grinding, tight-checking affair in Los Angeles on Tuesday, and they weren't April fooled.

Managing just 19 shots on goal and scoring only once, the Jets dropped a 4-1 decision, ending a three-game win streak and handing the Kings a sweep of the three-game season series.

You don't give LA easy ones and expect to win, especially in their barn, where they've lost just four times all season.

Yet that's exactly what the Jets did on three Kings goals in the first two periods.

"We turned the puck over three times and it ended up in the back of our net," head coach Scott Arniel told reporters on scene. "I liked a lot of what we did, our game plan against them. We didn't spend a lot of time in our end of the rink. But again, we made three mistakes and it ended up in the back of our net."

Cole Perfetti scored the only goal, as the Jets (51-20-4) failed to extend their four-point lead on idle Dallas in the race for first place in the Central Division.

Connor Hellebuyck took the loss, missing a chance to tie a career-high 44 wins in a season. Kings goalie Darcy Kuemper notched the victory. Final shots were 20-19, LA.

"We had our looks," Perfetti said. "A couple self-inflicted wounds and they capitalized on some of those chances. We didn't give up much either. We didn't play that bad. I don't think."

His coach agreed.

"They're extremely stingy," Arniel said. "They don't give you a whole lot. They're real good. They clogged the middle of the ice. They play a lot like us. They take the guts of the ice away. Then they've got some real good leaders that play the right way. Couple guys that have won Cups and do the right things."

"Another good team in the West."

The Jets were without defenceman Luke Schenn, who reportedly came down with back trouble during the morning skate. Arniel called him day-to-day.

After a nondescript first several minutes, the Kings scored twice in 82 seconds, Trevor Moore getting things started on a deflection after an errant Colin Miller pass in his own zone.

A couple of shifts later Winnipeg's David Gustafsson couldn't handle the puck in the neutral zone, giving the Kings a three-on-two that Anze Kopitar finished in style.

With LA being the NHL's second-stingiest team – behind only the Jets – Winnipeg's goose appeared all but cooked a mere 10 minutes in.

"They want to bore you and wait for you to make mistake," is how Perfetti put it.

The first penalty of the game went to – wait for it – Hellebuyck, who tripped Kevin Fiala in the second period while the Kings forward tried to get around him and behind the net.

The Jets not only killed it, they cashed in right after it, Perfetti jumping out of the box after serving the penalty, taking a pass from Morgan Barron and snapping one past Kuemper for his 17th of the year.

A Logan Stanley gaffe allowed the Kings to regain their two-goal lead before the second was up: the big defenceman was poke-checked trying to stickhandle past Andrei Kuzmenko. Kuzmenko went in to beat Hellebuyck on the two-on-one.

The Winnipeg goalie was next to hand Kuzmenko a gift, but he got back into his net just in time to snag the save after giving the puck to the Kings winger.

The Jets got their first power play five minutes into the third but did nothing with it. They got another with five minutes to go, came up empty again and were well on their way to their 20th loss of the season, even if they did some good buzzing in the Kings zone in that final 20 minutes.

Adrian Kempe added some salt to the wound with an empty-net goal in the final minute.

"You've got to attack," Arniel said of his power play. "They're an aggressive group... but in that split-second where you've got them, you've got to get the puck to the net and try to take the chaos down there. It's like our five-on-five. We just didn't do that enough."

"It was execution," Perfetti added. "I don't think it was a lack of effort. We had the right intent and the right mindset. And... when you're the top power play, teams are going to bring their A-game."

The Winnipeg power play had actually fallen to No. 2 in the league going into the game.

Vegas is No 1 and they're next on the schedule, Thursday in Las Vegas, the first of seven games left in the Jets' regular season.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-netminder-connor-hellebuyck-earns-nhl-third-star-honours>

Jets netminder Connor Hellebuyck earns NHL third star honours

By Gordon Anderson

On Monday, Winnipeg Jets netminder Connor Hellebuyck was named the NHL's third star for the week ending March 30.

The netminder made 29 stops in the overtime win over the Washington Capitals last Tuesday. Hellebuyck turned aside 24 shots in a 4-0 victory over the New Jersey Devils on Friday night. On Sunday afternoon he made 23 stops in the 3-1 victory over the Canucks.

"He's so steady Eddie back there, he's so calm, he's so quiet," Mason Appleton said. "Sometimes you do forget how dominant he is to lead the league in everything he is.

The 31-year-old Commerce, Mich., native earned his seventh shutout—a career high—in the victory over the Devils. He is tied with ex-Buffalo Sabres goalie Ryan Miller for the second most shutouts for an American-born goaltender with 44.

Hellebuyck finished the four-game homestand with a 3-0-0 record, a 1.00 goals-against average and a .961 save percentage.

"He is a generational player," Appleton said. "He's our backbone, he means everything to this team. We try to put our best foot in front and do what we can in front of him. But at the end of the day, we know we have got the best goaltender in the world back there."

Hellebuyck leads the league in wins (43), shutouts (7), while his 2.01 GAA and .925 save percentage are the best among goaltenders with 25 starts or more.

"He can save your bacon when you're a little bit off," Appleton said. "We try to make the game as easy as we can for him. But he's a heck of a goalie and I'm glad he's a Winnipeg Jet."

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/chl/colby-barlow-excited-to-stay-in-canada-and-one-day-play-for-winnipeg-jets-1.2280780>

Barlow excited to stay in Canada and one day play for Jets

By Adam Kirshenblatt

Colby Barlow is ecstatic at the idea of continuing his hockey career at the next level in Canada.

The Orillia, Ont., native was drafted 18th overall by the Winnipeg Jets in 2023 and says playing in Canada is a point of pride.

“As a Canadian kid, going to a Canadian team is pretty special and a dream come true,” said Barlow. “I grew up watching Hockey Night in Canada with my family and to continue to be a part of that is pretty cool. Being able to stay in Canada and representing my country is super, super special to stay in that realm.

“There’s still lots of work ahead to get to that point, but I’m looking forward to that.”

Barlow got his first experience with the Jets in the summer of 2023 when he participated in the team’s rookie camp. However, once the full team training camp began, Barlow had an illness that limited his participation.

He got his first full experience with the NHL club last off-season, which allowed him to watch closely and learn from veteran NHL players.

“The first camp was a bit of a roller coaster for me. I was able to participate in the rookie tournament, where I learned a whole lot,” said Barlow. “I participated in the first day of training came but then I got sick. It put a damper on camp for me because I wasn’t able to participate.

“The second time around was awesome because I was able to participate the entire time. I got into a few preseason games where I could learn and play with some of the guys. It was a great experience for me.”

Barlow specifically mentioned keeping an eye on long time Jets veterans Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Josh Morrissey, and Adam Lowry. He made sure to watch how they conducted themselves both on the ice and in the weight room, while taking advice on how to properly prepare himself as a professional.

Lowry also took the time to sit down with Barlow to discuss what has worked for him in his career and what hasn’t.

“I talked to him about his development and his path, which was helpful to hear,” said Barlow. “I could take a lot from that. I was trying to look at the road ahead, how they got there and what to do to keep themselves there every day.”

Barlow was returned back to the Ontario Hockey League after participating in two preseason games, recording a goal and two points.

The most valuable thing that Barlow took from his time was how players took care of themselves off the ice, which is something he wanted to take back with him to the OHL.

"It's a lot of little habits and a lot of it is off the ice as much as on the ice," said Barlow. "The guys there led by example and are always doing the right things and taking care of their bodies. How you take care of your body plays a massive role in how you perform, and I've seen a change in that aspect in myself this year."

"Continue to build those pro habits like sleep, hydration, and health is an asset. If you're prepared off the ice, you'll be prepared on the ice. When I check all those boxes, I have confidence when I step onto the ice."

The 6-foot-1 winger's 2024-25 campaign consisted of a lot of change for his life on the ice. After three seasons with the Owen Sound Attack, and captaining the team for two, he was traded to the Oshawa Generals to begin the season.

He joined an Oshawa team that made it all the way to the OHL Championship Series a year ago where they were swept by the London Knights.

Oshawa has 23 players returning from last year's squad, including stars like Beckett Sennecke, Cal Ritchie, and Luca Marrelli. They're trying to finish what they started last season.

"It's a winning culture here, which is awesome to be a part of," said Barlow. "They went to the finals last year and they don't this year to end the way last year did. Most of them were there last year, so it's great to learn and hear about their experiences."

The Generals are a team that is steeped in history with some of the best players to ever play the game having worn the sweater.

Oshawa has won the Memorial Cup five times, which is the most of any active OHL team. They also have won the J. Ross Robertson Cup 13 times and have had top-tier talent like Bobby Orr, Eric Lindros, and John Tavares go through their ranks.

The history of the Generals is not lost Barlow and the current team, who are hoping to add to the Generals' legacy.

"It's an honour to put on that jersey every single day," said Barlow. "There's a lot of history with the team and it's big winning culture here. I'm grateful to be a part of that and learn from it."

"I play as hard as I can every single night in front of an amazing fan base where almost every game is completely sold out. The support in the community is amazing and when I go to events, there's all these people and smiles, which is just awesome to be a part of."

Barlow recorded 32 goals and 61 points in 62 games to help the Generals to a 41-21-6 record and land in the fourth seed in the Eastern Conference. They are taking on the

Brampton Steelheads in the first round of the playoffs and have a 2-1 series lead with Barlow putting up four goals and six points.

The East ended up being a tight race, with the Brantford Bulldogs finishing at the top with 93 points and then the Barrie Colts, Kingston Frontenacs, and Generals all finishing below them at 88 points.

Barlow knows that mistakes have to be limited playing against such good competition, but believes his team is up for the challenge.

"I think we stack up [against the top teams] pretty well," said Barlow. "I'm really confident in our group how we prepare every day. The guys are so tight and it's amazing to be part of such a family-type culture.

"It's great to be in these tight situations. As a player, you get to learn how important every single game is and how important every single play is. Mistakes have to be so minimal because momentum can swing so easily."

As Barlow is finding team success in Oshawa, he hasn't forgotten about where he came from in his time in Owen Sound. Barlow played three seasons with the Attack, recording 116 goals and 184 points in 168 games.

He helped Owen Sound to three playoff appearances, but the team was never able to get past the first round.

Barlow attributes much of the success that he's had on an individual level to the opportunities and confidence that the Attack and the Owen Sound community gave to him.

"Owen Sound is a special community for me because they took me in as a 16-year-old and gave me a lot of opportunities," said Barlow. "The community is so tight and welcoming as a small market and it's so special how everyone comes together and works together.

"They not only helped me learn how to be a good hockey player, but a good guy and person. They showed me a lot of great things those first few years. I'm super grateful to them and that city will always be in my heart."

The Hockey News

<https://thehockeynews.com/nhl/winnipeg-jets/latest-news/jets-goaltender-named-third-star-of-the-week>

Jets Goaltender Named Third Star Of The Week

By Julian Gaudio

Winnipeg Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck has been named the NHL's third star of the week.

The 31-year-old posted a 3-0-0 record this week, including a .961 SV%, a 1.00GAA and a shutout. Hellebuyck has been dominant all season, earning praise and consideration in the Hart Trophy race.

The three wins Hellebuyck picked up this week were against the Washington Capitals, New Jersey Devils and the Vancouver Canucks, all of which are desperately looking for wins.

He currently leads all goaltenders in wins (43), save percentage (.925), goals against average (2.01) and shutouts (7). This feat has been achieved twice in NHL history, by Jacques Plante in the 1958-59 season and Bernie Parent in the 1973-74 season.

Here's what the NHL's press release had to say about Hellebuyck's week:

"Hellebuyck went 3-0-0 with a 1.00 goals-against average, .961 save percentage and one shutout to help the Jets (51-19-4, 106 points) reclaim first place first place in the overall NHL standings as they clinched their third straight playoff berth. He denied 27 of 29 shots to lead Winnipeg to a 3-2 overtime win against the Washington Capitals March 25 in a battle of the League's top two teams. Hellebuyck then made 24 saves to set a franchise record with his seventh shutout of the campaign in a 4-0 victory over the New Jersey Devils March 28. The reigning Vezina and William M. Jennings Trophy winner closed the week by stopping 23 shots, including all 18 he faced over the final two periods, in a 3-1 triumph versus the Vancouver Canucks March 30. The 31-year-old Hellebuyck has played in 57 total contests this season (43-10-3), topping the NHL (minimum: 25 GP) in wins (43), goals-against average (2.01), save percentage (.925) and shutouts (7)."

The Jets begin a three-game road trip which will feature another two difficult tests against the Los Angeles Kings and the Vegas Golden Knights. With the Dallas Stars breathing down the Jets' neck, they'll need every bit of Hellebuyck's dominance to continue.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11110834/turnovers-sink-winnipeg-jets-in-4-1-loss-in-los-angeles/>

Turnovers sink Winnipeg Jets in 4-1 loss in Los Angeles

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

It's been very challenging for visiting teams to win in Los Angeles this season, and when you shoot yourself in the foot several times, it certainly doesn't help your cause.

The Winnipeg Jets were undone by turnovers Tuesday night in L.A., dropping a 4-1 decision that improved the Kings' impressive home record to 28-4-4 on the season.

The Kings turned three Jets giveaways directly into three goals and added an empty netter to end the Jets three-game win streak.

"We turned the puck over three times and it ended up in the back of our net," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "I liked a lot of what we did, our game plan against them. We did a good job of getting through the neutral zone.

"We didn't spend a lot of time in our end of the rink, but again, we made three mistakes and ended up in the back of our net."

The Jets fell behind by two goals early and Cole Perfetti's 17th goal of the season in the second period pulled the Jets within one. But Andrei Kuzmenko scored off a Logan Stanley turnover late in the frame to restore the two-goal lead.

The Jets had single digit shot totals in each of the three periods and ended up getting outshot 20-19.

"The entire game, I thought we played pretty well," said Perfetti. "They're obviously a really good team in this building and they don't give up much. But I thought we created some chances and had our looks and a couple of self-inflicted wounds and they capitalized on some of their chances."

With the victory, the Kings won all three meetings to sweep the season series for the first time since the 2012-2013 season when they met only once. The Jets scored just once in each of their three matchups this season.

"They're extremely stingy," said Arniel. "They don't give you a whole lot. They're the type of team that if you make mistakes they pounce on it."

Luke Schenn missed the game and is day-to-day after stiffening up during the morning skate. Haydn Fleury dressed in his absence.

The Jets lead the Dallas Stars by only four points for the division lead and the Stars have a game in hand.

Not much happened over the first eight minutes of the game but a pair of misplays burned the Jets in a big way near the midway mark of the first.

The first mistake came when Colin Miller sent a grenade of a pass up the boards in his own end, too high and too hot for Mark Scheifele to corral. It landed on the stick of

Brandon native Joel Edmundson at the point, who sent a shot on net that banked off Trevor Moore and into the net at the 8:28 mark.

Just over a minute later, Josh Morrissey sent a breakout pass to David Gustafsson that the forward couldn't handle in the neutral zone. LA picked it up as Morrissey went off for a change with Adrian Kempe charging into the Winnipeg zone with the puck. He dropped it off to Andrei Kuzmenko who sent it backdoor to Anze Kopitar for a one-timer that beat Connor Hellebuyck to make it 2-0 at the 9:50 mark.

The Kings wound up outshooting the Jets 10-7 in the opening 20 minutes. Winnipeg started to generate some decent looks late in the period but couldn't get on the board.

The Jets generated solid zone time in the early minutes of the second as well but continued to struggle to get shots to the net.

Los Angeles earned the game's first power play when Kevin Fiala was tripped by the stick of Hellebuyck to the right of the Winnipeg net. The Jets managed to kill the penalty and moments later got on the board.

Perfetti served the minor penalty for Hellebuyck and right as he stepped out of the box, Morgan Barron made a great play to block a shot and collect the puck, leading to Perfetti being sprung on a 2-on-1 with Kyle Connor. Perfetti never looked to pass as he rifled a perfect shot that beat Darcy Kuemper to make it 2-1 at the 11:40 mark.

The Jets had the momentum as they looked to even the score but another big blunder set them back.

Logan Stanley skated out of his own end with the puck and as he attempted to cross the red line, Kuzmenko poke-checked the puck off Stanley's stick, and as Stanley lost his balance and fell to the ice, Kuzmenko skated the puck into the Winnipeg end on an odd-man rush.

He looked pass the whole way, fooling Hellebuyck before he slid a shot through Hellebuyck's five-hole to restore the Kings' two-goal lead at the 16:07 mark.

The Kings maintained their edge in shots on goal heading to the third period, edging Winnipeg 18-13 through 40 minutes.

Winnipeg got their first power play chance of the night with 15 minutes to go in the third when Nikolaj Ehlers was tripped in the attacking zone but the Jets, operating at a 17 per cent clip on the power play since the Four Nations Faceoff, failed to generate any shots on goal over the two minutes.

Ehlers drew another penalty with 5:08 remaining but the power play again struggled mightily, never getting set up and failing to generate a shot once again.

Winnipeg pulled Hellebuyck for an extra attacker but Kempe sealed the win with an empty-netter with 55 seconds to go.

The Jets fall to 0-2-1 against the Kings this season and failed to register 20 shots on goal in any of the meetings.

Hellebuyck turned aside 16 shots in defeat.

The Jets will now head to Vegas to face the Golden Knights Thursday night. Puck drop is just after 9:30 p.m. with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB starting at 7 p.m.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11111078/analysis-winnipeg-jets-kings-season-end/>

ANALYSIS: Jets' loss to Kings could be defining moment in sprint to season's end

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

It could be a seminal moment in their season.

Games like Tuesday night for the Winnipeg Jets have been few and far between through 75 games, but when they have occurred, it sure shines a different light on the hockey club.

From here on out the Jets will be judged on how they play in physical, tight and low-event hockey games, where battles won usually relate to what's on the scoreboard, when goals get tougher to score, come with a cost and are ultimately at a premium.

For the third time this season, the Los Angeles Kings had Winnipeg's number, dispatching the Jets 4-1 in the team's final regular season meeting and outscoring them 10-3 in the series.

Now, it might only be one loss on the schedule, but given the timing of the setback, it could also be a crucial misstep in holding off the Dallas Stars for a division title.

With only seven games remaining, the Jets' grip on the Central Division lead is slim — four points, in fact, on the Stars, with Dallas possessing a game in-hand, strength of schedule and Herculean experience in this type of race.

What the Jets will soon tell us is whether they have the ability to make adjustments to their game on the fly, bounce back in an appropriate fashion and deflect the mounting pressure down the stretch — identical to what a playoff series will encapsulate.

And therein lies the most intriguing aspect of what's ahead for the Jets: The Vegas Golden Knights are up next on the schedule, and their game won't be too dissimilar to what the Kings served up Winnipeg to start this road trip.

If the Jets can pivot quickly and prove they're capable of playing any style, or even force a team like Vegas into playing theirs, then we'll know they're truly ready for the playoffs

If not, then Tuesday's loss in L.A. was not only a seminal moment in their season but likely a defining moment to what's ahead as well.

Los Angeles Daily Times

<https://www.dailynews.com/2025/04/01/andrei-kuzmenko-provides-spark-again-in-kings-victory-over-jets/>

Andrei Kuzmenko provides spark again in Kings' victory over Jets

By Andrew Knoll

LOS ANGELES — The Kings stepped on the scale once more and asserted that they belong in the ring with any heavyweight.

They completed a season sweep of the team with the NHL's best record, the Winnipeg Jets, by way of a 4-1 win on Tuesday night at Crypto.com Arena.

The Jets had won nine of 12 games entering the clash and last month pieced together the longest winning streak in the league this season – 11 straight. They also have the most road wins in addition to several other regular-season superlatives, including a league-leading defense spearheaded by Vezina Trophy favorite Connor Hellebuyck in net.

Yet the Kings have beaten them in convincing fashion at home twice now and are 3-0-0 thanks to a gutsy overtime win in Winnipeg between those triumphs. They allowed just one goal in each of the three games and held the Jets under 20 shots in all three as well.

"If there's one team that we've played extremely well, it would be Winnipeg," Kings coach Jim Hiller said. "It goes back to the game that we lost in San Jose. We had them up next, they were the first-place team in the league, as they were tonight, so I think that really got us focused. The game in Winnipeg was a strong game for us, and then tonight, too, so I'm sure they're frustrated with us."

The Kings are now 12-1-0 against firm playoff teams (top three in their division) at home this season, but 3-10-0 on the road. Each home game they win – and they still have five more – signifies a new franchise single-season record. They're also 11-3-0 overall in 14 games since acquiring Andrei Kuzmenko at the trade deadline.

Kuzmenko catalyzed the Kings' effort Tuesday, with a primary assist on the game-winning goal before he tallied unassisted to match the goal and assist of both his

linemates, Adrian Kempe and Anže Kopitar. Trevor Moore opened the scoring and Darcy Kuemper repelled 18 shots for the Kings (42-23-9, 93 points), who are two points ahead of Edmonton (43-26-5) for second place in the Pacific Division with eight games left in the regular season.

Cole Perfetti scored Winnipeg's lone goal. Hellebuyck underwhelmed relative to his reputation, stopping 16 of 19 shots.

The final frame saw the Kings lock down two points, despite having to kill their first two penalties of the game, both tripping minors, to Vladislav Gavrikov and Quinton Byfield.

"Huge ones late in the game there. That's a dangerous power play," Kuemper said. "That was the difference in the game down the stretch."

They nullified both infractions with aplomb before Kempe sealed Winnipeg's fate with 55 seconds to play. He scored his team-leading 32nd goal uncontested by Hellebuyck, who'd gone to the bench for an extra attacker.

In the middle frame, the Kings appeared to assume control of the game even beyond the scoreboard and had the opportunity to put the game away with a mid-period power play.

But they failed to convert and summarily allowed a goal at 11:40 to Perfetti, who exited the penalty box and tallied from the right faceoff dot 10 seconds after his infraction had expired. It was Perfetti's second goal in two games as he amassed nine points in his past 10 appearances.

The Kings, however, conserved their two-goal edge at the second intermission thanks to Kuzmenko's second takeaway that led to a goal on Tuesday, at the 16:07 mark. He stripped Logan Stanley at the red line and then accelerated ahead on a partial two-on-one rush, selling a pass with his eyes and shoulders before slipping a crafty shot under Hellebuyck's pads.

So how did he see the play develop and open up perhaps the most vaunted netminder in the world, causing him to give up a relatively soft goal?

"You want my secret?" Kuzmenko asked. "I don't say."

Because of two trades, Kuzmenko ended up facing the Jets (51-20-4, 106 points) six times with three different franchises this season, with his teams winning three of those games, leading him to joke that "probably, these are my friends, the Winnipeg Jets."

Kuzmenko has nine points in his last seven games after getting a goal and two assists in an 8-1 drubbing of San Jose on Sunday.

The early going was largely a tactical battle but the Kings managed to break through with a bounce – and a goal – 8:28 after the opening faceoff. They added another 1:22 later to seize a 2-0 lead through 20 minutes, with the league's stingiest first-period team expanding its edge over its second most miserly group.

An own-zone giveaway by Winnipeg allowed Joel Edmundson, who skated in his 600th career game on Tuesday, to flick a shot attempt that was deflected downward by Moore. The puck hit the ice, then Moore's skate and, finally, the nylon behind Hellebuyck. It was the pride of the Conejo Valley's fourth goal in seven games and his 17th of the season.

The Kings' second goal was more picturesque, a rush tally from the top line. Kuzmenko's neutral-zone takeaway sent his trio off on an odd-man rush. Kempe found him between the circles, only to see Kuzmenko eschew a straight-on shot and dish to Kopitar for a redirection from the right side. It was the captain's 19th goal of 2024-25.

"He's a really strong O-zone player, but I didn't know he'd be this strong off the rush. That's probably the thing that's surprised me the most," Hiller said. "Well, how well he's played without the puck, that's the biggest surprise, and how dangerous he is off the rush. He has good hockey sense. Kopi and Juice are really good rush players, too, so he fits in really well with that line."

NOTE

Longtime broadcaster Nick Nickson, who will retire at season's end, was honored before the game.