

**Winnipegjets.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-blues-back-in-series-with-7-2-win>

***Three things - Blues back in series with 7-2 win  
Pavel Buchnevich records hat trick as Blues win first game of series***

By Jamie Thomas

Pavel Buchnevich scored three times to lead the St. Louis Blues to a 7-2 win over the Winnipeg Jets at Enterprise Center on Thursday night. The Jets now lead the best-of-seven series two games to one with Game 4 scheduled for Sunday at 12 CT. David Gustafsson and Neal Pionk scored for Winnipeg, Morgan Barron, Colin Miller, Mason Appleton and Jaret Anderson-Dolan added assists. The Jets played this game without Dylan DeMelo, Colin Miller came into the lineup for his first game of the series. Josh Morrissey played with Neal Pionk, Dylan Samberg with Luke Schenn and Miller paired with Logan Stanley.

***FIRST PERIOD...ALL BLUES***

With the series shifting to St. Louis, the Jets knew that the Blues would come out with a lot of intensity, and they certainly did. Pavel Buchnevich opened the scoring 48 seconds into the game and then again at 3:11 for a 2-0 St. Louis lead. The Blues would make it 3-0 at the 15:51 mark when Cam Fowler snuck past Alex Lafallo and beat Connor Hellebuyck glove side. Safe to say, the Jets head coach Scott Arniel was not happy with their start.

"We lost the game in the first period. They scored two goals in the first three minutes, got on our heels, crowd got behind them," said Arniel.

"We were terrible in the first period, game was over in the first."

***PERFETTI CLOSE TO FIRST PLAYOFF GOAL***

With St. Louis still leading 3-0, it looked like Cole Perfetti had scored his first career playoff goal around the halfway mark of the second period. Perfetti took a pass from Kyle Connor and Jordan Binnington made a glove save robbing the Jets forward but Perfetti immediately pointed at the net to say it was in. The league decided to take a look and while one angle showed that Binnington's glove and puck were behind the goal line, the league ruled no goal with no conclusive evidence that it was in.

"I mean, I saw a video on the bench that looked pretty evident. I mean, I don't know what angle they saw. From what I understand, they said they didn't have an angle of it," said Perfetti. "

Meanwhile it was on the scoreboard and their crowd kind of went "Ahh." Based on their reaction I thought it was in the net. I thought you could see the puck on its side in his glove and his glove in the net."

### ***BLUES BLOW IT OPEN IN THIRD***

Winnipeg had owned the third period through the first two games of this series outscoring St. Louis 4-0 and allowing just seven shots combined. Winnipeg finally got on the board when Jaret Anderson-Dolan went down the wall bringing two Blues with him and that left David Gustafsson wide open with his first of the playoffs to make it 3-1 at 4:32.

However, less than a minute later some confusion behind the Jets net led to the next Blues goal. Connor Hellebuyck went behind the net to play the puck and Robert Thomas knocked the puck off his stick to allow Buchnevich to steal and complete the hat trick into the empty net to restore the three goal lead at 5:24. St. Louis would get goals from Jordan Kyrou and Alexey Toropcheko to make it 6-1 and that would be it for Hellebuyck as he allows six goals on 25 shots.

### **NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-st-louis-blues-game-3-recap-april-24>

***Buchnevich has hat trick, Blues score 7 in Game 3 win against Jets  
Fowler gets five points for St. Louis, which cuts Winnipeg's Western 1st Round series lead to 2-1***

By Lou Korac

ST. LOUIS -- Pavel Buchnevich scored his first Stanley Cup Playoff hat trick and had an assist for the St. Louis Blues in a 7-2 win against the Winnipeg Jets in Game 3 of the Western Conference First Round at Enterprise Center on Thursday.

St. Louis trails the best-of-7 series 2-1. Game 4 will be here on Sunday (1 p.m. ET; FDSNMW, MAX, truTV, SN, TVAS, CBC).

"We had to step up," Blues center Robert Thomas said. "Their top players were contributing, and they were a big reason for us going down 2-0, and 'Buchy' stepped up right away, came out flying, and made some great plays and got us off to a great start. So, he deserves a lot of credit."

Cam Fowler had a goal and four assists, and Thomas had four assists for the Blues, who are the second wild card from the Western Conference. Jordan Binnington made 16 saves.

"I'm thankful. I'm happy that I was able to contribute and help our team get a win," Fowler said. "It's a special thing for me and having my family here and being back in the playoffs, but it's over now. It was a special night, but all it really is is one game. It helped us get back in the series and now our attention has to shift to Sunday."

David Gustafsson and Neal Pionk scored for the Jets, who won the Presidents' Trophy as the team with the most points in the regular season. Connor Hellebuyck allowed six goals on 25 shots before being replaced by Eric Comrie, who allowed one goal on three shots.

"It's one game. We lost one game. Whether it's 7-2 or 1-0, we lost one game in this series," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "We lost the game in the first period. They scored two goals in the first three minutes, got on our heels, crowd got behind them. We were terrible in the first period. Game was over in the first."

Buchnevich made it 1-0 at 48 seconds of the first period, scoring on a backdoor tap-in after Fowler's shot off the left wall hit Jimmy Snuggerud in front.

Buchnevich then made it 2-0 at 3:11 with a power-play goal, tapping in a Thomas pass from the left circle.

"I know [Radek Faksa, Nathan Walker and Alexey Toropchenko] had a great shift, physical, the crowd got going, really loud and we just followed them," Buchnevich said. "Second shift, we got turnover, I shot, missed the net and you know, [Fowler] hit the net and I got the rebound and the crowd got nuts and the emotions get even more and we keep going."

Fowler made it 3-0 at 15:51. Thomas found the defenseman coming down the middle of the ice, and he beat Hellebuyck with a quick shot high to the glove side.

"We had talked a little bit about our 'D' trying to use our skating ability to our advantage," Fowler said. "The play kind of developed there and I kind of saw that we had full control on the wall and I just felt like I could jump in and try and contribute to the rush a little bit and 'Tommer' made a great play and I just tried to get it off as quick as I could and happy to see it go in. It was more about just the mindset of our 'D' trying to use our legs and skate. I saw the opportunity and just tried to jump in, but like I said, 'Tommer' made that whole thing possible. It was a heck of a play by him."

The Jets thought they scored at 10:05 of the second period on a Cole Perfetti one-timer that Binnington gloved during a power play. However, a review concluded that there was no conclusive evidence to overturn the call on the ice, which was no goal, and it remained 3-0.

Binnington could sense the timeliness of the save.

"Yeah, obviously we had that 3-0 lead, you want to keep that going into the third period," Binnington said. "That was tight. It's just a hockey play and yeah, I knew it was close and I mean, I didn't really see the video of it, but I felt it was just too close to tell. Thankfully it was on our side and yeah, it was a big moment in the game to stay with that 3-0 lead and keep our momentum moving forward."

Gustafsson made it 3-1 at 4:32 of the third period when he beat Binnington with a quick shot from the slot alone.

Buchnevich completed the hat trick at 5:24 to make it 4-1. Thomas intercepted the puck from Hellebuyck behind the goal, and Buchnevich curled a backhand into the open net.

Jordan Kyrou scored a 5-on-3 power-play goal at 7:56 to make it 5-1, burying a wrist shot from the high slot using Brayden Schenn as a screen. Toropchenko made it 6-1 at 10:32 on a redirection in the slot that chased Hellebuyck from the game in favor of Comrie.

Pionk made it 6-2 at 12:50 with a power-play goal, a one-timer from the top of the left circle.

Colton Parayko scored a power-play goal on a one-timer from the edge of the left circle at 16:17 to make it 7-2.

"I just thought that the attitude we had ... we started the other two games really well, and what I liked was the fierce, competitive nature in our attitude for 60 minutes," St. Louis coach Jim Montgomery said. "The start was incredible. We were aggressive, we did the things we wanted to do to make sure that we were going to get more scoring chances, and we did get more scoring chances."

*NOTES:* Fowler's five points set a Blues record for the most by a defenseman in a playoff game. Fowler is also the eighth defenseman in League history to get five or more points in a playoff game. ... Buchnevich had one goal in 22 playoff games coming into the game. ... Winnipeg defenseman Dylan DeMelo was a late scratch due to illness and was replaced by Colin Miller, who had an assist in 16:52 of ice time. ... St. Louis defenseman Ryan Suter was a healthy scratch after playing all 82 regular-season games and Games 1 and 2 of this series.

<https://www.nhl.com/news/topic/playoffs/2025/series-e-news/st-louis-blues-back-in-series-with-dominant-game-3-win-against-winnipeg-jets>

***Blues 'climbed back into' series with dominant win against Jets in Game 3  
St. Louis scored 4 goals in 3rd period after being unable to close out opening 2 games***

By Tracey Myers

ST. LOUIS -- Coming home after losing the first two games on the road, the St. Louis Blues needed a big response in their Western Conference First Round series against the Winnipeg Jets.

Boy, did they get one.

"It's what we needed," Blues center Robert Thomas said after their dominant 7-2 win against the Jets in Game 3 at Enterprise Center on Thursday.

"It's a long series, we climbed back into it and good game tonight. We got to focus on Sunday and making sure we're prepared and coming out the same way."

The Jets lead the best-of-7 series 2-1 entering Game 4 here on Sunday (1 p.m. ET; FDSNMW, MAX, truTV, TBS, SN, TVAS, CBC).

It seemed to be a big night for everyone in a Blues uniform. Thomas had four assists. Forward Pavel Buchnevich scored his first career Stanley Cup Playoff hat trick and had an assist, and Cam Fowler had five points (one goal, four assists), the most by a Blues defenseman in a playoff game in their history.

"It was more about just the group, I think, getting off to a good start in front of our fans and using our momentum to our advantage. That's part of playoff hockey," Fowler said of helping the Blues jump out to a 3-0 lead with a goal and two assists in the first period.

"Winnipeg was a difficult place to go in and play with their fans. We wanted this to feel the same, and our fans showed up and made it loud and supported us all night and just like they have all season. We used that to our advantage and came out with a really good start and it helped us establish some momentum in the hockey game."

The Blues pretty much had all the momentum on Thursday. Obviously, it started with, well, their start. At the end of the first period, they led 3-0 with 15 shots on goal. That's compared to Game 1, when they finished with 17 shots in 60 minutes.

They had even-strength scoring and three more power-play goals to go along with the physical game they've played throughout the series. They kept Jets top-line center Mark Scheifele (two goals, three assists through two games) and left wing Kyle Connor, who scored the game-winner in each of the first two games, off the score sheet.

Oh, and the Blues also had plenty of finish. After not scoring a goal in the third period of either of the opening two games of the series, they scored four in the third on Thursday.

"I just thought that the attitude we had, we started the other two games really well, and what I liked was the fierce, competitive nature in our attitude for 60 minutes (on Thursday)," Blues coach Jim Montgomery said. "The start was incredible. We were aggressive, we did the things we wanted to do to make sure that we were going to get more scoring chances, and we did get more scoring chances."

The Jets were without defenseman Dylan DeMelo, who was out due to an illness. His presence was certainly missed; he averaged 20:21 of ice time in the first two playoff games. But it was a tough night for the Jets regardless of who was in the lineup. Their starts in Games 1 and 2 were so-so but they overcame them. On Thursday, their start proved way too slow and way too tough to overcome.

"I think starting better is definitely an emphasis for us here going forward in the series, but I think we didn't execute in the first period and especially the first 10 minutes," Jets defenseman Josh Morrissey said.

"They're going to come hard, that's their M.O. They're aggressive on the forecheck and they play an aggressive game, so that's where we have to do a better job of executing with the puck to move it past that aggressiveness that we didn't handle well in that first period."

The Blues played solid hockey in Winnipeg but left Canada with nothing to show for it. They played dominant hockey on Thursday and are right back in the series. It would stand to reason that the Blues have swung the momentum in their favor and set a great tone heading into Game 4. They don't necessarily see it that way, but it should certainly give them more confidence.

"I think every game has its own momentum and its own feel to it. All it is is Game 3 in our mind. We came out, had a great first period. That helped us get back in the series and helped us win the hockey game tonight. But when that puck drops on Sunday, none of that matters," Fowler said.

"It's about the preparation between now and then and getting ready for a huge game on Sunday. It's nice to play on home ice in front of our fans. We've really worked hard to have that opportunity and we made the most of it tonight."

### **Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/st-louis-blues-winnipeg-jets-game-2-recap-april-21>

### ***Takeaways: Blues take advantage of lifeless Jets in Game 3 rout***

By Jacob Stoller

You could've turned your TV off after the first period.

"We lost the game in the first period. They scored two goals in the first three minutes, got on our heels, crowd got behind them," Scott Arniel told reporters after the Winnipeg Jets lost 7-2 to the St. Louis Blues in Game 3. "We were terrible in the first period. Game was over in the first."

Terrible might be even putting it mildly.

In the first five minutes and change, St. Louis had a 2-0 lead and Winnipeg hadn't even recorded a shot. The Blues were harder on pucks, winning more battles and forechecking relentlessly. The Jets? Lifeless.

There were sprinkles of Déjà vu from Game 1, where Winnipeg looked like a deer in headlights for the first 10 minutes.

“They’re going to come hard, that’s their M.O.,” Josh Morrissey told reporters. “They’re aggressive on the forecheck, and they play an aggressive game, so that’s where we have to do a better job of executing with the puck to move it past that aggressiveness that we didn’t handle well in that first period.”

And Connor Hellebuyck wasn’t there to stop the bleeding. In fact, he enhanced it, allowing two goals against on his first three shots. The fourth goal was a result of a poor attempt at playing the puck behind the net. All in all, six goals against on 25 shots.

Notice a theme? The Blues are quick. And at this pace, this series could turn just as swiftly, if the Jets don’t start coming out of the gate with more juice.

### *St. Louis suffocating*

Give credit where it’s due, the Blues found a way to silence the Jets’ most deadly weapons.

By smothering them.

Josh Morrissey was hit eight times. Mark Scheifele received seven hits. Adam Lowry absorbed five.

Kyle Connor, as nifty as they come when it comes to finding open space, recorded just one five-on-five shot.

### *Goal or no goal?*

It sure looked like Cole Perfetti scored midway through the second period.

A camera angle showed what looked like pretty clear evidence that the puck crossed the line.

“I saw his glove in the net,” Perfetti told reporters. “Obviously, he made a great save, but I was on the goal line and I saw his glove in the net and the puck on the mesh of the glove. And you see it pretty evidently in the video, I think.”

At first glance, no doubt. It would seem to defy common logic to call that a no-goal. That said, these calls aren’t based on assumptions.

“It really looked like his glove was in the net. But there was never any video where it actually showed the goal line and the puck being over,” Arniel said. “There was nothing, whether it was his glove, bits and pieces of his glove was in the way, or whatever it was. Usually, when it isn’t called a goal, you’ve got to be 100 per cent to overturn it.”

### *No DeMelo*

Dylan DeMelo was a late scratch due to illness.

Arniel rolled out the following pairings to start the game:

Josh Morrissey — Neal Pionk

Dylan Samberg — Luke Schenn

Logan Stanley — Colin Miller

- The Morrissey-Pionk pairing was... ugly. They were outshot 7-0 during their 7:25 minutes during five-on-five play — all but one of which were scoring chances — while being hemmed in, continuously, on the forecheck.
- I'm somewhat surprised Arniel didn't keep Schenn and Stanley together, given how well they fared in Game 2. That said, St. Louis' speed burned the Jets, and if those two were together, it wouldn't have been pretty.

### **Associated Press**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/hellebuyck-pulled-as-blues-rout-jets-in-game-3/>

### ***Hellebuyck pulled as Blues rout Jets in Game 3***

By Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Pavel Buchnevich scored three goals for his first career playoff hat trick and added an assist as the St. Louis Blues beat the Winnipeg Jets 7-2 in Game 3 of their first-round series on Thursday night.

Cam Fowler had a goal and four assists, and Jordan Kyrou, Alexey Toropchenko and Colton Parayko also scored, and Robert Thomas had three assists to help the Blues cut the Jets' series lead to 2-1. Jordan Binnington made 17 saves.

David Gustafsson and Neal Pionk scored for the Jets, who won the first two games in Winnipeg. Connor Hellebuyck gave up six goals on 25 shots before being pulled midway through the third period. Eric Comrie stopped two of the three shots he faced.

Game 4 is in St. Louis on Sunday, with Game 5 in Winnipeg on Wednesday.

Buchnevich, who had just one goal in 22 previous postseason games, gave the Blues an early lead with two goals in the game's opening minutes. He got it going just 48 seconds in by kicking the puck off his stick and into the net, and then he tipped Thomas' shot for a power-play goal at 3:11.

Fowler, who assisted on the first two goals, made it 3-0 with 4:09 left in the opening period.



Buchnevich and Fowler became the first Blues teammates with three points in a period of a playoff game since Al MacInnis and Chris Pronger in Game 3 of the 1998 West quarterfinals against the Kings.

Binnington robbed Cole Perfetti of a power-play goal midway through the second that would have gotten Winnipeg back in it. Perfetti and the Jets thought the puck crossed the goal line in Binnington's glove, but after a lengthy league-initiated review, the save stood.

Buchnevich's third goal, at 5:24 of the third period, came less than a minute after Gustafsson gave the Jets some momentum with his first of the playoffs.

Kyrou had a power-play goal at 7:56 and Toropchenko scored with 9:28 left to make it 6-1 and chase Hellebuyck.

Pionk had a power-play goal for the Jets 2 1/2 minutes later, but Parayko got the Blues' third goal with the man-advantage with 3:43 remaining to close the scoring.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/what-was-root-cause-of-hellebuycks-rough-night-in-game-3/>

### ***What was root cause of Hellebuyck's rough night in Game 3? (VIDEO)***

Sam Cosentino joins Sportsnet Central to break down the St. Louis Blues' dominant 7-2 Game 3 win over the Winnipeg Jets, discussing Connor Hellebuyck's rough night in the crease, the physicality of the series, and more.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/why-no-goal-call-against-jets-stood-after-review/>

### ***Why no-goal call against Jets stood after review (VIDEO)***

The Hockey Central panel breaks down the no-goal call against the Winnipeg Jets on Cole Perfetti's shot and discusses why the call stood after review.

### **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6307676/2025/04/25/nhl-playoffs-blues-jets-game-3/>

### ***Blues rout Jets in Game 3 to get back in series: Takeaways***

By Jeremy Rutherford and Murat Ates

With the Western Conference playoff series between the St. Louis Blues and the Winnipeg Jets headed to Enterprise Center for Game 3 Thursday night, Pavel Buchnevich speculated about the energy that would be in the building.

It would be the Blues' first home playoff game since 2022, and the team had ended this season with 12 consecutive wins on home ice.

"Goose bumps," Buchnevich said before the game.

Little did Buchnevich know that he would create those goosebumps by scoring two goals in the game's opening 3 minutes 11 seconds. They were the fastest two goals scored at the start of a game by a St. Louis player in playoff history.

That was the start the Blues needed if they wanted back in the series, and Buchnevich provided the finish, too, with his first-career playoff hat-trick in a 7-2 victory over the Jets in front of a sellout crowd of 18,096 that witnessed the team's 13th straight win at home.

Cam Fowler, Jordan Kyrou, Alexey Toropchenko and Colton Parayko also scored for the Blues, who chased Winnipeg goalie Connor Hellebuyck from the game after he allowed six goals on 25 shots. Backup Eric Comrie came on and, on the first shot he saw, gave up Parayko's goal.

Winnipeg still leads the best-of-seven series 2-1, and now fans will have to wait two days to see if the Blues can hold the momentum or if the Jets can be the first team to win a game on the road.

Game 4 is Sunday at noon CT.

Blues coach Jim Montgomery noted on several occasions that Winnipeg had made "one more play" than his team in each game and that the Jets' top players were the ones making them. Namely, Kyle Connor, who had both game-winning goals, and Mark Scheifele, who helped set them up.

Meanwhile, Buchnevich, who scored 20 goals in 76 games, was sitting on just two power-play assists.

"I think Buchy has been good for us, but very similar to the team, I think he needs to possess the puck more when he's in the offensive zone," Montgomery said. "When the puck's on his stick, usually good things happen, and it hasn't been there enough."

Buchnevich certainly did that Thursday, with three goals on five shots. He finished with four points, including an assist.

In Game 3, Winnipeg's offense looked like the Blues' did in Games 1 and 2, finishing with just 18 shots on goal.

#### *Fowler trade paying off*

The Blues' acquisition of defenseman Cam Fowler from the Anaheim Ducks, one of the more underrated trades of the NHL season, continues to pay off.

In December, Blues GM Doug Armstrong picked up the 15-year veteran and a fourth-round pick in 2027 in exchange for prospect Jeremie Biakabutuka and a second-round pick in 2027. The Ducks also retained some of Fowler's salary, giving him a \$4 million AAV this season and in the final year of his contract in 2025-26.

In 51 regular-season games with the Blues, playing on the Blues' top pair with Parayko, Fowler had nine goals and 36 points.

When the Blues made the playoffs, it marked Fowler's first trip to the postseason since 2016-17 with Anaheim. He played 64 postseason games for the Ducks and had six goals and 35 points. The 33-year-old wasn't much of a factor for the Blues in the first two games in Winnipeg, but in Game 3, he had three points in the first period. He had the secondary assist on both of Buchnevich's goals, and then scored his first playoff goal for the Blues.

It was also the first goal for a Blues defenseman in the series. In the regular season, the team's defensive group finished third in the NHL with 46 goals, according to StatMuse.com, behind the Colorado Avalanche and Columbus Blue Jackets. Fowler finished with a five-point night.

#### *Blues' hit parade aimed at Scheifele, Morrissey*

Going into Game 3, the Blues all agreed that they needed to be more physical with the Jets' top players.

In Game 2, Jets forward Mark Scheifele was on the receiving end of just one hit. In Game 3, he was hit seven times.

In the first two games of the series, Winnipeg had the last change, and Jets coach Scott Arniel was insistent on getting Scheifele's line on the ice against Robert Thomas' line. But in Game 3, with the last change belonging to Montgomery, he opted to put captain Brayden Schenn's line against Scheifele. In the second period, there was a faceoff involving Schenn and Scheifele. After the puck was won, Schenn gave Scheifele two solid cross-checks, and fortunately for him, didn't get called for a penalty.

The seven hits on Scheifele weren't even the most for a Jets player. Defenseman Josh Morrissey was on the receiving end of eight.

#### *Suter sits, Texier makes debut*

Blues veteran defenseman Ryan Suter played in all 82 regular-season games and Games 1 and 2 in this playoff series. But with Montgomery returning to a conventional 12-6 lineup configuration in Game 3, Suter was a healthy scratch.

"It doesn't matter who you sit at this time of year, everybody has helped you get to the playoffs," Montgomery said before the game. "The guys that are going to play tonight are the guys that I feel give us the best opportunity to win our first game in the playoffs."

While the Blues went back to 12 forwards, Montgomery did not reinsert third-line winger Mathieu Joseph, who played in Game 1. He turned to Alexandre Texier, an offseason pickup from the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Texier, who had six goals and 11 points in 31 games during the regular season, hadn't played since March 27, sitting out the past 10 games. With the Blues limited to just one five-on-five goal in the first two games of the series, Montgomery felt that Texier could help the offense. Texier played just under 12 minutes and had two shots on goal.

#### *Jets in disarray with DeMelo's last-minute absence*

Dylan DeMelo took Thursday's morning skate after missing Wednesday's practice for what Scott Arniel called "maintenance." He was a last-minute scratch from the Jets lineup – out with illness, as per Scott Arniel on the ESPN broadcast – and it left Winnipeg's defense pairs in disarray.

Neal Pionk was promoted to the top pair with Josh Morrissey. His backhand clearing attempt was knocked down easily on the way to Buchnevich's first goal, while a poor neutral zone sort out contributed to Fowler's 3-0 goal later in the frame. His goal to make it 6-2 did not matter much.

Luke Schenn was bumped up to play heavy defensive minutes with Dylan Samberg. His first-period tripping penalty led to Buchnevich's second goal — a perfect high tip on the Blues' power play. In the third period, with the game well out of reach, Schenn was taken out of the play by Radek Faksa on the way to the Blues' sixth goal.

The only Jets pair that wasn't on the ice for a Blues goal in St. Louis' dominant win was the one fans were probably worrying about: Logan Stanley with Colin Miller. They held up their end of the bargain against the Blues' depth but St. Louis' stars overwhelmed Winnipeg's top two pairs; Stanley was on the ice with Schenn for the Blues' sixth goal but it clearly wasn't on him.

#### *Perfetti's power play one-timer: Did it cross the line?*

Ten minutes and five seconds into the second period, Cole Perfetti stepped into a cross-ice pass from Kyle Connor and fired a one-timer that Jordan Binnington gloved down for a whistle. The referee closest to the net waved off the goal, but Perfetti argued that Binnington's glove crossed the line.

A review was initiated by the league to see whether Perfetti's shot crossed the line. After a process so lengthy that there was booing in Enterprise Center prior to an announcement, the call on the ice was upheld. The Blues killed off the rest of Philip Broberg's hooking penalty and made it to the second intermission with their 3-0 lead.

It seems reasonable to believe that the puck did – or probably did – cross the line inside Binnington's glove. The NHL needed a conclusive angle to overturn the call on the ice:

An angle from which there was white space between the edge of the puck and the goal line.

No such angle was found.

According to the NHL Situation Room, “There was no conclusive video evidence to overturn the Referees’ call on the ice. Thus, the original call on the ice is upheld.”

#### *More playoff controversy for Hellebuyck*

Connor Hellebuyck was hung out to dry in the first period. Buchnevich’s first goal was a freebie as the puck fell to him in the slot. Buchnevich made a great play, kicking the puck then swatting it out of mid-air to get the goal. His second one was a beautiful redirection on the power play – most goalies would have had no chance – while Fowler’s 3-0 goal was the product of a neutral zone breakdown and a partial breakaway.

The part of Game 3 that falls on Hellebuyck is the puck he gave away 52 seconds after David Gustafsson got Winnipeg on the board. Gustafsson’s goal to make it 3-1 4:32 into the third was the one moment of Game 3 that the Jets had momentum. Keep the pressure on, get another one, and the Blues are sweating another third-period collapse. Get pickpocketed behind the net, give up Buchnevich’s hat trick goal to make it 4-1 as Hellebuyck did, and the game – already a longshot – becomes virtually unwinnable.

#### *Winnipeg still has levels it needs to find*

Morrissey told us after last year’s devastating playoff loss that the Jets had “levels that we need to find” in their quest to make a deep playoff run. Arniel told us earlier this week that the Jets’ video review of their own play wasn’t all roses – that Winnipeg had lots of room for improvement despite two wins.

We should have believed him. The Jets’ first period against St. Louis was the ultimate “everyone has a plan until they get punched in the mouth” moment – and it made it abundantly clear that Winnipeg still has to find another gear if it’s going to push St. Louis out of the series.

A win on Sunday would still put the Blues on the brink, but the Jets will need so much more than what they showed on Thursday to avoid heading home from St. Louis with the series tied 2-2.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6306962/2025/04/25/nhl-playoffs-cole-perfetti-jets-game-3/>

#### ***Cole Perfetti’s non-goal doesn’t change one hard truth: The Jets got smoked in Game 3***

By Murat Ates

ST. LOUIS — Cole Perfetti felt certain he'd scored the goal that would bring the Winnipeg Jets back into Game 3.

Sure, when the puck entered Jordan Binnington's glove and it snapped backward into the net. Sure, when he saw the replay on the Jets bench. And, just when he thought he was as sure as he could get in this particular instance, Perfetti said he heard Enterprise Center's collective reaction to the replay in the arena.

"Based on their reaction, I thought it was in the net," Perfetti said of the disappointed "ahh" sound he heard. "I thought you could see the puck on its side in his glove and the glove in the net. I don't know what else you've got to do."

Perfetti gave Binnington credit for his work on the save. He also admitted his own bias.

"But I was on the goal line and I saw his glove in the net and (the) puck in the mesh of the glove — and you see it pretty evident in the video."

"I didn't really see the video of it but I felt it was just too close to tell," Binnington said.

So Perfetti was sure he'd scored a goal. Binnington wasn't sure that he'd made a save. Oftentimes, those two statements would tell you everything you need to know about whether or not the shot crossed the goal line. The league-initiated video review of Perfetti's second-period power-play goal shot did not find the conclusive evidence that it needed to overturn the original call on the ice.

Some angles show a reasonable viewer enough to conclude that the puck probably went into the net. Some angles show enough of the puck beyond the goal line so as to create a reasonable assumption that the puck did cross the goal line. There were no clips that showed enough white space between the puck and the line from a conclusive angle to overturn the call.

That's all of the focus I'm going to put on a puck that I believe crossed the goal line. I feel confident that, if the original call on the ice had been a goal, the video review would have been simple: There's no conclusive evidence that the puck didn't cross the line, either.

But there's an enormous problem with any takeaway from Game 3 that centers on the missed goal call.

Put on Jets-coloured glasses and Perfetti's goal, had it counted, would spark a remarkable comeback. It would gain momentum for the visiting team — perhaps enough of it to fuel another third-period comeback. Winnipeg had been dominant to close out Game 1 and Game 2 — why wouldn't it have done so all over again? After all, if the Jets made it to the third period trailing 3-1 instead of 3-0, then Connor Hellebuyck's giveaway that led to the 4-1 goal might not have happened. The penalty parade that led to Jordan Kyrrou's 5-on-3 goal could have been avoided. Maybe Luke

Schenn wouldn't have been so easily dispossessed of the puck by Radek Faksa on Alexey Toropchenko's 6-1 goal that chased Hellebuyck or Colton Parayko wouldn't have hit a 97.6 mile per hour rocket passed Eric Comrie afterward.

None of this is how hockey works. You deal with the circumstances you're given and you pick apart your problems if — and only if — doing so helps you solve them.

Nothing about Perfetti's non-goal changes a fundamental truth about Game 3: The Winnipeg Jets got smoked. They were outskated, outpassed, outhit, out-puck-recovered, and dramatically outscored. This was true long before the midway point of the second period — it was the result of a Blues' start so dominant that Jets coach Scott Arniel said, "We lost the game in the first period" when asked about the magnitude of the 7-2 final score.

In the rest of his response, Arniel got one point exactly right.

"It's one game. We lost one game. Whether it's 7-2 or 1-0, we lost one game in this series," he said.

So how do the Jets solve the problems St. Louis is creating for them with greater regularity? How does Winnipeg prove it's not the 2021, 2023, or 2024 team that responded to losing one game by losing three more in a row?

Winnipeg can't say or do anything about Perfetti's goal in a way that gets them ready for Game 4. Nor can they stop Pavel Buchnevich from making the brilliant hand-eye play to two-hand his first goal into the net after he'd kicked the puck. They can't control the bounce the puck took off of Josh Morrissey's back and onto Buchnevich's foot, either.

The giveaway Neal Pionk made in the buildup to that goal is a play that can be avoided. The tripping penalty Schenn made that led to Buchnevich's second goal was ill-advised, too; Schenn struggled with his increased role in Game 3. Buchnevich and Robert Thomas deserve credit for creating a virtually unstoppable deflection for the 2-0 goal, but the Jets made life far too easy for St. Louis to put the Blues up 3-0. Cam Fowler's partial breakaway goal started on a Blues' breakout with all five Jets skaters in position.

The first pass beat Alex Iafallo, who was F1 and that's fine. The second pass got past Mark Scheifele and that's fine, too — Winnipeg had Pionk, Morrissey, and Kyle Connor back to handle the 3-on-3 rush. That's when Pionk committed to Buchnevich, stepping up and opening the seam behind him that Fowler attacked. For me, that play is on Pionk and not Iafallo — who was slow to identify Fowler's rush and never caught him — because Pionk can see the play developing in front of him.

But then you also have Connor watching Fowler jump into the lane. In the replay, you can see Iafallo stutter-step; he seems to think Fowler belongs to one of Connor or Pionk. This missed sort-out gave the Blues a golden opportunity on a play that began in innocuous fashion.

The troubling thing, if you're Winnipeg, is that this kind of first period execution is nothing new.

The Blues have been better prepared to start all three games of the series so far. (Arniel said he was happy with Winnipeg's start in Game 2 but, as I wrote, it took some special moments of defending to stop multiple early rush chances by St. Louis in that game.) It's concerning that the Jets haven't made it to the second or third period with a lead; both of their wins came by progressively leaning on St. Louis more and more until excellent third periods became too much to handle.

"Starting better is definitely an emphasis for us here going forward in the series, but I think we didn't execute in the first period and especially the first 10 minutes," Morrissey said.

The first question Arniel was asked was about the adjustments St. Louis made so as to dominate Game 3.

"Obviously they did, right?" Arniel bristled. "Obviously they made adjustments. We'll look at their adjustments and obviously we'll have to do some things as well."

Arniel has found the answers throughout the regular season. Winnipeg was able to win 56 games in no small part because of the Jets' ability to put their few miserable nights behind them and, as Arniel pointed out, the series is still 2-1 in Winnipeg's favour. The Jets are also expected to get Dylan DeMelo back in time for Game 4, which seems more pressing having watched Winnipeg's defencemen struggle badly in Game 3. (I wouldn't be as confident that Gabriel Vilardi will play, given that Winnipeg's next practice isn't until Saturday and he hasn't ditched his non-contact jersey as of yet.)

But the Jets are one more miserable game away from being tied in the series — and make no mistake, they're very much mired in a series now. This is no rout and Winnipeg can't afford to wait until the series is done to find the next level to its play. Morrissey told us after last year's devastating playoff loss that the Jets had "levels that we need to find" in their quest to make a deep playoff run.

I asked him to reflect on those words now. Isn't this mid-series gut-check moment about finding that next level now?

"We talked about it after the game. It's a 2-1 series now. You lose that game in overtime, you lose that game how we did, it's the same result," he said. "Playoffs are all about learning lessons and improving as the series goes on, but also being able to turn the page. So we'll look at the areas we need to improve ... Our team's done a great job all year of being resilient and bouncing back from games that aren't us, so that's our expectation over the next few days."



That's a productive place for Winnipeg to put its energy, even as Jets fans rally around the missed goal call on Thursday.

If DeMelo hadn't been ruled out with an illness shortly before game time... If Buchnevich hadn't had the presence of mind to bat his kicked puck bar-down to start the game... If Perfetti's second-period one-timer — gloved down by Binnington with a substantial part of his glove in the net — had counted as a goal... If Hellebuyck hadn't given the puck away to gift the Blues a goal so soon after David Gustafsson scored for the Jets...

If all of those things bounced the Jets' way on Thursday night in St. Louis, the story from Game 3 would still be that the Jets got smoked. I believe Morrissey when he says these Jets are resilient. Game 4 would be a brilliant time to prove it.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6306790/2025/04/25/blues-jets-nhl-playoffs-buchnevich-fowler/>

***Blues' statement win: Pavel Buchnevich's hat trick, Cam Fowler's 5-point night and finding 'another level'***

By Jeremy Rutherford

ST. LOUIS — Pavel Buchnevich will talk with a reporter longer than most players, discussing the X's and O's with passion, not to mention a few curse words.

That was the scene at his locker Wednesday at the St. Louis Blues' practice facility. The team had just come off the ice, and there were plenty of questions about being down two games to none in its Western Conference quarterfinal series against the Winnipeg Jets. Buchnevich was offering details about how the Blues could break through on offense.

It wasn't lip service. It was a player wanting to be part of the solution.

A little over 24 hours later, St. Louis indeed got on the scoreboard and back in the series, and it was Buchnevich leading the way with his first-career NHL playoff hat trick. He scored the two fastest goals by one player from the start of a game in Blues' playoff history and added his third goal early in the third period.

Yet, as hundreds of hats landed on the ice at Enterprise Center to celebrate the moment, Buchnevich wasn't satisfied.

"We just watch and be ready for the next shift," he said.

Neither were the Blues, who added three more goals Thursday in a 7-2 rout of Winnipeg. Game 4 is in St. Louis on Sunday.

It may go down as just one win for the Blues, but it was a statement. They're not going along with the foregone conclusion that the favorite Jets will win the series.

In their 13th straight win on home ice, the Blues chased goalie Connor Hellebuyck with six goals on 25 shots. Their power play went 3-for-8, and they had a playoff-record 63 hits in another physical battle.

"People are going to say what they want," Blues goalie Jordan Binnington said. "We've had our backs against the wall for the last quarter of the season, so it's a place where we're comfortable being."

To make those comments following Game 3, however, the Blues' top line of Buchnevich, Robert Thomas and Jimmy Snuggerud had to start matching the production of Winnipeg's top trio of Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor and Alex Iafallo. And with Thomas nursing an injury and Snuggerud suiting up in just his 10th NHL game, the pressure was building on Buchnevich.

It's been a trying season for the 30-year-old, who signed a six-year, \$48 million contract (\$8 million average annual value) in July. He started the season at center, and while the experiment wasn't his idea, fans began to panic about his long-term deal when he had just 13 goals through the first 65 games of the regular season. He scored seven goals in the final 11 games of the season to reach the 20-goal plateau, but when the Blues' offense went silent again in the first two games of this series, his late-season production was forgotten.

"Offensively, I thought there was more in his game, and I thought he brought that tonight," Montgomery said.

Just 48 seconds into Game 3, Buchnevich got the Blues on the board, and a few minutes later, at 3:11 of the first period, he had goals on his first two shifts for a 2-0 lead.

On the first goal, Buchnevich credited the Blues' starting lineup of Radek Faksa, Nathan Walker and Alexey Toropchenko for a physical first shift that got the crowd going.

"We just followed them," Buchnevich said.

On the second goal, Buchnevich buried a rebound off a Cam Fowler shot on the power play.

"The crowd got nuts, and we kept going," Buchnevich said.

That set the tone for how the Blues would play in Game 3.

"That start was incredible," Montgomery said. "What I liked was the fierce, competitive nature in our attitude for 60 minutes. We were aggressive, we did the things we wanted

to do to make sure that we were going to get more scoring chances, and we did get more scoring chances.”

In the first two games, Winnipeg had a 20-7 advantage in high-danger scoring chances. In Game 3, the Blues had a 9-4 edge.

Fowler, who would finish with five points, scored for a 3-0 lead in the first period.

“We had to step up,” said Thomas, who notched four assists. “Their top players were contributing and were a big reason for us going down 2-0 (in the series). But Buchy stepped up right away, came out flying, and made some great plays and got us off to a great start. He deserves a lot of credit.”

A lot of the credit, but not all of it.

The Blues kept Scheifele and Connor quiet all night with a group effort. Scheifele was minus-3 with just one shot on goal, and Connor was minus-4 with two shots. And after being hit by the Blues just once in Game 2, Scheifele was on the receiving end of seven hits in Game 3.

Jake Neighbours had nine of the Blues’ 63 hits.

“I thought we finished a lot of heavy checks,” Montgomery said. “I kind of wish we were playing in two nights (because) that’s where the benefit comes.”

In addition to his five-point night, Fowler and defensive partner Colton Parayko got the assignment of defending Scheifele’s line. They played more than eight minutes at five-on-five against the line and allowed just two shots.

“I told (Fowler) after the game, ‘Thank God you’re not in Anaheim anymore,’” Montgomery said.

Fowler downplayed the performance and just focused on the win.

“I’m happy that I was able to contribute and help our team,” he said. “It’s a special thing for me — and having my family here and being back in the playoffs — but it’s over now. It was a special night, but all it really is is one game. It helped us get back in the series, and now our attention has to shift to Sunday.”

That’s how the rest of the Blues were looking at Thursday’s win, too.

“It’s what we needed,” Thomas said. “It’s a long series, and we climbed back into it. But we’ve got to focus on Sunday and making sure we’re coming out the same way.”

As well as Buchnevich started the game, he finished that way, too, with four points, five shots on goal and six hits.

“Obviously, a special moment (with the hat trick),” Binnington said. “The crowd was loving Buchy. There are a lot of hats out there, and it was just such a great atmosphere. You see the true fans we have in times like these. They understand the game — understand we’re putting in the effort — and when you have success like that, it’s great to appreciate that. But like he said, it’s just get back to work after that.”

“The reason we’re in the playoffs is because those guys responded and took their game to another level,” Montgomery said. “We felt that we had to take our game to another level after losing the first two games, and we did that. Now we’ve got to keep going. We know how good Winnipeg is.”

The question is: Does the NHL know how good the Blues are? After losses in the first two games in the series, it seems like many had called it for the Jets.

“Both games were pretty close, one-goal games,” Buchnevich said. “We’ve just got to focus on ourselves and believe in our system, believe in our forecheck, and keep going. We’re at home two games. We should win at home both, too. We’ll see what happens.”

### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11148621/disastrous-start-sinks-winnipeg-jets-in-7-2-game-3-loss-in-st-louis/>

### ***Disastrous start sinks Winnipeg Jets in 7-2 Game 3 loss in St. Louis***

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

In the first two games of their series with the St. Louis Blues, the Winnipeg Jets managed to overcome some not-so-great starts to win both contests.

But in Game 3 in St. Louis, they couldn’t dig themselves out of an early hole, falling 7-2 as their series lead was cut in half.

The Jets surrendered three goals in the first period and four more in the final frame to chase Connor Hellebuyck from the game as the Blues won their 13th straight home game going back to February 23.

“It’s one game,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “We lost one game. Whether it’s 7-2 or 1-nothing, we lost one game in the series.

“We lost the game in the first period. Scored two goals in the first three minutes, got on our heels, crowd got behind them. We were terrible in the first period. Game was over in the first.”

The Jets have now lost four consecutive Game 3's and are just 3-9 all-time in the pivotal third game of the series.

Pavel Buchnevich scored only 48 seconds into the game before adding another a little over two minutes later and he recorded a hat trick for a four point effort. Cam Fowler had five points with a goal and four helpers, while Robert Thomas finished with four assists.

The Blues registered the first seven shots on goal of the game and outshot Winnipeg 15-7 in the opening period.

"We didn't execute in the first period and especially in the first 10 minutes," said Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey. "You lose that game in overtime, you lose the game how we did, it's the same result. Playoffs are all about turning the page, learning lessons and improving as the series goes on.

"So we'll look at the areas we need to improve. Obviously the start as I referenced, and turn the page, and I think that's important."

David Gustafsson and Neal Pionk scored the goals for the Jets in the loss.

Dylan DeMelo missed the game with an illness as Colin Miller made his series debut in his absence.

With the Jets trailing by three goals in the second period, Jordan Binnington made a glove save on Cole Perfetti, but it appeared his trapper was on the other side of the goal line.

The play was reviewed, but it was determined there was no conclusive evidence to call it a goal. Perfetti disagreed with the decision which would have made it a two-goal game.

"I saw video on the bench that looked pretty evident," Perfetti said. "I don't know what angle they saw. From what I understand they said they didn't have an angle of it and meanwhile it was on the scoreboard and their crowd kinda went ah. Based on their reaction I thought it was in the net. I thought you could see the puck on it's side in his glove, and his glove in the net. I don't know what else you gotta do.

"I thought it was a goal, but who knows. I don't really know anymore."

"There was no clearcut picture that showed the puck was over the red line," said Arniel. "It may have looked like it. There was lots of things that made it look like it was, but there was no perfect evidence that it was 100 per cent over the line.

After a quiet first two games, Buchnevich got the scoring started just 48 seconds in. He got free near the crease and a cross-ice feed went off his skate and fluttered in the air

towards the net. If the puck crossed the line, it would have likely been disallowed for a kicking motion, but he got his stick on the puck just before it entered the net, a good goal to give the Blues the early lead.

The Blues found themselves on a power play just a few minutes later and Buchnevich scored again, this time redirecting a shot-pass from Thomas past Hellebuyck at the 3:11 mark to make it 2-0.

St. Louis continued to dominate as the period rolled along and while the Jets tried to steady themselves late in the first, another goal from St. Louis really took the wind out of Winnipeg's sails.

It began as a simple breakout up the ice for the Blues as Thomas carried the puck into the Winnipeg end but nobody picked up Fowler as he streaked down the middle, breezing past Alex Lafallo before collecting a pass from Thomas and wiring it past Hellebuyck to make it 3-0 at the 15:51 mark of the first.

Neither team scored in the second period, though Winnipeg had several power play looks to try and get back in the game and on one of them, they thought they had a goal.

Right around the midway point of the second, Binnington appeared to have robbed Perfetti with a great glove save, though Perfetti immediately pointed at the net, suggesting that Binnington's glove was behind the goal line when the puck entered it.

After a nearly five-minute review that appeared to show the puck over the line, officials let the call on the ice stand, with the NHL saying that "there was no conclusive video evidence to overturn the Referees' call on the ice."

There didn't seem to be much hope for Winnipeg but just over four minutes into the third, their fourth line finally found a way to get one past Binnington. Jaret Anderson-Dolan drove the puck wide into the Blues' end, drawing two defenders to him and freeing up space for Gustafsson in the slot. He took a pass from Anderson-Dolan and buried it to make it 3-1 with 15:29 left.

But any hope generated by that goal was short-lived because of a mistake by Hellebuyck.

After the Blues dumped the puck in, Hellebuyck went behind the net to play it but as he tried to clear the puck, a forechecking Thomas knocked it off his stick and right to Buchnevich, who deposited the puck into an open net for his third goal of the night just 53 seconds after the Gustafsson goal.

St. Louis added another on a 5-on-3 with 12:04 remaining as Jordan Kyrrou got in on the fun, firing a wrister high past Hellebuyck through a screen.

The nightmare night for the Jets wasn't over yet.

The Blues made it 6-2 after Luke Schenn was hammered by a forechecking Radek Faksa, who took the puck away from Schenn and sent a pass cross-ice to Jake Neighbours, whose pass to the slot was steered past Hellebuyck by a streaking Alexey Toropchenko, ending the presumptive Vezina Trophy winner's night with 9:28 left in the third.

Winnipeg did get one back on the power play with 7:10 left as Pionk beat Binnington with a one-timer from the point, but the Blues then scored another power play goal with 3:43 left as Colton Parayko slammed a one-timer past Eric Comrie on the first shot that Comrie faced after entering the game.

It was also the fourth goal for the Blues on just five shots in the third.

St. Louis would finish the night with seven goals on 28 shots with Hellebuyck allowing six on 25 shots.

Binnington picked up the win, having to make just 16 saves in the game.

The Blues also went 3-for-8 on the power play and now have six power play goals in the series to just two for the Jets.

The Jets' top-line, after a great start to the series, was held off the scoresheet. Kyle Connor finished the game with a minus-four rating while Lafallo and Mark Scheifele were each minus-three.

The Jets will look to rebound in Game 4 of the series Sunday afternoon in St. Louis. The puck drops just after noon with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB beginning at 10 a.m.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11148806/winnipeg-jets-playoff-loss-st-louis-analysis/>

### ***ANALYSIS: Despite ugly loss, Jets still lead playoff series***

By John Shannon CJOB

Welcome to the Stanley Cup playoffs — and the highs and lows of a playoff series. You can't think it was supposed to be easy, can you?

The sting of Game 3 of the Winnipeg Jets' series against the Blues in St. Louis still lingers. At least, a bit. But we should be surprised?

The two games in Winnipeg were close. Really close. Effectively, the games at Canada Life Centre were both one-goal games, with third-period game-winning goals. The Blues faltered at both ends of the ice in the third period of both games 1 and 2. And the Jets capitalized. St. Louis was determined not to do the same in Game 3.

From the Blues' perspective, Thursday night's game was the most important of the season. They had no choice but to be totally committed. From the Jets' perspective, they have no choice but to learn from it. From the first minute of play, to the inconclusive video review, to a cringeworthy third period, the Jets just were never involved.

But here's the thing: losing 7-2 is ugly, for sure. But it's only one game. Losing by five goals does not mean you lose by more than one game. Let me remind you, the Jets still lead the series. And they still have home-ice advantage.

Now what has to happen is rather simple. Sunday afternoon's Game 4 has to reflect adjustments by the Jets: More bodies in front of St. Louis goalie Jordan Binnington, fewer Blues in front of Jets counterpart Connor Hellebuyck, be ready to play at the opening faceoff.

The adjustments don't have to be earth-shattering. This team knows how to win. They have been resilient all season long.

There's an old adage in the NHL that you're only in trouble in a series when you lose at home. Home-ice advantage is a reality in the NHL. The home team can draw energy from a loud, involved crowd. Certainly, the Blues did that Thursday night. The big question now is, can the Jets drown out the noise in St Louis and create their own positive energy? And finally put the Blues, on home ice, in trouble?

### **TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/corrado-this-is-a-st-louis-blues-team-that-is-way-too-good-to-go-quietly-in-this-series%7E3121715>

***Corrado: 'This is a St. Louis Blues team that is way too good to go quietly in this series' (VIDEO)***

The TSN Hockey panel discusses the Blues' bounce back performance on home ice to get back in the series, how St. Louis was able to shut down Winnipeg so dominantly in Game 3, and how Jordan Binnington stepped up in a big way.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/24/barron-takes-flight-with-move-to-middle>

***Barron takes flight with move to middle  
Jets forward's impact evident as centre of fourth line trio***

By: Ken Wiebe



ST. LOUIS — Morgan Barron is quick to point out that it's more of a matter of coincidence than connecting the dots.

Yes, the Winnipeg Jets forward acknowledges that he's playing with some additional confidence these days, but Barron also points out that growth was happening before he actually moved into the middle on the fourth line.

"The timing has lined up to where I moved to the middle. I felt like I was kind of building," Barron said before the Jets faced the St. Louis Blues in Game 3 of the opening-round series between Central Division rivals. "I think there's more to it than that. It's not some magical fix where you change positions and all of a sudden, it's a new player."

Since Barron is such a straight shooter, we'll take him at his word.

What can't be debated is the impact he's made since shuffling from the wing to centre.

These days, he's playing on a trio with David Gustafsson and Jaret Anderson-Dolan.

"Well, that was to be an experiment and it's worked out well," said Jets head coach Scott Arniel, who sent Barron for a test drive after Rasmus Kupari sustained a concussion. "He's a good skater. When you see him, it looks like he moves even better being in the middle of the ice, probably because you're covering more ice as a centreman. He's really good on faceoffs and obviously knows his responsibility, how to play without the puck."

"To me, he's really bought into the role and I know he's excited about being in there. It's just a bonus for us at this time of year."

Barron is a natural centre and spent much of his life playing there, though a good chunk of his pro career — especially in the NHL — had been spent on the wing.

The transition has certainly been smooth, but it hasn't happened by accident either.

This is where Barron's hockey sense has allowed him to flourish.

Barron's teammates have noticed how he's handled the additional responsibilities that come with the move.

"He took that extra role on, which we all know that he's capable of," said Jets forward Nino Niederreiter. "He's such a pro on and off the ice. He's very competitive and he cares a lot. His game keeps growing."

"He's very reliable defensively. He does a lot of little things the right way and that's something that is great to have in the lineup."

Barron had to miss the 2024 Stanley Cup playoff series against the Colorado Avalanche after suffering a lower-body injury late in the regular season.

Being relegated to the sidelines left Barron with an empty feeling, especially after the Jets were ousted in five games.

“It’s a lot more fun to be a part of it, obviously,” said Barron, who suffered the injury when he crashed into the boards awkwardly in a game against the Seattle Kraken. “Last year, I got a sense of the anxiety that fans have watching those games. It’s pretty stressful and it’s almost easier and less stressful than when you’re playing, believe it or not.

“To be able to go out there, once things settle down after the first few minutes of these games, it seems like you just go out and play. It’s a nice release from all of the thinking and stuff. It’s great to be back out there.”

Barron suited up in 74 games during the regular season and finished with eight goals and 15 points — a slight decrease in production from 2023-24 when he recorded 11 goals and 18 points in 80 games.

The eight games Barron missed this season came after a bone-jarring hit on Montreal Canadiens forward Kirby Dach on Jan. 29 and disrupted what he felt were the early signs of getting his season turned around.

Barron went into the post-season on a high note and that has allowed him to be effective both at five-on-five and on the penalty kill.

“Ultimately, everybody wants to be someone who shows up in the playoffs,” said Barron. “I’ve played over a handful of playoff games now (eight including Thursday) and you just try to keep building and contributing and hopefully we’ll get on a good run here and get quite a few more games.

“You try to play that power forward game that typically works well in these tight-checking games.”

When you see how well Barron has played in the early stages of the playoffs after finishing strong down the stretch, it’s obvious his presence was missed.

“That injury was big for us last year,” said Arniel. “He’s a big, heavy guy and (at) this time of the year, those are the type of guys that can help move the weight down the ice. That’s what he does, whether that’s him getting hard on the forecheck or him battling in the D-zone and being heavy and boxing people out that are trying to get to the net, having that size certainly helps.”

Barron used that size to get to the front of the net on multiple occasions so far, culminating with what looked like his first Stanley Cup playoff goal in Game 1.

After Gustafsson got the puck back to the point to Luke Schenn, Barron parked himself in front of Jordan Binnington and got his stick on the shot.

So did Anderson-Dolan and after the goal had originally been credited to Barron, it was eventually switched.

“Every team that goes on to win the Cup, you see that depth scoring come through at different times,” said Barron. “It’s akin to scoring your first NHL goal or your first goal of the season — you want to get it out of the way early, so you’re not thinking about it.

“Our line and (Anderson-Dolan) was able to do that and now it’s about continuing to build. Zone time and all of that is great, but we need to keep finding ways to get pucks to the net and to see if we can get a few more to fall.”

Barron wasn’t the least bit concerned about having his first playoff goal taken away and he’ll celebrate it again when the time comes.

“It doesn’t really matter,” said Barron. “There is so much emotion in the games. I know it’s a cliché and everybody says it and, oftentimes, you say you don’t care about scoring but of course you want to score. But to me, in that moment it felt like a huge goal to swing the momentum. To be a part of it, we’re working as a team, but also in units, in terms of the guys you are playing with.

“I didn’t really care if it was me or (Anderson-Dolan) or whoever it was. We got it and it was a big goal in the game.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/25/jets-overwhelmed>

***Jets overwhelmed  
Blues run rampant after scoring early and often***

By: Ken Wiebe

ST. LOUIS – This was the punch that the Winnipeg Jets knew was coming, but just didn’t know exactly when it would arrive.

After taking a 2-0 series lead that featured much of the blueprint that made them the Presidents’ Trophy winning club during the regular season, the Jets made an unscheduled rest stop for repairs on Thursday as the series shifted to Missouri.

A woeful start put the Jets in a deep hole and they never fully recovered, resulting in an effort that included their Vezina Trophy winning goalie pulled for the first time this season after giving up six goals on 25 shots.

By the time the final buzzer had sounded, the St. Louis Blues announced with fervour that this series was far from over, handing the Jets a lopsided 7-2 loss on Thursday before a highly-engaged crowd at Enterprise Center.

“We lost the game in the first period. They scored two goals in the first three minutes, got on our heels, crowd got behind them,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “We were terrible in the first period. Game was over in the first.”

There’s no argument on that front, as the Blues got a pair of goals from Pavel Buchnevich – the first just 48 seconds in and the second on the power play.

Cam Fowler added a goal on the rush to cap the three-goal first and the Blues were off and running.

“They came out hard and physical. We knew it was going to happen,” said Jets forward Cole Perfetti. “I just didn’t think we were quite prepared and ready for it. It’s hard to come back from that (3-0 deficit). Next game, we’re going to have to come out way harder and start with that aggressiveness that they had. We’ll be fine. Not really worried about that. Just need to come out and have a better start.”

Starting better is a top priority but does the one-sided score make things any more difficult to come back from at this time of the season?

“You lose that game in overtime, you lose that game how we did, it’s the same result,” said Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey. “Playoffs are all about turning the page, learning lessons, and improving as the series goes on. So, we’ll look at the areas we need to improve. But our team’s done a great job all year of being resilient and bouncing back from games that aren’t us, so that’s our expectation over the next few days.”

The Jets still lead the best-of-seven series between Central Division rivals 2-1, with Game 4 scheduled for Sunday at noon before the series shifts back to Winnipeg for Game 5 next Wednesday.

Let’s take a closer look at this one:

### *THE CONTROVERSY*

It certainly wasn’t the reason the Jets lost the game, but the call with 9:55 to go in the second period would have made things a lot more interesting had it gone the other way.

With the Jets on the power play, a one-timer from Cole Perfetti was stopped by Blues goalie Jordan Binnington.

Before the play was whistled down, Perfetti made a signal to the referees that the puck had crossed the line despite it being in Binnington’s glove.

"I saw his glove in the net," said Perfetti, asked about the play in question. "Obviously, he made a great save but I was on the goal line and I saw his glove in the net and the puck on the mesh of the glove. And you see it pretty evidently in the video. Obviously biased. But yeah, I don't know how much more they need to see the puck in the net."

A lengthy video review occurred to try and make a final determination and although the overhead view appeared to show there was some white ice between the puck and the goal line, there was no conclusive view that showed it was completely across.

So, the call on the ice stood and the Jets still faced a three-goal deficit.

"I saw video on the bench that looked pretty evident. I mean, I don't know what angle they saw," said Perfetti. "From what I understand, they said they didn't have an angle of it. Meanwhile it was on the scoreboard and their crowd kind of went 'Ahhhh.' Based on their reaction I thought it was in the net.

"I thought you could see the puck on its side in his glove and his glove in the net. I don't know what else you got to do. If it wasn't a goal, it was a good save. It would have been nice to get that one and get the power play rolling and get us back in the game. I thought it was a goal but who knows."

Arniel had a slightly different stance on the situation.

"There was no clear-cut picture that showed the puck was over the red line," said Arniel. "It looked like it, there's lots of things that made it look like it was. But there was no perfect evidence that it was 100 per cent over the line. And obviously the call on the ice was no-goal."

### *THE PULL*

It doesn't happen often, but Arniel got the hook out in the third period, pulling goalie Connor Hellebuyck after he had given up six goals on 25 shots on goal with 9:28 to go in the third period.

Eric Comrie came on to play the remainder of the contest.

"The game got out of hand," said Arniel. "At the end of the day, just get (Comrie) some minutes."

Hellebuyck has now allowed 10 goals through three games.

Nobody is pointing the finger at Hellebuyck for the loss, but there's another level that the Vezina Trophy favourite needs to find as the series continues.

### *THE FOURTH LINE GOAL*

David Gustafsson scored the lone even-strength marker for the Jets, converting a perfect pass from Jaret Anderson-Dolan after a burst of speed down the boards.

Morgan Barron also chipped in an assist on the play.

At a time when secondary scoring is imperative, it was the second goal in three games for the Jets' fourth line.

On the flip side, the Jets' second line is still searching for its first goal of the series.

Several scoring chances have been generated, but getting a bit more finish is something the trio of Vladislav Namestnikov, Nino Niederreiter and Cole Perfetti is looking for.

"We've created some momentum in the o-zone. Now it's a matter of finding a way to create more high-danger chances," Niederreiter said after the morning skate. "It's something we want and demand from our line as well."

### *THE SPECIAL TEAMS WOES*

With the goal disallowed, the Jets' power play continues to struggle to get unlocked in this series, with Winnipeg limited to two goals on the man-advantage through three games – including one during what was effectively garbage time on Thursday night as Neal Pionk ripped home a one-timer with his team down by five goals.

The power play that led the league this season with an efficiency rate of just under 30 per cent hasn't been operating near full capacity for the better part of two months.

There have been some dangerous chances and some alterations have been made, but the goals have been tough to come by.

The loss of Gabe Vilardi and Nikolaj Ehlers to injuries has obviously been a factor, but there's enough talent within the group to produce more – or at least generate a bit more momentum at five-on-four as the series moves along.

The Blues are having no such issues, as they're up to six goals with the man-advantage through three games – including three more on Thursday (one from Buchnevich, one from Jordan Kyrou and a late one from Colton Parayko, who was a force in all three zones in this one).

### *THE KEY PLAY*

Cam Fowler's goal late in the first period capped a three-goal outburst and proved to be the game-winner.

### *THE THREE STARS*

1. Pavel Buchnevich, Blues. Records his first playoff hat trick and adds an assist.
2. Cam Fowler, Blues. Had a goal and four assists.
3. Robert Thomas, Blues. Produced three helpers.

### *THE LATE SCRATCH*

There was a surprise absence from the Jets' lineup on Thursday after defenceman Dylan DeMelo didn't come out for the pregame warmup.

DeMelo, who suited up for all 82 games during the regular season, skipped Wednesday's workout for what Arniel described as "maintenance" and actually took part in Thursday's pre-game skate.

Arniel confirmed after the game that DeMelo was scratched due to an illness and that the Jets only found out around 4 o'clock that he wouldn't be able to go.

With DeMelo out of the lineup, it opened the door for veteran blue-liner Colin Miller to draw in on the third pairing with Logan Stanley.

The absence of DeMelo meant that the pairings were a bit in flux during the contest, with Neal Pionk and Luke Schenn bouncing back and forth between Josh Morrissey and Dylan Samberg depending on the situation.

"I mean, listen, obviously you develop chemistry with your partner, but we've got lots of great players back there," said Morrissey. "Definitely miss (DeMelo) out there. Hopefully he's back Sunday, but at the end of the day, it's like I said, that's not an excuse."

### *EXTRA, EXTRA*

There was no extended standoff between Winnipegger Joel Hofer and Scheifele on this evening, as the Blues backup goalie departed the ice before trying to outwait the Jets' centre.

The Jets other healthy scratches were goalie Chris Driedger, defencemen Haydn Fleury and Ville Heinola and forwards Rasmus Kupari and Dominic Toninato. Right-winger Gabe Vilardi skated in a non-contact jersey and continues to make progress as he works his way back from an upper-body injury.

The Blues also made a change to the lineup, scratching defenceman Ryan Suter and bringing Alexandre Texier in up front for his first game of the series. Suter appeared in all 82 games for the Blues during the regular season.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/25/road-to-cup-rarely-straightforward>

### ***Road to cup rarely straightforward***

By: Mike McIntyre

There has never been a perfect Stanley Cup champion.

Don't believe us? Look through the NHL's record books and you'll find blemishes on the last team standing every spring. Some left quite a mark.

For example, the Florida Panthers lost eight combined games over their four rounds last year — including doozies by scores of 6-3 in the first round (against Tampa Bay), 5-1 in the second round (against Boston) and 8-1 in the Final (against Edmonton). Nobody remembers those now, of course, because their 16 combined wins ultimately rendered them moot.

The 2023 champion Vegas Golden Knights dropped six in total, including ones by scores of 4-1, 5-1 and 5-1. The 2022 Colorado Avalanche only fell four times that year, but two were by scores of 4-1 and 6-2. Fact is, since the NHL moved to four best-of-seven rounds back in 1987, not a single squad has ever gone 16-0.

Bottom line: Teams are going to get knocked down when playing emotional, high-stakes hockey. Games sometimes get out of hand and momentum shifts can be extreme this time of year. Even the greatest clubs are going to lose. Likely several times. Maybe even in ugly, lopsided ways.

Which brings us to the Winnipeg Jets. It's far too early to say if this group will be sipping out of Lord Stanley's mug in about seven weeks from now, although hopes were certainly raised when they quickly jumped out to a 2-0 series lead over the St. Louis Blues with a pair of hard-fought home ice victories (5-3, 2-1).

However, any thoughts of a perfectly paved road to the promised land were tossed out the window Thursday night in the form of a 7-2 beatdown at the hands of the St. Louis Blues.

Anything that could go wrong seemingly did go wrong. From a "You've got to be kidding me?" goal by Pavel Buchnevich just 48 seconds into the contest to a controversial Cole Perfetti no-goal that sure looked like a goal to a Connor Hellebuyck puckhandling blunder that ended up in the back of his net, this was a disaster on multiple levels.

The Jets didn't just lose the game, but their cool, too. They tried to take their pound of flesh in the third period but ended up filling up the penalty box, which allowed the home team to keep piling on much to the delight of their fans.

As far as we know, Winnipeg hospitals didn't experience an overnight surge thanks to scores of Jets fans limping in with ankle and foot injuries. But it sure felt like plenty of folks were jumping off the crowded bandwagon fast and furious over one lousy, out-of-character performance.

Cause for some concern? OK, we'll give you that. A reason for full-blown panic? Hardly.

"It's one game. We lost one game. Whether it's 7-2 or 1-0, we lost one game in this series," Jets coach Scott Arniel told reporters in St. Louis.



This wasn't a case of the bench boss simply trying to put on a brave face. Arniel is speaking the truth.

While it may not feel this way to some, the Jets are still in a solid position by holding a 2-1 advantage in the series with Game 4 set for Sunday at noon. There's no cumulative score here. It's the first team to four wins that moves on. That perspective is important. As is some additional hockey history.

We bring you back to 2018, which remains the benchmark for playoff hockey in Winnipeg. The Jets won their first postseason game in franchise history in the form of a 3-2 squeaker over the Minnesota Wild, then followed that up with a 4-1 victory in Game 2.

That was the only other time, until this week, the Jets were off to a 2-0 series start off a pair of home wins. How did Game 3 go on the road that year? A 6-2 loss, which sure looked a lot like what went down in Missouri on Thursday. Winnipeg couldn't match the desperation of Minnesota that year, which was basically in a "must-win" situation. Same goes for St. Louis.

Let the record show the Jets quickly picked themselves up off the mat and responded with a rock-solid 2-0 road triumph in Game 4, then a 5-0 victory in Game 5 back at Canada Life Centre to quell any hopes of a Wild comeback, ultimately making it to the Western Conference Final.

We have no idea if a similar script might be followed this time around, but it should at least demonstrate that one ugly loss does not automatically spell doom. Not for Winnipeg. Not for any playoff team. Just ask the Lightning, Bruins and Oilers from last year, who weren't able to turn dominating wins over the Panthers into sustained success and a series victory.

It's why you won't see or hear the Blues taking any victory laps over one impressive, 60-minute effort.

"I think every game has its own momentum and its own feel to it. All it is is Game 3 in our mind," said veteran St. Louis defenceman Cam Fowler, who led the way with a goal and four assists.

"We came out, had a great first period. That helped us get back in the series and helped us win the hockey game, but when that puck drops on Sunday, none of that matters. It's about the preparation between now and then and getting ready for a huge game on Sunday."

The Jets didn't have many stinkers like this during the regular season, which explains why this finished on top of the standings with a 56-22-4 record. Maybe the closest reasonable facsimile happened in Salt Lake City back on Jan. 20, when the 5-2 deficit

against Utah likely flattered the visitors and had Arniel publicly calling out himself and his team.

It was a rare show of anger from Arniel, and it sent the intended message. Winnipeg responded with an impressive 3-2 victory two nights later in Colorado, the first of what would become an 11-game winning streak.

They'll need more of that kind of internal drive and resolve to get back on track this time. But that's where losing 7-2 instead of 1-0 might be an even bigger motivator. This is a proud group that just got embarrassed and humbled, which might help bring out their best. There was no moral victory, no "we should have won this" mentality.

Following the rout, players like Josh Morrissey and Cole Perfetti repeatedly mentioned "turning the page," and that's something these Jets have been very good at all season long. No doubt getting defenceman Dylan DeMelo (illness) and perhaps forward Gabe Vilardi (upper-body injury) back into the lineup would help the cause.

This year's playoff story was never going to be simple and straightforward. No team's ever is. There's always a few plot twists along the way. But whether this one for Winnipeg ends up being a mere footnote or something more substantial has yet to be written.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/series-turns-as-jets-humiliated-by-blues-in-st-louis>

### ***Series turns as Jets humiliated by Blues in St. Louis***

By Paul Friesen

The Winnipeg Jets have run into something new in their first-round playoff series with the St. Louis Blues: Real adversity.

The Jets didn't just lose for the first time on Thursday, they were humiliated, giving up three first-period goals on their way to a 7-2 loss, cutting their series lead to 2-1.

Knowing the Blues would come out desperate on home ice, the Jets had their butts kicked in the first 20 minutes anyway, out-skated and out-hit by a Missouri mile.

Just when it appeared they might get back into it with an early third-period strike, goalie Connor Hellebuyck went back in time and coughed up the puck for the goal that broke his team.

The Blues pumped two more past the Vezina-Trophy favourite and he finished the game on the bench.

He and his teammates have a couple of days to chew on the fist sandwich they've been handed, with Game 4 not until Sunday at noon in St. Louis.

With defenceman Dylan DeMelo out of the lineup with an illness and Colin Miller taking his place, the Jets got goals from David Gustafsson and Neal Pionk, both in the third period.

Gustafsson's was the one that gave his team some life, while Pionk's was window-dressing, as the Blues won their 13th straight home game and served notice they won't go quietly, underdog status or not.

Final shots favoured the Blues, 28-18, who also benefited from an apparent Jets goal in the second period that was ruled not to have crossed the line while in goalie Jordan Binnington's catching glove.

That came after a disastrous start for Winnipeg, a lesson in how you don't want to come out of the gate.

Creating havoc in the Jets end, the Blues got on the board just 48 seconds in when Pavel Buchnevich took the puck off his skate then batted it out of the air just before it entered the net.

With the home crowd into it, the last thing the Jets needed was a penalty. That's exactly what Luke Schenn took barely a minute later.

Another minute and change later, it was 2-zip on Buchnevich's nifty redirection from the slot, the Blues' fourth power-play goal of the series.

The home side kept pouring it on and only an acrobatic leg save from Hellebuyck while he was on his belly kept it from getting out of hand quickly

It did anyway a little later, the Jets allowing defenceman Cam Fowler free to take a mid-ice feed and beat Hellebuyck for a 3-0 lead late in the first.

Meanwhile, the Blues were hitting like their lives depended on it.

The Jets, by comparison, looked slow, out of sync, even rattled.

The few times they got anything going in the Blues end, they were one-and-done.

Shots through the first 20 minutes were 15-7, which flattered the visitors. The official hit count, 39-23, did, too.

The Jets held their own in the second and came close to getting on the board, Kyle Connor setting up Cole Perfetti for a power-play chance that Binnington snared – but with his catching mitt partially in the net.

The play was initially ruled a non-goal and sparked a lengthy review that didn't go the Jets' way.

Neither did another power play, and the three-goal St. Louis lead stood going through 40 minutes.

Gustafsson's goal less than five minutes into the third gave his team some hope.

But Hellebuyck's giveaway behind his own net killed it and handed Buchnevich an easy way to fill his hat.

Once things were out of reach, the game deteriorated into a series of predictable scrums, including a double-minor and 10-minute misconduct for defenceman Logan Stanley.

The Jets apparently believed they could send a message for Sunday.

The Blues answered with a seventh goal, again on the power play, Colton Parayko blasting it past Eric Comrie.

Jordan Kyrou and Alexey Toropchenko had already scored third-period goals for St. Louis, who put an exclamation point on their start with a four-goal knockout punch in the final 20 minutes.

<https://winnipegson.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/we-were-terrible-in-the-first-fixing-bad-starts-job-1-for-jets>

### ***'We were terrible in the first': Fixing bad starts Job 1 for Jets***

By Paul Friesen

In two out of three games, the Winnipeg Jets have been badly beaten out of the starting blocks by the St. Louis Blues.

Thursday it cost them the game, and instead of grabbing a 3-0 stranglehold on their first-round playoff series, the best-of-seven has a whole new feeling.

The underdog Blues parlayed two early goals into a 3-0 first period lead and eventually a 7-2 romp, cutting Winnipeg's series lead to 2-1 and leaving a significant dent in the NHL's top regular-season squad.

"We were terrible in the first period," Jets coach Scott Arniel told reporters in St. Louis. "Game was over in the first."

Down the hall, his counterpart was as happy as Arniel was angry.

"The start was incredible," Blues boss Jim Montgomery said. "We were aggressive, we did the things we wanted to do to make sure that we were going to get more scoring chances and we did get more scoring chances."

The Blues' first strike came just 48 seconds in. By the 3:11 mark, a power-play goal made it 2-0 and Arniel's team was on its heels.

"Then you're chasing the game from that point," he said.

While the first St. Louis goal came with some luck, Pavel Buchnevich kicking the puck in the air and knocking it in with his stick, the way his team took it to Winnipeg had nothing to do with good fortune.

The Blues were by far the better team in the first period with whatever measuring stick one could use.

They also smacked the Jets around at will.

"We knew it was going to happen," forward Cole Perfetti said. "I just didn't think we were quite prepared and ready for it. They came out hitting again and we have to do that to them."

"That's their M.O.," defenceman Josh Morrissey added. "They're aggressive on the forecheck and play an aggressive game. That's where we have to come out and execute under pressure and that aggressiveness that they're throwing at us."

It was a similar story in the first 20 minutes of Game 1.

The Jets gave up three goals in the first 21 minutes of that one, weathered the storm, got better as the game went on and were dominating by the third period of a 5-3 win.

Thursday they surrendered three goals in less than 16 minutes, and while their second period was better than their first, they crumbled in the third.

"We gave up the middle of the ice a lot," Arniel said. "Which we don't usually do."

The coach had to shuffle his lineup when Morrissey's defence partner, Dylan DeMelo, came down with an illness. Arniel learned that some four-and-a-half hours before game time.

Morrissey arrived at the rink to find Neal Pionk would be his defence partner, instead.

That meant every defence pair was different than they were in the first two games, with Colin Miller taking DeMelo's place in the lineup.

"Obviously you develop chemistry with a partner," Morrissey said. "But we've got lots of great players back there. Definitely miss Mel out there. Hopefully he's back Sunday. But... that's not an excuse."

DeMelo has time to recover, as Game 4 isn't until Sunday at noon.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/the-case-of-the-hidden-puck-the-jets-goal-that-wasnt>

### ***The case of the hidden puck: The Jets goal that wasn't***

By Paul Friesen

Call it The Mystery In the Leather Mitt. Was the puck over the goal line, or not?

It was midway through the second period of Game 3 in St. Louis on Thursday, the Jets down 3-0, when Kyle Connor set up Cole Perfetti just left of Blues goalie Jordan Binnington.

Binnington made a spectacular, reaching glove save, but part of his glove was behind the plane of the goal line.

Perfetti pointed, but the referee did not. No goal, was the immediate call.

"I was on the goal line and I saw his glove in the net and the puck on the mesh of the glove," Perfetti would tell reporters, post-game. "And you see it pretty evidently in the video. I don't know how much more they need to see the puck in the net."

The play went to video review, the replay officials delaying the game for several minutes, knowing the critical nature of their call.

A Jets goal, and the complexion of what is typically the swing game of a series has drastically changed.

Coaches and players on both benches checked their tablets for their own replays, as the minutes dragged on.

"I saw a video on the bench that looked pretty evident," Perfetti said. "I don't know what angle they saw. From what I understand, they said they didn't have an angle of it. Meanwhile it was on the scoreboard and their crowd went 'ahhh.' Based on their reaction, I thought it was in the net."

His head coach wasn't so sure.

"There was no clear-cut picture that showed the puck was over the red line," Scott Arniel said. "It looked like it. There's lots of things that made it look like it was. But there was no perfect evidence that it was 100 per cent over the line. And obviously the call on the ice was no goal."

That meant the replay officials needed conclusive evidence to overturn it.

Arniel says he saw two or three angles that made it appear it was in.

"But there was never any video where it actually showed the goal line and the puck being over. There was nothing, whether it was his glove, bits and pieces of his glove was in the way, or whatever it was. Usually when it isn't called a goal you've got to be 100 percent to overturn it."

The original call was upheld and the Jets didn't get on the board until early in the third period.

"That was tight," Binnington said. "I knew it was close... I didn't really see the video of it but I felt it was just too close to tell. Thankfully it was on our side."

The NHL explained the decision in a news release, saying the situation room found "no conclusive video evidence" to overturn the ref's call, and Perfetti remained without a career playoff goal.

"I don't know what else you've got to do," the 23-year-old said. "It would have been nice to get that one and get the power play rolling and get us back in the game."

The Jets had another power play before the second period was up, but didn't get anywhere near that kind of chance.

And while they finally beat Binnington early in the third, they gave up the next three goals in little more than five minutes, losing 7-2 and ending any discussion of which was the better team on this night.

Winnipeg's series lead is cut to 2-1, with Game 3 on Sunday at noon.