

## **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/25/getting-back-to-the-blueprint>

### ***Getting back to the blueprint***

#### ***Jets know what adjustments to make after Game 3 loss***

By: Ken Wiebe

ST. LOUIS — Do you remember all of those times Scott Arniel mentioned building calluses over the course of the regular season?

This is when those teachable moments should come in handy.

After being on the receiving end of a 7-2 throttling on Thursday, the Winnipeg Jets used Friday to recharge their collective batteries.

With a two-day break before Game 4 on Sunday at Enterprise Center, the Jets did require some additional time to lick their wounds, but this lopsided loss doesn't necessarily signify the beginning of the end either.

You can understand why some folks in the fan base see any defeat as a sign that a four-game losing skid is right around the corner, given the way several of the more recent playoff series have gone.

But the Jets used the 82-game regular season to prepare them for dealing with adversity and — to be honest — a single playoff defeat, no matter how ugly it was, doesn't even represent a full dose of it.

The Jets will enter Sunday's game with another opportunity to build a 3-1 cushion in this best-of-seven series with a Central Division rival.

Of course, the Jets hoped to end the series as quickly as possible but a sweep was always the unlikeliest of outcomes. Especially when you consider how well the Blues have played coming out of the break for the 4 Nations Face-Off, and how hard they pushed the Jets in Games 1 and 2 before faltering in the third periods of each game.

Jets defenceman and alternate captain Josh Morrissey exuded a calmness in his post-game interview. No doubt he was disappointed with the outcome and the overall performance, but this is not a time for panic.

"You lose that game in overtime, you lose that game how we did, it's the same result," said Morrissey. "Playoffs are all about turning the page, learning lessons, and improving as the series goes on."

“Our team has 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.”

There haven’t been many games like Thursday’s, where the sound defensive structure gets poked, prodded and penetrated.

That doesn’t mean the Jets need to reinvent the wheel or come up with a completely new game plan for Game 4 — though better execution is also a necessity.

Obviously, adjustments will need to be made, but this is more a matter of getting back to a blueprint than overhauling what has made the Jets successful for most of the 85 games they’ve played to this point.

“Bottom line, like we’ve talked about all year, we try to look at what we’re doing and what we do in our room and how we know when we’re at our best and when we’re not,” said Morrissey.

There was some saltiness in Jets head coach Scott Arniel’s tone during his media availability and that’s to be expected.

Nobody likes getting their butt kicked, and hating to lose can sometimes be as important as knowing how to win.

Not only was giving up a seven-spot out of character, it was the manner in which most of those goals were allowed.

“We gave up the middle of the ice a lot,” said Arniel. “Which we don’t usually do.”

Because the Jets don’t normally give up the middle of the ice, it stands to reason that it should be an area that is fairly easy to get sorted out.

But there are a number of things the Jets can do better, even while holding a 2-1 series lead.

One of the storylines that was under the microscope going into these playoffs revolved around how Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck was going to play.

After getting pulled for the first time this season on Thursday, a lot of eyes will be on Hellebuyck again.

While his removal was more of a mercy pull than an indictment of his play, Hellebuyck’s turnover less than a minute after the Jets had scored to narrow the deficit to 3-1 was a critical error.

As far as Hellebuyck’s play goes, there aren’t an abundance of soft goals that he’s allowing. Though, there haven’t been as many timely saves being made either.

After another incredible regular season that has Hellebuyck on the verge of a third Vezina Trophy and a strong possibility he could be a finalist for the Hart Trophy, it's been an uneven start to these playoffs.

Although the sample size is remarkably strong, the early numbers don't paint a pretty picture.

Going into Friday's action, Hellebuyck has allowed 10 goals in his three starts and, while it's worth noting that five of those have come on the power play, his goals-against average has ballooned from 2.00 to 3.54 and his save percentage has dipped from .925 to .844.

Want to look under the hood at some underlying numbers?

MoneyPuck has Hellebuyck at -3.9 goals saved above expected and that number is tied for 16th among goalies with Linus Ullmark of the Ottawa Senators.

Hellebuyck led the league with 39.6 goals saved above expected.

These early returns don't mean that Hellebuyck can't get the job done when the lights are brightest, though it does suggest he'll need to find another level in order for the Jets to retain control of this series.

The Jets don't need Hellebuyck to single-handedly carry them to the promised land either, they simply need him to come up with a few more saves — like the breakaway stop he made on Jordan Kyrou late in the second period of Game 1.

Now, there are other areas that require improvement for the Jets in Game 3 — including special teams, secondary scoring and a return to stifling defensive play among them.

The Jets are minus-4 in the special teams battle after surrendering six power-play markers and scoring just two so far.

The improvements the Jets made on both the power play and penalty kill during the regular season were significant — with Winnipeg finishing atop the NHL with the man-advantage and jumping up from the bottom third to 13th while shorthanded.

But cleaning up those two facets of the game would take off some pressure when it comes to scoring at even strength.

The Jets' top line delivered the game-winning goal in each of the first two games, while the Blues' top guns and top D-men were all over the scoresheet in Game 3.

By the time the buzzer sounded, top-line centre Robert Thomas had four assists and first-line winger Pavel Buchnevich delivered his first career hat trick and added an assist.

Cam Fowler, acquired from the Anaheim Ducks in mid-December to bolster the blue line, had a Morrissey-esque effort, scoring a goal off the rush and adding four helpers for five points.

It's been said often already that the best players have to be the best players, and that's been the case through three games.

The Jets' fourth line has already scored twice in the series, while the Blues' fourth unit got a goal from Alexey Toropchenko in Game 3.

Jets captain Adam Lowry had the lone goal for his team's identity line and that one was scored into an empty net. Lowry thrives at this time of the year and supplying supplementary offence is something the Jets have come to rely on from that trio, so they'll need to do more as well.

As the Jets continue to play without Gabe Vilardi and Nikolaj Ehlers, there must be some temptation for Arniel to reunite Nino Niederreiter with Lowry and Mason Appleton.

Although moving Niederreiter into the top-six where he's spent a good chunk of his career is an option, he's got to produce a bit more offence no matter what line he's playing on, as he's generated only two shots on goal so far.

The same goes for Vladislav Namestnikov, who has gone 16 games without scoring, has one goal in his past 32 games and has yet to record a shot on goal in this series.

There's no questioning the effort of Niederreiter, Namestnikov or Cole Perfetti (who has one assist and nearly had a goal in Game 3 that didn't count because there wasn't conclusive video evidence to overturn the original call on the ice), but they'll need to chip in some more offence given how well the Blues' second line has been playing.

The Jets leaned on their depth throughout the roster all season long and it's time to see if they can stand tall once again.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipegsun.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/friesen-blues-demolition-crew-testing-jets-very-foundation>

### ***FRIESEN: Blues demolition crew testing Jets' very foundation***

By Paul Friesen

Years ago, in the early days of the Manitoba Moose in the old IHL, I heard a funny hockey story that’s stuck with me and seems to have some relevance for the Winnipeg Jets today.

A former player who’d become a coach, and who shall remain nameless, was talking about one of his former coaches, who shall also remain nameless.

Going into a big playoff game, the ex-player recalled, his coach’s pre-game speech included this line: “This is where they separate the men from the boys.”

In the next breath, the coach ended with, “Let’s go, boys.”

I don’t know which team won that game, and it doesn’t really matter.

Which brings us to the Jets, who’ve reached a moment in their first-round playoff series we knew was coming in the post-season eventually.

We’re not going to use the hackneyed “men-or-boys” analogy, but we’ll trot out another: it’s gut-check time.

Coming off a 7-2 blowout in Game 3, the Jets have to be just a little discombobulated about what happened on Thursday.

That strong foundation they've talked about over and over again this season, while laying brick after brick through 82 games? It's been subjected to a blast by that demolition crew from St. Louis.

The Jets withstood a similar force in Game 1, but this one carried even more oomph – and lasted longer.

Head coach Scott Arniel called his team “terrible” in the opening 20 minutes of Game 3. The 3-0 hole they were in was well deserved. They had one hand on the shovel that dug it.

Arniel said the game was over at that point. A strange thing for a coach to say. Since when are early three-goal deficits insurmountable?

When the Jets didn't narrow the gap substantially in the second, though, the jig was up.

This isn't a come-from-behind bunch. Hasn't been all season.

Their record when trailing through 40 minutes was 2-16-1.

Give them a lead, though, and they'll protect it like a newborn.

They're loaded with confidence in a close game, secure in a way of playing that's been tried and tested for 82-plus games.

We'll have to wait a couple days to see what a blowout does to that confidence.

“You lose that game in overtime, you lose that game how we did, it's the same result,” defenceman Josh Morrissey told reporters, post-game.

In the series standings, yes. But in their minds?

“Playoffs are all about, ‘Turn the page.’ Learning lessons and improving as the series goes on,” Morrissey said.

They're supposed to about that. The Jets' core players haven't exactly mastered that in playoffs past.

One loss in last year's series against Colorado and the wheels fell off. Against Vegas a year earlier, same crap, different pile.

Job 1 this season was about honing that skill of taking a punch and getting back up. Through the regular season the Jets learned to respond, never letting a stinker or two turn into three or four.

“Our team’s done a great job all year of being resilient,” Morrissey said. “And bouncing back from games that aren’t us.”

Safe to say 7-2 isn’t them.

“The score gets a little inflated with some of the penalties near the end of the game,” No. 44 explained. “Just the way things shook out.”

Actually it got inflated at even strength soon after David Gustafsson got the Jets on the board early in the third. At 3-1, they had life.

Less than a minute later, their most valuable player, Connor Hellebuyck, went behind his net to get the puck and handed over the back-breaking fourth Blues goal.

Two more in the next five minutes, one on the power play, and Hellebuyck got the mercy pull.

If the Jets as a whole have some playoff ghosts to deal with, there’s one wearing No. 37 flitting around in the rafters.

Hellebuyck had put his nasty puck-handling history behind him, or so we’d thought. He was going to put his last two playoff series in the rear-view, too, and still may.

But the cold, hard numbers through three games are as follows: a 3.52 goals-against-average and .844 saves percentage, the latter even worse than in his last two series, the former better only than one of them.

Behind the mask, though, one number stands above all: the wins.

The Jets have two, the Blues and Jordan Binnington one. Advantage, Hellebuyck.

Momentum, though: all Blues.

The Jet have a couple of days to check that foundation for cracks.

Sunday at noon is now the biggest game of the year. The opening 20 minutes, the biggest period of the year.

Exactly what they’re supposed to be built for.

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

## ***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.

**TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/what-s-the-key-to-a-jets-bounceback-after-big-loss~3121299>

***What’s the key to a Jets bounceback after big loss? (VIDEO)***

What does a coach say to his players and his goaltender after a big loss like the Jets suffered in Game 3? How should Winnipeg adjust to make sure the same thing doesn't happen in Game 4? TSN Hockey analyst Bruce Boudreau joins That's Hockey with his thoughts.

**NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-look-to-rebound-in-game-4-of-1st-round-after-blues-dominant-win>

***Jets look to rebound in Game 4 of 1st round after Blues' dominant win  
Winnipeg still leads series, but gave up middle of ice, struggled on power play***

By Tracey Myers

ST. LOUIS -- The Winnipeg Jets knew exactly what they were going to get in Game 3 of the Western Conference First Round.

They knew the St. Louis Blues, down 2-0 in the best-of-7 series, were going to respond. They knew the Blues were going to feed off their home crowd at Enterprise Center. They were right, and when it was all over the Jets were on the wrong end of a 7-2 loss Thursday.

"Obviously they made adjustments," Jets coach Scott Arniel said after the game. "We'll look at their adjustments and obviously we'll have to do some things as well."

They have some time with Game 4 here Sunday (1 p.m. ET; FDSNMW, MAX, truTV, TBS, SN, TVAS, CBC). But where to start?

Well, perhaps with the start. It's been a bit of an issue for the Jets through the first three games -- they've allowed six first-period goals -- but Thursday was the toughest.

The Blues were aggressive, and the Jets were overwhelmed. Barely three minutes into the game, Winnipeg trailed 2-0, with Blues forward Pavel Buchnevich scoring twice.

The first goal came 48 seconds into the game when a pass into the crease hit Jimmy Snuggerud and trickled toward Buchnevich, who kicked it into the air and then banged it home with his stick.

"I think that [first] goal, he kicks it and then deflects it [48] seconds into the game. We knew that they were going to start throwing pucks at the net, bodies to the net," Jets forward Cole Perfetti said. "It was a skilled play but a little unfortunate, lucky to kick it like that and then bat it out of the air bar down.

"[Forty-eight seconds] into the game. It's tough to start like that. And then, you know from there, yeah, it's hard when that's your start. It's frustrating and we've just got to come out stronger."

Less than three minutes later, Buchnevich scored again, this time deflecting a pass from Robert Thomas in front of the net over Hellebuyck's shoulder.

Going to the middle of the ice was an adjustment the Blues made and one the Jets had no answer for.

With the exception of Oskar Sundqvist's even-strength goal in Game 1, a wrist shot from 16 feet out, the Blues' goals in Games 1 and 2 came from 29 feet or farther away. In Game 3, four of the Blues' seven goals came from within 16 feet.

"We gave up the middle of the ice a lot tonight," Arniel said. "Probably if I'm going to talk about the whole game, we gave up the ice a lot tonight, through the middle. Which we don't usually do."

The Jets got one power-play goal on four opportunities in Game 3, and they've been rather quiet there through three games. After having the No. 1 power play during the regular season at 28.9 percent, they're 11th among the 16 Stanley Cup Playoff teams at 20.0 percent (2-for-10).

"Well, we had some good looks, especially to start. That one, [defenseman Josh Morrissey] had a couple good looks, we had a couple net-front whacks at it that could have gone," Perfetti said. "[Blues goalie Jordan] Binnington made some good saves at the right time. They did a better job on our entries today. We had a bit tougher time breaking in and getting set up. We'll clean that up.

"We're going to build off that and see where we can improve and move on. We had some good looks. Binnington's made some good saves on the power play so far, but we're creating those chances and that's all you can ask for. Eventually the puck's going to go in the net for us."

Winnipeg's lineup could have some changes for Game 4. Defenseman Dylan DeMelo was a late Game 3 scratch because of illness. A two-day break should give him time to recover. Forward Gabriel Vilardi has been out since March 23 because of an upper-body injury. He's skated with the Jets since Monday, albeit in a noncontact jersey, and is with them on this trip.

Game 3 was a bad one for the Presidents' Trophy winners, but they're looking at it as that: just one bad game. They're still up in the series, still have home-ice advantage, still expect to rebound Sunday.

"I mean, if you look at it, I think the score gets a little inflated, obviously, with some of the penalties near the end of the game, and just kind of the way things shook out," Morrissey said. "But, you know, we made it 3-1, and obviously we're trying to get back into that hockey game. I thought the second was better for us as well. So at the end of the day, like I said, playoffs are all about momentum, all about learning lessons in series, adjusting in series, getting better within the series.

"And that's something that we need to do over the next few days, but then turn the page and come out with a great start on Sunday."

## **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6310763/2025/04/26/winnipeg-jets-connor-hellebuyck-nhl-playoffs/>

### ***What's behind Winnipeg Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck's playoff struggles?***

By Murat Ates and Jesse Granger

ST. LOUIS — A Friday afternoon Google search for “Connor Hellebuyck” yielded seven of what Google calls its “top stories.”

Three of those seven headlines were about Hellebuyck getting pulled in Game 3. Three more led with Hellebuyck being haunted by playoff demons. The seventh merely referenced Pavel Buchnevich's Game 3 hat trick.

This is not an ideal place for a franchise goaltender's narrative to land, particularly after producing the best regular-season performance in the NHL for the second straight year while earning front-runner status for the Vezina Trophy and consideration for the Hart.

It is also a fair assessment of the Hellebuyck story right now. The 31-year-old goaltender, who specializes in a “big and boring” playing style that exploits his best-in-class read of the play in front of him, has been beaten badly in recent playoff series. He's a generational goaltender, a future Hall of Famer and perhaps the best American goaltender in history, but Hellebuyck has allowed 52 goals in his last 13 playoff games.

“To not be able to keep four goals off the board is heartbreaking,” Hellebuyck said after Winnipeg's loss to the Colorado Avalanche in the playoffs last year. “For me to not be able to put my foot down even in a single game is really heartbreaking. It's not typically how I do things.”

Hellebuyck's “typical” is to be the best. This season, the defending Vezina Trophy winner posted the NHL's best save percentage and goals against average and the most shutouts and goals saved above expected among starters. He was brilliant for Team USA at the 4 Nations Face-Off, saving three goals above expected in the gold medal game as Canada held a dominant edge in slot shots.

So, why has he averaged four goals against in 13 playoff games going back to 2023 against the Vegas Golden Knights?

Is it something about the way Winnipeg defends in front of him? Something that teams have exploited? Or is it just bad luck in small samples? Remember that Hellebuyck was sensational against Connor McDavid, Leon Draisaitl and company the last time Winnipeg won a playoff series, stopping 151 of 159 shots and posting one shutout in a four-game sweep. He out-battled Pekka Rinne in Game 7 of 2018 — the biggest playoff

game in Jets history at the time — and has put together long stretches of spectacular play in front of poor defending before.

How much of Hellebuyck's "demons" are just narrative, then, and what are the facts?

Let's bring in The Athletic's resident goaltending guru, Jesse Granger, to explore how and why Hellebuyck has been beaten so far this series.

Hellebuyck hasn't been terrible over the first three games of the series, despite what his statistics might say. He also hasn't been his usual, spectacular self who bails the Jets out of defensive lapses with regularity.

At times, I wonder if his unique style of goaltending, which is built around playing deep in his crease to require less movement to stay in position, leaves him less room for error in the postseason. More than any other time of the year, teams crowd the crease in the playoffs and try to score through screens. Because Hellebuyck doesn't typically play these situations aggressively at the top of his crease, more net is available, and when he doesn't see the shot, the puck finds room.

This power-play goal by Jordan Kyrour in Game 1 is a good example. Once screened by Oskar Sundqvist, Hellebuyck shrinks into his net and flattens along the goal line by rotating his right skate back.

By the time the shot arrives, Hellebuyck is covering significantly less net, especially toward the far-side post, where Kyrour's shot scores.

Going back to last year's struggles in the first round against Colorado, it seems like a lot of goals are being scored against Winnipeg in this manner. Hellebuyck is so good at reading the play and staying in position when he sees the puck that teams are relying on firing shots from the point while sending all hands on deck to disrupt Hellebuyck's vision.

This goal by Kyrour in Game 3 is another good example because it highlights how many things are going wrong around Hellebuyck that certainly aren't helping.

First, it's a five-on-three power play for the St. Louis Blues, which already puts him behind the eight ball. On top of that, Hellebuyck is facing a cross-seam pass while dealing with a screen by Blues forward Brayden Schenn and an additional screen by his own defenseman, Dylan Samberg. If Samberg is going to kneel for that block, he really needs to make it, or he puts his goaltending in a tough spot.

On most of the goals going in, it's hardly Hellebuyck's fault. But as mentioned, he's also not coming to the rescue as often, and once again, his depth is at least partially to blame. Before the pass, Hellebuyck has his toes at the top of his crease, but when he pushes across, he loses significant depth, ending up about halfway between his goal line and the top of the blue paint.

Kyrrou's shot is perfectly placed into the corner, but if you look closely, Hellebuyck reacts with his glove. He missed it by an inch. If he were at the top of his crease, the puck likely would have hit him in the glove even if he didn't see it.

This isn't a plea for Hellebuyck to suddenly abandon the style that's made him the most consistent goaltender of this generation. It does mean his teammates need to work harder to clear traffic in front. It also means Hellebuyck could do himself a favor by standing tall and holding his ground confidently on these screens, rather than ducking or slumping back in an attempt to see the release.

A slippery thing about narratives, for better and for worse, is that they get dictated by results. When a series is won or lost, few observers slow down, rewind and dig into the process behind those results. Wins are inarguable and permanent; process is an opinion. Thus, our understanding of playoff greatness is determined by what happens, not what might have been.

When Winnipeg got reverse-swept by Colorado, not all observers considered the scale of the Avs' dominance in their analysis of the Jets' goaltender. Much like St. Louis did Thursday, Colorado had forechecked in waves. It recovered every dumped puck, took its shooting options and recovered so many pucks in a row that in Game 4, Colorado had taken four shots on goal in 20 seconds or less — twice — in the first six minutes.

When Jim Montgomery talks about the Blues attacking with "chaos," that's what he means. The Blues have found a way to get away from Winnipeg's swarming defence, getting out of outnumbered situations by firing pucks from one side of the offensive zone to the other and then being the first to recover them. They've crowded the Jets' crease, getting bounces and screens, kick plays and great hand-eye coordination.

It's Hellebuyck's job to fight through all of that. It's also Winnipeg's job to be better at handling net-front traffic to turn its 2-1 series lead into something approaching a win. If the Blues channel their Game 3 formula, take control of the series and blow out the Jets in Game 4, not many people will remember how they did it.

For Hellebuyck's and his team's sake and the enduring belief from Jets fans, the next search for Hellebuyck's name needs to result in a "W."