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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-comrie-shuts-out-golden-knights>

***Three things - Comrie shuts out Golden Knights  
Comrie makes 27 saves to record his second shutout of the season***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets bounced back from a loss in Los Angeles two nights ago to record an impressive 4-0 win over the Vegas Golden Knights at T-Mobile Arena. Mark Scheifele, Adam Lowry, Colin Miller and Cole Perfetti scored for the Jets who remain four points up on the Dallas Stars for first place in the Central Division. Eric Comrie got his second shutout of the season making 27 saves, he also got a lot of help from his teammates who blocked 20 shots. Winnipeg will close out this road trip Saturday against the Utah Hockey Club.

***PLAYOFF BLUEPRINT***

The Jets played a solid game in Los Angeles two nights ago, but mistakes cost them in the 4-1 loss to the Kings. Thursday night they took the fans out of the game with a defence first performance which led to offence at key times in the opening frame. At 13:01, Luke Schenn sent a stretch pass up ice that saw Alex Iafallo and Mark Scheifele go in on a 2-on-1, Iafallo's pass found Scheifele who deposited his 37th of the season to make it 1-0.

Winnipeg added to their lead with some nice work from the third line who was reunited tonight, Nino Niederreiter's shot was stopped by Adin Hill, but Adam Lowry swooped in and scored on the rebound for a 2-0 Jets lead. Winnipeg held the high-powered Golden Knights to just five shots in the first period.

***POWER PLAY GIVES SOME BREATHING ROOM***

The Jets power play has had its struggles lately and especially without Gabe Vilardi going 1-for-9 over the last four games. Davis Payne made a change to the two power play units moving Cole Perfetti to the top unit and Alex Iafallo down to the second unit. With Winnipeg still with a two-goal lead, the second unit cashed in at 11:53 of the second, Colin Miller one-timed Mason Appleton's pass past Hill to make it 3-0.

Eric Comrie was not that busy through the first 37 minutes of the game but was at his best for the remaining 23. Mark Stone and Brett Howden had two fantastic looks at the end of the second period, but Comrie shut the door. Vegas made a huge push in the third period, firing 15 shots at the Jets goaltender, who was locked in all night to help Winnipeg win their 52nd game of the season (tying a franchise record) and end an eight-game winless streak with the Golden Knights. The Jets recorded their ninth game without allowing a goal in the 2024-25 campaign and surpassed 2023-24 (8) for the most outing in a single season in franchise history.

"These group of guys, they block shots. You can see every up and down the lineup of how many guys (block shots)," said Comrie.

"I mean, it's phenomenal. It's a lot of fun to play with these guys."

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<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-vegas-golden-knights-game-recap-april-3>

### ***Jets shut out Golden Knights, tie franchise record with 52nd win Winnipeg maintains lead in Central Division; Vegas loses ground in Pacific***

By Paul Delos Santos

LAS VEGAS -- Eric Comrie made 26 saves for the Winnipeg Jets in a 4-0 victory against the Vegas Golden Knights at T-Mobile Arena on Thursday.

It was Comrie's second shutout of the season and fourth in the NHL.

"[Coach Scott Arnie] and the coaching staff has a lot of trust in me," Comrie said. "Arnie' told me a couple days ago, 'He doesn't care who's playing because we have full confidence in you.' That gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and it just gave me a belief in myself to go out there and do what I have to do."

Mark Scheifele, Adam Lowry, Colin Miller, and Cole Perfetti scored, and Nino Niederreiter had two assists for the Jets (52-20-4), who tied their franchise wins record, which they first set in 2017-18 and matched in 2023-24.

Winnipeg also maintained its four-point lead over the Dallas Stars for first in the Central Division. The Stars won 5-1 against the Nashville Predators on Thursday.

"The messaging from 'Arnie' is just about the process, taking care of that and the results will follow," Lowry said. "We talked about coming in here against another red-hot team, another dangerous team off the rush, and a team that really makes it hard to get to the net. You got to be willing to get inside. You must be willing to win those races and win those battles. We did a good job listening to that message and getting to the heart of the ice, especially in the first half of the game."

Adin Hill made 16 saves before being relieved by Akira Schmid to start the third period for the Golden Knights (45-22-8), who have lost consecutive games. Schmid made two saves in relief.

Vegas saw its lead in the Pacific Division drop to three points after the Los Angeles Kings' 4-2 victory against the Utah Hockey Club on Thursday.

"We had a really good stretch of hockey, and now we've lost two in a row," Golden Knights captain Mark Stone said. "So, you can feel sorry for yourselves, or you can pick yourself off the mat and get back to work and put in your best effort on Saturday night. We're playing a desperate team (the Calgary Flames) that is still fighting and clawing to try and make the playoffs. So we have to be at our best, and hopefully, those games are the ones."

Scheifele one-timed an Alex Lafallo cross-ice pass into an open net at 13:01 of the first period to give the Jets a 1-0 lead.

Lowry made it 2-0 at 18:15 after Brayden McNabb blocked a Logan Stanley shot, which deflected off Niederreiter and onto Lowry's stick. It was Lowry's first goal in 11 games.

"A good shot by 'Stan,' great net-front battle by Nino, and I was just lucky that the puck was laying there," Lowry said. "I was able to get it by him."

Miller scored on a one-timer on the power play at 11:53 of the second period to push it to 3-0.

"I liked the fact that Colin pounded the puck there a few times from the top," Arniel said. "They're still a work in progress. This morning was our first time to really put the units together and get a look at it."

Perfetti scored an empty-net goal 19:08 for the 4-0 final.

"We've got to get the part of our game in order. The style of play we need to play, to excel if we want to get to where we want to go," Golden Knights coach Bruce Cassidy said. "It's that simple. So, tonight wasn't good enough. The players, if they haven't acknowledged it, they should. They're a very honest group. Self-analyze well. So, we've got to correct that."

*NOTES:* Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers did not play the final 12:56 after taking a puck to the right leg. Arniel did not have an update. ... Jets defenseman Luke Schenn returned after missing Tuesday's 4-1 loss to the Kings with an undisclosed injury. He had an assist, three hits, three blocked shots and was plus-1 in 19:25 of ice time.

## **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6247014/2025/04/04/why-jets-mark-scheifele-kyle-connor-cole-perfetti-are-more-playoff-ready-this-season/>

### ***Why Jets' Mark Scheifele, Kyle Connor, Cole Perfetti are more playoff-ready this season***

By Murat Ates

If I told you this season's Winnipeg Jets are better than last season's model, would you believe me?

What if it became clear that Winnipeg is playing at a higher level right now than it did last season, even when compared only to the Jets' season-ending eight-game win streak? That might be an easier sell now that the Jets shut out Vegas, but it's been true since Winnipeg beat Dallas 4-1 on March 14. Winnipeg has won the territorial battle in a way that it didn't down the stretch last season.

That was a good team, too, but the underlying numbers of this Jets team are better than the one that fell to Colorado in five playoff games.

Recently, they've been better than anyone else in the NHL in a lot of cases. No team has a better expected goals percentage over its last 10 games than Winnipeg. No team has given up fewer shots per minute while short-handed since the 4-Nations break. No team has given up fewer goals per minute at five-on-five.

The goaltending has remained great, while the penalty kill has improved enough to make up for Gabriel Vilardi's absence from the top power play.

Now that Winnipeg has put its original lines back together, there are a lot of signs under the hood that suggest these Jets are more legitimate Cup contenders than they were last season.

"You may have those analytics or those stats," head coach Scott Arniel said. "I just think that we're a confident group."

We do have the stats. Winnipeg is controlling the play at a higher level now than it did last season, including its season-ending eight-game win streak. Here's how:

#### ***Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor's elevation continues***

Scheifele and Connor are each on track to set new career high point totals. Given where they started from — Connor set the Jets 2.0 record with 93 points in 2021-22, while Scheifele has cleared 80 points three times, including this season — that's an incredible achievement.

Connor has already scored 91 points, needing only three more in Winnipeg's six remaining games to surpass his own Jets 2.0 record. Scheifele has 82 points, which brings him within one of 800 on his career and two points shy of his single-season best (84). These kinds of numbers make it possible that we miss the point when we look back at their 2024-25 seasons: yes, Connor and Scheifele have stepped up their game this season, but their biggest leaps forward have come in terms of their defensive impact.

Do you remember 2021-22, when Connor scored 93 points and the Jets missed the playoffs? His defensive impact was so poor that season that the Jets got outscored (by three) when he was on the ice during five-on-five sessions.

This season, the Jets are winning Connor's five-on-five minutes by 18 goals, which is the single best number of his NHL career. He and Scheifele are grading out as stars — second and third among healthy Central Division forwards — and their star turn is about ramping up their defensive game.

There are still occasional moments of fear. One of Vegas' best chances against goaltender Eric Comrie on Thursday came when Jack Eichel stole a puck from Scheifele and centred it. However, the overall trend has been of much better defence without sacrificing any of the scoring that makes them great.

It's the improvements they've made during five-on-five that bode well for the playoffs — improvements that have helped the Jets win games with or without Vilardi on their wing.

There are still areas of Connor and Scheifele's game that could stand to improve. Their five-on-five shift length continues to lead the team, and it's rare to see them go off for a change when an offensive opportunity is available. This reduces the Jets' potential for "hand-off" shifts, where multiple lines hem opponents in their zone for extended periods to the point of exhaustion and dramatically increase scoring odds.

To be clear, this is a nitpick, not the driving story. I would worry about the tendency to extend shifts against Nathan MacKinnon of the Colorado Avalanche in a way I wouldn't against Marco Rossi in Minnesota.

But the overall arc is ascent: Even if you limit the duo's performance to the Jets' eight-game win streak to end last season, you find them outscored 3-2 while earning 43.1 percent of shot attempts and 39.7 percent of expected goals.

Here's Connor's defensive zone heat map from last season, courtesy of Hockey Viz. Red indicates areas of the ice where teams got more shots against Winnipeg than average; blue indicates fewer shots against Winnipeg than average:

And here it is this season:

Last season's defensive zone results brought Connor dangerously close to being an empty-calorie scorer. This season's results make him one of the top forwards in the best division in the NHL. No, that doesn't guarantee playoff success, but Winnipeg can beat anybody in seven games if Connor and Scheifele control play.

They're doing a better job of it right now — and throughout this season — than they did during the eight games at the end of last season that put visions of playoff glory in fans' minds.

### *Cole Perfetti's elevation continues*

What a difference a couple of months has made to Winnipeg's second line. Perfetti has been at the heart of it, learning to initiate contact on his way into corners, playing faster in all three zones and delivering the NHL's goal of the week:

Nikolaj Ehlers has been flying, too, and just in time for what could be the most important stretch run of the pending unrestricted free agent's career. It doesn't seem like Ehlers will miss time despite leaving Thursday's game hurt, based on Arniel's postgame comments to reporters in Las Vegas.

That's phenomenal news for the Jets, because few secondary scoring lines beat their opposition quite this badly.

Winnipeg will need more from this line than it got from the Tyler Toffoli version last season. It will need more production than Ehlers has put together in any playoffs of his career.

To watch Perfetti and Vladislav Namestnikov play a feisty, puck-hounding game in all three zones is to believe they have more to give when the games get even tougher. It was encouraging that Perfetti was one of the Jets' most dangerous players against Los Angeles and Vegas, which are teams that make space tough to come by.

This line doesn't get the same heavy run against opposing top lines and top pairs that Scheifele's line gets. They need to be a strength for Winnipeg as a result and they're doing that. One simple, but telling frame of comparison: Toffoli had five points during the Jets' eight-game win streak to end last season. Perfetti has seven points in his last eight games right now.

When I asked Arniel about Perfetti's year-over-year improvement, the Jets head coach pointed to Perfetti's resilience.

"I think what we've talked about is the mental part of it," Arniel said. "He recognizes that he's going to have highs and lows. He's going to have slumps; he's going to be in situations where he's going to have a bad game or a bad shift or a bad period.

"He's been able to get himself out of it this year faster than he's ever been able to (before)."

*Adam Lowry's line: still the standard and scoring again*

When Lowry's line runs hot, the Jets' middle six becomes the biggest non-Connor Hellebuyck strength of the team. When it runs cold, as it did for parts of February and March, you have to appreciate a good backcheck or board battle to get the most out of your viewing time.

Lowry's line has not dominated on the scoresheet the way it does in terms of flow of play, but there have been recent signs of life. Nino Niederreiter scored two points in four games with two groups of Swiss fans in attendance last week — a group connected to EHC Chur, Niederreiter's hometown team, and a group of his oldest friends. Neither group was aware the other had planned their trip, but it made for a lively atmosphere at Canada Life Centre, perhaps sparking Niederreiter's recent offensive push.

Mason Appleton scored twice on that homestand, and Lowry scored the insurance goal in Winnipeg's 4-0 win against Vegas on Thursday. I've opined before, wondering if this group needs a break from one of the hardest jobs in hockey.

Even among shutdown lines, it's rare for players to get such a steady diet of tough matchups, and I suspect it's exhausting to need to play "perfect" hockey to achieve success. Lowry's line commits to every backcheck, board battle and contested puck in a way that's tough to match.

While they lost the flow of play battle against Vegas, Lowry's line got on the scoresheet again. If they're rejuvenated in any way, then the sum of all parts in Winnipeg's top-nine forward group should be more impressive come playoff time than it was a year ago.

A healthy Vilardi would work wonders, too.

**Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/04/jets-snap-losing-streak-defeat-las-vegas-4-0>

***Jets snap losing streak against old foe, defeat Las Vegas 4-0***

By: Ken Wiebe

LAS VEGAS — It's safe to say the Winnipeg Jets measured up in this one.

Looking for a response after a series of puck management woes were a big factor in a 4-1 loss to the Los Angeles Kings, the Jets cleaned up what ailed them in one of their tidiest performances of the season.

By the time the final buzzer sounded, the Jets had earned a 4-0 victory over the Vegas Golden Knights on Thursday at T-Mobile Arena.

“Especially the first period and a half, we did a really good job limiting what we gave up,” said Jets captain Adam Lowry, who tied his career-high with his 15th goal of the season.

“Real suffocating, real tight hockey. I think that’s what you have to do against a real dangerous team.”

The Jets, who improved to 52-20-4, close out a three-game road trip on Saturday against Utah HC.

The victory also snapped a string of eight consecutive regular-season losses in head-to-head matchups with the Golden Knights, who are leading the Pacific Division.

“We needed a good start more than anything. Everybody got running right away,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “And when you can get up a couple goals like that, it certainly makes them change their game a little bit.”

Jets backup Eric Comrie made 26 saves in what was his 19th start of the season, recording his second shutout of the campaign and fourth of his career.

“My wife is due any day. So yeah, I was trying to see if I was playing tonight or not,” said Comrie.

“She can give birth any second, so I’d be on a plane back. My phone’s on loud every single night right now, I’ve been looking at flights to get home, just in case it happens. So I’m prepared if I have to go home. It could be any day now.

“I just stuck to my game. I was a little bit frustrated by my last game, but I stuck to my process.”

Let’s take a closer look at this one:

### *THE RETURN*

The absence of Luke Schenn was obvious in Tuesday’s loss to the Kings, and while he was a game-time decision on Thursday, the Jets’ defenceman was able to play through the pain and made a massive impact in this game.

Back on a pairing with Dylan Samberg, Schenn was a physical force, but it was his ability to remain calm while under pressure was on display in this one.

“He’s a guy that’s been there on great teams — a Stanley Cup champion,” said Morrissey. “You look at what he does on the ice, he’s a very physical presence back there. He’s a steadying force on the blue line. He can play up and down the back end. Other teams know when he’s out there. He makes other teams and players work for their ice and work to get to the front of the net.



“That’s important in the regular season, but even more so in the playoffs.”

### *THE SCARE*

Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers went down in a heap after blocking a shot from the right point by Golden Knights defenceman Nic Hague off his right foot with just under six minutes to go in the first period.

Ehlers got to his feet and eventually made his way to the Jets bench, but he was bent over in agony as he tried to shake off the pain.

It turns out that Ehlers didn’t even miss a shift, but his unfortunate puck luck was just beginning.

During a third-period power play, Ehlers was parked in front when a shot from the slot by Cole Perfetti caught him on the inside of the right leg.

Ehlers had to be helped off the ice and went down the tunnel for further evaluation.

Arniel said it was too early to tell the severity of the injury but sounded hopeful that it wasn’t too serious.

“We don’t know yet. He keeps getting hit with pucks,” said Arniel. “I think he’ll be all right.”

### *THE RACE*

The Dallas Stars defeated the Nashville Predators 5-1 earlier on Thursday night to temporarily pull within two points of the Jets.

But after the Jets’ victory, they remain four points clear of the Stars in the chase for the top spot in the Central Division and the Western Conference.

Following the morning skate, Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey discussed what it was like to be pushed down the stretch.

“Realistically, we’re worried about ourselves and we’re trying to be ready for Game 83,” said Jets defenceman Morrissey. “We’d love to win the division, we’d love to win the conference and we’d love to be the No. 1 seed in the NHL. All of those things are attainable right now. But that’s in the background of what we’re pushing for.

“More importantly, we’ve got (six more) games to prepare for the Stanley Cup playoffs and have our game where we want it to be. That’s the biggest focus right now.”

Not surprisingly, Arniel sounded like someone who was expecting this race to go right down to the wire.

“Well, we’ve talked about this every month. Dallas, Minnesota, Colorado, St. Louis, nobody has ever left our rearview mirror,” said Arniel.

“Whether that gap got wide at one time, it’s always tightened back up. Those teams are all really good hockey teams. We just have to take care of our business. We’ve always talked about that, from the start of the year and on. Take care of our business and then kind of let everything fall into place.”

The fourth and final meeting in Dallas next Thursday figures to go a long way to determining who is going to be the No. 1 seed in the NHL.

#### *THE KEY PLAY*

Adam Lowry got to the front of the net and banged in a loose puck with 1:45 to go in the first period to extend the Jets’ lead to 2-0.

#### *THE THREE STARS*

Eric Comrie, Jets, made 27 saves to record his second shutout of the season, the fourth of his NHL career.

Adam Lowry, Jets, scored his first goal in 11 games and did an excellent job defensively. Luke Schenn, Jets, finished with an assist, three hits and three blocked shots in his return to the lineup.

#### *EXTRA, EXTRA*

Mark Scheifele, Colin Miller and Cole Perfetti also scored for the Jets.

With Schenn returning to the lineup, it meant that Haydn Fleury joined fellow defenceman Ville Heinola and forward David Gustafsson as the healthy scratches.

Gustafsson was replaced on the fourth line by Jaret Anderson-Dolan, who made his Jets debut after spending the rest of the season with the Manitoba Moose of the American Hockey League. Anderson-Dolan had a strong training camp but broke his foot in an exhibition game against the Calgary Flames.

After a tough start to the American Hockey League campaign, Anderson-Dolan has been one of the most consistent forwards with the Moose, and Arniel wanted to see what he could do.

“He’s playing to his identity, which is what you want those guys to do,” said Arniel. “We brought him in because he’s an energy guy; he can get in on the forecheck and help us on the penalty kill if there’s some room there. We wanted to get a look at him.”

Anderson-Dolan finished with 13 shifts for 8:54 of ice time while recording six hits.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/03/driedger-brings-depth-to-hometown-team>

***Driedger brings depth to hometown team  
Jets' backup goalie took hard-fought 'scenic route to the NHL'***

By: Ken Wiebe

LAS VEGAS — Chris Driedger is quick to admit he was a little bit surprised to see the number for Roberto Luongo pop up on his phone on the day of the NHL trade deadline.

The veteran netminder had just been reassigned to the Charlotte Checkers of the American Hockey League by the Florida Panthers, but this wasn't a social call from Luongo, the Hall of Fame goalie who is now a special advisor to general manager Bill Zito.

Driedger was on the move again, this time to his hometown as the Winnipeg Jets had acquired him as goaltending insurance in a deal for Kaapo Kahkonen.

"It came as a surprise," Driedger said in an interview earlier this week. "It was kind of a whirlwind, for sure. It took me a minute to process and then, it was exciting. To come back to Winnipeg and come back home. An exciting opportunity, too."

Driedger had been up with the Panthers after Spencer Knight was traded to the Chicago Blackhawks, but when Florida acquired Vitek Vanecek from the San Jose Sharks, the organization decided to pivot and moved him for Kahkonen to be the third guy on the goalie depth chart.

After spending a few days back home in his parent's basement, Driedger moved into his own place.

When was the last time Driedger lived at home?

"Summer of 2016, maybe 2017. It's been a minute, but it's good to be back. It's a familiar city and I have a lot of good memories in Winnipeg. Some of my oldest friends are still there."

Upon his arrival, Driedger appeared in five games with the Manitoba Moose, who were officially eliminated from playoff contention on Thursday.

With Jets backup Eric Comrie on baby watch, Driedger was recalled by the Jets to serve as the backup netminder on this three-game road trip, which continued on Thursday in a game that was ongoing at press time.

By his own admission, Driedger's journey has been an interesting one.

“I grew up in Whyte Ridge and a friend of mine, a hockey player, we were in Grade 1, maybe six years old or something like that,” said Driedger. “I would go over to his place at lunch and I would have a baseball glove and a goalie stick and he would shoot on me. I told my parents that I wanted to play hockey. I went out there and I didn’t really contribute much offensively. One day they put me in net and I was a little bit more of a contributor than I was with the player stick out there.

“They said ‘you know what, maybe we’ll just stick this kid in net’ and then the rest is history from there. I enjoyed it because I wasn’t bringing too much to the table as a forward.”

In minor hockey, Driedger suited up for the Fort Garry/Fort Rouge Twins and Winnipeg Monarchs.

“I actually put all of the logos on the new mask that I just got to pay some respects to my old squads back in the day,” said Driedger, who then described some of the other elements he added to the art work. “A couple of landmarks from around the city. I’ve got the Golden Boy, Louis Riel, the legislature, the (Human Rights) Museum and I’ve got the Dale Hawerchuk statue on there. I kind of went for it. Let’s make this cool and very Winnipeg.”

Driedger left home to join the Tri-City Americans of the Western Hockey League at 16 and the adjustment wasn’t easy.

“It was tough at the start, you’re 16 and you’re playing against 20-year-olds,” said Driedger, who played 22 games that rookie season. “I didn’t play much and I was probably the worst goalie in the league that year. I barely played, but looking back, it was the best thing for me.”

But after a strong season with the Calgary Hitmen, Driedger was chosen in the third round (76th overall) of the 2012 NHL Draft by the Ottawa Senators.

At the end of his third season with the Hitmen, Driedger turned pro and that’s where things got even more interesting.

After 44 games in the ECHL and another nine in the American Hockey League, Driedger made his NHL debut for the Senators, coming on in relief against the New York Rangers on Mar. 26 of 2015.

Since then, he’s bounced around a bit, but his perseverance allowed him to put 67 NHL games on his resumé to go along with various pit stops in the AHL and ECHL.

“Trust me, there were plenty of times when I was wondering (what the future might bring),” said Driedger. “It’s all part of the journey. I took the scenic route to the NHL, you could say. It’s been a long road and it definitely made getting to the NHL a heck of a lot

sweeter, having been down and playing some games in the ECHL and in the AHL, too. It makes you appreciate everything. I try not to take myself too seriously.”

Driedger, 30, spent part of two strong seasons with the Panthers as the backup to Sergei Bobrovsky and put up impressive numbers — posting a 2.05 goals-against average and .938 save percentage in 12 games in 2019-20 and a 2.07 goals-against average and .927 save percentage in 23 games the following season.

That was enough to catch the attention of the Seattle Kraken, who signed him to a three-year deal worth US\$10.5 million to share the crease with Philipp Grubauer.

“Being up on the stage there, when they announced who they were signing and who was getting picked from each team was pretty cool,” said Driedger. “They did it right, too. It was the middle of July, a beautiful day, on the water, with 300 boats out on Lake Union (Wash.), everyone was going nuts. It was pretty fun. Those are fond memories for me.”

At the end of the first season with the Kraken, Driedger was asked to play for Canada at the IIHF Men’s World Championship and he was between the pipes for the gold medal game when he tore his ACL so badly that his career was at risk.

But Driedger worked his way back. And while he’s been limited to two NHL games since, last spring he led the Coachella Valley Firebirds (the top affiliate of the Kraken) to Game 7 of the Calder Cup final before losing to the Hershey Bears.

“To be the guy, to play a bunch of games and make a really serious playoff run was something I hadn’t really had the chance to be a part of during my pro career,” said Driedger. “A lot of fun. It was great. Competing for a championship is pretty special.”

Jets defenceman Haydn Fleury played against Driedger in the WHL and was teammates with him on the Kraken.

“He’s a really good person who likes to have fun and keeps it light,” said Fleury. “He works hard. You can tell he doesn’t take it for granted.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/featured/2025/04/03/the-future-is-almost-now>

***The future is (almost) now  
Jets top prospect Yager turning heads in WHL***

By: Mike McIntyre

VIRDEN — Brayden Yager was given some homework this season by the Winnipeg Jets.

Following each Western Hockey League game he played, the organization's top forward prospect was asked to send a short report to player development officials about how it went.

"I'll write a couple things I did well, a couple things I can do a bit better. It's a nice little way to be able to have some self-reflection and to be able to look back on," Yager told the Free Press this week in a wide-ranging one-on-one interview.

With the caveat that there's always room for improvement, it's hard to imagine anything but straight A's when it comes to his hockey report card.

Take Wednesday night in Virden, for example, where his Lethbridge Hurricanes were taking on the Brandon Wheat Kings in Game 4 of their first-round playoff series. Yager appeared to be in a class of his own, opening eyes and turning heads pretty much every time he was on the ice.

He showed off his elite smarts and speed early in the second period when he intercepted a pass attempt in his own zone and scored a nifty shorthanded breakaway goal. Although the 1,200 seat rink was largely filled with Brandon fans — their own building wasn't available due to their annual Royal Manitoba Winter Fair — you could hear the cheers from many folks sporting Jets attire.

"He's going to be a very good Winnipeg Jet," said his current head coach Bill Peters. "They have a very good young prospect who loves the game. I think the world of him."

### *First things first*

The future could arrive very soon. Yager, 20, is expected to join the organization once this playoff run is over — something he admits is very much on his mind.

"Sometimes you have to reel yourself in a bit. But it's exciting to be part of the organization and sometimes you can't help but think how badly you want to get there and prove yourself," said Yager.

First things first. His Hurricanes, who finished fourth in the WHL's Eastern Conference, are up 3-1 in the best-of-seven series against the No. 5-ranked Wheat Kings, who staved off elimination with Wednesday's 6-4 victory. Lethbridge can move on to the next round with a win on home ice Friday. Brandon will try to force a Game 6 back in Virden on Sunday.

"It's the best time of the year," Yager said of the playoffs. "You get to the end of the year and you're chomping at the bit. Now we're here and having a blast. The whole goal here is to help this team win a championship. I think we've got the team to do it."

Yager currently leads his team with five points (3G, 2A) in the playoffs after doing the same in the regular-season with 82 points (25G, 57A) through 54 games. The first 21 of those were played with the Moose Jaw Warriors, who he helped lead to the Memorial

Cup last year but are now entering a re-building phase and traded him to Lethbridge for draft picks.

“He’s made a big difference for us and in a very professional manner,” said Peters, whose resumé includes coaching the Carolina Hurricanes and Calgary Flames in the NHL.

“He has lots to offer for a team. We use him in all situations. Big-time right-hand value as a faceoff guy. He’s got the hockey sense, plays on the penalty kill, the power play. And he’s committed to doing that.”

Yager, the 14th-overall pick in the 2023 draft, was obtained by the Jets last summer from the Pittsburgh Penguins in exchange for disgruntled prospect Rutger McGroarty, the 14th-overall pick in the 2022 draft. It’s been a whirlwind ever since, including an impressive training camp with Winnipeg and being named captain of the Canadian World Junior team.

Yager has kept in close contact with the Jets all year, not only through his personal reports but plenty of visits from Jimmy Roy and Mike Keane, who work in player development. He’s also become close with the current Winnipeg leadership group of captain Adam Lowry and alternates Mark Scheifele and Josh Morrissey — routinely picking their brains for advice

“They’ve been unreal. They have all been great giving me pointers and helping me out,” said Yager. “I’ve been trying to watch as many games as I can when we’re not playing.”

### *Second-line centre*

At the risk of doing Yager’s most recent paperwork for him, he had numerous other chances to score in Wednesday’s game, using his quickness to put himself in a prime position on multiple occasions. At least two hard shots just missed the top corner. He also went 12-for-25 in the faceoff circle, which he says is an area he’s quickly improving on.

The Jets have been in constant search for a solid second-line centre behind Scheifele, with the versatile Vlad Namestnikov currently holding down that spot. Peters has no doubts Yager — who clocks in at 6’0 and weighs 170 pounds — will soon occupy it.

“For sure,” he replied. “Maybe early in his pro career, if you want to get him into the league quicker, it’s easier to bring him in as a winger. A little less responsibility, defensively. But long-term — and I think short-term, myself — he’s going to be a centre. And he’s doing to be the play-making centre who makes his wingers better, who has the ability to drive a line.”

Yager was born in Prince Albert and spent most of his life in Saskatoon. He initially wanted to be a goalie as a little kid, even trying it out for one of his first skates. His

grandfather and his father, Cam, who played for the Detroit Falcons in the Colonial Hockey League, were both masked men.

“(My dad) said ‘there’s no chance you’re going to be a goalie,’” Yager said with a laugh. “I guess he didn’t want the stress that comes with it.”

That would appear to have been a sound decision, given the way things have turned out.

Yager tore up minor hockey in Saskatchewan and was granted exceptional status as a 14-year-old to play in an older league. He was selected third overall in the 2020 WHL Bantam Draft and scored 34 goals in his first season in Moose Jaw, winning both the WHL and Canadian Hockey League Rookie of the Year awards.

Yager is also a two-time winner of the WHL’s Most Sportsmanlike Player award and won the CHL’s Sportsman of the Year honours last season.

Now, one final chance to add “Memorial Cup champion” to his accomplishments before the biggest one yet — professional hockey player. At that point, those progress reports to the Jets will start happening in person.

### **Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/why-hellebuyck-appears-to-have-the-edge-in-the-hart-trophy-race/>

#### ***Why Hellebuyck appears to have the edge in the Hart Trophy race (VIDEO)***

Justin Bourne joins Tim Micallef to break down the NHL awards races, detailing how Connor Hellebuyck appears to have the inside track to win the Hart over a couple perennial contenders and why Lane Hutson is a lock to win the Calder.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/takeaways-jets-continue-to-show-ability-to-bounce-back-quickly/>

#### ***Takeaways: Jets continue to show ability to bounce back quickly***

By Jacob Stoller

This was the first must-win game of the season.

It wasn’t a had-to-win or should-win game.

A loss would’ve dented the Winnipeg Jets’ cushion atop the Central Division, with the red-hot Dallas Stars just four points behind and within striking distance.



But if there's one thing we've learned about this team, it's that they always respond in the face of adversity.

They rattled off seven straight wins after the Toronto Maple Leafs overpowered them and ended their eight-game win streak to start the year. They responded from a 5-0 loss to the Florida Panthers with a convincing 6-3 win to close out a November home-and-home. They put together another eight-game win streak after what Jets coach Scott Arniel coined as an "embarrassing" 5-2 loss to the Utah Hockey Club in January.

And on the heels of being heavily outplayed in a 4-1 loss to the Los Angeles Kings on Tuesday, the Jets bounced back with a convincing 4-0 win against the Vegas Golden Knights.

Winnipeg's downfall against Los Angeles was their inability to generate quality chances in the middle of the ice and around the net.

"The L.A. game was a little bit different in the fact that because they're clogging up so much, it's hard to get through there. And it makes it tough on the forecheck," Arniel told reporters. "You're kind of putting the puck into places, and it's hard to get it back. But tonight — Vegas played a good defensive game as well — we just got to pucks quicker."

Yet again, this team learnt from the previous games' mistakes and stopped the bleeding.

"The messaging in our room and from Arnie is just about the process. Taking care of that, and the results will follow," Adam Lowry told reporters. "I think we look at the game we played in L.A., and you know, obviously, we didn't generate a ton of offence, but outside of a few mistakes, it was a fairly tight checking, even match.

From the top to the bottom of the lineup, everybody responded.

The big dogs lead by example.

Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele worked tirelessly to get to the guts of the ice, recording three and two scoring chances, respectively. The Jets' two top scorers were more direct with their playmaking, making a conscious effort not to default to the type of east-west style of hockey that Vegas feasts off of when collapsing the middle of the ice effectively.

The support players followed suit.

Adam Lowry set up an office in front of the net, scoring his 15th goal of the season via a net-front rebound. Nino Niederreiter crashed the net. Brandon Tanev and Luke Schenn each made timely blocks.

Everybody was pulling on the same rope.

Amid numerous bright spots this year, Winnipeg's ability to reset after a frustrating loss reigns supreme.

### *Comrie dialed in on and off the ice*

Eric Comrie may have had a lighter workload during the first two periods, but his 26-save shutout was well-earned, especially considering that 15 of those stops came in the final frame.

The Jets' backup delivered his most impactful win of the year amidst a particularly chaotic time, given that his wife is due with their second child.

"I had no idea if I was playing tonight or not because she can give birth any second, so I'd be on a plane back," Comrie told reporters.

Having Comrie in the net for such a crucial game may have seemed odd, but don't fixate too much on his 8-9-1 record — the 29-year-old has given the Jets a chance to win every time he's been called upon.

"Arnie told me a couple days ago... we don't care if it's the playoff push right now... we have full confidence in you," Comrie said. "I think that gave me a lot of confidence in myself, and it just gave me belief in myself to go out there and do what I had to do."

### *Ehlers Leaves Game*

Nikolaj Ehlers is going to be waking up purple and blue tomorrow.

Not only did The Great Dane take a 90 m.p.h. slapshot to the ankle in the first period, but he took a puck to a non-padded area of his knee in the third period and didn't return. While Arnie didn't have a concrete update post-game, he didn't sound overly concerned.

"He keeps getting hit with pucks," Arnie smirked. "I think he'll be alright."

If Ehlers misses any period of time, there's two routes Arnie can take:

- Split up Scheifele and Connor to create a more balanced top nine
- Run Cole Perfetti — Vladislav Namestnikov — Nino Niederreiter as the second line.

Odds are Arnie goes with the second option, given that those three have fared well together in a middle-six role. While the Jets coaching staff may not want to tinker with Scheifele and Connor's chemistry, it can't hurt to try out other combinations — like Scheifele and Ehlers, Perfetti and Connor — to get an idea of what other options they have, should the top line struggle in the playoffs.

## **Associated Press**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/comrie-records-shutout-jets-beat-golden-knights-in-matchup-of-divisional-leaders/>

### ***Comrie records shutout, Jets beat Golden Knights in matchup of divisional leaders***

By Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — The Jets took a step toward securing the Central Division and home-ice advantage for the Stanley Cup playoffs. They have three more points than Washington in the race for the Presidents' Trophy and four more than Dallas in the Central.

Vegas, after back-to-back losses this week, finds its once solid grip on the Pacific Division more tenuous. Los Angeles is within three points after beating the Utah Hockey Club 4-2 on Thursday night.

Mark Scheifele, Adam Lowry, Colin Miller and Cole Perfetti scored and Nino Niederreiter had two assists. Comrie, who backs up Vezina Trophy winner Connor Hellebuyck, got his first shutout since Feb. 4 against Carolina.

Adin Hill stopped 16 of 19 shots while playing the first two periods for the Golden Knights. Hill was replaced by Henderson call-up Akira Schmid in the third. Schmid saved both shots he faced.

Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers was twice injured after getting hit by the puck.

#### ***Takeaways***

Jets: Winnipeg clogged up the neutral zone through the first two periods to limit the Golden Knights to 13 shots on goal and two high-danger chances, according to Natural Stat Trick.

Golden Knights: Vegas entered the week comfortably ahead in the Pacific, but the Golden Knights are now in a battle for the division or risk falling into a potential first-round matchup with the Oilers.

#### ***Key moment***

Scheifele's goal was his 799th career point. Blake Wheeler is the only Jets player to reach the 800-point mark.

#### ***Key stat***

The Jets are one victory from breaking the franchise record. Their 52 wins tied the mark set last season and in 2017-18.

*Up next*

The Jets are at Utah and the Golden Knights at Calgary, both on Saturday.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-discover-playoff-blueprint-to-beat-the-house-in-vegas>

### ***Jets discover playoff blueprint to beat the house in Vegas***

By Paul Friesen

Going into Thursday's game, Las Vegas had been no kinder to the Winnipeg Jets than it is to the average gambler.

Winless in their last four there and their last eight overall against the Golden Knights, the Jets finally beat the house, coming up with a critical 4-0 win that maintains their one-handed grip on first place in their division.

A loss, and the dogged Dallas Stars would have pulled to within two points after they easily handled Nashville, 5-1.

Instead, the Jets (52-20-4) kept the gap at four, with six games left on their schedule, seven for Dallas.

"Real suffocating, real tight hockey," is how captain Adam Lowry described his team's performance to reporters in Vegas. "That's what you have to do against a real dangerous team."

After a night of costly turnovers in LA, the Jets played one of their most solid games of the season, matching the team-best 52 wins they recorded in 2017-18 and again last year.

Lowry, Mark Scheifele, Colin Miller and Cole Perfetti into an empty net scored the goals, while backup goalie Eric Comrie earned his second shutout of the season and evened his record at 9-9-1.

Comrie wasn't even sure he'd play because he's been on high alert for a few days, waiting for his wife to go into labour.

"My wife is due any day," the 29-year-old said. "She can give birth any second, so I'd be on a plane back. My phone is on loud every single night right now. I've been looking at flights to get home, just in case it happens."

He'll pack one of his best outings of the season when he does hop on a plane back to Winnipeg.

The Golden Knights (45-22-8) had been 6-1 in their last seven, 14-4-2 in their last 20, but struggled to get much going, and when they did Comrie was lights-out.

“Fantastic,” is how head coach Scott Arniel described his goalie. “He’s just waiting here for baby No. 2 to come. An early present. But he was outstanding. Third period there we gave up a lot of shots but he was solid. A couple of chances in the first and second where he looked big and made that stop. Those are things that help the team’s confidence as well.”

The only negative for the Jets was the sight of Nik Ehlers helped off the ice after he took Perfetti’s shot off the inside of his leg midway through the third period. He didn’t return.

“He keeps getting hit with pucks,” Arniel said. “I think he’ll be alright.”

In a tilt between two of the league’s highest-scoring teams and the top two power plays, it was the Jets who came out on their toes, grabbing the first few scoring chances and the first four shots on goal.

“We knew that Vegas has been really good, especially in this building,” Arniel said. “We needed a good start more than anything. We were a little bit slow coming out in LA. Tonight we really got off, all the lines, the D, everybody got running right away.”

The Golden Knights got the first power play when Miller got tagged with a roughing call seven minutes in.

The Jets killed it off, and when Alex Lafallo’s perfect pass set up Scheifele for his 37th goal of the season, they had the lead with seven minutes to go in the first.

They made it 2-0 on Lowry’s rebound shot with less than two minutes left, breaking a 10-game goal drought and matching a career-high 15 for the rugged centre.

“I’ve been ice-cold,” Lowry acknowledged. “The last few games I’ve had some chances and they haven’t been falling for me. I was just lucky the puck was laying there and I was able to get it by him. Going into the intermission up two, you have a good feeling, especially the way we played.”

“When you can get up a couple goals like that it certainly makes them change their game a little bit,” Arniel added.

The most painful moment of the opening 20 minutes, like the closing 20, belonged to Ehlers, who took a shot off his foot and spent an agonizing amount of time limping around in his own zone before his team finally got the puck out. The winger returned from that block, at least.

The rest of the first period was pure smiles, Winnipeg dominating the shot clock, 11-5.

Six minutes into the second the Golden Knights still hadn't recorded shot No. 6, as the Jets were playing one of their tightest defensive games in recent memory, an ideal blueprint for the looming playoffs.

The Jets got their first power play midway through the second and made it count, Miller's 96-miles-per-hour blast beating Hill cleanly to give him four on the year and extend the Jets' lead to three.

Shots were 18-8 at that point, and when Vegas captain Mark Stone failed to capitalize on three Grade A chances – he misfired on one and was stoned by Comrie on the others – it was clear which team was going to hit the two-point jackpot on this night.

A third-period Vegas surge – they pulled their goalie with more than four minutes to go – put the final shot count at 26-22 for the home side, 14 of those 26 coming over the last 20 minutes after they were already down by three.

"We didn't necessarily love the third period," Lowry said. "We sat back. Sometimes you have that tendency when you're up a few goals."

The good news for the Jets started before the opening faceoff, when defenceman Luke Schenn was deemed good to go after missing a game with a bad back. He was his usual sound and physical self.

They'll try to keep the good vibes going in Utah on Saturday.

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/not-all-smooth-sailing-long-painful-road-back-for-jets-anderson-dolan>

### ***'Not all smooth sailing': Long, painful road back for Jets' Anderson-Dolan***

By Paul Friesen

A broken foot in a preseason game scuttled any chance of making a good first impression on his new team.

But Jaret Anderson-Dolan got his chance with the Winnipeg Jets in Las Vegas on Thursday.

Signed as a free agent in July, the 25-year-old found out Thursday morning he'd be playing his first game in a Jets sweater.

"Very excited. Great opportunity," Anderson-Dolan told reporters in Vegas. "As you get more of these opportunities you realize how hard they are to come by. It's not all smooth sailing so you just try to appreciate it."

The product of Calgary is a classic example of how the road to pro hockey is often choppier than Lake Winnipeg during a wind storm.

Drafted in the second round by the LA Kings in 2017, Anderson-Dolan played 126 games with the Kings over six seasons split between the NHL and the AHL, only to be put on waivers in March of last year.

Claimed by Nashville, he played one game for the Predators in April.

It took 12 months for him to get back to the NHL, the journey including a 51-game sojourn in the minors with the Manitoba Moose this season – and that broken foot.

“It’s been a little bit tough,” he acknowledged. “Not to the standard you want. Anytime that happens early in the season you’re behind the eight-ball. And then the team down there as a whole has been struggling. But when you get opportunities like this you put it in the rear view... it feels like a fresh start.”

Anderson-Dolan goes from a Moose team eliminated from the AHL playoff race to a Jets team on top of the NHL and gearing up for a playoff run.

“We haven’t seen him all season... he’s had a good year there,” Jets coach Scott Arniel said. “He’s another depth guy that I want to see play some games here, in case we happen to need him in the playoffs.”

A 40-goal scorer in junior with Spokane of the Western Hockey League, Anderson-Dolan has 15 goals and 13 assists in his NHL career. He scored seven times and added 12 assists in 51 games with the Moose this season.

“He’s been one of their best forwards, especially for the second half of the year,” Arniel said. “And playing to his identity, which is what you want those guys to do. Brought him in because he’s an energy guy, can get in on forechecks. Can help us on the penalty kill, if there’s some room there.”

A tweak here, another there

Aside from the change on his fourth line, Arniel went back to his traditional units for the game in Vegas.

That had centre Adam Lowry dropping back to the third line between Nino Niederreiter and Mason Appleton, with Nik Ehlers back up on Line 2 with Vlad Namestnikov and Cole Perfetti.

“That line has been really good for us all year,” Arniel said of his second unit. “They go sneaky under the wire and I’m hoping that again.”

Arniel also tweaked his struggling power play, moving Perfetti to the first unit to replace Alex Lafallo.

Still without Gabe Vilardi, the Jets are hoping Mark Scheifele can take over the spot Vilardi had, down low beside the net with the option of taking the puck to the front.

“A little bit of a different look,” the coach said. “The best part, Scheif’s open to it and wants to... he realizes we need to get that up and running. Maybe this is a new look that helps us.”

Going into Thursday’s game, Winnipeg’s power play had scored just three goals on its last 28 chances.

“Gabe’s a big loss on the power play,” defenceman Josh Morrissey said. “Specifically in front of the net.”

The Jets’ next chance to work on it will come in Utah on Saturday, where they end their three-game road trip.

### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11115165/comrie-shines-in-goal-as-winnipeg-jets-blank-golden-knights-4-0-in-vegas/>

### ***Comrie shines in goal as Winnipeg Jets blank Golden Knights 4-0 in Vegas***

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

With baby number two on the way any day now, the Winnipeg Jets’ number two goalie looked like a number one Thursday night in Las Vegas.

Eric Comrie stopped all 26 shots he faced, including 14 in the third, as the Jets blanked the Golden Knights 4-0 to maintain their four-point edge over Dallas for first place in the Central Division.

The Jets scored a pair of goals in the opening period and held Vegas to just 12 shots in the first 40 minutes as they bounced back from Tuesday’s loss in L.A.

“I think, especially in the first period and half, we did a really good job of limiting what we gave up,” said Jets captain Adam Lowry. “A real suffocating forechecks, a real tight defensive structure, obviously, we didn’t necessarily love the third period. We sat back. I think sometimes you have that tendency, you’re up a few goals.

“I thought right from the get go we were being direct. We were a second quick on pucks and just winning the races. I think that was kinda the difference.”



Lowry, Mark Scheifele, Colin Miller and Cole Perfetti scored the goals for Winnipeg, giving Perfetti a three-game goal streak.

The win gives the Jets 52 victories for the campaign to match last season's franchise record win total and they still have six games left.

Comrie wasn't very busy in the first two periods, but made a few highlight reel saves in the final frame with the Golden Knights pulling their goalie with five minutes left.

"I think I just stuck to my game," said Comrie. "I think I was a little bit frustrated with my last game but I stuck to my process.

"Felt really good tonight. Team played really well I thought all night long."

Comrie wasn't even sure he was going to get the start as he was prepared to jump on a plane for the birth of his second child.

"My phone is on loud every single night right now," he said. "I've been looking at flights to get home just in case it happens. So, I'm prepared if I have to go home. Yeah, it could be any day now."

Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers was injured twice after getting hit by two different shots. He returned to the game the first time, but after being hit by friendly fire in the third, he left the game and did not return.

Defenceman Luke Schenn was back in the lineup after missing their last game and had three key blocks and three hits in nearly 20 minutes of ice time.

Jaret-Anderson Dolan made his Jets' debut on the fourth line as David Gustafsson and Haydn Fleury both came out.

Winnipeg got on the board first at the 13:01 mark of the opening period. Schenn sent a stretch pass up the ice that took a deflection and hit Alex Lafallo near his face but the puck fell to his stick, giving the Jets a 2-on-1. Lafallo held the puck on his backhand before sending a perfect pass to Scheifele that was one-timed past Adin Hill.

Just over five minutes later, Winnipeg's captain doubled their lead. Lowry carried the puck into the Vegas end before rimming it around the boards to the far point where Logan Stanley grabbed it and fired a shot toward the net. The puck did not get through but after a scramble in front of the crease, Lowry found the puck and deposited it for his 15th of the season, matching his career-high from 2016-17.

Winnipeg outshot the Golden Knights 11-5 in the period despite Vegas having the lone power play of the opening 20 minutes.

The Jets earned their first power play chance just past the midway point though their power play had been sputtering of late, scoring just three goals on their last 28 chances coming into the game.

But late in the power play and with the second unit on the ice, Miller blasted a one-timer from the point that beat Hill through some traffic to make it 3-0 Jets at the 11:53 mark of the second.

At this point in the period, Vegas had just three shots on goal and only eight in the game, giving Comrie very little to do, but he was tested late in the period, turning aside Mark Stone twice from close range to keep the Jets ahead 3-0 heading to the third.

Vegas made a goalie switch to start the third with Akira Schmid coming in for Hill, though he didn't have much to do as Vegas pushed hard to try and get anything going in the third, dominating the shot counter but Comrie stood tall.

Desperate for a late push, Vegas pulled Schmid for an extra attacker with 5:28 to go, and while they had a lot of zone time, they couldn't get one past Comrie before Perfetti scored into the empty net with under a minute left.

Winnipeg was outshot 14-3 in the final period, but Comrie did the job to pick up his second shutout of the season and fourth of his career.

The Jets will finish off this three-game road trip in Utah on Saturday.

### **TSN.ca**

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

### ***Jets sit four points clear of Stars with shutout win over Golden Knights (VIDEO)***

The Jets rebounded from their loss to the Kings with a complete game against the Golden Knights. Dan Robertson is joined by Kevin Sawyer to breakdown the game with Winnipeg sitting four points clear of the Stars in the Central.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/ehlers-and-draisaitl-leave-with-injuries-on-thursday-night~3109842>

### ***Ehlers and Draisaitl leave with injuries on Thursday night (VIDEO)***

Jets and Oilers fans are holding their breath after Nikolaj Ehlers and Leon Draisaitl both left their respective games with injuries. Martin Biron joins SportsCentre to discuss how big of a blow these injuries could be with the playoffs right around the corner.

## **Las Vegas Review Journal**

<https://www.reviewjournal.com/sports/goldenknights/knights-stumble-against-west-leading-winnipeg-3346761/>

### ***3 takeaways: Knights take 'step back,' lose to West-leading Winnipeg***

By Danny Webster

On a night when the presumptive Vezina Trophy winner sat on the Winnipeg Jets' bench, Eric Comrie looked like one against the Golden Knights.

Comrie made 26 saves for his second shutout of the season, and the Knights lost 4-0 to the Jets on Thursday at T-Mobile Arena.

The Jets played Comrie over Connor Hellebuyck, who is on pace for his second straight Vezina Trophy with a league-leading 43 wins.

It was the second time this season the Knights faced the 29-year-old Comrie. The Knights scored four times on Comrie on Nov. 29.

They got nothing this time.

"I think it feels like a step back," center William Karlsson said. "They're a good team, and we're in the hunt to catch them. To have a performance like this is not good enough, and we've got to learn from it."

Goaltender Adin Hill made 16 saves before he was pulled in the third period for Akira Schmid. The Knights (45-22-8) were shut out for the fifth time this season.

Winnipeg (52-20-4) showed why it's been one of, if not the best team in the league all season and is the top club in the Western Conference.

The Knights went 10-2-2 in March, but it was mostly against Eastern Conference teams. Against the West, and teams they may see down the road in the playoffs in the next two weeks, there's a heightened sense of urgency.

"I'm concerned," coach Bruce Cassidy said. "This isn't a one-off. We should be prepared to play. We didn't."

The Jets suffocated the Knights from the start. Passing lanes were closed. There were plenty of one-and-dones in the offensive zone.

The Knights looked disjointed offensively and got next to nothing. They were held to five shots in the opening 20 minutes.

It wasn't any better defensively.

The fourth line and top pairing of Brayden McNabb and Shea Theodore were on the ice for both Jets goals in the first period. McNabb and Theodore were caught flat-footed on both.

Jets right wing Alex Lafallo got a full step behind McNabb to spring a two-on-one and fired a backhand pass by Theodore to center Mark Scheifele at 13:01 of the first.

Center Adam Lowry made it 2-0 when he got behind the Knights' defense and jammed home a loose puck on a sprawling Hill at 18:15.

"The difference in the game was the start of the game," captain Mark Stone said.

Former Original Misfit defenseman Colin Miller made it 3-0 at 11:53 with a power-play goal.

Schmid, playing in place of the injured Ilya Samsonov, made two saves in relief of Hill.

The Knights are playing a back-to-back in Calgary on Saturday and Vancouver on Sunday. Hill made his fifth straight start over a span of 10 days.

But it's not Hill the Knights need to worry about right now. They've been held to two goals combined in two losses following their six-game winning streak.

Suddenly, their lead in the Pacific Division is down to three points after the Los Angeles Kings defeated the Utah Hockey Club 4-2 on Thursday.

It's a tighter race than what it was when the Knights were reeling off six straight wins. It's far from over.

"You can feel sorry for yourselves, or you can pick yourself up off the mat and play your best game against a desperate team on Saturday," Stone said. "We're not going to roll over."

Three takeaways from the loss:

*1. Comrie terrific*

It was a quiet start to the game for Comrie, but when the Knights got their chances, he shut them down.

Comrie made multiple key stops to halt any of the Knights' momentum, including consecutive stops on Stone starting at 16:43 of the second.

Comrie entered Thursday 0-2 all-time against the Knights with an .846 save percentage and 5.15 goals-against average. Those numbers will look slightly better now.

## *2. Missing Hertl*

The Knights got their offense going on their three-game road trip last week, even without center Tomas Hertl in the lineup.

The net-front presence is sorely lacking, especially in games like these when the offense is limited. The Knights had just 22 shots Tuesday against the Edmonton Oilers and had only 12 through two periods Thursday.

The Knights went 0-for-1 on the power play for the second straight game, but it was another instance when a timely goal could have swung the momentum.

Hertl has returned to practice after injuring his shoulder March 23. Though he won't play the next two games, his return could not come at a more important time.

## *3. Reinforcements in Henderson*

The Silver Knights will soon be joined by two of the Knights' top prospects.

Forward Trevor Connelly and goaltender Cameron Whitehead signed professional tryout deals Thursday and will join the American Hockey League club for its final eight games.

Whitehead practiced Thursday after completing his college career at Northeastern. Connelly, the Knights' 2024 first-round pick who played his freshman year at Providence, traveled to Las Vegas on Thursday and could join the team for Friday's game against the Coachella Valley Firebirds.