

**NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/goalies-explain-reasons-and-origins-of-preperiod-ice-scrape>

***Unmasked: Goalies explain reasons, origins of preperiod ice scrape  
Grubauer, Hellebuyck have different method, but goal is the same***

By Kevin Woodley

The preperiod routine for NHL goalies can be as unique as a fingerprint, in the way they use their skates to scrape up the blue ice in their crease and the reasons for it.

The patterns are also unique, though most generally resemble someone skating in place, legs pumping side to side like a speed skater but without ever moving too far.

For many, it is little more than a habit learned from watching a generation of goalies before them do it, a ritual repeated from a young age with such regularity that they now couldn't imagine starting a new period without marking up the ice under their feet.

For others, it is more purposeful and measured, a way to warm up the legs, connect with their edges and make sure that ice is optimized for sliding side to side on their pads.

It's a contrast exemplified in the Seattle Kraken crease.

"There's more to it than just scraping," Kraken goalie Philipp Grubauer said. "Some rinks leave water on the ice and now with the fast glide [materials on the inside edge of the pads] you'd just slide into the corner. So, you scrape it to stop yourself from sliding too much but also to make it a little bit better to slide because there's a little more snow on the ice."

For Grubauer's crease counterpart in Seattle, the preperiod scrape is more of a habit.

"Scraping the ice for me is just a routine," said Joey Daccord. "Everyone does it, so you just start doing it too, and now it's like a routine and I do it the exact same way every time."

Daccord, who also mentioned sliding better on ice that has been scraped, starts by going across his crease in each direction. The first pass is close to goal line, followed by another side-to-side scrape closer to the top of crease, staggering them to fill in the middle gap from the first one with the strides of the second. Then he does one scrape up the middle of the crease just passed the top, and one more from the middle out to each face-off dot.

"Same thing every time," Daccord said.

Grubauer, though, sometimes doesn't scrape at all to start a period.

"I hate scraping when the crease is still wet because it freezes and then it's like sandpaper and you can't do anything," he said. "So, I sometimes wait until the first TV time out or I get a towel and just wipe the water down, but some rinks are better than others."

Grubauer and Daccord aren't the only ones whose crease scraping routines differ.

Some goalies make long, slow strides from one side to the other, almost like they're slow dancing compared to the more frenetic techno beat-inspired movements of those who prefer shorter, choppy-looking strides from top to bottom or at angles from the middle.

"It is a good way to get your legs going a little bit," Chicago Blackhawks goalie Spencer Knight said. "But mostly it's because you watch NHL games growing up, you see goalies do it, so when you're a kid, you do it too and it's always been something that's part of our routine."

Some barely scrape the ice or change how the crease looks. Other goalies turn it from a deep blue to a faded, lighter blue with the layer of white scrapings they add to the top.

Eric Comrie's routine looks a lot like Daccord's but without the last two scrapes out toward each face-off dot, but he never scrapes the crease before practice.

"It's honestly just a habit for me. I've watched it and done it my whole life before a period, but I don't scrape the crease before practice," the Winnipeg Jets goalie said. "A wet crease doesn't bother me. I know sometimes a wet crease can be inconsistent sliding because you can get too far, or sometimes it can be sticky, and grab. Sometimes I scrape it up if the ice is sticky, other times you scrape it up when it's too wet, kind to get the right feel."

But before each period it's a constant and it's always the same.

"Always, it's just my routine," Comrie said. "I pretty much copied (Montreal Canadiens') Carey Price's scrape routine. I saw that when I was younger, so I kind of copied his."

Comrie's Vezina Trophy-winning playing partner has a much different routine.

Connor Hellebuyck makes the same two side-to-side passes across his crease as many of his peers, but it's mostly gliding, and he barely takes any ice off the top of his crease, typically only digging his edges in four times and very briefly compared to others.

"I just nick it, a light touch to make sure there are no like bumps. That's it," Hellebuyck said. "I put little edges in it, just to make sure I have spots. I don't want to rip across the

crease, but I want to know there's a couple spots in it that will slow me down if I need it to."

Generally, ice left untouched or unscraped can be so smooth that the pad slides too well, too fast, and at the cost of the lateral control most goalies crave. The sliding properties of different ice surfaces can vary from brand to brand of leg pads, and even within brands, depending on the type of material used along the inside edge of each pad. Optimizing that interaction can help, but the reality is most goalies still scrape the crease because they grew up watching the NHL goalies that came before them doing the same thing.

"You do it to scrape up a little water so you don't slide out of your posts but 30 percent of when I started doing it when I was younger was because I thought it looked cool," said Edmonton Oilers goalie Calvin Pickard. "I did it because everyone else did it."

### **Canadian Press**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11116334/winnipeg-jets-hellebuyck-mvp-season/>

#### ***'Stabilizing force': Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck putting in MVP-calibre season***

By Joshua Clipperton The Canadian Press

Connor Hellebuyck will knock on Scott Arniel's door or pull his head coach aside for a brief chat.

The Winnipeg Jets goaltender usually has one specific question before a road trip.

"What days we have off and should he bring his fishing gear?" Arniel said with a smile. "He's extremely focused there ... and then when he gets to the rink, he does not want to get scored on."

Opponents have once again found that a challenge in 2024-25.

The two-time Vézina Trophy winner is not only on course to secure another nod as the NHL's top goaltender, Hellebuyck is firmly entrenched in the league's MVP conversation with less than two weeks remaining in the regular season.

The numbers are impressive. The accolades for a club atop the standings are nice.

The 31-year-old, however, has just one prize in mind — the Stanley Cup.

"The only goal I have left," Hellebuyck said following a recent practice. "All the guys in that locker room feel the same way."

The Commerce, Mich., product leads the league with a 43-11-3 record, .924 save percentage, 2.02 goals-against average and seven shutouts.

The Vezina winner in 2019-20 and again last season has impressed teammates by raising his own bar and injecting his name into the Hart Trophy mix alongside the likes of Edmonton Oilers star centre Leon Draisaitl and Colorado Avalanche counterpart Nathan MacKinnon.

"We always think that he's reached his potential," Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey said. "Then he goes out and does something new and proves that he always has more ceiling and areas to grow. We're so fortunate to have him.

"A stabilizing force."

Winnipeg captain Adam Lowry said Hellebuyck, whose big-money contract extension signed in October 2023 ties him to the Manitoba capital through 2030-31, hasn't garnered the attention the netminder has truly deserved throughout his career.

"He's able to anticipate," Lowry said. "He's so positionally sound that he gets to where he needs to be. Other goalies are maybe making desperation saves."

"Makes it look easy," Morrissey added. "It's not easy."

The Jets have also made crease life less chaotic for Hellebuyck with improved structure. Hellebuyck faced 2,155 shots in 2021-22 before former head coach Rick Bowness, who retired last May, took over in 2022-23.

The shot number dropped to 1,964 that season and fell further to 1,798 in 2023-24. Hellebuyck has seen 1,534 pucks fired his direction through 58 games in Arniel's first campaign.

"We hurt Helly's stats in the past because he was so good and we played very loose," Lowry said. "Even the best goalie in the world, the best shooters are going to beat him sometimes, especially from dangerous areas. We've really got a huge buy-in from the group and are committed to team defence.

"He's the anchor."

Hellebuyck, who enjoys both fishing and hunting in his spare time, could become the first goaltender to win the Hart as NHL MVP since Carey Price of the Montreal Canadiens in 2014-15.

Lowry sees style parallels with the netminders.

"The game almost looks boring to them," said the veteran forward. "It's smooth. It's that inner drive where (Hellebuyck's) working off the ice trying to perfect his movement. I

don't expect his aspirations or his pursuit of perfection to decrease. It's only going to continue to increase until we reach that ultimate goal."

"His competitiveness," Arniel added of what stands out about the netminder's approach. "His attention to detail about what he does every day."

Hellebuyck, who backstopped the United States at the 4 Nations Face-Off, said the group in front of him is playing with a new level of belief despite losing in the first round of the playoffs the last two springs after failing to qualify altogether in 2021-22.

"Every game is a chance to build," he said. "We're all playing with a lot of confidence. It's not just stretches of confidence. It's locked in."

Winnipeg is on track to face Minnesota or St. Louis in the first round of the playoffs. And if the Jets, whose last deep post-season run came when the franchise made the 2018 Western Conference final, can get past that test, either Dallas or Colorado — fellow Central Division heavyweights — will be waiting.

Laid-back off the ice and razor-sharp on it, Hellebuyck's teammates know he's ready for whatever challenge comes.

"Never satisfied," Lowry said. "Always pushing, always talks about winning the Stanley Cup. He's always looking for different edges, always looking for different angles."

"That inner push is what motivates him and propels him even further."

Landing another Vezina or capturing a first Hart could be in cards. Hockey's holy grail, however, is the sole target in Hellebuyck's crosshairs.

"The only thing we want to achieve," he said. "Feels like we're gonna go out and get things done."

## **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11115519/analysis-winnipeg-jets-vegas-shutout/>

### ***ANALYSIS: Time to stop doubting Jets after dominant performance in Vegas***

By John Shannon CJOB

There was a moment after the Jets game in Los Angeles on Tuesday night when a level of doubt crept into the thinking of many about this hockey team.

The power play, first almost all season, was sputtering. Connor Hellebuyck was looking a little closer to mortal, the injury bug was biting the team hard ... and the Dallas Stars

were on their heels. Indeed, all over the province, people started to doubt what this Jets team had done for 75 games. It was hard not to worry.

Except, it appears for one group, there was no doubt. And it was the one group that mattered. After being completely frustrated by the Kings — stymied, suffocated, shut down — Scott Arniel and the rest of the Jets took their lumps and went back to work.

Yes, you could hear a little pushback in all the voices. Despite being swept by the Kings, the belief in playing Jets hockey still existed. The only team this group measures itself against is the Winnipeg Jets.

That made Thursday's game in Las Vegas that much more important. And what we all witnessed — and were reminded of — was the strength and resiliency we have seen all year:

They needed to attack the net, and they did.

- Nik Ehlers took a puck off his skate, tried to stay in the play in the second period, and then took friendly fire in the third.
- Luke Schenn was back in the lineup and brought grit and composure in the defensive zone, forcing his will against the Golden Knights forwards.
- Alex Iafallo barely flinched when the puck hit his face to set up the game's first goal
- The captain did what captains do: Adam Lowry with a goal and a great 200-foot game.
- And then there was the goaltending. Eric Comrie gave the club great goaltending — a 27-save shutout, giving Hellebuyck a night off.

It was a game of commitment, a complete game by every player. A game that showed this team believes in itself. I'm sure the two days between games weren't pleasant for the group, but it would appear now that there was more anger than doubt. With six games to go, the Jets are atop the Central standings, where they have been for more than 100 days.

They have certainly earned a great deal of respect throughout the NHL for their play. And with as big a win the Jets have had all season, 4-0 against Vegas, perhaps we should just stop doubting them.

**TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/chl/brayden-yager-welcomes-changes-after-trades-to-winnipeg-jets-and-lethbridge-hurricanes-1.2282834>

## ***Yager welcomes change after trades to Jets and Lethbridge***

By Adam Kirshenblatt

Brayden Yager had an eventful start to his 2024-25 campaign.

The 6-foot centre had just completed the best season of his hockey career, helping the Moose Jaw Warriors become Western Hockey League champions and represented the league at last year's Memorial Cup.

He was in the middle of his off-season and preparing to attend his second NHL training camp when he found out that he was traded from the Pittsburgh Penguins to the Winnipeg Jets on Aug. 22 in exchange for forward Rutger McGroarty.

"It was a little bit of a surprise. You don't expect to get traded at such a young age," said Yager. "Obviously, I enjoyed my time in Pittsburgh where I met some pretty good players and learned a lot from.

"[But] my first camp in Winnipeg was unreal and there are obviously lots of great players there too. It was great that those guys were really good to me and the staff were unbelievable to just make me feel welcome and that I belonged."

With the trade to Winnipeg, the Saskatoon, Sask., native was given the opportunity to remain in Western Canada where he has played his entire minor-league career up to this point.

The opportunity allows him to play in a market that he's familiar with and stick close to home, which wasn't lost on Yager's family.

"Mom and Dad were pretty pumped because I'm a lot closer to home [than in Pittsburgh]," said Yager. "I've been to Winnipeg a lot when I was growing up and it's a great city and obviously a great hockey town.

"Being in Canada makes it more special and I'll hopefully get a chance to play in the NHL there."

Yager was drafted 14th overall by the Penguins in 2023 and had his first taste of NHL action in Pittsburgh by appearing in two preseason games with the club.

One of the huge advantages of being drafted by the Penguins was that Yager had a chance to get an up close and personal look at future Hall of Fame centre Sidney Crosby, who also went out of his way to welcome Yager to the pros.

“Sid was unbelievable with me,” said Yager. “From the moment I got drafted, he gave me a call to welcome me to the organization. When I went to that first camp, I was trying to be a sponge to learn as much as I could from a guy like him.”

Yager prides himself of being a 200-foot player who is focused on taking care of the defensive side of the ice before worrying about offence.

The Jets have asked him to focus more on improving his game when he doesn’t have the puck, and while Yager believes he has made significant strides in that area, it remains a work in progress, which is not uncommon for offensively gifted young players.

“As a young player, if you want to play in the NHL you have to play on both ends of the ice and you got to play not just with the puck, but be just as good without it,” said Yager. “That’s what they’re really harping on me in order to transfer to the next level and that’s been a common theme from both my experiences with the Penguins and Jets.”

Yager recorded a goal and two points in two preseason games with the Jets before he was returned back to the WHL.

He went back to a Moose Jaw team that looked very different than the one that won a championship the year prior. Big names like Denton Mateychuk, Matthew Savoie, and Jagger Firkus all moved onto their NHL organizations and the Warriors looked to be in a rebuilding state.

After going 6-15-4 to begin the season, the Warriors pulled the trigger to send Yager and starting netminder Jackson Unger to the Lethbridge Hurricanes for goalie Brady Smith, forward Landen Ward, defenceman Colt Carter, and six draft picks at the beginning of December.

Yager and Unger joined a competitive Hurricanes team that was in a tight race at the top of the Eastern Conference standings and gave both players new life on the season.

“It was unbelievable for [Warriors general manager Jason Ripplinger] to put me in a good spot here in Lethbridge,” said Yager. “There’s such a great staff here, great players, and a team that has a chance to do something special.”

Yager recorded 25 goals and 82 points in 54 games split between Moose Jaw and Lethbridge and helped the Hurricanes to finish fourth in the conference with a 42-21-5 record.



Lethbridge is currently taking on the Brandon Wheat Kings in the first round and have a 3-1 series advantage. Yager has three goals and five points in the series and is looking to move onto the second round with a win on Friday.

Should Lethbridge finish the job against Brandon, they could have a tough task ahead of them with the prospect of taking on phenom Gavin McKenna and the Medicine Hat Tigers in the second round. Medicine Hat finished at the top of the conference with a 47-17-3 record and McKenna has been unstoppable lately, registering points in each of his last 44 games.

The Tigers are taking on the Swift Current Broncos in the first round and also have a 3-1 series advantage entering Friday night.

“Our division and conference is really strong this year,” said Yager. “A lot of the teams were loading up and it’s going to be a battle but that’s just the way the playoffs are, it’s hard.

“We have the group that we have, I think we have a lot of players that can be really good in the playoffs. It’s just going to be a matter of being consistent and not getting too high or too low. It’s a seven-game series and those are long series.”

Yager believes that the main things that both he and Unger can bring to the Hurricanes is their experience from last year and their leadership.

Moose Jaw went through a gruelling seven-game series against the Saskatoon Blades in the Eastern Conference Final last season with six of the seven games being decided by overtime. That experience of having gone through tough battles in the past will be a valuable asset as the team moves forward.

Yager, who was captain of the Warriors before the trade, was also a member of Team Canada at the World Juniors in 2024 and 2025 and captained the team in Ottawa this year.

Though the overall team results didn’t end the way he would like, there were lessons that he took despite back-to-back fifth-place finishes.

“Any time you get to represent your country it’s a special feeling. You want to wear it with pride, represent your country well and to be a part of the leadership group was very special to me,” said Yager.

“The biggest thing that we learned as a group and individuals was how important it is to play a full 60 minutes. You have one game to win it, not a series. You don’t have any time to waste and just be ready from puck drop to the last final seconds.

“Obviously, it’s best on best and those tournaments are tough. Everybody is so good; it doesn’t matter what country it is.”

## **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/04/jets-captain-lowry-delivers-when-moment-demands-it-the-most>

### ***Jets captain Lowry delivers when moment demands it the most***

By: Ken Wiebe

KEARNS, Utah — The question wasn't even complete and Adam Lowry couldn't help but lean back and let out a chuckle.

On an evening when the Winnipeg Jets captain snapped a 10-game goal-scoring drought by getting to the front of the net and banging home a loose puck late in the first period of a 4-0 victory over the Vegas Golden Knights, Lowry wasn't about to resist the chance to make light of the situation.

"I've been ice cold," said Lowry, who tied his career high by notching his 15th goal of the season, a number he hasn't hit since 2016-17. "I feel like the last few games I've had some chances and they haven't been falling for me."

The evidence supports Lowry's assertion.

The powerful centre had plenty of quality opportunities in prior games to hit the mark, but for whatever reason, the puck just didn't find the back of the net.

It's no surprise that Lowry delivered a big goal in a big moment.

During the course of his career, Lowry has routinely shown that when the stakes are highest, you can count on him.

"Certainly. That's a guy you want every day in the playoffs," said Jets right-winger and frequent linemate Mason Appleton. "He fits that mould, with his size and his style of play. You always see him rise to the occasion at this time of the year."

As the Jets prepare to face Utah HC on Saturday night to wrap up this three-game road trip, Lowry isn't sure who will join him and Appleton.

During Friday's workout, it was Brandon Tanev doing the job since Nino Niederreiter (who had two assists, five shots on goal and three hits against the Golden Knights) was with Vladislav Namestnikov and Cole Perfetti.

Part of the reason was Nikolaj Ehlers missed the on-ice session after he was hit by two pucks in the same leg on Thursday, one blocking a shot by Nic Hague in the first

period and then another on some not-so-friendly fire from Perfetti during a third period power play.

Ehlers was walking around the Olympic Oval a bit gingerly, but Jets head coach Scott Arniel sounded encouraged when he was asked for an update on his status.

“Actually he’ll be a game time (decision). Not as bad as we thought,” said Arniel. “He’s a lot better than he was after the game (Thursday) night. We’ll see how it goes.”

Speaking of injuries, Jets’ defenceman Neal Pionk continues to take steps forward and made it through another conditioning session on Thursday, so it looks like he should be able to return to the lineup before the end of the regular season.

Lowry is in the midst of another stalwart campaign.

Along with his 15 goals (which includes four game-winners), Lowry has 32 points (four shy of his career high) to go along with his physical play (126 hits), 56 blocked shots, a faceoff percentage of 51.6 and quality efforts on the penalty kill and the defensive side of things.

So, even when he goes through those “ice cold” stretches, Lowry can still find plenty of ways to contribute.

“You know what he’s going to bring every single night. He’s a huge piece on this team,” said Appleton. “On the ice, you’ve seen the evolution of his game. He can match up against any line and then offensively, he can also create as well. He’s got that ability around the net — to get there, to stay there and not get pushed out — and score timely goals and make good plays coming out of his end and through the neutral zone.

“He’s a really simple player to read off of and play with too. He’s become a heck of a player in this league.”

That Lowry does so much heavy lifting but still does his part when it comes to complementary scoring is a testament to his work ethic.

“He plays the game the right way. The little details in his game are shining each night,” said Tanev. “He’s a leader, he’s vocal when he needs to be but his play talks when he’s on the ice.

“When you play that type of game continually over an 82-game season, it translates a little bit easier to the playoffs because you don’t have to change the style of play.”

Lowry’s skillset, coupled with his consistency and smarts, have allowed him to grow into a Selke candidate as one of the top defensive forwards in the NHL.

"I'd love for him to get more recognition for that, for the Selke," said Arniel. "He's a guy that has been pretty consistent over the years going against the other team's number one lines. Not only doing that, but going out to defend leads, on penalty kill, or having to step up for his teammates — on the physical side, whether that's fighting or running people over. He does a lot of stuff.

"Then put on top the 'C' he's wearing, and the leadership on and off the ice, it's pretty impressive what he does day in and day out."

After Eric Comrie recorded a 26-save shutout in his 19th start of the season, the Jets will be going back to workhorse Connor Hellebuyck, while Utah HC will counter with Karel Vejmelka — who is expected to make his 20th consecutive start.

The Jets are 2-1 against Utah HC this season but lost the last road meeting 5-2 at the Delta Center in January, prompting Arniel to call his team out for sloppy play.

The Jets responded by winning 11 consecutive games to set a franchise record — including a 5-2 win over Utah HC in the rematch.

"They're quick off the rush. They ate us up here in this building with their transition game," said Arniel. "We were better in our building. But it's the big emphasis for them. They have skilled forwards that can make plays. I know they're still not out of it yet and they're battling as hard as they can. You get a team that's desperate and looking for an opportunity."

With six games left in the regular season, the Jets hold a four-point cushion over the Dallas Stars, who hold a game in hand while Utah HC is nine points out of the final wild-card berth in the Western Conference and has three teams to leapfrog — so they're in must-win territory to keep their hopes alive.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/friesen-must-be-something-in-the-water-for-jets-nhl-central>

### ***FRIESEN: Must be something in the water for Jets, NHL Central***

By Paul Friesen

Call them the Fab Four. Or maybe the Group of Death.

Either way, there's clearly something in the water they're drinking in the NHL's Central Division.

To paraphrase the late Winnipeg Blue Bombers coach Dave Ritchie, they're definitely drinking the good stuff in Winnipeg, Dallas, Colorado and St. Louis.

Heck, health experts might want to check to make sure it's legal. Because those teams are doing nothing short of hijacking the push for the playoffs.

This isn't a stretch drive, it's a nitro-fuelled, 300-mile-per-hour quarter mile. The start line was the end of the 4 Nations tournament.

Since that green light flashed, the Jets, Stars, Avalanche and Blues have collectively been on fire.

The breakdown, from red-hot to just sizzling: St. Louis, 17-2-2. Dallas, 15-3-2. Colorado, 14-4-2. Winnipeg, 13-6-1.

That's a combined 59-15-7, for a points percentage of .772.

Not surprisingly, all four are comfortably in playoff position, not just readying for the Stanley Cup tournament but roaring towards it.

The division's top three – the Jets, Stars and Avs – are probably set, although not necessarily in that order.

But the Blues are on an 11-game tear that might make them the most formidable one to face in the first round.

They've shot past Minnesota into the first wildcard spot, putting even more potential emphasis on winning the division and facing the second wildcard.

That race remains a nailbiter, the Jets remaining four points up on Dallas with the Stars holding a game in hand – and the two squaring off in Texas next Thursday.

Before that, the Blues visit Winnipeg on Monday.

Feels a bit like the playoffs starting early.

### *HUMAN ERASER*

Defenceman Luke Schenn's value is becoming clearer with each passing game.

It's not that his absence on Tuesday, in a Jets loss in Los Angeles, was the main factor, but he was noticeable in his return for Thursday's game in Vegas.

It turns out teammates have a nickname for how he plays.

"The Human Eraser," goalie Eric Comrie said after the 4-0 win. "He likes to erase things that happen on the ice that aren't so good, and he makes it really good for us."

Whether it's taking players out physically or blocking shots, Schenn is starting to look like an ideal addition for a playoff run, which the Jets hope to make.

It seems he's not shy, either, even though he was just acquired at the trade deadline.

"He's an unbelievable leader," Comrie continued. "He's vocal in the room. He's set up a really nice dinner (Wednesday) night. We had a really, really good spread. So I'm really happy with that. It got the guys going."

Captain Adam Lowry says the 35-year-old can do the opposite, too, when it's called for.

"He's such a calming presence in the room," Lowry said. "His leadership is something that we're really grateful to have. All that experience that he brings to the table. The stuff off the ice, the calming presence in between periods, on the bench when things aren't going our way."

#### **VALUABLE VIDEO**

Having the Golden Knights pull their goalie with more than four minutes to go in Vegas provided an unusual chance for the Jets to dive deep into five-on-six defending.

"We'll use some video from that, actually, to continue to build our little library for the playoffs about certain things, how to react to them," Arniel told reporters in Utah on Friday. "Not too often you get that much time to get it on video."

The Jets held off Vegas and eventually scored an empty-netter.

#### **THE LAST WORD**

"I'd love for him to get a lot more recognition for that, for the Selke."

– Arniel, on the two-way play of Jets captain Adam Lowry, who's typically not in the discussion for the Selke Trophy as the NHL's top defensive forward.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/dodging-a-bullet-jets-star-ehlers-could-play-saturday>

#### ***Dodging a bullet: Jets' star Ehlers could play Saturday***

By Paul Friesen

The Winnipeg Jets got lucky in Vegas on Thursday, and it had nothing to do with slot machines or the roulette wheel.

Dynamic winger Nik Ehlers did not break a bone in his foot or suffer a long-term injury to his leg when he blocked two shots, one from his own teammate.

Head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Utah that Ehlers hasn't even been ruled out of Saturday's game there.

"Not as bad as we had thought," Arniel said on Friday. "He was a lot better today obviously than he was after the game. Let's hope that's all it is, just day-to-day."

Ehlers went down hard in the first period when a Golden Knights shot went off his foot. He returned, only to take a Cole Perfetti shot off what looked like the inside of his knee in the third, crumpling to the ice a second time.

He didn't return, finishing with 12:35 of ice time, including some two minutes on the Jets' two power plays.

His speed, shot and ability to gain the offensive zone would be dearly missed there as well as in five-on-five play, where he was reunited with Perfetti and Vlad Namestnikov in Vegas after a brief stint with centre Adam Lowry and winger Mason Appleton.

Ehlers is third in team scoring with 63 points, 24 of them goals. Six goals have come on the power play. Five have been game-winners.

His close call is a reminder of how quickly things could change over these last handful of regular-season games.

Although with Dallas still nipping at their heels, the Jets can ill afford to take their foot off the gas and start resting players. Not yet, anyway.