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<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-set-franchise-record-with-53rd-win>

***Three things - Jets set franchise record with 53rd win
The Jets beat the Blues 3-1 ending St. Louis' 12-game win streak***

By Jamie Thomas

WINNIPEG – The Winnipeg Jets played one of their best defensive games of the year in a 3-1 win over the St. Louis Blues at Canada Life Centre, ending the Blues 12 game win streak in the process. The Jets snapped a team's win streak of at least 10-plus games for the second time in franchise history following Oct. 28, 2006, when they ended the Sabres' 10-game run in a 5-4 shootout victory. Morgan Barron, Alex Iafallo and Adam Lowry scored for the Jets who improved to 53-21-4 on the season and moved five points ahead of Dallas for first in the Central, the Stars have a game in hand. Jets head coach Scott Arniel recorded his 53rd win and matched Todd McLellan, Pat Burns, and Mike Keenan for the fifth-most wins by a head coach in his first year with a team. Winnipeg will head to Dallas for a showdown with the Stars on Thursday.

4th LINE MAGIC

After a well-played first period by Winnipeg in which they outshot the 8-3, the Jets opened the scoring at 2:34 of the second. Morgan Barron broke up a Blues pass at the Winnipeg blueline, Josh Morrissey sent the puck up ice and Barron did the rest, fighting off Mathieu Joseph and beat Joel Hofer blocker side for a 1-0 lead.

GO TO THE NET, GOOD THINGS HAPPEN

The two Central Division rivals entered the third period tied 1-1 and that's when the top line went to work. Kyle Connor forced a turnover all the way in the Blues end and skated to the slot, his shot was stopped by Hofer, but Alex Iafallo followed the puck and banged home his 14th of the season for the eventual game winning goal.

TRYING TO FIND CONSISTENCY

The Jets held the NHL's hottest team to just 15 shots which was a dramatic turnaround from the way they played in the 4-1 loss to Utah on Saturday night. As of late, the Jets look more like themselves in big games like tonight, last Thursday in Vegas and late in March against Washington. Connor Hellebuyck wasn't busy but made his best save when the Jets were nursing a 2-1 lead late in the game off of Pavel Buchnevich. Hellebuyck matched his career high 44th win that he set back in the 2017-18 campaign.

"Yeah, I think that's how we want to play. Obviously, that's a really good team in transition and we kind of knew when we're at the top of our game we could stymie that the best we could," said Morgan Barron.

"Our D just gapped up really nicely and the forwards tracked back really well."

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<https://www.nhl.com/news/st-louis-blues-winnipeg-jets-game-recap-april-7>

***Jets end Blues' 12-game winning streak, pad lead for Presidents' Trophy
Winnipeg sets franchise record with 53rd victory; St. Louis remains in West wild-card lead***

By Darrin Bauming

WINNIPEG -- The St. Louis Blues' franchise record 12-game winning streak ended with a 3-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre on Monday.

It was the longest winning streak in the NHL this season, surpassing the Jets, who won 11 straight from Jan. 22-Feb. 27.

"That was a really solid 60 minutes of going out in five-man units, outbattling them, and getting zone time on the opposition," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "I thought all four lines won their matchups, along with the D-men, obviously. But yeah, you do that, you have 20 guys doing that, that's a tough team to beat."

Alex Iafallo, Morgan Barron and Adam Lowry scored for the Jets (53-21-4), who set their franchise record for wins in a season. Connor Hellebuyck made 14 saves.

"We're still after something here, we're still trying to get that division, and this was another step towards it," Arniel said. "It's amazing that we're at [win] 53 and we still haven't clinched the division. That's how good our division is."

Winnipeg extended its lead to five points over the Dallas Stars for first in the Central Division and Western Conference, and to three points over the Washington Capitals for the Presidents' Trophy as the top team in the NHL.

"They're top of the League, right? They're there for a reason," Blues captain Brayden Schenn. "They play hard defense, no time and space, good goalie. Second period I thought we got it going there a little bit. And then, obviously in the third [we] gave one up there and had some chances late and weren't able to capitalize, but onto the next one now and we're going to go win in Edmonton."

Pavel Buchnevich scored, and Joel Hofer made 23 saves for the Blues (43-29-7), who remained two points ahead of the Minnesota Wild for the first wild card into the Stanley Cup Playoffs from the Western Conference.

"They're very committed defensively, one of the best teams, and then they have one of the best, if not, well, [Hellebuyck is] going to win the Vezina this year," St. Louis coach Jim Montgomery said. "So, [it] speaks for itself. They've done a great job all year. They're the measuring stick in the West."

Iafallo put the Jets in front 2-1 at 7:05 of the third period. Kyle Connor stickhandled through the Blues' zone and was stopped by Hofer in the slot, but Iafallo jammed in the rebound at the edge of the crease.

"Everybody looked at each other and got up for this one," Connor said. "We just embraced the moment. Top to bottom, we took the flow of the game early. I liked what I saw."

Lowry scored an empty-net goal for the 3-1 final at 19:51.

"They took it to us in the first period, definitely," Schenn said. "Took time and space away from us, had extended O-zone time, and we just weren't able to get to a forecheck. Whether that was us maybe forcing a few plays and not putting it to the goal line, and obviously them defending well. So like I said, we feel like we didn't have our best tonight, but at the end of the day they're a good hockey team and we're right there till the end."

Barron gave the Jets a 1-0 lead at 2:34 of the second period. After breaking up a pass from Blues forward Mathieu Joseph at the defensive blue line, Barron then held off Joseph's check on a partial breakaway and scored with a shot that beat Hofer stick side.

"I think that's how we want to play. That's a really good team in transition," Barron said. "We kind of knew that when we're at the top of our game we're able to stymie that the best we could. Our 'D' just gapped up really nicely and our forwards tracked back really well."

Buchnevich tied it 1-1 at 7:27 with a one-timer in the slot after Robert Thomas found him with a centering pass from behind the net.

Thomas has 20 points (four goals, 16 assists) on a nine-game point streak.

"Hellebuyck made a save, and coming to the boards [defenseman Philip Broberg] pinched the wall," Buchnevich said. "[Thomas] made a play behind the net and I just shot it."

NOTES: Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers did not play for the second straight game due to a lower-body injury. ... Winnipeg surpassed its previous record of 52 wins, which it achieved in 2023-24 and 2017-18. ... With 110 points (53-21-4), the Jets are five away from breaking their franchise record set in 2017-18 (114). ... Hellebuyck won his 44th game this season (44-12-3), which leads the NHL and is tied for his career high. It was also the 319th win of his career, tying Craig Anderson for the fifth-most by a United States-born goalie in NHL history.

<https://www.nhl.com/news/connor-hellebuyck-deserving-of-hart-trophy-jose-theodore-says>

***Hellebuyck worthy of Hart Trophy consideration, Theodore says
Goalie who won award as League MVP of 2001-02 rooting hard for Jets netminder***

By Dave Stubbs @davestubbs.bsky.social

If he had a vote for the 2024-25 Hart Trophy, Jose Theodore would absolutely be casting a ballot for Winnipeg Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck.

“He’s in the prime of his career, dominating this season as he has the past few years,” said Theodore, who won the Hart with the Montreal Canadiens in 2001-02 as the player “adjudged to be the most valuable to his team” during the regular season.

“I hope that Hellebuyck wins the Hart. Nobody can deny that he’s a future Hall of Famer. He’s gone deep in the Stanley Cup Playoffs (Western Conference Final in 2018), and for sure he’s going to win his third Vezina Trophy this year -- that’s a no-brainer.”

The Hart has been awarded 100 times since 1924, voted on by members of the Professional Hockey Writers Association.

It is one of the NHL’s two most valuable player awards; also highly coveted is the Ted Lindsay Award, introduced in 1971 as the Lester B. Pearson Award, the League’s MVP as voted by NHL Players’ Association members.

The Hart has gone to a goalie only eight times in history, the Lindsay/Pearson Award four times in its 53 years.

Happily retired in Florida with his wife and two children, piloting his own plane, doing twice-weekly Montreal sports radio spots and his days packed with myriad business interests, Theodore firmly believes that Hellebuyck will soon add his name to the Hart goalie list, the first in a decade.

The first winner in goal was Roy Worters of the New York Americans in 1928-29. Others to follow: 1949-50: Chuck Rayner, New York Rangers; 1953-54: Al Rollins, Chicago Black Hawks; 1961-62: Jacques Plante, Canadiens; 1996-97 and 1997-98: Dominik Hasek, Buffalo Sabres; 2001-02: Theodore, Canadiens; 2014-15: Carey Price, Canadiens.

Theodore is most impressed by Hellebuyck’s statistics, given the Jets veteran’s workload. That’s only natural, given that Theodore was a workhorse between 1996-2013 for the Canadiens, Colorado Avalanche, Washington Capitals, Minnesota Wild and finally the Florida Panthers.

His final four full seasons in Montreal, Theodore played 59, 67, 57 and 67 games. In his 2001-02 Hart Trophy-winning season, then 25, he had a record of 30-24-10 and seven shutouts; his .931 save percentage led the NHL during a year that would see the Canadiens defeat the Boston Bruins a six-game first-round playoff series before falling in six to the Carolina Hurricanes in the second round.

In his 59 games played through April 6, Hellebuyck was 43-12-3 with seven shutouts, 2.04 GAA and a .924 save percentage, leading the NHL in wins, GAA and save percentage among goalies who had played a minimum of 25 games, .01 behind Darcy Kuemper of the Los Angeles Kings in goals-against.

The 2024 and 2020 Vezina Trophy winner seems a virtual lock for a third, the NHL's best goalie as voted by the League's general managers.

"I look now at the number of games a goalie plays," said Theodore, who wanted to start every night. "For me, that's the biggest thing that sets Hellebuyck apart -- the amount he plays. That's what an MVP needs to be doing. I hope he keeps going.

"It's so much harder to maintain great stats the more you play. If you play over and over, about every two days, there are more opportunities to have a bad game, to throw your stats off. You have to be so strong mentally."

In Theodore's mind, a team's No. 1 goalie should be playing "close to 60" of the 82 regular-season games.

"In my day it was 67, 69," he said. "But today, 57 to 62 or 63 should be the key point for a goalie to really be able to dominate and show what he can do. That's why I'm happy that we're bringing Hellebuyck to the table in the Hart discussion.

"Nowadays, everybody says a goalie isn't supposed to play too much, not back-to-back games. What Hellebuyck is doing is even harder now than it was in my time. It's so hard to be able to play all these games with a different mentality around the League. That he can have these stats with the number of games he's going to play, which will be like 80 games in my day, it's even more credit to him."

Connor Hellebuyck poses with his Vezina Trophy during the 2024 NHL Awards at Fontainebleau Las Vegas.

The Hart Trophy was never a thought in Theodore's youth in Montreal, a 10-year-old in 1986 dazzled by rookie goalie Patrick Roy leading the Canadiens to the Stanley Cup, winning the Conn Smythe Trophy as MVP of the playoffs.

"In my mind, the Hart was always Wayne Gretzky or Mario Lemieux (Gretzky winning nine times, Lemieux once during the 1980s)," Theodore said. "In my life, before Hasek won it back-to-back, no goalie had won the Hart. I didn't have Hart-winning role models, it wasn't for goalies, it was only for forwards. Then Hasek won two.

"I'm thinking, 'If you're telling me I have one chance in a million, then OK, I do have a chance? That's perfect.' One in a million is better than nothing."

At the NHL Awards in 2002, Theodore was awarded the Vezina Trophy, three first-place votes ahead of his boyhood idol Roy, then edged Calgary Flames forward Jarome Iginla by three first-place votes for the Hart, the latter award presented to him by Gretzky.

"When I was announced the Vezina winner, I said to myself, 'OK I've won one. It doesn't matter now. Just being here is special,'" Theodore told reporters that night. "And then Wayne Gretzky was announcing my name (as Hart winner). I was shaking. To think that something like this could happen ..."

Two years earlier, Theodore finished second to Ed Belfour of the Dallas Stars for the Roger Crozier MBNA Saving Grace Award that saluted the League's best save percentage, presented annually between 2000-07. Theodore's .91911 was five-thousandths of a percentage point behind Belfour's .91910.

"I did the math. Two more saves that year and I've had edged Belfour," Theodore said. "On the flip side, I'm happy I didn't win it. You're not supposed to win if you only play 30 games, like I did that year. There's a big difference between playing 30 and Ed's 61, and the 59 I played the following year."

The illustrious list of Hart winners in goal began with a man nicknamed "Shrimp," Roy Worters, all of 5-foot-3 and 135 pounds.

"Roy Worters, Hockeyist of Yankees, Cited," read the headline in the March 11, 1929 edition of the Pasadena Star News.

In making the case for Worters as the season's Hart winner, which he would be awarded three weeks later, Consolidated Press Association syndicated columnist Lawrence Perry wrote. "Game after game in truth he has won practically single-handed, making two and three saves to the opposing goaltender's one; throttling every drive while the other net guard has let just enough through to bring victory to the Americans.

...

"Any goaltender could have let such shots such as these get by without laying himself open to the charge of negligence or lack of skill. But Worters stopped them all, charging thereupon out onto the ice some 30 feet to break up rushes that looked like sure goals."

Two decades later, the Rangers' Rayner would be the second goalie voted the Hart.

"It was the superb goaltending of the bushy-haired backstop that enabled the Rangers to get into the Stanley Cup Playoffs for the second time in the last eight years," it said a wire-service report of May 9, 1950.

Rollins, of the Black Hawks, and Plante, of the Canadiens, followed with Hart wins in 1953-54 and 1961-62, respectively.

Critics of the Rollins selection, wrote the Toronto Star's Red Burnett, "will no doubt point out that Chicago finished last and that foes blasted 212 goals behind him in 66 games."

But Burnett suggested that Rollins should have been awarded the "Heart" trophy "for courage, if nothing else" given the Black Hawks' allergy to defense, the goalie left to his own devices while opponents bombed him from every angle.

Plante led the 1960-61 Canadiens to a first-place regular-season championship, winning his sixth career Vezina Trophy that season. Montreal's run of five consecutive Stanley Cup wins would end in 1961, the Canadiens shockingly upset by Chicago in a six-game semifinal.

Carey Price of the Montreal Canadiens with his 2014-15 winnings, from left: Vezina Trophy, William M. Jennings Trophy, Hart Trophy and Ted Lindsay Award; and in 2022 action against the Florida Panthers.

"Plante doesn't know how valuable he is," a newspaper headline read, the goalie incommunicado on vacation somewhere in California when his Hart win was announced.

Hasek would score a hat trick with the Sabres in 1997, winning the Hart, Vezina and Lester B. Pearson Award.

"It was never, never in my wildest dreams," Hasek told reporters at the June 19 NHL Awards ceremony in Toronto. "It's a fantastic honor."

Said then-Maple Leafs president Ken Dryden, the 1970s Canadiens goaltending legend, "He is terrific. If his first name wasn't Dominik, 'Dominator' would be appropriate."

Hasek repeated his Hart win in 1998, again adding the Vezina and Pearson to his trophy case.

Theodore followed four years later with his Hart and Vezina wins, miniatures of both trophies displayed in his home office. With them are his 2010 Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy, annually awarded to the player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey.

Price made history as the most recent goaltending winner of the Hart -- he is the only goalie to sweep that trophy, the Vezina, the Ted Lindsay Award and the William M. Jennings Trophy (shared with Chicago's Corey Crawford).

By the time Price walked on stage at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas to accept the NHL Awards-closing Hart, he was almost embarrassed.

"I'll be honest, I'm right out of things to say," he managed.

Price led the NHL in 2014-15 with 44 wins, a 1.96 GAA and .933 save percentage, the first goalie to lead all categories since Belfour did so with Chicago in 1990-91.

Now, a decade later, Hellebuyck is on a very short list of players in the hunt for the 2024-25 Hart Trophy.

The Jets host the St. Louis Blues on Monday (7:30 p.m. ET; Prime, NHLN, FDSNMW).

"I feel that he's set himself apart this year, where he's really on top of the Hart list," Theodore said. "What Hellebuyck is doing is not a fluke, he's been doing it for a long time.

"It's always fun to see a goalie step up. It's not an easy task; you need all the stars aligned. I can't see him not winning it. My vote would go to him."

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11120626/winnipeg-jets-snap-blues-12-game-win-streak-with-3-1-victory/>

Winnipeg Jets snap Blues' 12-game win streak with 3-1 victory

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

Coming off a rough outing in Utah, the Winnipeg Jets needed to bring their best effort to slow down the hottest team in hockey.

Mission accomplished.

The Jets suffocated the St. Louis Blues Monday night, allowing just 15 shots on goal in a 3-1 win as Winnipeg picked up their 53rd win of the season to set a new franchise record.

"Everybody kinda looked at each other and got up for this one," said Jets forward Kyle Connor. "We just embraced the moment and I thought, top to bottom, we kinda took the flow of the game early, and liked what I saw. We had a lot of zone time, a lot of pucks to the cage, and just kinda stuck with it.

"Just stay persistent and found a way to come through."

Morgan Barron opened the scoring for the Jets in the second period. The Blues tied the game only five minutes later, but Alex Iafallo scored seven minutes into the third to take the lead back before Adam Lowry notched an empty-netter in the dying seconds.

“That was a really solid 60 minutes of going out in five-man units and outbattling and getting zone time on the opposition,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “Everybody kinda figured out after the first period who their matchups were, who they were going head-to-head, and I thought all four lines won their matchups.”

The victory ended the Blues’ 12-game win streak and gave the Jets a five-point cushion atop the Central Division ahead of the Dallas Stars with only four games left in the regular season.

The Jets held the Blues to just shot three shots on goal in the first period and only four shots in the final frame.

“I think that’s how we want to play,” said Barron. “Obviously, that’s a really good team in transition and I think we kinda knew when we’re at the top of our game, we’re able to stimy that the best we could, and I thought our D (defence) just gapped up really nicely and the forwards tracked back really well.”

The victory gives the Jets 110 points, just four points away from the franchise record of 114 points they set in the 2017-2018 season.

Neither team found the back of the net in a fairly uneventful opening period, though Winnipeg controlled play for most of the 20 minutes, outshooting the Blues 8-3 and out-attempting St. Louis 31-8.

Winnipeg got on the board with 2:34 gone in the second period. Barron made a nice play at the Jets’ blue line to disrupt Mathieu Joseph and started skating up the ice before Josh Morrissey got to the loose puck and chipped it ahead.

Barron fought off Joseph to win the race to the puck and continued to ward him off as he took the puck to the net and beat Joel Hofer blocker-side to make it 1-0 Jets.

The lead held for just under five minutes before St. Louis answered back. The Blues won puck battle along the boards that led to Robert Thomas having the puck in the corner below the goal line. He held it for a moment before finding Pavel Buchnevich in the slot, whose one-timer went off the post and in to tie the game at the 7:27 mark.

Each team had a failed power play in the period as it stayed tied 1-1 through 40 minutes. Each team managed to get eight shots on goal in the middle frame.

Winnipeg regained the lead at the 7:05 mark of the third period thanks to their top line. Buchnevich turned it over to Connor in the Blues’ end before Connor took it to the slot and whipped a shot that Hofer stopped but Lafallo immediately banged home the rebound to make it 2-1.

After the Jets iced the puck with 2:02 remaining, Hofer went to the bench for an extra attacker. Winnipeg had a great chance to seal it with about 40 seconds to go but Mason Appleton hit the side of the empty net, giving the Blues an extra life but they couldn't take advantage of it before Lowry scored to clinch the win with 8.5 seconds left.

Hellebuyck only had to make 14 saves to secure his 44th victory of the season to tie his career-high.

Nikolaj Ehlers missed a second straight game, while Colin Miller sat out with an illness.

The Stars will host Vancouver Tuesday night before the Jets and Stars meet in Texas on Thursday in a game that very well could decide who wins the Central.

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<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/morgan-barron-playing-best-hockey-of-the-year-as-jets-kick-it-down/>

Morgan Barron playing best hockey of the year as Jets kick it down

By Jacob Stoller

WINNIPEG — Back when he was coaching the AHL's Manitoba Moose, Winnipeg Jets assistant coach Marty Johnston foreshadowed what we're seeing from Morgan Barron today.

It was in late March 2022 and Barron — acquired by Winnipeg nine days prior, in the Andrew Copp deal — had just concluded a two-game series against the Laval Rocket where he registered a goal, an assist and nine shots. The six-foot-four forward looked dominant in those two games, making his presence felt in all three zones of the ice.

"It's a good sign for fans of the Winnipeg Jets," Johnston, then an assistant with the Moose, said. "Because he's got a lot of potential."

Three years later, we're getting a glimpse of Barron's ceiling as a high-end bottom-six centre.

It's not like it's come out of nowhere, with the 26-year-old solidifying himself as a trusted bottom-six winger and penalty killer over the last two seasons. But since becoming the team's fourth-line centre since the trade deadline, Barron has kicked his game up a notch.

"I feel like I've been playing my best hockey of the year right now," Barron said after Monday's 3-1 win over the St. Louis Blues, in which he scored the game's opening goal.

In 15 games as a centre, Barron has recorded two goals and six points. During his five-on-five minutes, Winnipeg has controlled the high-danger shot share by a significant margin (35-21).

"He's always said he's a natural centreman. I think everybody was when they were playing junior or college," Jets coach Scott Arniel said with a smirk.

While Arniel's comment about Barron's familiarity with the position was somewhat tongue-in-cheek, his transition to centre has been seamless.

He exemplifies the ideal modern-day bottom-six centre — with a knack for winning faceoffs (52.2 FOW%), forechecking and holding onto pucks down low. Plus, he pairs those workman traits with blistering speed.

"You want those type of guys coming through the middle of the ice," Jets forward Kyle Connor said.

Look no further than Monday's goal: Barron beat Blues forward Mathieu Joseph in a foot race, cut to the inside and chipped the puck past Joel Hofer to give Winnipeg a 1-0 lead early in the second period.

"I like that move, instead of bailing out and going behind the net, (Barron) sticks his leg out and drives inside," Arniel said.

According to data tracked by AllThreeZones.com, Barron ranks in the 97th percentile in Zone Entries per 60 minutes (25.73) among forwards who have played at least 100 minutes this season.

Earlier in the year, Rasmus Kupari's speed added an extra layer to the team's fourth line. But different from Kupari, Barron plays a more direct, straight-line style of play. He doesn't hesitate to cut to the inside and once he's in the zone, he leverages his large frame and strong stick skills to extend plays along the wall.

The Cornell alum may have only five playoff games to his name — and not much to show for, aside from that gnarly scar he got from the freak skate incident back in 2023 — but he looks poised to become an impact player once do-or-die games begin.

Big Line Continues to Cook

Connor, Mark Scheifele and Alex Iafallo put on a clinic against St. Louis on Monday.

That trio outchanced the Blues 10-2 during five-on-five play against Robert Thomas, Pavel Buchnevich and Jimmy Snuggerud.

"That Thomas line has been one of the best lines coming (since) the 4 Nations," Arniel said. "I love the fact that Scheif and those guys go up against the other teams' top line and do what they do."

lafallo scored the game-winning goal with 12:56 remaining in the third period at the tail end of a shift that exemplified that line's best version of itself. Scheifele and Connor made quick and precise passes along the wall, they fought hard to win pucks back and lafallo crashed the net for a second chance opportunity.

I wouldn't rule out this line — which has outchanced opponents 39-27 during five-on-five play — remaining intact once Gabriel Vilardi returns.

Should Arniel opt to roll Nikolaj Ehlers alongside Adam Lowry — a duo that's jived well in a small sample size — Arniel could slot Vilardi, instead of Nino Niederreiter, alongside Cole Perfetti and Vladislav Namestnikov. Doing so would provide the Jets with a more balanced top nine.

Tanev's Tenacity

Jets forward Brandon Tanev got a hearty ovation from the fans after blocking three shots in the same shift near the midway point of the third period.

"Doesn't matter if he gets hit once, twice or three times, he's going to jump back in that lane," Arniel said.

The Jets coach described Tanev as an "Energizer bunny," a fitting nickname given the 33-year-old's dog-on-a-bone approach.

A month into his second stint with Winnipeg, Tanev is shaping up to be one of the best trade deadline acquisitions of the season. He's had an impact wherever he's been deployed — be it on the third line alongside Lowry, the fourth line with Barron or the penalty kill.

He may be approaching his mid-30s, but would anybody complain if Tanev was inked to a multi-year deal this summer by Jets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff?

Stoller Says

- Winnipeg tied their franchise record in wins (53) against St. Louis. Unsurprisingly, Arniel wasn't patting his team's back after the game.

"It's gratifying, but it's stuff for after the year," he said. "We're still after something here, we're still trying to get that division, and this was another step towards it. It's amazing that we're at Game 53 and we still haven't clinched the division, that's how good our division is."

- Blues coach Jim Montgomery tipped his cap to the Jets post-game.

"They're the measuring stick in the West," Montgomery said, after his team's franchise-record 12-game win streak was snapped.

- Winnipeg will clinch the Central Division if Dallas loses to Vancouver on Tuesday and the Jets beat the Stars on Thursday.

Canadian Press

<https://www.chrisd.ca/2025/04/08/winnipeg-jets-st-louis-blues-game-win-story/>

Jets Eyeing Bigger and Better Things After Franchise-Record 53rd Win of the Season

By Judy Owen, The Canadian Press

Scott Arniel paused for a few moments to appreciate a Winnipeg Jets' milestone before turning his mind to the next piece of business.

Alex Iafallo scored the game-winner at 7:05 of the third period to help the Jets defeat the red-hot St. Louis Blues 3-1 on Monday and register a franchise-record 53rd win of the season.

Calling it a "great accomplishment," Winnipeg's first-year head coach then focused on a crucial goal around the corner.

"It's gratifying, but it's stuff for after the year," Arniel said. "We're still after something here, we're still trying to get that (Central) Division (title), and this was another step towards it.

"It's amazing that we're at (win) 53 and we still haven't clinched the division, that's how good our division is. So it's just move off of this one, move on to the next one."

The NHL-leading Jets (53-21-4) travel to Dallas for a Thursday showdown against the Stars, a team that's five points behind them in the division and Western Conference standings. Dallas has one game in hand.

Snapping the Blues' franchise-record 12-game win streak, which was also the longest in the NHL this season, helps with preparation for Thursday.

"We got another great team," Jets forward Kyle Connor said of the Stars. "There's a lot of good teams on the stretch here. And in the playoffs, it's gonna be every night.

"A couple times this year we win a big game and the next night it's not quite there. So that's something that we're working on."

The battle with the Blues also produced another milestone.

Morgan Barron and captain Adam Lowry, into an empty net, also scored for Winnipeg. It was Lowry's career-high 16th of the season.

“Real happy for him,” Arniel said of Lowry. “Obviously he does an awful lot for us. Lot of heavy lifting, a lot of the leadership role and then to have a year like this, that’s been great.”

Connor Hellebuyck made 14 saves to record his 44th win of the season and tie his franchise record from 2017-18. Mark Schiefele had one assist and tied his career high for points with 84.

Pavel Buchnevich scored for the Blues (43-29-7) and Joel Hofer stopped 23 shots for St. Louis, which holds the first wild-card spot in the conference, two points ahead of the idle Minnesota Wild.

The tight-checking first period featured some interesting numbers but no goals.

Winnipeg outshot the Blues 8-3, but the visitors led 14-3 in blocked shots. The Jets’ shot attempts in the opening frame was 31-8.

“They defended well all night, and as we’re moving to the playoffs, we’re going to see more and more of that,” said Barron, who gave his team a 1-0 lead at 2:34 of the second period after racing for a loose puck.

“It’s obviously frustrating when you’re not getting through all the time, but it’s going to be something that we work on and continue to stay patient. Obviously it paid off tonight.”

Buchnevich tied it at 7:27 of the second. His 18th of the season extended his goal streak to three in three games.

Iafallo’s goal at 7:05 of the third was his 14th goal of the season. Lowry sent the puck into the empty net with nine seconds left.

Holding the Blues to 15 shots was a point of pride for Connor.

“That just says everybody’s bought in and we’re focused right now,” said the team’s leading scorer, who’s a point away from matching his career high of 93. “And it’s still something that we’re working on – consistency.”

The good thing is they know what needs tweaking.

“There’s awareness of where this game needs to be for a team,” Connor said. “And when everybody’s going, we’re scary.”

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/07/jets-rewrite-record-book>

Jets rewrite record book

Conquer hard-charging Blues to set franchise record for wins

By: Mike McIntyre

Don't let the close final score fool you.

The Winnipeg Jets played one of their most dominating games of the season Monday night, absolutely smothering the NHL's hottest team at every single turn and skating away with a well-deserved 3-1 victory that very much had a playoff feel to it.

"Everybody looked at each other and got up for this one," Jets forward Kyle Connor said. "We just embraced the moment. Top to bottom, we took the flow of the game early. I liked what I saw."

How impressive was this timely triumph over the St. Louis Blues? Let us count the ways.

*The Blues came to town on a 12-game winning streak and with two regulation defeats over their past 23 outings. They were the clear second-best in this one, and by a considerable margin. They fall to 43-29-7 and currently occupy the first wild-card spot in the Western Conference.

*By improving to 53-21-4, the Jets broke their franchise record for wins in a season. They still have four games remaining.

*Winnipeg is now five points ahead of Dallas in their efforts to win a first division title (in either 1.0 or 2.0 eras). They need six points — either gained by them and/or lost by the Stars, who have five games left — to clinch.

*Winnipeg is now three points ahead of Washington in the race for the President's Trophy. The Capitals have one game in hand.

*Goaltender Connor Hellebuyck, the runaway favourite to win a third Vezina Trophy and a legitimate Hart Trophy candidate, stopped 14 of 15 shots to tie his own franchise record with his 44th win of the year. He's now four away from the league's all-time mark.

*Jets captain Adam Lowry, who had a monster defensive game, fittingly sealed the victory by scoring into an empty net and breaking his career high with his 16th goal.

*Jets alternate captain Mark Scheifele — the first draft pick by the 2.0 Jets, with Lowry being the second — set up the clincher to match his career high with his 84th point.

*The game was played in front of 15,225 fans, marking a sixth consecutive sellout (and 13th of the year).

That, folks, is what you call a pretty nice Monday.

"It's gratifying, but it's stuff for after the year. We're still after something here, we're still trying to get that division, and this was another step towards it," said coach Scott Arniel.

"It's amazing that we're at (win) 53 and we still haven't clinched the division, that's how good our division is. So it's just move off of this one, move on to the next one."

Let's break this down further:

THE ROUT WASN'T ON

But it should have been with the huge disparity in play. Consider this:

The Jets had a whopping 31 shot attempts in the first period while giving up eight to the Blues. Yet it was still tied 0-0. Credit St. Louis for only allowing eight of those to get on net, with a whopping 14 being blocked and the other nine missing the net.

It was only a matter of time before that kind of relentless pressure paid off.

Winnipeg finally got rewarded when Josh Morrissey made a great play at his own blue-line to spring fourth-liner Morgan Barron on a breakaway at 2:34 of the middle frame.

You could almost feel the players and the fans exhale at that point.

"I think that's how we want to play," said Barron.

"That's a really good team in transition. We kind of knew that when we're at the top of our game, we're able to stymie that the best we could. Our D just gapped up really nicely and our forwards tracked back really well."

Pavel Buchnevich tied it up later in the period, converting a nice feed from linemate Robert Thomas, but that proved to be a temporary blip for the Jets who kept coming in waves.

Connor set up Alex Iafallo at 7:05 of the third to give the home team the lead for good, while Lowry added the big insurance marker in the waning seconds.

"Everybody's bought in and we're focused," Connor said. "It's still something we're working on, the consistency. Also fresh in our mind is how we played in Utah (Saturday, a 4-1 loss). There's an awareness of where this game needs to be for our team."

Winnipeg tilted the ice in the entire game, with shot attempts ending up 64-40. The website Natural Stat Trick had high-danger chances 17-4 in favour of the Jets.

HOMETOWN HOFER

Credit the hometown boy, Joel Hofer, for keeping his team in it.

The 24-year-old Blues goaltender stopped 24 of the 26 shots he faced as he tried to win for a second time this year in Winnipeg. Hofer was sensational during a 4-1 St. Louis victory on Dec. 3.

He had plenty of family and friends in attendance who saw put in another terrific performance despite the outcome.

“You know, they made us defend a lot more than we made them defend,” said Blues coach Jim Montgomery. “And then the other part would be, we had turnovers where we should. We should have made more poised plays than we did.”

Of course, the Jets played no small role in that.

“That was a really solid 60 minutes of going out in five-man units, out-battling them, and getting zone time on the opposition,” said Arniel.

“Everybody figured out after the first period who their matchups were, who they were going head to head (with) and I thought all four lines won their matchups. Along with the D-men, obviously. You do that, you have 20 guys doing that, that’s a tough team to beat.”

MEN IN STRIPES

We normally shy away from commenting on officiating, but this was a bit of an odd one.

Referees allowed both teams all kinds of leeway through the first half of the game, then completely changed the standard in the second half and called a ticky-tack infraction on each team.

The Jets were later penalized for a second time on a clear high-stick, but the game then reverted back to Hudson Bay rules for the duration with all kinds of shenanigans ignored by the men in stripes.

Winnipeg was two-for-two on the kill and zero-for-one on the power play.

KEY PLAY

Iafallo’s 14th goal of the year with just under 13 minutes to play was the winner.

THREE STARS

1. Jets Alex Iafallo: Game-winning goal, 6 shots
2. Blues Joel Hofer: 24 saves

3. Jets Josh Morrissey: 1A, 7 shot attempts, team-high 25:45

EXTRA EXTRA

Get the ice packs. The two teams combined for 38 blocked shots (20-18 for the Blues) and 57 hits (31-26 for the Blues).

The Jets were once again without injured forwards Nikolaj Ehlers (lower-body), Rasmus Kupari (concussion), Gabe Vilardi (upper-body) and D Neal Pionk (lower-body). D Colin Miller also missed the contest due to illness. The only healthy scratch was D Ville Heinola.

St. Louis was also missing a couple key skaters in forward Dylan Holloway and defenceman Colton Parayko.

The Jets will take Tuesday off and then skate on Wednesday before hitting the road for a huge Thursday night showdown in Dallas, followed by a visit to Chicago on Saturday. Then it's home for the final two games of the season — Edmonton (Sunday) and Anaheim (next Wednesday).

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/07/familiar-formidable-foe>

Familiar formidable foe

Schenn brothers clash as Jets look to end Blues hot streak

By: Mike McIntyre

Motivation can come in many shapes and sizes. For the St. Louis Blues, it's apparently in the form of a tiny, wild-haired, cigarette-smoking voodoo doll.

Meet Jobu, the unofficial team MVP who began popping up in their locker room immediately after the 4 Nations Face-Off break. Is it a coincidence that the Blues have gone on a 18-2-2 tear since, including a 12-game winning streak heading into action Monday night against the Winnipeg Jets at Canada Life Centre?

"He's a good guy," is all St. Louis captain Brayden Schenn would reveal to the Free Press when asked about Jobu, who even accompanies them on the road and had his own locker room stall and nameplate set up Monday.

Schenn was then quizzed whether Jobu is the 2025 equivalent to Gloria, the song by Laura Branigan that became their victory anthem as they went on an incredible mid-season surge all the way to winning the Stanley Cup in 2019.

"Jobu's a good man," said Brayden, clearly sworn to some kind of team secrecy about saying too much.

Hey, whatever works.

Jobu is likely not a stranger to many sports fans, having first appeared in the 1989 movie *Major League*. One of the fictional baseball players in the film, Pedro Cerrano was a Cuban refugee who had the doll in his stall and would worship him and pray to him before hitting the field. He ultimately ended up being a good luck charm.

It would appear the Blues are hoping for a similar result. So far, so good.

BLUES DEJA VU? Get off to a terrible start? Check. Fire the head coach during the season? Check. Go on a sensational surge down the stretch? Check.

Is 2025 going to be 2019 all over again for the Blues?

“There are only five of us left off that team and it feels completely different with different guys but there are some similarities,” said Brayden.

“How hard guys are playing for one another and how hard the guys are playing defensively. Obviously the win streak has similarities but that was five or six years ago. It is a completely different mindset in the room right now and we have to write our own story.”

The Jets are quite familiar with that previous incarnation, given that they had the unfortunate task of trying to stop the Blues in the opening round that year — and were quickly punted out of the playoffs in six games.

“You look back at their team in ’19 that went on that run and followed a similar path. I’m sure that guys that are still on that team are feeling similar vibes,” said Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey.

“What they’ve done is impressive, and certainly the streak that they’re on is impressive. I guess the other 15 teams come playoff time are trying to not repeat what happened when they won the cup in ’19.”

BROTHERLY LOVE: It was another battle of Brayden vs Luke on Monday night as the Schenn brothers faced off in Winnipeg.

Naturally, the topic of previous on-ice meetings between the skaters, who both surpassed 1,000 career games respectively earlier this year, was broached.

Brayden recalled how, in his first year of junior hockey with the Brandon Wheat Kings, he faced Luke and his Kelowna Rockets and paid a painful price.

“He got me and my linemate pretty good. He ran us over,” Brayden said of that 2007 encounter.

Then there was the NHL game a few years ago, where Brayden's Blues faced Luke's Vancouver Canucks. Brayden had just returned to action after suffering broken ribs and took a vicious crosscheck in the corner from his own flesh and blood.

"He was looking for me after the game and I was getting an X-ray to see where it was at. He apologized 100 times but that is just who he is," Brayden recalled with a chuckle.

Their father wasn't quite as forgiving, calling up Luke to read him the riot act.

"He said 'What the hell were you thinking?' I said 'I wasn't,'" Luke said Monday.

All kidding aside, their bond is strong and both men were excited about the possibility of meeting in the playoffs for the first time this spring, with the Blues and Jets a potential first-round matchup.

"It has definitely been talked about," said Brayden.

While Brayden admits his hockey teams have traditionally gotten the better of Luke's over the years, there's one thing his older brother has over him — two Stanley Cups compared to his one.

"It is always a little bit different playing each other because I feel when you are in the game you are worried about yourself and your team at the same time you see your brother out there with the puck your mind watches him a little bit more closely than any other player in the league," said Brayden.

"Obviously, we don't take these moments for granted. We have had a lot of battles with each other."

INJURY UPDATES: There was some good news on the injury front.

Although forward Nikolaj Ehlers missed a second straight game with a lower-body ailment, he was a full participant at morning skate and is expected to return by Thursday in Dallas. The same goes for defenceman Neal Pionk, who has missed 12 straight contests with an upper-body issue.

Centre Rasmus Kupari, who has missed the past five games with a concussion, took part in a conditioning skate Monday as part of his return-to-play protocol.

And forward Gabe Vilardi, who has missed the last seven games with an upper-body injury, is now doing off-ice workouts and, according to head coach Scott Arniel, is "getting close to seeing about him going on the ice. He's up and running here a little bit more."

Although Vilardi remains week-to-week, that certainly increases optimism he could be ready for the start of the playoffs.

WELCOME TO WINNIPEG: The Jets signed 18-year-old prospect Kieron Walton to his first NHL contract Monday — a standard three-year entry-level deal that kicks in next fall.

Walton, selected in the sixth round (187th-overall) last summer, is coming off a sensational year with the Sudbury Wolves of the Ontario Hockey League. The six-foot-six, 216-pound forward had 92 points (38G, 54A) in 66 regular-season games, which is a mammoth jump from 43 points (18G, 25A) in 65 games last year.

Walton also had a goal and four assists in four playoff games as his Wolves were swept in the first round by the Kingston Frontenacs. He's now signed an amateur tryout to join the Manitoba Moose for the duration of this season, which would allow him to get a taste of pro hockey down the stretch.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/we-embraced-the-moment-jets-smother-red-hot-blues-in-playoff-type-tilt>

'We embraced the moment': Jets smother red-hot Blues in playoff-type tilt

By Paul Friesen

It was intense and physical, like a playoff game, with no time or space for pretty plays.

Jets' Scheifele collects 800th career point with 38th goal of the season

Blocked shots were as common as Winnipeg potholes, scoring chances as few and far between as a clean car on the streets.

The odd cheap shot was dished out, too, with the officials also in playoff form. Let the boys play, they said. For the most part.

A sixth straight sellout crowd in downtown Winnipeg got a taste of what's to come in a couple of weeks as the Jets and St. Louis Blues went toe-to-toe for 60 minutes on Monday, the Jets slamming the door on the visitors' 12-game win streak with a 3-1 victory.

"Everybody looked at each other and got up for this one," Jets winger Kyle Connor said. "We just embraced the moment. Top to bottom, we took the flow of the game early. I liked what I saw."

So did his coach.

“That was a really solid 60 minutes of going out in five-man units, out-battling them, and getting zone time,” Scott Arniel said. “All four lines won their matchups. Along with the D-men.”

Alex Iafallo scored on a rebound some seven minutes into the third period to break a 1-1 tie and the Jets (53-21-4) were on their way to a franchise-record 53rd win of the season.

Morgan Barron and Adam Lowry (into an empty net) had the other Jets goals – Lowry’s giving him a career-high 16 on the year – while at the other end of the ice the stingiest team in the NHL gave up just 15 shots on net against the NHL’s hottest team.

Connor Hellebuyck stopped 14 of them and had his 44th win of the year, tying his own franchise record.

“Everybody’s bought in and we’re focused,” Connor said. “It’s still something we’re working on, the consistency. Also fresh in our mind is how we played in Utah (Saturday). There’s an awareness of where this game needs to be for our team.”

Mark Scheifele picked up an assist to tie a career high with 84 points on the year.

But this win was most critical in the standings, giving Winnipeg a five-point edge on Dallas in the battle for the Central Division title. The two meet in Dallas on Thursday, with the Stars holding a game in hand for one day, at least.

The Jets’ magic number to clinch first is six: a combination six points gained by them and lost by the Stars seals first place.

The Jets played without speed-burning winger Nik Ehlers for a second straight game, although there’s a good chance he returns for Thursday.

Defenceman Neal Pionk is getting close, too.

Coming off a lacklustre, 4-1 loss in Utah on Saturday, the Jets were ready from Monday’s opening faceoff.

With local product Joel Hofer, the Blues backup, in goal for the visitors, the Jets were camped out in the St. Louis end for much of the first period, the 31-8 shot-attempt total saying it all.

Just eight got through to Hofer, while three found Hellebuyck. Winnipeg’s best chance in the first came from Cole Perfetti, with Hofer’s stretching skate save keeping it scoreless.

“This time of year, that is what you come to expect,” Barron said of the tight game. “That’s what they’re going to do. They defended well all night, and as we’re moving to the playoffs we’re going to see more and more of that.”

The Blues finally got some chances to start the second, but the first goal came from Winnipeg's fourth line, Barron picking up a poke-pass from Josh Morrissey, out-muscling Mathieu Joseph and beating Hofer to the far side for his seventh of the year.

The Blues got that one back before the period was half over when Pavel Buchnevich was left unchecked in front.

It stayed 1-1 going into the third, the shot count favouring Winnipeg, 16-11, at that point. They got the go-ahead goal from Lafallo, then put a clamp on it.

"Winnipeg doesn't give up much, and they create a lot," Blues coach Jim Montgomery had said going into it.

His crystal ball was clear on this day.

End-to-end, edge-of-your-seat action?

Nope. But the fans didn't care.

One of the biggest cheers of the night came when Brandon Tanev, the Jets' whirling dervish on skates, blocked a third-period shot, crumpled to the ice and got back on his feet to finish another one of his edgy shifts.

Just a warm-up for the playoffs.

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/schenn-brothers-potential-jets-blues-playoff-clash>

Schenn brothers well aware of potential Jets-Blues playoff clash

By Paul Friesen

They claim nobody's keeping track of how many times they've squared off, or what the won-loss record is between them.

But brothers Luke and Brayden Schenn are dead-sure of one thing: Despite a combined 29 seasons in the NHL, all but four of them on different teams, they've never clashed in the playoffs.

This could be the year.

Winnipeg Jets vs the St. Louis Blues, anyone?

"It's definitely been talked about," Blues captain Brayden Schenn was saying on Monday. "That would be a first, and a little different."

The products of Saskatoon seemed destined to miss the Stanley Cup tournament this year, Brayden's Blues getting off to a horrible start, Luke's Nashville Predators not even coming close to expectations.

But oh, how things changed.

St. Louis changed head coaches and is storming towards the post-season, while Luke got traded twice and landed in Winnipeg. One on the hottest team in hockey, the other on the top squad, overall.

"I've been on some teams that have had some tough years and he's had some good years in St. Louis," Luke said before his Jets took on the Blues on Monday. "We're both obviously in the latter stages of our careers so you don't want to take anything for granted."

Winning, in particular, is something they don't take for granted at their age.

They've both done it, and this is where Luke, 35, has one up on his 33-year-old brother.

"He's got two Stanley Cups," Brayden acknowledged.

"No one's keeping track," Luke countered. "There's no bragging rights."

The younger brother hit paydirt first, the eighth-seeded Blues going on a run to the Cup, through Winnipeg in Round 1, in 2019.

Big brother Luke was there for it, celebrating with Brayden and other family members on the ice in Boston after the Blues' Game 7 win over the Bruins.

"I couldn't have been more proud," he said. "It was pretty special to see him get the chance to realize his dream."

Even though Luke's career had hit a rough patch that saw him play in the minors that season, his superstition about the Stanley Cup remained big-league.

"I didn't touch it," he said. "Went through the whole celebration and party with him and never did."

Those who don't buy into superstitions can make note of this: Luke signed with Tampa Bay that summer and was quickly part of back-to-back Cup winners.

"To have our names on it beside each other is more than you can dream of," he said.

Both hit another milestone this season, reaching 1,000 career NHL games, Luke early in the year, Brayden more recently.

The ones they played together through four seasons in Philadelphia were obviously special. The games in which they've been opponents, well, some have been special, while the odd one has gotten a little nasty.

"A couple I'm not too proud of," the hard-hitting Jets defenceman said, more than a little sheepishly.

The gory details of one such encounter came with Luke in Vancouver colours a few years back, Brayden already with the Blues.

"He'd just come back from having broken ribs," Luke recalled. "He was in the corner and I wasn't really thinking, gave him a little whack right above the pants and he ended up stinging again pretty good."

Big brother went looking for little brother to apologize after the game.

"I was getting an X-ray to see where it was at," Brayden said. "He apologized 100 times. I think it was a bye week, so I had some time to heal up."

Then came a call from dad later that night.

"What the hell were you thinking?" is how Luke remembered the question. "I said I wasn't."

As competitive as both are, you get the feeling something like that won't happen again. Luke says the two talk almost every day throughout the season and train together in the summer.

"I'm the most biased older brother in the entire world," Luke said. "I've really leaned on him as I've struggled throughout my career. He's the one guy that's always been in my corner. We've had some good long chats.

"At the same time, we're not afraid to be honest with each other, give each other a kick in the butt."

Brayden couldn't be more proud of how his brother came back from his minor-league stint to get his career back on track.

"It just shows what kind of fight he has and what kind of person he is," he said.

The brotherly love is alive and well.

There's only one thing left to test it: A playoff series against each other.

BIG SIGNING FOR JETS

The Jets have signed towering sixth-round draft pick Kieron Walton to an entry-level contract.

The 6-foot-6, 216-pound winger led Sudbury of the Ontario Hockey League with 38 goals and 92 points in 66 games this season, adding a goal and four assists in five playoff games.

Walton will join the AHL Manitoba Moose for their last four games of the season, beginning Friday at home against Iowa.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/the-deja-blues-2019-all-over-again-when-they-beat-the-winnipeg-jets-and-won-the-stanley-cup>

The Deja-Blues: 2019 all over again?: When they beat the Winnipeg Jets and won the Stanley Cup

By Gordon Anderson

You could forgive select members of the Winnipeg Jets if they view the current version of the St. Louis Blues and have haunting flashbacks to six seasons ago.

“You look back at their team in 2019 that went on that run and are following a similar path,” Winnipeg d-man Josh Morrissey said. “I’m sure that guys that are still on that team are feeling similar vibes.”

The Blues grounded the Jets on the way to dispatching the Boston Bruins in seven games to win the league championship in June of 2019. Morrissey was on that Jets team.

Yes. Similar vibes, but seasons, shadows and ghosts of previous teammates rush in and out of the dressing room quicker than a wink.

“There are only five of us left off that team and it feels completely different with different guys but there are some similarities, like how hard guys are playing for one another and how hard the guys are playing defensively,” Blues captain Brayden Schenn said.

Besides Schenn, Craig Binnington, Robert Thomas, Colton Parayko and Jordan Kyrou are the holdovers from the championship squad.

“There are some of the same pieces, like Binnington, and it can be easy to compare, but we are a completely different team,” Thomas said. “We have a long way to go, so we can’t really compare (this team) to that.”

The Jets holdovers from that series loss include Mark Scheifele, Mason Appleton, Kyle Connor, Nikolaj Ehlers, Connor Hellebuyck and Adam Lowry. Eric Comrie and Brandon Tanev have since gone and come back.

Dustin Byfuglien led the Jets in scoring with eight points. Connor and Scheifele had five points each. Schenn had three points for the Blues. Thomas added one helper in six games.

The Blues were 7-9-3 when GM Doug Armstrong fired Mike Yeo on Nov. 19 of 2018, promoting assistant coach Craig Berube to the head coach position the same day.

At the time, Armstrong said Berube was going to get an opportunity to prove his worth.

The club coughed and sputtered into the new year with a 15-18-4 mark but went on a 30-18-5 run and finished second in the Central Division with a 45-28-9 record.

The Blues beat the Dallas Stars and San Jose Sharks on the way to the finals.

Fast forwarding to more contemporary times, the Blues dismissed Drew Bannister on Nov. 24 of last year. Jim Montgomery assumed the head coaching duties five days after the Bruins led the Montreal native to the exit door on Nov. 19.

St. Louis went 9-12-1 under Bannister's leadership. With Montgomery in charge, the Blues are 33-16-6 heading into Monday's clash with the Jets. They arrived in town explosive as a hand grenade, riding a 12-game win streak and a 43-28-7 record.

"What they've done is impressive, and certainly the streak that they're on is impressive," Morrissey said. "I guess the other 15 teams, come playoff time, are trying to not repeat what happened when they won the cup in 2019."

St. Louis hasn't officially locked down a playoff spot just yet.

They held a two-point advantage over the Minnesota Wild for the first wildcard going into Monday action around the league. They also held an eight-point gap over the 10th place Calgary Flames. The Blues and Minnesota have four games remaining. The Flames have six.

But there is work to do between today and an unknown day in mid to late June when the Stanley Cup is passed to the victors. Between now and then, it's anyone's game.

"It is a completely different mindset in the room. We have to write our own story," Schenn said.