

Winnipeg Free Press

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/08/let-the-parties-begin>

Let the parties begin

Winnipeg prepares for Whiteout Mania as front-running Jets get ready for playoffs

By: Mike McIntyre

Bigger. Better. And, Manitoba Premier Wab Kinew hopes, longer and pricier than ever.

As he stood in front of a jam-packed True North Square on Tuesday afternoon, Kinew said his government is going to provide up to \$300,000 in funding to offset costs associated with expanded downtown Winnipeg Jets playoff parties this spring.

"It's 75 grand per round, so I don't want to take any of this money back," Kinew said to an eruption of cheers from a few hundred spectators who attended the launch of what is being dubbed "Winnipeg Whiteout Mania."

"I want that money to keep rolling over four rounds into the playoffs. And you know what? This is one area where I don't mind us going over budget. Because if we have to plan another party at the end of the playoffs, what does that mean?"

The answer, of course, would be a Stanley Cup celebration. Dare to dream, but it's not so far-fetched considering the hockey club currently sits on top of the NHL standings with a 53-21-4 record. The Jets have already sewn up home-ice advantage for at least the first round of the playoffs, which are set to begin over the Easter long weekend. Specific game dates are yet to be announced and an opponent still to be determined.

"The greatest day in Manitoba history is the day Mark Chipman and True North brought the Winnipeg Jets back to our city," Kinew told the crowd.

"I say that as one of the kids that was there breaking the proverbial piggy bank in the '90s to try and keep the Jets home. But I think we are saving room in our hearts for another special day sometime soon, where the Winnipeg Jets bring the Stanley Cup home to Canada."

Kinew said he was going to work with Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham, who also spoke at the kickoff, to ensure "downtown is safe."

"The Jets are going to make sure it's a winning team, and all of you are going to make sure that this is the No. 1 hockey town in the entire world," said Kinew, which prompted another round of "Go Jets Go" chants.

Among Tuesday's announcements:

- There will be outdoor parties on Donald Street during every home game. They will be capped at 5,000 fans who will pay \$10 per ticket to take in the festivities outside Canada Life Centre. Fans can enjoy live music, win prizes and watch the game on big screens and also use the facilities and amenities inside The Met for additional food and drink options. A secondary party, held at True North Square and the Hargrave Street Market, will be an outdoor/indoor mix and host a maximum of 1,200 fans who will pay \$20 each. Tickets for both go on sale on Tuesday April 15 and \$5 from each one will go to United Way Winnipeg.

“This is a special day for Winnipeg. It speaks to two things — unity and community,” said J.P. Perron, the campaign chair for the organization. “Moments like this remind us how powerful it is when we come together for something bigger than ourselves.”

More than \$312,000 has been raised through previous Whiteout parties, with various agencies including N'Dinawemak – Our Relatives' Place, Main Street Project, Velma's House, Astum Api Niikinaahk and the Bruce Oake Recovery Centre all using the proceeds to tackle issues such as mental health, homelessness and addiction.

Just crunching the numbers, each home playoff game has the potential to bring \$31,000 their way. If the Jets go all the way to the final and play the maximum number of home games — four each round for a total of 16 — the end result would be \$496,000.

“These funds will bring real meaningful change to people's lives,” said Perron.

- The Jets will host watch parties inside Canada Life Centre for all road playoff games this year, allowing up to 15,225 fans to watch together on the Jumbotron while also having the typical amenities for a home game, including a rally towel and all concessions available. Tickets will be \$10 with all proceeds going towards the True North Youth Foundation.

“Every year, fans make this time of year bigger and better,” said Kevin Donnelly, senior-vice president with True North. “We're just trying to keep up with their exuberance and their energy and hope to enhance the sense of community that gets created around these whiteouts and celebrate our fans.”

Donnelly joked that Winnipeg “might be the only place where we have a party to announce that we're going to have a party.”

- Single-game playoff tickets go on sale this Friday at noon. However, fewer than 1,000 per game are expected to be available due to the fact existing season ticket holders and those who have put deposits for either half or full season packages for next year get first crack at purchasing them.

Fans attending home playoff games can use their tickets to access the two street parties prior to puck drop.

“Of course there’s the hockey, but it’s the pride and spirit — we’re seeing it here today — of our city that elevates Manitoba’s playoff experience to the legendary celebration that it has become,” Sara Orlesky, emcee of Tuesday’s event, told the crowd. “It’s a phenomenon that players embrace and look forward to. And it’s a spectacle that is shared and admired the world over.”

- The Jets are also bringing the playoff atmosphere to the public this year through what they are calling a community “Hype Tour.” They’ll be popping up at various locations around the province, starting with the Clear Spring Mall in Steinbach between 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday to get the party started early. Fans are also being invited to showcase their passion — whether it’s with costumes, signs and songs — through the team’s website for a chance at winning prizes including playoff tickets. Princess Auto will also be giving out “Whiteout Mania” lawn signs for free at their three locations starting April 15.

“Get your facepaint, get your painter suits, your Elvis jumpers, your wedding dresses, your white wigs and your clever signs,” said Donnelly. “It’s an integral part of our playoff celebrations. Fans embrace the experience and give the world yet another reason to put our city on the map.”

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/08/jets-back-to-filling-the-barn>

Jets back to filling the barn Success on the ice leads to success in the stands

By: Mike McIntyre

The Winnipeg Jets have once again become the hottest ticket in town.

Monday’s game against the St. Louis Blues was played in front of 15,225 fans, marking the sixth consecutive sellout at Canada Life Centre and the 14th this season.

That’s a notable development considering previous angst over attendance issues, which was exacerbated last season following an emergency visit from NHL commissioner Gary Bettman to join team co-owner Mark Chipman in publicly sounding the alarm that more support is needed if this is going to work for the long haul.

“It’s unbelievable,” Jets defenceman Josh Morrissey told the Free Press this week regarding the response he’s seeing and hearing.

“I’ve been fortunate to call this my home arena my entire NHL career. You talk to guys that have been visitors into this arena, and it’s never an easy place to play. And, that’s something as players and as a team, we try to take pride in our game at home, and definitely the fans do their part. So it’s been great to have the sellouts.”

To be clear, no one in the organization is doing a full-blown victory lap. There is still plenty of work to be done when it comes to re-building a depleted season-ticket base in addition to some goodwill in the community which may have been lost over the years.

The foundation still needs to be shored up, especially for when the on-ice product might not be as solid as it currently is.

Progress is being made in a significant way. The Jets are averaging 14,322 fans through 39 games this year — a big jump from 13,490 last year. That has them at 94.1 per cent capacity, which ranks 23rd out of 32 teams and fifth out of seven Canadian clubs, with the Ottawa Senators (93.4 per cent) and Calgary Flames (91.3 per cent) behind them.

If the final two regular-season games are sold out, which is expected to be the case, the 2024-25 average will end up at 14,366. That would represent the largest average crowd size for the Jets since before the pandemic hit.

"It means so much to us to have the building full and obviously to have that support," said Morrissey.

"And I think the way our team has played this year, just being around the community, a lot of people, I think we've earned some respect from the fan base in terms of the way we play. The commitment to hard work and trying to be a team that plays the right way. So, it's special."

Indeed, the Jets have certainly given fans their money's worth this year with 29 wins on home ice, to go with six regulation losses and four overtime defeats. Only the Los Angeles Kings are better, with a 29-4-4 home record. It's a huge reason the Jets are currently No. 1 in the standings with a 53-21-4 record.

"You obviously want that every night. I know that sometimes you have to earn it as well," Jets coach Scott Arniel said of seeing a spike in crowd sizes.

"One thing about the building, whether it's at capacity or not, we've been doing a good job of entertaining them and it's been reciprocated back the other way. It's loud. It is really loud when you get to ice level. They've been great for us all year long. Obviously, winning certainly helps that, but it's a loud building and we'd like that to continue."

Earlier this year, the Jets launched an aggressive new approach through a beefed-up sales and marketing team and the implementation of a new game plan aimed specifically at Winnipeg's corporate community.

The hope is to eventually restore a season-ticket base that was at 13,000 following the NHL's return in 2011 but plunged to 9,500 coming out of COVID. They got that up to 10,000 for this season while also boosting their corporate members from approximately 15 per cent up to 20 per cent, with private citizens accounting for the other 80 per cent.

That's still the lowest in the league, with some Canadian markets well over 50 per cent corporate.

The Jets have also brought in more flexible ticket options for all fans, recognizing the current economic climate and the collapse of large groups which might have shared a full package.

Last summer, the Jets reported 95 per cent renewals of what was then 9,500 season ticket holders plus an additional 1,000 new customers with a heavy emphasis on businesses. They now hope to keep that momentum going into this coming off-season — which they obviously would like delayed as long as possible.

In the meantime, the Jets will try to use what has clearly become a true home-ice advantage to go on a lengthy playoff run.

Single-game playoff tickets go on sale Friday, and fewer than 1,000 are expected to be available. That's another good sign, as it means existing season-ticket holders and fans who have put deposits down for either half or full packages next year have scooped up the rest as part of their benefits.

"I think the fans are getting pretty riled up here for what's to come in the next number of weeks," said Morrissey.

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/04/08/hereditary-condition-brings-jets-prospect-lucius-career-to-an-end>

Hereditary condition brings Jets prospect Lucius's career to an end

By: Mike McIntyre

Chaz Lucius just couldn't stay healthy, his body repeatedly betraying him as he struggled to get his hockey career going over the past several seasons.

Now, a devastating diagnosis in the ongoing search for answers: The 21-year-old Winnipeg Jets first-round draft pick has Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS), a hereditary disorder that affects the connective tissue that stabilizes and supports the joints and organs throughout the body.

"It is with great disappointment that I am announcing my retirement from playing professional hockey," Lucius said Tuesday in a written statement released by his agency.

The 18th-overall selection in 2021 seemingly had all the tools to be an impact player with the Jets but never did get an NHL game under his belt. Lucius did appear in 54 American Hockey League games over parts of three seasons with the Manitoba

Moose, including 25 this year before the latest series of physical setbacks shut him down.

This time for good.

“As I struggled with incurring and recovering from various joint injuries over the past several years, I had thought I was just unlucky,” wrote Lucius. “With this diagnosis of EDS, I now realize that my body impacted by EDS could not handle the physical nature of playing hockey.”

Lucius, who was born in Kansas but moved to Minnesota, was part of the U.S. National Development team and had 19 points (9G, 10A) in 24 games with the University of Minnesota during the 2021-22 season, which he was unable to finish due to a knee injury.

After turning pro in the fall of 2022 and joining the Moose, he played a starring role that winter on the American World Junior team which won a bronze medal. He was then loaned to the Portland Winterhawks of the Western Hockey League with 15 points (5G, 10A) in just six games before he got hurt again, this time to a shoulder.

Lucius had 13 points in 17 AHL games last year before suffering a third-straight season-ending ailment that once again required surgery. His ankle was the culprit.

Lucius told the Free Press last summer how all these physical challenges had made him mentally stronger. He was finally feeling healthy and strong and even appeared in a Jets preseason game after an encouraging training camp.

“I know what I need to do. Whether that's a whole year in the AHL or maybe if I'm playing great hockey I can hopefully get a game or two next year, that would be awesome as well,” he said during summer development camp.

“First and foremost, I just need to stay healthy and prove I can play consistent hockey.”

His year started well enough with the Moose, only to once again be derailed by something completely out of his control. His last game came in early February as he began consulting various specialists about what had gone so horribly wrong.

In his retirement announcement, he thanked the Jets organization, co-owner Mark Chipman, general manager Kevin Cheveldayoff, Moose GM Craig Heisinger, team doctor Peter MacDonald and other medical and training staff with the Jets and Moose for helping him “through a very challenging time.”

“I particularly want to thank Mike Keane, who consistently checked in on me and cared for me as a person as well as a player,” Lucius said of the former NHLer who now works for the Jets in player development.

“Finally, I want to thank all of my current and former teammates and coaches. I feel blessed to have experienced all that hockey gave me over the years even though I am crushed that I cannot continue to pursue my dream of playing in the NHL. I look forward to being an advocate for those suffering with EDS and to all that is ahead of me.”

The Jets issued a statement saying they “fully support his difficult decision to retire” and that this is ultimately for the best.

“Chaz’s condition and struggles with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome put him at risk of injury if he continues to play at the professional level, so we understand his choice,” said the team.

“We wish Chaz all the best in his efforts to be an advocate for those dealing with EDS and hope for a bright future in front of him.

Winnipeg Sun

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/business-down-in-dallas-jets-looking-to-hold-back-the-shooting-stars>

***'Business down in Dallas': Jets looking to hold back the shooting Stars
‘It’s amazing that we’re at Game 78 and we still haven’t clinched the division,***

By Gordon Anderson

After smothering the hottest team in the national league, the Jets have zero interest in resting on collective laurels.

“We have got to turn the page quick,” Winnipeg winger Kyle Connor said. “We’ve done it all year, harping on it win or loss, to take what we can and use it for the next game.”

Connor picked up the primary assist on Alex Lafallo’s game winner as the Jets put to bed the St. Louis Blues 12-game heater, a lunch-pail effort producing a 3-1 triumph at the downtown rink on Monday.

Speaking of the next game, the Jets pair up with the Dallas Stars on Thursday evening in Texas.

“We have got another great team coming up,” Connor said. “There’s a lot of good teams on the stretch here. And in the playoffs, it’s going to be like this every night.”

With less than two weeks remaining in the regular season, the final placings in the division are still up for debate. Heading into league action on Tuesday night the first-place Jets held a five-point advantage over the second-place Stars.

Five of the eight playoff slots in the Western Conference are currently occupied by Central Division teams.

Head coach Scott Arniel knows the division is a certifiable beast this season. Arguably, the Jets, Stars, Blues and Avalanche have a legit chance at hoisting the Stanley Cup come June. The second wildcard Minnesota Wild probably fancy their chances as well.

"It's amazing that we're at Game 78 and we still haven't clinched the division, that's how good our division is," Arniel said. "It's just move off this one and move on to the next one. Go down and do our business down in Dallas."

The Jets are 13-9-2 against the division. Winnipeg is 2-1-0 against the Stars this season.

For Connor, it's equally important the squad's suffocating performance over the Blues is carried forward through the remainder of the regular season.

The Jets are in Chicago on Saturday to finish the road portion of the 82-game schedule. The Jets entertain the Edmonton Oilers and the Anaheim Ducks before the postseason begins on April 19.

Despite setting a franchise record for wins with 53, the Winnipeg fan base is in wait and see mode.

Ultimately, the final arbiter of this season will come when the postseason ends. Waves and troughs in performance must become a thing of the past if the Jets hope to win the minds and pocketbooks of the fans.

"A couple times this year we win a big game, and the next night it's not quite there," Connor said. "So that's something that we're working on, being consistent. And having that ability to look to the guy next to you, and try to get everybody, try to get everything you can out of them, have all 23 guys leading."

The final phrase

"That's just says everybody's bought in, and we're focused right now. And it's still something that we're working on, consistency," Connor said. "And when everybody's going, we're scary." – Connor on the Jets holding the Blues to a season low 15 shots on net, including four in the third. St. Louis averages 26.8 shots a game. The Jets limited the Blues to four high danger chances. Winnipeg had 17 high danger chances.

<https://winnipegssun.com/news/local-news/whiteout-loud-and-proud-how-winnipegs-iconic-playoff-tradition-became-the-heartbeat-of-jets-nation>

Whiteout, loud and proud: Winnipeg's iconic playoff tradition lives on

By David P. Stein

When it comes to playoff hockey, few traditions in the NHL rival the electric atmosphere of the Winnipeg Jets' "Whiteout." A sea of white flooding Canada Life Centre — every fan clad in white, voices raised in unison — is more than just a visual spectacle. It's one of the most iconic rituals in professional sports and a symbol of Winnipeg's deep-rooted hockey passion.

The tradition began in the spring of 1987, when the original Winnipeg Jets faced off against the Calgary Flames in the Smythe Division semifinals. At the time, the Flames had launched a "C of Red" campaign, encouraging fans to wear red to playoff games. In true prairie defiance, Jets fans countered with the stark and simple idea of wearing white. The result was a blindingly unified crowd that rattled opponents and inspired the home team.

What began as a one-time response quickly became a playoff tradition, the Winnipeg Whiteout was born, and it stuck. Fans embraced the tradition not just for its aesthetic power, but for its sense of unity because it turned the stands into a single, roaring force.

During the original Jets' final years before their relocation to Phoenix in 1996, the Whiteout became synonymous with springtime in Winnipeg. While playoff success was limited in that era, the intensity of the crowd left a lasting impression on players and opponents alike. Legends like Dale Hawerchuk and Teemu Selanne skated in front of the frosty wave of white, backed by one of the loudest and most loyal fan bases in the league.

"It was a pretty cool idea they had, and it was pretty daunting and intimidating going out onto the ice. It was sad to see the team leave, but it was always enjoyable to go to Winnipeg and to play in that arena," Hockey Hall of Famer and six-time Stanley Cup champion Kevin Lowe told the Sun before expressing the joy he felt when the Atlanta Thrashers relocated to Winnipeg in 2011.

"I was one of the happiest people when Mark Chipman and the Thompsons got together to bring the team back, and they're having a great year," added Lowe, who was named to the Order of Hockey in Canada in 2021.

When the NHL returned to Winnipeg in 2011, bringing the Atlanta Thrashers north and rebranding them as the new Jets, fans wasted no time reviving the Whiteout tradition. It wasn't until 2015, however, that the new iteration of the Jets hosted their first home playoff game, and the Whiteout came back with force. Thousands packed the then-MTS Centre, all dressed in white, their voices making up for nearly two decades of waiting.

That year, Winnipeg fell to the Anaheim Ducks in a first-round sweep, but the Whiteout once again made headlines across the league. NHL broadcasters and analysts praised the crowd's energy, and visiting teams acknowledged the intimidating environment.

By 2018, the tradition had expanded beyond the arena walls. As the Jets made a deep playoff run and reached the Western Conference Final, downtown Winnipeg had transformed. Whiteout Street Parties drew tens of thousands of fans to watch games on massive outdoor screens. In one game against the Nashville Predators, nearly 20,000 fans

watched outside while another 15,000 packed the arena. The city, buzzing with energy, came alive with each goal, save, and bone-crushing hit.

Among the most unforgettable Whiteout moments was Game 5 of the 2018 series against the Predators, when the Jets stormed back from a deficit to win 6–2 in front of a raucous home crowd. Another came during Game 7 in Nashville that year, and although the game was not played in Winnipeg, the scenes from the Whiteout party at home matched the jubilation of the visiting locker room at Bridgestone Arena.

The Whiteout isn't just about playoff hockey, it is a civic expression of pride for hockey as a cultural unifier. In a small-market city where winters are long and hockey is a religious experience, it's a way for Winnipeggers to express that this is their team, and that this is their moment.

On hand for the 2025 Whiteout launch on Tuesday afternoon, Manitoba's Premier Wab Kinew and Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham were in attendance to rally fans and show their support for the Jets, who won their 53rd game of the season on Monday night at Canada Life Centre against the visiting St. Louis Blues.

With only four games remaining in the regular season, and sitting atop the National Hockey League standings with 110 points, Premier Kinew announced a 300,000\$ commitment from the province to ensure that Whiteout events this spring have everything they need, with safety measures in place by the city.

Winnipeg may not have the glitz of larger NHL markets, but what it lacks in size, it more than makes up for in passion. And when the Jets hit the ice in April and the white shirts start waving, it is clear to anyone that the Whiteout isn't just a playoff gimmick, it's the beating heart of Jets Nation.

<https://winnipegssun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/jets-first-round-pick-chaz-lucius-retires-from-professional-hockey>

Jets first-round pick Chaz Lucius retires from professional hockey

By Gordon Anderson

Manitoba Moose forward Chaz Lucius retired from professional hockey on Tuesday.

The Jets selected the Lawrence, Kan., native in the first round, 18th overall, of the 2021 National Hockey League draft. He signed a three-year entry-level contract with Winnipeg in 2022.

“After much discussion and consultation with Chaz, his representatives, and medical professionals, the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club fully supports his difficult decision to retire,” the Jets said in a release.

Lucius made his American Hockey League debut with Manitoba on Oct. 15, 2022, against the Rockford IceHogs. He scored his first professional goal in the same game.

“Chaz’s condition and struggles with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome put him at risk of injury if he continues to play at the professional level, so we understand his choice,” the Jets said. “We wish Chaz all the best in his efforts to be an advocate for those dealing with EDS and hope for a bright future in front of him.”

Lucius had three goals and six assists in 25 games this season. His last game was Feb. 9 against Iowa.

“As I struggled with incurring and recovering from various joint injuries over the last several years, I thought I was just unlucky,” Lucius said in a statement. “With this diagnosis of EDS, I now realize that my body, impacted by EDS, could not handle the physical nature of playing hockey. Given this condition, my injury history, and the physical nature of hockey, I have been medically advised not to continue to play.”

Ehlers-Danlos syndrome is a group of inherited disorders that affect your skin, joints and blood vessel walls.

Global Winnipeg

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11121615/winnipeg-jets-whiteout-parties/>

Playoff-bound Jets means the return of the Winnipeg Whiteout

By Sam Thompson Global News

The league-leading Winnipeg Jets are playoff-bound once again, and with post-season hockey in Winnipeg comes the return of a tradition — the Winnipeg Whiteout.

The large-scale street parties are coming back next month, with the hockey club set to welcome thousands of fans into the city's downtown for the celebration of all things Jets.

This year's event — which raises funds for United Way Winnipeg, to be reinvested into the community via local organizations — is being put together by the team's owners, True North Sports + Entertainment, alongside the city, the province, and Economic Development Winnipeg.

"Our fans created the Whiteout, evolved it to the phenomenon it is today and continue to be the essence of the Winnipeg Jets' playoff celebrations," said True North executive Kevin Donnelly.

"The Whiteout Street Parties are more than just a celebration of our team, they are a celebration of our fans and their desire to share their excitement and passion for our team in a community setting."

The street parties will be held pre-game and post-game for each of the Jets' home playoff appearances, taking over an area of Donald Street adjacent to the team's arena, stretching from Portage Avenue to, fittingly, Honourary Dale Hawerchuk Way.

Half the price of each \$10 ticket goes back into local organizations, via United Way Winnipeg, including those taking on social issues like homelessness and addiction, to a total of more than \$312,000 raised at previous street parties to date.

The province announced Tuesday that it intends to spend up to \$300,000 to support the events, with Premier Wab Kinew saying in a statement that he hopes the team will have a long playoff run.

"Not only do Whiteout Parties benefit downtown businesses and raise money for housing and mental health supports, they're a fantastic way to come together as a community," Kinew said.

"Whiteout Street Parties are a great, affordable way to experience the atmosphere of playoff hockey."

For more details about the events and ticket information, visit the Whiteout page on the Jets' website.

As of Tuesday, the club had clinched a playoff spot and was sitting at the top of the standings in the Central Division, Western Conference, and the entire National Hockey League.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11123060/analysis-winnipeg-jets-central-division-dallas/>

ANALYSIS: Big win in Dallas could cement division title for Jets

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

If, as we're told, everything is bigger in Texas, then it's only fitting that the biggest game in the National Hockey League's Central Division this season will be played there Thursday night.

After 78 regular-season games, one 60-minute contest between the Winnipeg Jets and the Dallas Stars could decide a divisional winner — and with it, the spoils that come along with the banner.

For the Jets, a win Thursday in Big D would provide an almost assured path to claiming their first-ever Central title, as they would then only require one more victory, with the potential of that coming two nights later in Chicago to close the deal.

At present, the Jets lead the Central by four points over the Stars and control the levers on which way this chase for a Central championship is steered, in a race that started months ago and has seemingly come right down to the wire.

Now, what's at stake here is not only important but potentially crucial for Winnipeg, as they would ultimately gain playoff advantages of home ice in the first two rounds, should they get that far, and avoid meeting the Colorado Avalanche — the team that knocked them out last year — in a first-round series for a second straight April.

Of course, if the Jets don't win on Thursday, then their lead in the division would be down to two points on the Stars. And then the final three games on the regular-season docket become that much more dramatic in determining a Central Division winner.

So, in sensing the scenarios at play here, Winnipeg understands how big Thursday's game against Dallas truly is. And fittingly, it will be held in the heart of Texas — where things, we're told, are always bigger.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11122284/winnipeg-jets-prospect-chaz-lucius-retires-medical/>

Winnipeg Jets prospect Chaz Lucius retires on medical advice

By Russ Hobson Global News

Winnipeg Jets prospect Chaz Lucius is retiring from professional hockey at the age of just 21 due to a medical condition.

Through his agent, Newport Sports, the announcement was made on social media on advice from doctors after he was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome. EDS is a hereditary disorder that affects connective tissue that stabilizes and supports the joints and organs.

The Jets selected Lucius 18th overall in 2021, but the first round draft pick was plagued by ankle injuries in his first three professional seasons with the AHL's Manitoba Moose.

"As I struggled with incurring and recovering from various joint injuries over the past several years, I had thought I was just unlucky," said Lucius in a statement. "With this diagnosis of EDS, I now realize that my body impacted by EDS could not handle the physical nature of hockey.

"Given this condition, my injury history and the physical nature of hockey, I have been medically advised not to continue to play."

Lucius was limited to just 12 games as a rookie due to injuries. He only appeared in 17 games last season and dressed for only 25 contests this season and hasn't played since early February.

"I feel blessed to have experienced all that hockey gave me over the years," he said. "Even though I am crushed that I cannot continue to pursue my dream of playing in the NHL."

Lucius finishes his pro career with seven goals and 20 assists in 54 professional games.

"After much discussion and consultation with Chaz, his representatives, and medical professionals, the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club fully supports his difficult decision to retire," the Jets said in a team issued statement.

"Chaz's condition and struggles with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) put him at risk of injury if he continues to play at the professional level, so we understand his choice. We wish Chaz all the best in his efforts to be an advocate for those dealing with EDS and hope for a bright future in front of him."

Canadian Press

https://www.thecanadianpressnews.ca/sports/oddsmakers-cool-to-suggestion-of-league-leading-winnipeg-jets-winning-stanley-cup/article_a14bfc95-228b-57fb-b1b2-37292e42b57d.htm

Oddsmakers cool to suggestion of league-leading Winnipeg Jets winning Stanley Cup

By Judy Owen The Canadian Press

WINNIPEG - Mark Scheifele is known as a "hockey nerd," whose understanding of the game has turned him into an elite NHL player.

But the Winnipeg Jets star centre isn't losing sleep trying to figure out why his league-leading team is being snubbed by betting sites as Stanley Cup favourites. Many popular outlets don't even have the Jets (53-21-4) in the top-four.

"I don't really think about it at all," Scheifele told The Canadian Press before Monday's game against the red-hot St. Louis Blues. "Honestly, it's not in our brains at all.

"We're just going to go out there and play no matter what and it doesn't matter what all that says."

Winnipeg defeated St. Louis 3-1 to not only notch its club-record 53rd victory of the season but snap the Blues' 12-game win streak. However that didn't appear to move the needle on the DraftKings betting site.

On Tuesday, it had Winnipeg tied for fifth with Toronto at +1200 (12/1 odds). Dallas was favoured to hoist the Cup at +600, followed by defending-champion Florida and Colorado (both at +800). Tampa Bay and Edmonton were both at +900 while Washington (second overall in the league), Vegas and Carolina each came in at +1100.

BetMGM's latest odds last week are similar.

The Jets, Capitals and Lightning are tied for sixth at +1100 while the Maple Leafs were seventh at +1200. Dallas topped the odds at +600 and the Panthers were next at +650.

The Avalanche sat at +750 while the Oilers were at +850. The Hurricanes and Golden Knights were both at +1000.

"I don't know how they do it," veteran Jets defenceman Dylan DeMelo said when asked if he could explain the odds. But he shrugged off any lack of respect for what the Jets have accomplished so far this season.

"No matter what the betting odds are, we just want to win," DeMelo said. "We just want to put ourselves in the position where we're in the playoffs and give ourselves a good chance to hopefully make a long run.

"We're not too worried about everybody else's perception of us."

Maybe it has something to do with being a Canadian team playing in the league's smallest market?

"It may," DeMelo said. "I don't know.

"I like our chances."

Jets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff was asked during Monday's game on Prime TV about a lack of respect.

"If I knew what betting was all about maybe I'd be upset, but I don't know a thing about betting," he said. "That's fine."

"You know, we're Winnipeg, we have to punch above our weight and we're looking forward to keep on playing the way we're playing."

Heading into their final four regular-season games _ including a showdown in Dallas Thursday that could swing the odds in Winnipeg's favour _ the Jets are poised to set more franchise records.

Winnipeg has never won the Presidents' Trophy for finishing atop the league standings. They're currently three points ahead of Washington.

Winnipeg has topped the Western Conference standings since Jan. 14 and has never achieved that milestone, either. Same with winning the Central Division, which the Jets led by five points over Dallas, who hosted the Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday.

Even if the oddsmakers aren't respecting the Jets, the same can't be said for their league counterparts.

Vancouver defenceman Tyler Myers, who played for Winnipeg from February 2015 through the 2018-19 season, dismissed betting odds.

"I don't know who makes those odds, but it's usually people who don't know much about hockey," Myers said following Vancouver's 3-1 loss to Winnipeg on March 30. "I wouldn't put too much stock in any team's odds at any time of the year."

Winnipeg is in a good spot heading into the playoffs and could make some noise, he added.

Canucks coach Rick Tocchet agreed.

"That's a good hockey team that has a chance to win a Cup and I thought we went head-to-head on them really well," Tocchet said.

Robert Thomas, St. Louis's leading-scorer, weighed in on the Jets before Monday's loss.

"I don't really follow too much on the betting sites and all that crap, but they're a hard team to play," he said.

Thomas, of Aurora, Ont., didn't correlate Winnipeg's playoff odds with competing in Canada and the smallest market.

"I think a lot of people know how dangerous this team is," Thomas said. "They've got the offence, they've got the defence, they've got the goalie, so it's a tough team to play."

Winnipeg netminder Connor Hellebuyck is on his way to capturing his second consecutive Vezina Trophy and third of his career. He tied his franchise record for wins (44-12-3) against the Blues and leads the league in save percentage (.924) and goals-against average (2.02)

Winnipeg was tied with Colorado for third-most goals in the league with 265, behind Washington (277) and Tampa Bay (276) before Tuesday's league action. The Jets also have the lowest goals-against average (2.32).

"They're very committed defensively, one of the best teams," St. Louis coach Jim Montgomery said. "And then ... (Hellebuyck is) gonna win the Vezina this year."

"So, (it) speaks for itself. They've done a great job all year. They're the measuring stick in the West."

TSN.ca

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/boudreau-believes-in-the-jets-when-they-play-their-best-they-re-very-difficult-to-beat~3112178>

Boudreau believes in the Jets: 'When they play their best, they're very difficult to beat' (VIDEO)

The Jets put an end to the Blues' 12-game win streak Monday night with an impressive home victory. Did Winnipeg's win prove that they shouldn't fear facing St. Louis in the playoffs? TSN Hockey analyst Bruce Boudreau shares his thoughts on that and who he'd pick to win a seven-game series between the Jets and Stars.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/the-talking-point-jets-made-a-statement-beating-blues-what-does-it-tell-us~3112180>

The Talking Point: Jets made a statement beating Blues...what does it tell us?

After a statement win Monday night against the red-hot Blues, who were on a 12-game win streak coming in, TSN Hockey analyst Bruce Boudreau joins Domino's That's Hockey host Gino Reda to discuss what that big victory tells us about Winnipeg in this edition of The Talking Point.

CBC Manitoba

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/winnipeg-jets-whiteout-street-parties-nhl-playoffs-1.7504712>

Time for a spring blizzard: Winnipeg Jets announce plans for playoff whiteout parties

Whiteout tradition dates back to 1987 and the original Jets franchise

Darren Bernhardt · CBC News

Downtown Winnipeg is forecast to be hit by a spring whiteout soon, but the shovels can stay in the shed — this storm needs pompoms, boas and a lot of creativity.

The NHL Stanley Cup playoffs begin April 19, and the Jets, who clinched their spot back on March 25, are inviting their fans to one of the most envied parties in pro sports: the Winnipeg whiteout.

"Manitobans are used to whiteouts, but let's be honest, the ones that hit us in April are undoubtedly our favourite kind," said Sara Orlesky, a senior host and producer for the Winnipeg Jets on TSN.

"Of course, there's the hockey, but it's the pride and spirit ... of our city that elevates Manitoba's playoff experience to the legendary celebration that it has become. It is a spectacle that is shared and admired the world over."

Orlesky and others from the Jets organization and Manitoba politicians gathered Tuesday at True North Square plaza, kitty-corner to the Jets' home arena, to unveil the plan for the 2025 playoff parties.

"We will once again welcome fans to join 5,000 of their closest friends and neighbours on the street and share in a playoff viewing experience next to the action inside Canada Life Centre ... and show North America and the world that Winnipeg is the epicentre of hockey," said Kevin Donnelly of True North Sports & Entertainment, which owns the Jets and arena.

Whiteout street parties will take place before and during every Jets home playoff game, transforming Donald Street into a sea of thousands of white-clad fans, dressed in hockey jerseys and everything else from body suits and wedding dresses to polar bear costumes, Elvis jumpsuits, Santa beards and anything else that fits the mood.

The NHL regular season is still wrapping up, with the Jets holding a slim lead for first place overall. Playoff game dates and times will be announced April 11, when tickets for the first round go on sale.

The parties will feature large screens broadcasting the games, as well as DJs before puck drop and between periods, a variety of food trucks and concessions, prizes and giveaways.

The party zone will be the same footprint as in recent years — along Donald between Portage Avenue and Honourary Dale Hawerchuk Way (Graham Avenue), adjacent to Canada Life Centre.

The Metropolitan Entertainment Centre, across from Canada Life Centre, will be included within the footprint this year, accessible to ticket holders for food and beverages and other amenities.

The party zone will have a capacity of 5,000 fans with an entrance fee of \$10 per ticket. Those will go on sale April 15 at noon through Tickemaster.

Party gates will open two hours before the opening faceoff of each home game.

An image of cheering, white-clad fans in a hockey arena.
The Jets reposted this Instagram post by American sports analyst Pat McAfee during last year's playoffs. (nhljets/Instagram)

Fans with tickets to a particular day's playoff game can also access the party that same day, before heading to their seats inside the arena. A separate ticket is not required.

Five dollars from each entry fee will go to United Way Winnipeg and redirected to agencies that help people experiencing homelessness, addictions and mental health challenges.

More than \$312,000 has been raised from past whiteout parties.

The province has promised to kick in as much as \$300,000 — the amount depends on how far the Jets go — to support the parties.

A slightly more intimate party for 1,200 will happen at the same time at True North Square plaza, hosted by the Hargrave St. Market.

The Party in the Plaza will feature the game on a big screen and amenities inside the market. Tickets for that are \$20, with \$5 going to the United Way.

New this year, fans can also take in a game-day experience when the Jets are on the road. Watch parties will be held inside Canada Life Centre for \$10.

Fans will get a whiteout rally towel and access arena concessions as they watch the game on the scoreboard. Proceeds from every ticket will go to the True North Youth Foundation.

Dating back to 1987 and the original Jets franchise, the whiteout tradition has wowed visiting and home players alike, as well as broadcasters.

It disappeared, along with the Jets 1.0, in 1996, but was revived in 2015 when the Jets 2.0 (the relocated Atlanta Thrashers) made the post-season for the first time since landing in Winnipeg in 2011.

"Some people say when you're waving white, you surrender. Well, we don't surrender here," said Dan Nolin, whose vintage Chevy Vega was decked out in Jets decor and featured in the plaza for Tuesday's event.

The car is a familiar sight on the streets during the playoffs, and then stored the rest of the year when the post-season ends.

"I'm hoping this year they go deep into the playoffs and I get some miles on my car. So go Jets, go," Nolin said.

The Vega is festooned in gear, including flags, a goalie mask, a jet fighter plane, a plush version of Jets mascot Mick E. Moose and ministicks on the wiper blades. It's also equipped with a specialized siren that can be heard for several blocks.

"We call it white noise. So I go all over the place, and we raise hell," Nolin said.

He also has a reproduction Stanley Cup on top but hopes to one day sport the real one for a photo, along with the champion Jets players.

"We're just gonna see what happens," Nolin said, calling the whiteout party "great for the city, great for the team, great for business.

"It's a blast. It's fun."

The Jets are also running a contest throughout the playoffs to highlight the passion and creativity of fans, who are invited to show costumes, home decor, special recipes, cheers, hype songs or other ways they celebrate the team for a chance to win tickets to a 2025 playoff game.

Free whiteout mania lawn signs will also be made available beginning April 15. They can be picked up at any Princess Auto location.

City TV

<https://winnipeg.citynews.ca/2025/04/08/whiteout-parties-return/>

Whiteout parties return to Winnipeg as Jets prepare for playoff run

By Morgan Modjeski

Winnipeg Jets fans can rejoice.

That's because the return of the Whiteout Street Parties is upon us.

True North Sports and Entertainment announced Tuesday that 5,000 fans will be able to converge on Donald Street, between Portage Avenue and Graham Avenue.

"The Winnipeg Whiteout Street Parties have become part of our city's Whiteout traditions," said Kevin Donnelly, True North's Senior Vice President of Venues and Entertainment, in a news release.

"Our fans created the Whiteout, evolved it to the phenomenon it is today and continue to be the essence of the Winnipeg Jets' playoff celebrations. The Whiteout Street Parties are more than just a celebration of our team, they are a celebration of our fans and their desire to share their excitement and passion for our team in a community setting."

Tickets for the events, which will take place during every Jets' home playoff game, are \$10 with 50 per cent of each admission being donated back into the community through United Way Winnipeg.

JP Perron, the United Way Winnipeg 2025 Campaign Chair, offered thanks to the True North, the NHL club and of course, the fans, who contribute to the community through the events.

"Your love for the Jets is making a real, lasting difference," he said in a news release.

"It's been amazing to team up with The Jets and True North on this. Their commitment to the community is inspiring, and I'm so grateful for the positive impact they're helping create for Winnipeggers."

The Government of Manitoba will also be contributing \$300,000 to the celebrations.

Hoping for a "lengthy playoff run" Premier Wab Kinew and Minister of Sport, Culture, Heritage and Tourism Nellie Kennedy say the parties not only offer fans an unforgettable playoff experience, but also boosts the local Downtown economy.

"Winnipeg has the best fans in the NHL and we can't wait to see downtown buzzing with energy," said Kennedy.

"By partnering with True North Sports and Entertainment, we're helping to create safe events downtown that allow neighbours to connect, support local business and create lasting memories as we support our Winnipeg Jets."

Dates for playoff games has yet to be determined, but tickets for home games will go on sale through True North on April 11.

The Athletic

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6260606/2025/04/09/winnipeg-jets-schenn-power-play-lucius/>

Will the Jets keep Luke Schenn? Neal Pionk? What's up with the 5-on-3 power play? Mailbag

By Murat Ates

Morgan Barron is thriving at centre. Why did the Winnipeg Jets wait so long to give him the opportunity?

What comes next for Luke Schenn, either during the playoffs or next season? Will Elias Salomonsson be NHL-ready next year? And what's going on with the disappointing five-on-three power play?

Part two of this month's mailbag provides answers to those questions, plus Neal Pionk's next contract, Chaz Lucius' retirement announcement, Colby Barlow's post-draft progress and more. Thank you as always for the insightful questions, everyone. You're what makes this place great.

Note: Submitted questions may be edited for clarity and style.

Why has it taken until recently to try Morgan Barron at centre? — Ross D.

Scott Arniel nailed this in his postgame comments on Monday.

"He's always said he's a natural centreman," Arniel said of Barron. "I think everybody was when they were playing junior or college."

Arniel was being lighthearted while speaking the truth: A disproportionate number of great, young players play centre. The NHL moves some of them to wing, whether they're Gabriel Vilardi, Cole Perfetti, Mason Appleton (who played centre and right wing growing up), Rasmus Kupari (at times) or Barron. Sometimes it's because a coach identifies a skill set deficiency: Despite Vilardi's and Perfetti's elite hockey sense, Arniel prefers centres to be faster skaters. Sometimes it's just a way of keeping a good player in the lineup while deferring to a better faceoff winner or more established veteran.

Barron worked his way up to Adam Lowry's third line in 2022-23 in his first full season with Winnipeg. Nino Niederreiter took that job for part of the stretch run (with great results) but Barron returned to the job in the playoffs against Vegas. In the small sample in which Barron was bumped to the fourth line, he did so as a wing for Kevin Stenlund, who Rick Bowness preferred for his superior faceoff ability.

It was more of the same last season. Part of Barron's time was spent as Lowry's left wing. Part of it was spent in various incarnations of the Jets' fourth line, where David Gustafsson performed better than Barron did on faceoffs. (Vladislav Namestnikov's faceoff performance was awful but the veteran was appreciated — and deferred to — for the other aspects of his game.)

Part of making it as an NHL player is earning what has always been yours over and over again. Barron is doing that right now.

I don't particularly fault the Jets for taking this long to move Barron into the middle. I can see the logic in their previous approach and their excitement early this season when it seemed as though Kupari had turned a corner in terms of his reads. Now it's on the Jets to recognize what they have.

When Kupari returns from concussion protocol, it may make more sense to play the fleet-footed Finn at right wing.

Luke Schenn has another year after this one on his contract. Would you assume the Jets will want to keep him and his \$2.75 M on the roster for next year? — Ross D.

Yes, I fully expect the Jets to keep Schenn next season. They're thrilled with what he brings in front of the net, in the corners and in the dressing room.

On Tuesday, I caught Barron talking about the Jets' performance against the St. Louis Blues as though Winnipeg had felt extra-connected during the game. When I asked Barron for his thoughts, he agreed and then singled Schenn out for his role.

"Schenner has been a very vocal guy since he got here," Barron said. "You often hear him (say), 'Great job forwards, great job backchecking, let's just gap up.' That's reassuring for us and reassuring for them. It turns into a snowball rolling down the hill and kind of gains some momentum and keeps helping each other out."

Oliver Moore and Gabe Perreault are debuting in the NHL this week, both of whom were still on the board when the Jets selected Colby Barlow. Did the Jets whiff on their first round pick in 2023? — Aavcocup A.

I'm going to go with a short, unresearched "no" in response to your question. I understand concerns about Barlow's development — in fact, I've written about some — but Barlow was viewed as a top prospect when Winnipeg drafted him with the No. 18 pick in 2023. Bob McKenzie's final draft list does a great job aggregating scouts' opinions and often tracks well with when players get chosen; McKenzie had Barlow 12th in his final 2023 rankings. (He had Perreault 10th and Moore 13th.)

Here at The Athletic, Barlow was ranked 17th in Scott Wheeler's final predraft list and 20th by Corey Pronman.

An analysis of his progression since draft day would require more words than this; I'm just not ready to say the Jets whiffed by taking Barlow in a range that seemed quite appropriate for him at the time. Hopefully, for Barlow's sake, he can build on the six-goal, five-assist tear he went on for Oshawa in Round 1 of the OHL playoffs. The Generals are through to Round 2 against top-seeded Brantford.

Murat, what's the deal with the terrible 5-on-3 power play recently? They've looked ... well, really bad. — Grant B.

Let's start with some numbers. The Jets have scored four five-on-three goals this season in 12 opportunities — a 33.3 percent efficiency. This ties them with a bunch of teams for sixth-most in the NHL. On the surface, that sounds just fine. The league average for five-on-three power plays this season is 35.7 percent, compared to 31.6 percent for four-on-three power plays and 20.5 percent for five-on-four.

If you'd like to pick that apart a bit, the Jets are 22nd in terms of goals per minute spent with a five-on-three power play. They take the 22nd-most shot attempts and get the 18th-most shots on goal per minute of five-on-three time, so it's not as though they're shooting or scoring more than average for the situation. (Winnipeg is first in goals per minute and 10th in shots per minute at five-on-four.)

You also mentioned recently. And recently, the Jets' five-on-three power play has looked ... less than ideal. What's going on?

The short answer is they're not moving the puck or their feet quite as fast as they did here:

The slightly less short answer is the only awful five-on-three I could find when watching video was the one against Edmonton on the road last month. Even in other games where the Jets haven't scored, I've thought their puck movement was strong, their off-puck movement was strong, and their shot selection made sense.

That was not the case against the Oilers.

Watch how the Jets without the puck move in this clip compared to the one that came before it. In some cases, they're moving slowly and in others, they're not moving at all. Even the puck carrier is slower.

I realize that "move faster, move more, shoot more" is basic stuff in power-play analysis but my opinion is that the Jets' five-on-three power play has mostly been fine this season before slowing right down in a couple of recent games. I'd have to slow myself down and approach it from a different angle to deliver a more nuanced response.

Do the Jets even try to sign Neal Pionk? — Winnipegjets1972

Yes, they do. They value Pionk's offensive ability, his success alongside Dylan Samberg, his contribution to team culture and his love of Winnipeg. The Pionk family feels at home here and I expect the Jets to make a good pitch to keep him.

I understand some concerns about Pionk's defensive impact in recent seasons. His numbers have been way better with Samberg than without him (which actually makes a lot of sense, considering the drop-off from Samberg to Haydn Fleury). I think the Jets will bet on their all-Hermantown pair continuing to deliver top-four results for them, however you divide up the credit.

The Jets have the top Swiss and Danish goal scorers on their roster. Has any other team had two players who also led their respective nations in goals scored? Or are we alone in this obscure stat? — J M.

I liked this question so much that I sent it to Down Goes Brown. I am including your question to celebrate its uniqueness and to try to persuade DGB to pursue it through a hilarious series of twists and turns in his inimitable style.

My interpretation of your question is that you're talking about Nikolaj Ehlers and Niederreiter, who each lead their nations in career goals scored. A single season wouldn't do, would it? Mario Lemieux (Canada) and Jaromir Jagr (Czechia) led the NHL with 69 and 62 goals each back in 1995-96, for example, but Wayne Gretzky was (and still is) the all-time Canadian goals leader. If we're using Canada as one of our examples, maybe the trick is to start with March 23, 1994, and follow Gretzky from Los Angeles to St. Louis and then New York in search for other country's goal-scoring leaders.

As it turns out, that's a successful trick: Gretzky's 1993-94 teammate, Jari Kurri, was Finland's all-time goals leader until Teemu Selanne passed him on April 2, 2010. I can find one other example of a team employing two different countries' all-time goals leaders. Can anyone find another?

Will Elias Salomonsson be ready for the third pair job at right defence? — Winnipegjets1972

Yes.

Phew. Easy. Wait, you want to know if he ends up getting the job?

That's trickier. While I don't know and can't guarantee that Pionk re-signs in Winnipeg, I am expecting the Jets' top four to include Josh Morrissey, Samberg, Pionk and Dylan DeMelo. I don't think Winnipeg can reasonably count on Schenn to step into that role if Pionk signs elsewhere, especially given the drop-off in DeMelo's performance this season. This leaves Schenn first in line for the third-pairing right-defence job, with competition from Colin Miller.

Salomonsson will turn 21 years old before the season starts, with two years remaining on his entry-level contract. It would take a spectacular camp for Winnipeg to burn assets in the name of keeping him with the NHL club. I view Salomonsson's long-term outlook similarly to Samberg's — or beyond, in a best-case scenario, given Salomonsson's youth — and wholeheartedly believe he is capable of that spectacular camp performance.

The glut of right-shot defenders creates a challenge for him, as does the ease with which Winnipeg could simply assign him to the Moose without fear of waivers. If the Jets are willing to play somebody on their off side — and it works — I wouldn't be terribly worried about them moving lefties Logan Stanley or Ville Heinola to make room.

Is Chaz Lucius done? — Alan M.

Chaz Lucius' playing career has come to an end. The Jets' 2021 first-round pick has had injury issues throughout his career — with three straight seasons prior to this one derailed by injury — and now he knows why.

"Recently, I was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS) which is a hereditary disorder that affects the connective tissue that stabilizes and supports the joints and organs throughout the body," Lucius said via a statement on social media from his agency, Newport Sports. "As I struggled with incurring and recovering from various joint injuries over the past several years, I thought I was just unlucky. With this diagnosis of EDS, I now realize my body could not handle the physical nature of playing hockey."

At his healthiest and best, Lucius showed tremendous instincts in the offensive zone, using great vision and timing to find soft ice and create scoring chances. While he was often sidelined by injury, he did manage 27 points in 54 AHL games as a young player. He excelled when competing against his peers, scoring a hat trick in the 2023 World Juniors bronze medal game.

I don't know much about EDS but one constant in the literature I can find is that it's difficult to diagnose. Thinking back to all of the injuries Lucius has experienced, even before the Jets drafted him in 2021, I hope he finds solace in understanding more about why he's experienced so many joint injuries. I also remember reading this feature story by Scott Wheeler, in which Lucius walks us through all the books he's just read and one of Lucius' coaches compares his mindset to that of Tom Brady. He strikes me as an intelligent, motivated person who will find a way to excel in his post-playing career.

Lucius ends his statement by saying he looks forward to becoming an advocate for people afflicted with EDS. What a tremendous purpose that would be for a driven young man who kept a positive attitude throughout his injury troubles.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6265424/2025/04/08/winnipeg-jets-prospect-chaz-lucius-retires/>

Winnipeg Jets prospect Chaz Lucius retires from hockey at age 21 for medical reasons

By Rob Rossi

Chaz Lucius, a first-round pick by the Winnipeg Jets in 2021, retired from professional hockey Tuesday after being diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

Lucius, 21, never played in the NHL but scored seven goals and 27 points in 54 AHL games for the Manitoba Moose, the Jets' top minor-league affiliate.

"Recently, I was diagnosed with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS), which is a hereditary disorder that affects the connective tissue that stabilizes and supports the joints and organs throughout the body," Lucius said in a statement on social media via his agency, Newport Sports.

"As I struggled with incurring and recovering from various joint injuries over the past several years, I had thought I was just unlucky. With this diagnosis of EDS, I now realize that my body impacted by EDS could not handle the physical nature of playing hockey," he continued.

According to the Cleveland Clinic, EDS is "a genetic condition that makes your body's connective tissue weaker than it should be." It also explains that EDS usually impacts the skin and joints. There is no cure, but EDS is not life-threatening once a person learns to manage symptoms and prevent potentially dangerous complications.

Lucius, a center, was ranked as the top Jets prospect in 2023 by The Athletic's Murat Ates. However, even then, injuries were a concern.

As part of Ates' 2023 rankings, he wrote:

"Chaz Lucius needs to stay healthy. He's finished three straight seasons on the sidelines and, at 20 years old, can already name his shoulder, knee and ankle as 'body parts repaired by surgery.'"

Lucius had fallen to eighth among Jets prospects only a year later, primarily because of his inability to stay healthy.

The Jets, also in a statement, said they supported Lucius' retirement.

"After much discussion and consultation with Chaz, his representatives and medical professionals, the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club fully supports his difficult decision to retire. Chaz's condition and struggles with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS) put him at

risk of injury if he continues to play at the professional level, so we understand his choice. We wish Chaz all the best in his efforts to be an advocate for those dealing with EDS and hope for a bright future in front of him.”

Lucius reiterated that he looks forward “to being an advocate for those suffering with EDS and to all that is ahead of me.”