

**Winnipegjets.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/jets/news/three-things-jets-run-into-hot-goaltender-lose-game-4>

***Three things - Jets run into hot goaltender, lose Game 4  
Oettinger makes 31 saves, Ehlers scores lone goal for Winnipeg in Game 4***

By Jamie Thomas

The Winnipeg Jets road losing streak in the 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs has reached five games as they fell 3-1 to the Dallas Stars at American Airlines Center. Nikolaj Ehlers scored for the Jets who now trail the best-of-seven series three games to one. Connor Hellebuyck made 21 saves to fall to 5-6, the series shifts back to the Manitoba capital for Game 5 on Thursday at Canada Life Centre.

***OETTINGER THE STORY***

Jake Oettinger backed up Connor Hellebuyck at the 4 Nations Face-Off but Tuesday night the Stars goaltender was the story. The Jets played another solid road game but could not solve Oettinger who ended up making 31 saves in his best performance of the series. Possibly his best save came with the Stars leading 2-1 and on the power play, Kyle Connor came in on a shorthanded breakaway and Oettinger shut the door. Moments later, Dallas scored on the man advantage for the insurance marker.

***STARS SPECIAL TEAMS BETTER***

Much like Game 3, the Stars opened the scoring on the power play when Mikael Granlund walked up the middle of ice and beat Connor Hellebuyck with a long wrist shot. With Dallas leading by one in the third period, Haydn Fleury got a double-minor for high sticking and as the second minor penalty was about to expire, Granlund completed the hat trick with his second power play goal of the night. Meanwhile, the Jets went 0-for-3 on the power play, Dallas finished 2-for-4.

“It's pretty simple answer. They scored and we didn't, we need to find a way to get some better looks and get pucks through, get the rebounds,” said Nikolaj Ehlers.

“We need to be harder on pucks. They're hard on pucks when they get in the battles, and we need to be harder and get those pucks out.”

***DIFFERENT LOOKS***

The Jets looking to even the series decided to mix things up front with some different line combos. Scott Arniel went with Alex Iafallo on the right side of Mark Scheifele and Kyle Connor, Adam Lowry in the middle of Gabriel Vilardi and Nikolaj Ehlers, Vlad Namestnikov with Cole Perfetti and Nino Niederreiter and Brandon Tanev, Morgan Barron and Mason Appleton on the fourth line. The Scheifele trio and Namestnikov line led the way with three high danger scoring chances.

“All the lines had zone time. It was different because Dallas went 11-and-7, so kind of knew what the changes would be for them,” said Scott Arniel.

“Just for us, I thought all of our combinations had a lot of opportunities, we just didn’t put the puck in the net.”

## **NHL.com**

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-searching-for-road-win-in-playoffs-face-elimination>

### ***Hellebuyck, Jets still searching for road win in Stanley Cup Playoffs Winnipeg has lost past 9 postseason away games since 2023, including 5 this year***

By Nicholas J. Cotsonika

DALLAS -- The chants echoed throughout American Airlines Center on Tuesday.

“OTT-ER’S BET-TER! OTT-ER’S BET-TER!”

Connor Hellebuyck lost the goaltending battle to Jake Oettinger, his backup for the United States in the 4 Nations Face-Off in February, and the Winnipeg Jets lost to the Dallas Stars 3-1 in Game 4 of the Western Conference Second Round.

The Presidents’ Trophy winners trail the best-of-7 series 3-1 and face elimination in Game 5 at Canada Life Centre in Winnipeg on Thursday (9:30 p.m. ET; CBC, TVAS, SN, TNT, truTV, MAX).

“I’m doing my best, and you know, sometimes it’s a heartbreak,” Hellebuyck said. “But all it takes is one little change, one little bounce, and things can start going our way.”

It’s hard to believe.

The Jets led the NHL with 26 road wins in the regular season, a big reason they had the League’s best record. But they’re 0-5 on the road in the Stanley Cup Playoffs and have lost nine straight away from home in the playoffs dating to 2023.

Hellebuyck won the Vezina Trophy as the NHL’s top goaltender for the second time last season. He was so good this season that he was not only a finalist for the Vezina, but also for the Hart Trophy, which goes to the League’s most valuable player. But he’s 0-5 with a 5.84 goals-against average and .793 save percentage on the road in the playoffs.

Winnipeg outplayed Dallas on Tuesday, but Oettinger outplayed Hellebuyck. From a U.S. perspective, you wonder what this means for the 2026 Milano Cortina Olympics.

From a Winnipeg perspective, it's an issue with the offense as much as, or more than, the goaltending.

The Jets had 72 shot attempts to the Stars' 45, and they had a 32-24 advantage in shots on goal. Oettinger made 31 saves, some big ones right before Dallas goals. Hellebuyck made 21.

"I thought we played a good hockey game," Jets coach Scott Arniel said. "We had 70 shot attempts and scored one goal. If we can't find more than one goal, we're not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team.

"I liked a lot of what we did 5-on-5. I liked a lot of the opportunities that we created. I loved our first period. We got off to a great start, had them hemmed in, had some great looks. Oettinger made some big stops."

After Oettinger made saves on forwards Gabriel Vilardi and Cole Perfetti, forward Mikael Granlund sauntered across the blue line during a Dallas power play. He fired a shot from the high slot in front of defenseman Neal Pionk that eluded Hellebuyck, giving the Stars a 1-0 lead at 8:36.

"Obviously, [Hellebuyck] probably wants the one back, the first one, the wrister coming in," Arniel said.

Asked if he got a clean look at the shot, Hellebuyck said: "I need to review it. I mean, his stick snapped into our guy's shin pad, but I got a clean enough look. I mean, it was just a damn perfect shot, just above my pad, below my glove."

Oettinger stopped forward Kyle Connor from point-blank range at 16:55 of the second, and then Granlund came down on a 2-on-1 rush, looked to his left as if to pass and whipped the puck past Hellebuyck's glove at 17:52. Instead of taking a 2-1 lead, the Jets fell behind 2-1.

Jets defenseman Haydn Fleury took a double minor for high-sticking at 3:26 of the third. Oettinger stopped Connor on a shorthanded breakaway at 5:19, and then Granlund ripped a one-timer from a sharp angle in the right circle past Hellebuyck for a hat trick at 7:23. Instead of tying the game 2-2, the Jets fell behind 3-1.

"I actually thought we played a really good game," Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers said. "I think at the end of the day, we've got to score on our chances. It's as simple as that."

Easier said than done. Oettinger is 3-1 with a 2.02 GAA and a .929 save percentage in this series, while Hellebuyck is 1-3 with a 2.84 GAA and an .884 save percentage.

Winnipeg is going to have to win a game in Dallas to win this series. But first, the Jets must win Game 5 at home. At least they're 5-1 at home in the playoffs, where Hellebuyck is 5-1 with a 1.99 GAA, a .902 save percentage and one shutout.

“At the end of the day, we’ve got to get him some run support,” Arniel said. “He’ll do his job. We’ve got to get him some run support. We’ve got to get him a lead. We’ve to get out in front, make this team chase us instead of us chasing them like we have in the last couple games.”

A reporter told Hellebuyck he seemed more frustrated than usual after a game. How could he not be?

“This is pretty raw,” Hellebuyck said. “It is playoffs, and it’s been maybe five minutes since the end of the game. Every loss is frustrating. That being said, I’m just really looking forward to the next one, and leave it all out there.”

<https://www.nhl.com/news/winnipeg-jets-dallas-stars-game-4-recap-may-13>

***Granlund gets hat trick, Stars push Jets to brink with Game 4 win  
Forward scores 3 goals for 1st time since 2017, Dallas moves within 1 victory of  
Western Final***

By Taylor Baird

DALLAS -- Mikael Granlund scored a hat trick for the Dallas Stars, who pushed the Winnipeg Jets to the brink with a 3-1 win in Game 4 of the Western Conference Second Round at American Airlines Center on Tuesday.

It was Granlund's first career hat trick in the Stanley Cup Playoffs. It was also just the third time in his NHL career he has scored three goals in a game, and the first since Dec. 29, 2017, when he played for the Minnesota Wild.

Dallas leads the best-of-7 series 3-1. Game 5 will be in Winnipeg on Thursday (9:30 p.m. ET; CBC, TVAS, SN, TNT, truTV, MAX).

“When you pass all the time, you know, you’re going to surprise the goalie maybe once in a while to shoot the puck,” Granlund said. “The job is not done. We have a lot of work to do. So you know, a good win, and we have a tough game ahead of us in Winnipeg.”

Jake Oettinger made 31 saves for Dallas, which is the No. 2 seed from the Central Division. Miro Heiskanen, who was playing in his first game since Jan. 28 because of a knee injury, had an assist in 14:52 of ice time.

“Tonight was the first night we've actually had our full team together, and everyone is still not 100 percent, but a nice feeling to have. I hope we can keep everybody in a healthy place, we can keep this going for a little bit,” Dallas coach Pete DeBoer said. “I got goose bumps when the crowd cheered, when they announced [Heiskanen’s] name. That's a great shot of energy for our group tonight. It's always toughest to win two in a row. You knew [the Jets] were going to push. They pushed hard. I thought they played

hard all night. We needed a little bit of a shot of energy, and we got it from Miro, we got it from Granlund, we got it from [Oettinger]."

Nikolaj Ehlers scored for Winnipeg, which won the Presidents' Trophy as the team with the best record in the regular season. Connor Hellebuyck made 21 saves.

"Just win one game, leave it all out there," Hellebuyck said. "I leave it all out there every night. I'm doing my best. Sometimes it's a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce and things can start going our way. We're a good team, so we can really rack [the wins] up, but we've just got to worry [about] one at a time."

Play Video

WPG@DAL, Gm4: Ehlers knocks one by Oettinger to tie it up early in the 2nd

Granlund gave Dallas a 1-0 lead at 8:36 of the first period. He skated through the neutral zone and into the high slot before scoring glove side through Neal Pionk for a power-play goal.

Ehlers tied it 1-1 at 1:02 of the second period. He took a pass along the right boards and scored with a sharp-angled shot that deflected in off Oettinger two seconds after a power play expired.

"I actually thought we played a really good game. I think at the end of the day, we got to score on our chances. It's as simple as that," Ehlers said. "They scored and we didn't. We need to find a way to get some better looks and get pucks through, get the rebounds. We need to be harder on pucks. They're hard on pucks when they get in the battles, and we need to be harder and get those pucks out. And that's where we've been able to create a lot of chances throughout the regular season. So, we need to be a lot harder."

Granlund responded to put Dallas back in front 2-1 at 17:52 of the second. He skated in on a 2-on-1 rush and roofed a shot over Hellebuyck's glove from the inside edge of the right circle.

Oettinger then preserved the one-goal lead at 5:19 of the third period by making a save with his left pad on a short-handed breakaway chance by Kyle Connor.

"We feel like when we have everyone we're going to be a tough out. We got all our guys back healthy, different guys are stepping up every night. We feel like when we play the right way and focus on our net first, we're going to be tough to beat," Oettinger said. "We've been right there the last two years. The ball is in our court now, we're up 3-1. It's on us to play a mature game up in Winnipeg. We don't want to have to come back here and play again. We've all been talking about how bad we want to get back to the conference final, now it's our turn to show up."

Granlund completed the hat trick during the same power play to make it 3-1. He roofed a one-timer glove side on Hellebuyck from the outside edge of the right circle at 7:23.

"I thought we played a good hockey game. We had 70 shot attempts and scored one goal. We're not going to, if we can't find more than one goal, we're not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team," Winnipeg coach Scott Arniel said. "I liked a lot of what we did 5-on-5, I liked a lot of the opportunities that we created. I loved our first period. We got off to a great start, had them hemmed in, had some great looks. Oettinger made some big stops. But like I said, we had 70 shot attempts. We've got to get more than that, more than one goal off of those. Maybe [we need to start] driving harder than that, finding those rebounds, screening, whatever it is. We've done it. We've done it in the past and we've got to find a way to do it in the next game."

<https://www.nhl.com/news/topic/playoffs/2025/series-k-news/miro-heiskanen-return-key-for-dallas-stars-in-game-4-win>

### ***Heiskanen provides immediate boost in return for Stars in Game 4 Defenseman has key assist in 1st game since sustaining knee injury on Jan. 28***

By Nicholas J. Cotsonika

DALLAS -- Miro Heiskanen returned from a knee injury with an assist in a 3-1 win for the Dallas Stars against the Winnipeg Jets in Game 4 of the Western Conference Second Round at American Airlines Center on Tuesday.

The Stars' No. 1 defenseman hadn't played since Jan. 28 after what coach Pete DeBoer called "a serious knee surgery."

"It's hard, for sure," Heiskanen said. "You never want to miss any time and want to be playing. That stuff happens in this sport, and it's something you have to deal with. You just have to try to stay positive, and the guys did a great job to beat [the Colorado Avalanche in the first round]. Now I had a chance to come back and be playing again."

"Of course, it's frustrating to be out and watching the games. But it's great to be back now."

Heiskanen played 14:52 on Tuesday after averaging 25:10 in 50 regular-season games, fifth in the NHL. He played on the second power play, with defenseman Thomas Harley continuing to quarterback the top unit as he did in Heiskanen's absence.

"Play short shifts and make simple plays at the beginning," Heiskanen said. "I'm just trying to be smart and handle the pressure well. It's a long time between the last game. It's fun to be back, and the guys helped out there."

During a Dallas power play in the third period, Heiskanen was a step behind as Jets forward Kyle Connor broke away, but goalie Jake Oettinger made the save.

Soon afterward, forward Matt Duchene hit a goal post, and the puck bounced out to the high slot. Heiskanen stopped it with his left skate, then whipped a pass to the right circle. Forward Mikael Granlund one-timed the puck into the net, completing a hat trick and giving Dallas a 3-1 lead at 7:23.

"That's the first time I've ever seen him not catch a guy on a breakaway, so you can tell he's been out a while," DeBoer said of Heiskanen. "I thought it was a perfect night. He got 15 minutes in and made a huge play for us on the power play. You can see what he has with his composure and patience with the puck. It's hard not to play him more. We have to fight the urge. Talking to him after he got through the game, he feels good, so mission accomplished."

Dallas made the Western Conference Final in each of the past two seasons. In those two playoff runs combined, Heiskanen led the Stars with 28:00 of average ice time and their defensemen with 28 points (seven goals, 21 assists) in 38 games. If he can get back up to speed, he can make Dallas even more dangerous.

"It's great," Oettinger said. "He has worked his butt off and is such a big part of this team. The fact that we get to add a guy like that halfway through the postseason run is pretty incredible."

<https://www.nhl.com/news/topic/playoffs/2025/series-k-news/winnipeg-jets-road-from-wha-to-nhl-playoffs-west-2nd-round>

***Jets have come long way from WHA to Western 2nd Round against Stars  
Original franchise played strategic role in expansion that brought Hartford,  
Edmonton, Quebec City into NHL***

By Stan Fischler

Legendary hockey reporter Stan Fischler writes a weekly scrapbook for NHL.com. Fischler, known also as "The Hockey Maven," shares his humor and insight with readers each Wednesday. This week he focuses on the Western Conference Second Round between the Winnipeg Jets and Dallas Stars while sharing how the original Jets overcame adversity to successfully plant the NHL in Manitoba.

Every so often, a sporting event takes place that has eternal written all over it.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman watched firsthand when the Winnipeg Jets defeated the St. Louis Blues 4-3 in double overtime in Game 7 of the Western Conference First Round and put that magical game in historic perspective.

"Moments like that will be in people's minds for a long time," Commissioner Bettman said. "You see the connection to the hockey club and to hockey and to the city. Sports brings people together and the Jets brought the people of Winnipeg together."

The Presidents' Trophy-winning Jets trail the best-of-7 second round 3-1 to the Dallas Stars after a 3-1 loss in Game 4 at American Airlines Center on Tuesday, when Miro Heiskanen had an assist in 14:52 of ice time in his return from a knee injury that sidelined the defenseman since Jan. 28.

"I hope we can keep everybody in a healthy place," Stars coach Pete DeBoer said. "We knew that the Jets were going to push. They pushed hard and played hard all night."

Stars forward Mikko Rantanen had a natural hat trick in Game 1 and three points (one goal, two assists) in Game 3, a 5-2 win that included a goal by Dallas defenseman Alexander Petrovic that bounced in off Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck's stick at 3:51 of the third period, a goal upheld by video review.

"It was a pretty lucky goal," Petrovic said, "but it was a good timely goal."

There was nothing lucky about Mikael Granlund's first NHL postseason hat trick that put the Jets on the brink entering Game 5 at Canada Life Centre on Thursday (9:30 p.m. ET; CBC, TVAS, SN, TNT, truTV, MAX).

"But the job is not done," Granlund said. "We have a lot of work to do. We have a tough game ahead of us in Winnipeg."

The Jets are still in pursuit of their first Stanley Cup championship since Winnipeg played a strategic role in NHL expansion via the World Hockey Association, which was founded in 1971 and opened for business a year later. By luring future Hockey Hall of Famer Bobby Hull from the Chicago Black Hawks to play for the newly formed Jets, owner Ben Hatskin turned the hockey world upside down.

"Hull would become the WHA," wrote Ed Willes in "The Rebel League: The Short and Unruly Life of the World Hockey Association."

"He was its star, its face, its drawing card and its goodwill ambassador."

The WHA also bolstered itself by adding Gordie Howe, Dave Keon and Frank Mahovlich, and several younger players who eventually became NHL stars. By 1977, NHL president John Ziegler and his WHA counterpart, Howard Baldwin, began negotiations leading to a merger with the NHL for the 1979-90 season, the League expanding into Hartford, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Quebec City.

"It was Winnipeg that made it happen," Baldwin said, "If it wasn't for Bobby Hull and the WHA's 1972 Jets, Edmonton and Winnipeg wouldn't be in the League today."

The original Jets endured a lean expansion draft. They won 20 games in 1979-80 and only nine a season later before their first playoff appearance, a 3-1 loss to the Blues in the best-of-5 Norris Division Semifinals. The state of the 2025 playoff run is yet to be



determined, but this much is certain: They have come a long way since Tom McVie's understaffed team struggled to win games. One day after McVie was asked about the pressure of coaching the Jets, he shot back: "What pressure? I sleep like a baby."

Then, a pause: "Every two hours I wake up and cry."

### **TSN.ca**

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/jets-down-to-their-last-life-as-playoff-demons-continue-to-torment~3133480>

### ***Jets down to their last life as playoff demons continue to torment Winnipeg (VIDEO)***

The Jets are down to their last life after dropping both games in Dallas, scoring just three goals total in those losses. With the Stars now up 3-1 in the series, is the hill too steep to climb for Winnipeg? The TSN Hockey panel breaks down Game 4 and how the Mikael Granlund acquisition is paying dividends for Dallas.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/lu-stars-finnish-trio-of-rantanen-granlund-and-hintz-is-getting-the-better-of-the-jets~3121552>

### ***Lu: Stars' Finnish trio of Rantanen, Granlund and Hintz is getting the better of the Jets (VIDEO)***

TSN Jets reporter John Lu joins SportsCentre to weigh in on Jake Oettinger outplaying Connor Hellebuyck in Game 4 and how the Stars' top line has titled the ice against Winnipeg's top players.

<https://www.tsn.ca/nhl/video/have-the-stars-figured-out-hellebuyck~3133479>

### ***Have the Stars figured out Hellebuyck? (VIDEO)***

Mikael Granlund lit up the Jets with a hat trick in Game 4 as the Stars pushed Winnipeg to the brink of elimination. What have Granlund and the Stars solved about Connor Hellebuyck? What's wrong with the Jets on the road? TSN Hockey analyst Martin Biron joins SportsCentre to discuss.

**Sportsnet.ca**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/video/are-hellebuycks-struggles-in-the-playoffs-beyond-salvageable/>

***Are Hellebuyck's struggles in the playoffs beyond salvageable? (VIDEO)***

Kevin Bieska joins Sportsnet Central after the Jets' Game 4 loss to the Stars to discuss another disappointing performance from Connor Hellebuyck, a couple of controversial plays favouring the Stars, and the Jets' struggling power play.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/more-road-woes-push-jets-to-brink-of-elimination/>

***More road woes push Jets to brink of elimination***

By Iain MacIntyre

DALLAS — The Winnipeg Jets must be good to be able to lose all these playoff games.

Over this season and the last two, no National Hockey League team has won more regular-season games than Winnipeg's 154. And, yet, no team has lost more consecutive road playoff games than the Jets, who on Tuesday had their best road performance of the current Stanley Cup tournament but still lost 3-1 to the Dallas Stars, imperilling their season.

It was the first time in Winnipeg's unfathomable nine-game road losing streak that the team allowed fewer than four goals. And the ninth time they have scored two or less.

"We had 70 shot attempts and scored one goal," Jets head coach Scott Arniel, who inherited the road kill from previous coach Rick Bowness, lamented after the Stars boosted their second-round series lead to 3-1. "If we can't find more than one goal, we're not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team.

"I liked a lot of what we did five-on-five. I liked a lot of the opportunities that we created. I loved our first period. We got off to a great start, had them hemmed in, had some great looks. (Jake) Oettinger made some big stops. But like I said, we had 70 shot attempts. We've got to get ... more than one goal off of those. Maybe that's driving harder (to the net), finding those rebounds, screening, whatever it is. We've done it in the past and we've got to find a way to do it the next game."

Dallas goalie Oettinger stopped 31 of 32 shots on net and was the second-best player Tuesday, behind only hat-trick hero Mikael Granlund, who single-handedly tripled the output of the entire Jets roster.

Winnipeg goalie Connor Hellebuyck was better than he has been, but still allowed a softie to open the scoring and was probably not among the top 20 players on Tuesday.

Hellebuyck was beaten three times on 24 shots, but couldn't be faulted on the lasers Granlund perfectly fired into small windows for his final two goals. The killer was a one-timer into the roof of the net at 7:23 of the third period at the end of what had been an exemplary Winnipeg penalty kill of three seconds less than the four-minute, double-minor Jets defenceman Haydn Fleury took for high-sticking Roope Hintz at 3:26.

But Granlund's first goal, an unscreened 32-footer at 8:36 of the first period, was another groaner like the several from distance Hellebuyck has surrendered in these playoffs.

Asked if he was aware from the Stars' pre-scout that Hellebuyck has been vulnerable from distance, Granlund said: "Honestly, no clue. I was just shooting it somewhere and it went in. Obviously, we go through a little pre-scout but, you know, you just try to find a hole. And I was lucky it went in."

"I need to review it," Hellebuyck told reporters. "His stick snapped into our guy's shin pad, but I had a clean enough look. It was just a damn perfect shot, just above my pad and below my glove. I don't know, I need to review it."

Arniel didn't need to see it again.

"Obviously, probably wants the one back, the first one, the wrister coming in," the coach said of his goalie. "Man, the one, three seconds left on that four (minute penalty), it was an unbelievable kill by us. That's a seeing-eye shot, that's a heckuva shot. I mean, right under the bar from the short side. But at the end of the day, we've got to get (Hellebuyck) some run support.

"He'll do his job. We've got to get him some run support. We've got to get him the lead, we've got to get out in front. Make this team chase us, instead of us chasing them like we have in the last couple of games."

The Jets will be chasing from now on.

They need to sweep the series' final three games to advance to their first Western Conference Final since 2018, and the good news is only one of those would be away from home.

Game 5 is Thursday in Winnipeg, where the Jets are 5-1 in the post-season.

"Just win one game," Hellebuyck said. "Leave it all out there. I leave it all out there every night. I'm doing my best. Sometimes it's a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce and things can start going our way."

Oettinger wasn't quite perfect.

He was fooled by Nikolaj Ehlers' sharp-angle shot that made it 1-1 at 1:02 of the second period. But nearly all of the toughest saves were made by Oettinger — none bigger than his stop on Jets sniper Kyle Connor on a shorthanded breakaway about two minutes before Granlund's clinching goal.

"He was probably our best player tonight," Dallas coach Pete DeBoer said of his goalie. "He was so solid. You know, he made a lot of really tough saves look easy. And the breakaway save was ... the turning point of the night. They score there, the momentum flips and who knows what happens down the stretch. So he was fantastic."

In his first game back from knee surgery three-and-a-half months ago, Dallas defenceman Miro Heiskanen teed up Granlund's third goal and logged 14:52 of ice time as DeBoer used seven blue-liners.

DeBoer said he could tell Heiskanen is still working to find his game because he couldn't catch Connor on the key breakaway. But Heiskanen will probably be better in his second game than he was in his first. Outplayed for stretches of Tuesday's game, in which shot-attempts finished 72-45 for Winnipeg, the Stars team might be better, too.

At least it's a home game for the Jets.

"If I had the answer to why," Ehlers said of the nine-game road losing streak, "we would have gotten one at some point.

"The message is pretty clear to everyone: We need to go home and win and we know that. Obviously, going to Dallas and losing two is not what we were looking for. We had some good moments, but at the end of the day, we lost. So we've got to go home, recharge, get ready for the next one."

And hope there's another one after that.

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/why-stars-game-3-winner-vs-jets-counted-after-kicking-review/>

### ***Stars' Oettinger outduelling Team USA teammate Hellebuyck in playoffs***

By Sportsnet Staff

Jake Oettinger and Connor Hellebuyck have gone from teammates to rivals in the most important games of their season. But through five games in the Western Conference semifinal series between the Dallas Stars and Winnipeg Jets, one goalie has risen above the rest.

Oettinger made 31 saves in a 3-1 win Tuesday to put the Stars up 3-1 in the series. Overall in the series, Oettinger has now allowed just eight goals with a .929 save percentage, while Hellebuyck has allowed 11 goals for an .887 save percentage.

The duo were teammates for Team USA in February's 4 Nations Face-Off, with Hellebuyck starting three of the four games, including the gold-medal game overtime loss to Canada. But with the way Oettinger has performed in these playoffs, those roles could be reversed when the NHL returns to the Olympics in 2026.

"Other than winning the Cup, that's my No. 1 goal," Oettinger told Sportsnet's Scott Oake when asked about starting for his home country at the Olympics. "A long ways from now, a lot of hockey left... I can worry about that when it comes."

If Oettinger keeps playing like he has in the playoffs, both of those dreams could come true very soon.

### **Associated Press**

<https://www.sportsnet.ca/nhl/article/granlunds-hat-trick-leads-stars-to-game-4-win-3-1-series-lead-over-jets/>

### ***Granlund's hat trick leads Stars to Game 4 win, 3-1 series lead over Jets***

By Associated Press

DALLAS — Mikael Granlund had his first career playoff hat trick, Jake Oettinger stopped 31 shots, and the Dallas Stars beat Winnipeg 3-1 on Tuesday night, taking a 3-1 series lead over the top-seeded Jets in the second round of the Western Conference playoffs.

Mikko Rantanen upped his NHL-leading playoff total to 19 points (nine goals) with the primary assist on Granlund's second goal that broke a 1-1 tie with 2:08 left in the second period and put the Stars ahead to stay.

Granlund did a double fist pump from his knees, then popped up to his skates after his third goal, his fourth in these playoffs, on a power play with 12:37 left in the game. The 33-year-old forward had scored multiple goals only one time in his previous 69 playoff games, for Minnesota in 2014.

Game 5 is at Winnipeg on Thursday, when the Stars will have their first chance to advance to the West final for the third year in a row.

Nikolaj Ehlers scored for the Jets, who have lost all five of their road games this post-season.

The primary assist on the third Granlund goal came from Miro Heiskanen, the standout defenceman in the lineup for the first time since Jan. 28 after missing the final 32 regular-season games and first 10 playoff games because of a knee injury.

That came soon after Oettinger's kick save on Kyle Connor's short-handed attempt in the first half of a double-minor penalty against Haydn Fleury. Granlund scored just before the end of the four-minute penalty.

Granlund got his first goal after skating down the middle over both blue lines, and a nifty move around Brandon Tanev near mid-ice, before snapping a 38-foot shot past Connor Hellebuyck for a 1-0 lead just 8 1/2 minutes into the game.

Hellebuyck has now lost nine consecutive playoff road games since winning Game 1 at Vegas in 2023, before the Golden Knights won four in a row. The two-time Vezina Trophy winner, the odds-on favourite to win the top goalie award again this season, has allowed 24 goals in the five road losses in these playoffs.

The Jets began the second period with a minute left on a power play and Dallas technically killed the tripping penalty. But Ehlers scored from a severe angle, his shot from the bottom of the circle to the left of Oettinger going under the goalie's legs and ricocheting into the net while Tyler Seguin was coming out of the box.

### **Canadian Press**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11179402/winnipeg-jets-must-win-dallas-stars/>

### ***Jets in must-win mode after dropping 3-1 decision to Stars in Game 4***

By Gregory Strong The Canadian Press

As the final minutes of regulation time ticked down Tuesday night, Winnipeg Jets executive chairman Mark Chipman paced outside his team's dressing room.

Hands in his pant pockets, head facing down, Chipman occasionally glanced up at the television monitor in the hallway.

He watched as his team pressed late but couldn't cut the deficit, eventually dropping a 3-1 decision to Dallas in a Game 4 loss that left the Jets in must-win mode for this second-round NHL playoff series.

Chipman folded his arms and looked away in the dying seconds. He didn't need to look up again. The game-ending horn that blared throughout American Airlines Center and the roar from the sellout crowd said it all.

Chipman moved to the side as the dejected players made their way into the room, a frustrated Josh Morrissey punching the door on his way through.

The Presidents' Trophy winners have been unable to win on the road in these playoffs and now they're on the brink of elimination. The result, with Mikael Granlund scoring all

three goals for the Stars, left Jets coach Scott Arniel with a clear message for his players.

“Don’t lose your last game,” he said. “Real simple.”

Game 5 goes Thursday at Canada Life Centre, a venue that will be a welcome sight for a Winnipeg side that has lost nine straight road playoff games and all five this post-season.

The Jets aren’t getting breaks and the Stars have taken advantage of their opportunities. Jake Oettinger has outplayed Winnipeg’s Connor Hellebuyck in net and Dallas is playing with confidence.

The free-flowing skating, crisp puck movement and offensive potency that helped the Jets finish first in the overall standings have been minimized due to more frequent broken plays and general scuffling.

Something just feels a little off and when Winnipeg presses to find another gear, it sometimes backfires.

There are no easy answers for a team that hasn’t won a road playoff game since the 2023 playoff opener in Las Vegas.

“If I had the answer to why, we would have got one at some point,” Ehlers said. “I think this (season) we’ve been really good on the road, and now we need to win at home and find a way here and hopefully make it to Game 6.

“So we need to find a way, simple as that.”

Arniel experimented for Game 4 by juggling his lines with Mark Scheifele on the top unit with wingers Kyle Connor and Alex Iafallo.

The Stars also changed things up as star blueliner Miro Heiskanen returned after an absence of over three months due to knee surgery.

A good start by Winnipeg was negated by an undisciplined penalty from Dylan DeMelo. He was called for holding the stick and Granlund tallied on the power play with a wrist shot that beat Hellebuyck on the glove side.

After Ehlers scored early in the second period, Granlund restored the Dallas lead by shooting on a 2-on-1 break. He notched his first career hat trick with a one-timer midway through the third.

“Granny led the way,” said Stars coach Pete DeBoer.

Heiskanen, meanwhile, played almost 15 minutes and set up Granlund's final goal — a power-play marker — with a crisp pass from the point.

"He's worked his butt off," Oettinger said of Heiskanen. "Just such a big part of this team. The fact that we get to add a guy like that halfway through the post-season run is incredible."

Sounds like a player who's preparing to play two more rounds. If Oettinger plays like he did Tuesday, he very well might.

Oettinger made 31 stops, including a highlight-reel save on Kyle Connor in the second period and a short-handed breakaway stop on the Winnipeg forward in the third.

"There were a couple of guys that had some really good looks," Arniel said. "Just got to find a way to bury those."

Hellebuyck, a Vezina Trophy and Hart Trophy nominee, has started all five road losses this spring. He has a 5.84 goals-against average and .793 save percentage away from home in the playoffs.

"I leave it all out there every night, I'm doing my best," Hellebuyck said in a rare post-game media availability for the netminder. "Sometimes it's a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce and things can start going our way."

The Jets led the NHL with 26 road wins this past season and topped the Western Conference in road points percentage.

They won't be back on the road this spring without a victory at home in Game 5.

### **Global Winnipeg**

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11178870/winnipeg-jets-on-brink-of-elimination-after-3-1-game-4-loss-in-dallas/>

### ***Winnipeg Jets on brink of elimination after 3-1 Game 4 loss in Dallas***

By Christian Aumell & Russ Hobson Global News

Tuesday night in Dallas, the Winnipeg Jets played their best road game of the 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs.

They still lost.

Jake Oettinger was brilliant in goal, while Mikael Granlund scored a hat-trick as the Dallas Stars took down the Jets 3-1 to take a 3-1 lead in their second round series.



The Jets had more chances, more shots, and more hits, but the Stars led the only category that really matters with three goals in the Game 4 victory.

“I thought we played a good hockey game,” said Jets head coach Scott Arniel. “We had 70 shots attempts and scored one goal. If we can’t find more than one goal, we’re not gonna win hockey games, especially against this hockey team. So, I liked a lot of what we did 5-on-5.

“We just didn’t put the puck in the net and that’s the bottom line. This time of year you got to find a way to score goals. They’re not going to be pretty. They’re probably going to have to be ugly ones and we’re going to have to find a way to do that.”

For the first time in the playoffs Connor Hellebuyck allowed less than five goals in a road game, but he gave up a goal in the first period on a long shot.

“It was a damn perfect shot, just above my pad, below my glove,” said Hellebuyck. “I’m doing my best. Sometimes it’s a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce, and things can start going our way. And we’re a good team, so we can really rack them up, but we just got to worry for one at a time.

“We’re going to do this as a team and we’re not out of it yet.”

The Jets scored their lone goal right after a penalty expired but are now just 1-for-16 on the man advantage in the series.

“I think at the end of the day, we got to score on our chances,” said Jets forward Nikolaj Ehlers who scored their only goal. “It’s as simple as that.”

The Jets were the NHL’s best road team in the regular season but are still winless on the road for the entire playoffs. They’ve lost nine straight postseason road games overall and all five in these playoffs in getting outscored 25-8.

“If I had the answer to why, we would have gotten one at some point,” Ehlers said.

Arniel made changes to all four of his forward lines ahead of Game 4.

“I thought it was great,” he said. “Worked out good. We matched up well. All the lines had zone time.”

The Jets have now lost five straight Game 4’s going back to the 2021 Stanley Cup Playoffs and are now in a must win situation for Thursday’s Game 5 in Winnipeg.

“Don’t lose your last game,” said Arniel. “Real simple – don’t lose your last game.

“We’re gonna have to go home and win the next one so we come back here. So we got to get the job done, focus in on this next game. Game 5 that’s what it’s all about.”

The Jets had a couple decent early chances before Dylan DeMelo took an ill-advised penalty for holding Granlund's stick in the neutral zone and the Stars made Winnipeg pay.

The Jets cleared the puck down the ice after the ensuing faceoff but Granlund gathered the puck in his own end, skated through the neutral zone and cut into the Jets end before sending a low wrister on goal from the high slot that eluded Hellebuyck to open the scoring at the 8:36 mark.

It was the kind of shot that Hellebuyck should have stopped but instead, the Jets fell behind the eight-ball as they so often have in their previous road games this postseason.

Winnipeg carried the bulk of the play for the opening 20 minutes, outshooting the Stars 10-5 but were unable to get one past Jake Oettinger.

The Jets began the second period with a minute left on a Tyler Seguin holding penalty and just moments after the penalty expired, Winnipeg got on the board.

Kyle Connor got the puck to Ehlers on the half-wall before Ehlers sent a shot on goal that surprised Oettinger and beat the goalie five-hole to tie the game 62 seconds into the middle frame.

Each team would fail on a power play look later in the period as the game stayed deadlocked, each team taking turns controlling play.

Winnipeg had a great chance to take the lead late on an odd-man rush as Alex Lafallo carried the puck below the goal line before sending a pass in front to Connor but the Jets' sniper shot the puck into the left pad of Oettinger.

That proved to be a huge moment because the Stars regained the lead exactly one minute later.

After Neal Pionk pinched at the Stars blueline, Nino Niederreiter covered the point for him but he failed to get the puck in deep, turning it over to Mikko Rantanen. He sent the puck ahead to Granlund to jump-start a 2-on-1 that Granlund finished by rifling a shot top-shelf past Hellebuyck to make it 2-1 with 2:08 to go in the second.

Winnipeg maintained their edge in shots on goal after 40 minutes, outpacing Dallas 20-13.

The Stars got a golden opportunity to put the game away just 3:26 into the third when Haydn Fleury received a double-minor for high-sticking after catching Roope Hintz in the mouth.

Winnipeg wound up with a great look about two minutes into the penalty when Connor got sprung on a partial breakaway but he wasn't able to get much on his shot as it got turned aside by the pad of Oettinger.

With just seconds to go in the double-minor, Matt Duchene rang a shot off the crossbar and it looked like Winnipeg would get the kill but after the puck hit the crossbar it landed on the stick of Miro Heiskanen at the point. Playing in his first game since January, Heiskanen slid the puck to Granlund for a one-timer from the faceoff dot to Hellebuyck's left and it beat Hellebuyck to make it 3-1 with 12:37 remaining.

It was the first career playoff hat-trick for Granlund, who had scored just one goal in ten games this postseason coming into the night and 12 goals in 69 playoff games dating back to 2014.

Hellebuyck made multiple big saves down the stretch of the third to keep his team in it, leading to a huge power play with 4:53 to go. But Winnipeg failed to register a shot in the two minute chance, with the best look coming after the penalty expired when Pionk was stopped on a low-percentage look from high in the slot.

Ahead of the ensuing faceoff with 2:51 remaining, the Jets pulled Hellebuyck for an extra attacker, needing to recapture the 6-on-5 magic that kept them alive in Game 7 of their first round series with St. Louis.

But the Jets never really threatened to score as the clock ran out on another road loss in the playoffs.

Oettinger outplayed Hellebuyck in this duel of top American goalies, with Dallas' netminder turning aside 31 shots while Hellebuyck made 21 saves in defeat, though it was the first time in Winnipeg's nine-game postseason road losing skid that Hellebuyck had allowed less than four goals.

Special teams also remain an issue for the Jets, who went 0-for-3 on the power play, while Dallas scored twice with the man advantage.

The Jets will try and save their season Thursday night in Game 5 of the series in Winnipeg. The puck will drop around 8:50 p.m. with pregame coverage on 680 CJOB starting at 6:00 p.m.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/11179225/analysis-winnipeg-jets-trouble-round-2/>

***ANALYSIS: Jets in trouble, but second-round series isn't over yet***

By Paul Edmonds CJOB

For the first time in these Stanley Cup playoffs, the Winnipeg Jets are in trouble. The depth of their dilemma is being felt by a province and a rabid fanbase that was certain this year was going to be different.

After what was, without question, their best road game of the post-season and systematically one of their best of the playoffs Tuesday night, the Jets still fell short in Dallas, falling 3-1 to the Stars in Game 4 of their second-round series, and are now heading home trailing this Western Conference semifinal on the verge of a gentleman's sweep.

The Jets – the Presidents' Trophy winners, the best regular-season team in the NHL, the franchise-best 56-win Jets – now face playoff elimination Thursday night at home.

That prospect is not what most thought possible – the Jets included – but despite out-chancing, out-playing and generally out-willing the Stars on Tuesday, Winnipeg suffered its second straight setback in Texas, and its fifth consecutive road loss of the playoffs, with Tuesday night the most heartbreaking of them all.

For its part, Dallas prevailed in two crucial areas: goaltending and special teams. Stars netminder Jake Oettinger was Conn Smythe-esque, holding Winnipeg back all night in a barrage of high-danger chances, while Mikael Granlund scored two of his three goals on the power play, and the Stars are now one game away from advancing to the conference finals for a third straight year.

Now, how the Jets respond to what is absolutely a must-win game Thursday and — without hyperbole — the biggest of the year, will tell us everything about a team that showed during the regular season and against St. Louis in Game 7 of their first-round series an ability to get up off the mat.

But the broad scope of the situation leading into Thursday's Game 5 easily projects that the Jets will need to beat the Stars three straight games to advance in the playoffs – a tall order for a team without that historical precedent.

For the Jets, trouble has indeed arrived in these Stanley Cup playoffs.

And unless they can pivot quickly, a season that was supposed to be different will look the same as many others to a rabid fan base.

## **The Athletic**

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6354615/2025/05/13/nhl-stars-jets-granlund/>

### ***Mikael Granlund records hat trick in Game 4, Stars extend Jets' road woes: Takeaways***

By Murat Ates and Mark Lazerus

DALLAS — The Dallas Stars' other Finnish import put them on the verge of a return trip to the Western Conference final.

Mikael Granlund scored three goals and Jake Oettinger made 31 saves in the Stars' 3-1 victory over the Winnipeg Jets in Game 4 of their second-round series Tuesday night at American Airlines Center. The win gave Dallas a 3-1 series lead and extended the Jets' staggering road playoff losing streak to nine games, dating to Game 1 of their first-round series against the Vegas Golden Knights in 2023.

Mikko Rantanen has, understandably, gotten most of the attention during his remarkable postseason run. But before the Stars stunned the hockey world by acquiring the Moose, it was another Finn who appeared to be Dallas' big in-season addition. Granlund was averaging approximately 1 point a game for the San Jose Sharks when Stars general manager Jim Nill sent the Sharks first- and third-round picks for Granlund and defenseman Cody Ceci on Feb. 1.

Granlund was getting top-line minutes in San Jose, so it's not a huge surprise that his numbers dipped a bit when he got to Dallas. In a mostly middle-six role, he still had seven goals and 14 assists in 31 games. But after scoring just one goal in the first 10 games of the postseason, Granlund came out flying in Game 4. He threw his body around — he was credited with five hits through two periods — broke up two Winnipeg rushes with a quick stick and scored three times. His first goal was on a power play — off a Dylan DeMelo holding-the-stick penalty that Granlund drew — taking a Thomas Harley drop pass in his own end, dancing past Brandon Tanev, racing right up the gut and snapping off a shot through Neal Pionk to beat Connor Hellebuyck.

After Winnipeg tied the score with a sharp-angle Nikolaj Ehlers shot that caught Oettinger by surprise, Granlund gave Dallas the lead again with 2:08 remaining in the second period, keeping the puck on a two-on-one with Roope Hintz and beating Hellebuyck clean again with another wrist shot.

Granlund then gave the Stars some badly needed breathing room 7:23 into the third period, potting a one-timer from the bottom of the right circle with three seconds left in a double-minor high-sticking penalty to Haydn Fleury.

Hellebuyck stopped 21 of 24 shots for the Jets, who went 0-for-3 on the power play.

Here are some takeaways from Game 4:

### *Jets' road woes continue*

Before Game 4, Jets coach Scott Arniel said: "The biggest thing that a head coach once told me — and I've told our group — is there isn't a home or a road way to play. There's only the right way."

And for the overwhelming majority of Tuesday's game, the Jets played the right way. They forechecked well. They won battles in front of their own net. They kept Rantanen from scoring a goal, controlled the flow of play and spent more time in the Stars' zone than their own end of the ice.

If Game 4 had been Winnipeg's only road loss of the playoffs, the story would be about how well the Jets had played, despite their result. Now that they've lost every road game of the playoffs — and can't win the series without winning Game 6 in Dallas — it's fair to put a microscope on the Jets' road struggles.

The Stars' two goals were the direct results of Jets mistakes: first, an ill-advised penalty, then poor rush coverage on the Stars' power play — and Hellebuyck's failure to stop the shot. In the second period, Nino Niederreiter correctly covered Pionk's foray into the offensive zone, guarding the blue line and picking up the Stars' clearing attempt, but he flubbed his backhand chip-in, creating a long two-on-one for Granlund's second goal. The third goal was punishment for Fleury's accidental high-stick on Hintz.

Tiny, individual moments. Massive consequences. The Jets haven't won a playoff road game in two years, and now they're not guaranteed another shot.

### *Heiskanen returns*

Stars coach Pete DeBoer cautioned against expecting too much from defenseman Miro Heiskanen in his first game since Jan. 28. And DeBoer was careful to ease Heiskanen into the lineup, using him sparingly on the second power-play unit and not at all on the penalty kill. The man who was fifth in the NHL in average ice time during the regular season, at more than 25 minutes per game, played just 14:52 as DeBoer went with seven defensemen.

Heiskanen looked rusty at times and was hardly his usual dominant self. Winnipeg severely out-attempted and out-chanced Dallas — but didn't score — at five-on-five with Heiskanen on the ice. And his turnover just inside the blue line on the power play led to a Kyle Connor breakaway — Heiskanen couldn't catch him, only able to get a weak hook on him as he approached the crease — but Oettinger bailed him out with a pad save. Shortly afterward, with Dallas still on the power play, Heiskanen teed up Granlund's one-timer for his third goal.

Colin Blackwell, who's been an energizer for the Stars in the playoffs, was scratched to accommodate Heiskanen.

“Those decisions are always difficult because you’re taking out players that have not only helped us all season but have made some big contributions so far in the playoffs,” DeBoer said. “The 11/7 thing’s no big deal. It gives Mikko Rantanen some more ice time, so that’s an easy one. The scratch decisions are tough, but our group understands.”

#### *Jets oh-so-close on penalty kill*

Fleury’s four-minute high-sticking penalty was an accident, an errant attempt to play the puck just over three minutes into the third period. His stick caught Hintz in the face all the same. If it had been the follow-through of a shot, it wouldn’t have been a penalty, but it was upheld by video review.

“(Fleury) never had the puck,” Arniel said. “The puck was on Hintz’s stick, and (Fleury) swiped at it. He went to swipe it, and he didn’t have the puck, and so it rode right up and hit him in the mouth. It was the right call.”

It was a brutal turn for the Jets, down 2-1 in a must-win game, but Granlund’s hat-trick goal was worse. The Jets were three seconds from escaping the double-minor with a gutsy kill, punctuated by blocks from Brandon Tanev, one great save by Hellebuyck and a short-handed breakaway by Connor — the tying goal scripted on his stick — that Oettinger turned aside.

The Stars pressed, and the Jets held until they couldn’t hold anymore. Matt Duchene had just rung a scorching shot off the post when Heiskanen found Granlund for the one-timer that put Game 4 out of reach. The Jets were three seconds from escape.

#### *Oettinger outduels Hellebuyck again*

The goal that Oettinger gave up in Game 4 was brutal, as Ehlers somehow beat him clean, unscreened, from a very sharp angle, from 33 feet out. But it was the only mistake Oettinger made. The trusty Stars netminder came up big time and time again. Among his best stops were gloving down a Gabe Vilardi shot in the opening minutes, getting his left foot on a Connor chance after Alex Iafallo wheeled around the net late in the second, stopping Connor’s short-handed breakaway, getting in front of a big slapper from a hard-charging Josh Morrissey midway through the third, and denying Mark Scheifele shortly after that.

Hellebuyck, again, didn’t fare as well. Yes, two of the Stars’ goals were power-play tallies, but all three Granlund goals came from distance. His road save percentage in these playoffs remains sub-.800.

#### *Jets put best foot forward, then shoot it*

Winnipeg’s new forward lines controlled play in the first period, outshooting Dallas 10-4 at five-on-five and creating quality scoring chances for Vilardi, Ehlers and Connor — among others — plus a pair of odd-man rushes that started off looking dangerous. They even hemmed in Dallas in its own zone for multiple shifts, including a hand-off shift from Adam Lowry’s line to Scheifele’s line with Connor and Iafallo.

It was a shift that should have led to a Jets goal but instead led to an ill-advised DeMelo penalty for holding the stick. Granlund was the player he held up in the neutral zone after a 1:02 shift for Granlund — it's hard to believe he was a major rush threat that required that kind of impediment.

Mind you, it was Granlund who then went one-against-the-world on the Stars' ensuing power play, eventually shooting through Pionk's stick-check and beating Hellebuyck from range. The Jets had done almost everything right but still exited the first period down 1-0 because of big moments gone horribly wrong.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6354330/2025/05/14/jets-series-comeback-stars-nhl-playoffs/>

### ***How can the Jets come back from this 3-1 deficit? Winnipeg's 5 needs to topple the Stars***

By Murat Ates

DALLAS — To get to the Winnipeg Jets' dressing room at American Airlines Center after Tuesday night's loss, reporters shared an elevator with Jets management, navigated through members of Winnipeg's taxi squad, stepped past True North Sports & Entertainment chairman Mark Chipman, and turned down a narrow hallway, guided by Jets communications staff.

Nikolaj Ehlers and Connor Hellebuyck were waiting in the visitors' room, ready to dissect Winnipeg's ninth straight road playoff loss — a streak going back to Vegas in 2023. For Ehlers and Hellebuyck, and one can assume for Jets brass as well, it was difficult to explain how Winnipeg had lost a critical playoff game on the road.

Again.

"If I had the answer to why, we would have gotten (a win) at some point," Ehlers said.

"This is pretty raw," Hellebuyck said. "It's playoffs and it's been, I don't know, maybe five minutes since the end of the game. Every loss is frustrating."

Ehlers praised Winnipeg's quality of play, but lamented the Jets' inability to bury their scoring chances. Hellebuyck leaned into the idea that one positive bounce could dramatically change Winnipeg's fortune in the series. The words were well felt. One can go through the game tape and find goals Winnipeg "should" have scored and saves Hellebuyck "should" have made.

But the part of this Jets story that matters most has yet to be written.



The odds are stacked against Winnipeg now. Teams down 3-1 have gone on to win 32 out of 352 NHL playoff series — a 9.1 percent success rate. The Athletic's Dom Luszczyszyn's in-house model gives these Jets a 13 percent chance of completing the comeback — essentially the same odds as flipping a coin and getting heads three times in a row. Winnipeg's odds would improve further if the Stars were a paper tiger, unworthy of their postseason success, but the Dallas Stars are an excellent hockey team only getting better.

This is a problem, but it's clearly not up to the Jets to care about the odds of their success. It's up to them to win a hockey game Thursday night in Winnipeg. Get that right in Winnipeg and then they can worry about Game 6 and their incomprehensible nine-game playoff losing streak on the road. Get that one — one — road game right and then there's a Game 7 waiting on home ice.

So the Jets are on the brink of elimination. What would it take for them to win three games in a row and become the 33rd team in NHL history to come back from a 3-1 series deficit?

#### *Connor Hellebuyck needs to lock in*

Hellebuyck isn't playing poorly in this series. He has a better save percentage at five-on-five (.918) than Jake Oettinger does (.913). The difference is made up shorthanded: Hellebuyck has been beaten on four of eight shots while Oettinger has stopped 23 out of 24.

A quick review of those goals:

- Mikko Rantanen tries to pass but banks a goal in off of Dylan Samberg's leg
- Rantanen finds Roope Hintz in the center slot for a deflection just as a 5-on-3 power play ends
- Mikael Granlund steps into the high slot and shoots through Neal Pionk
- Matt Duchene hits the post, the Stars recover, Granlund buries a one-timer from a Miro Heiskanen pass

Blame Hellebuyck for one of those goals (as I do) or all four (as others have chosen to do). Take comfort in his five-on-five success or misery in his .884 save percentage across all situations. It doesn't matter: Winnipeg cannot come back against Dallas without Hellebuyck outplaying Oettinger. The Jets' odds of a miracle rely more heavily on their franchise goaltender than on any other player.

"I leave it all out there every night," Hellebuyck said Tuesday. "I'm doing my best. Sometimes it's a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce and things can start going our way."

#### *The Jets' top scorers need to meet the moment*

“He’ll do his job,” said Arniel of Hellebuyck. “We’ve got to get him some run support. We’ve got to get him the lead, we’ve got to get out in front. Make this team chase us, instead of us chasing them like we have in the last couple of games.”

Winnipeg has the worst shooting percentage of any playoff team.

The lack of finishing, after posting the third-best shooting percentage during the regular season, is a surprise. It should be a surprise in the same way that Hellebuyck sliding from best in the NHL to the second-worst save percentage in the playoffs is a surprise, but we’ve spilled far more ink about the goaltender.

Game 4 was the first time the Jets won the expected goals battle at five-on-five in the series, but it wasn’t enough. Whether it was Gabriel Vilardi all alone in the slot three and a half minutes into the game or Kyle Connor, shorthanded, breaking in on Oettinger with the game-tying goal on his stick in the third period, Winnipeg’s finishers need to finish.

“We had 70 shot attempts and scored one goal,” Arniel said after Game 4. “If we can’t find more than one goal, we’re not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team.”

The Jets’ power play is the source of most of the regression, with only one goal on 23 shots. The Anaheim Ducks had the worst power-play shooting percentage (8.2 percent) in the NHL this season. Winnipeg’s Round 2 percentage (4.2 percent) is roughly half as good.

The playoffs are about getting it done when the moment presents itself.

Connor is the Jets’ best finisher, scoring 41 goals in 82 games during the season and five more in 11 playoff games. If anyone can go on a finishing run so unsustainably good it turns around a series, it’s him, but Oettinger had Connor’s number in Game 4.

“It’s skill, work, and the habits you create,” Connor told *The Athletic* on Tuesday. “It’s the reps you take in practice over the summer to be familiar with any situation that you get to be able to score.”

*No more implosions: Careless penalties count, too*

The Jets took the fourth-fewest penalties in the league this season. They’ve taken more than any other team in the playoffs. Some of their problems are self-inflicted.

Granlund had been on the ice for over a minute when Dylan DeMelo took a penalty for holding his stick in Game 4. He wasn’t a likely threat to score off the rush at that moment, although Granlund did exactly that on the ensuing power play.

There was also the matter of Haydn Fleury’s accidental high-sticking penalty — the four-minute double-minor that led to Granlund’s hat-trick goal. Or Nino Niederreiter’s high

stick to start Game 3, followed by Josh Morrissey's tripping penalty to make it a five-on-three.

The Stars take enough of their success into their own hands. They don't need Winnipeg's help. And the problem with going down 3-1 in a series is that a team runs out of outs. If the Stars score a controversial goal or the referees make a horrid penalty call on Thursday, the Jets will have to deal with it and move on, or call it a season.

*The Jets' secondary scorers need to meet the moment, too*

Winnipeg is supposed to be able to count on its elite goaltender, its dynamic power play, and its depth scorers. Look at the Jets' Game 2 win for a great example: Hellebuyck got a shutout, Vilardi got a power-play goal and Adam Lowry scored, too.

The Jets are down 3-1 in part because the secondary scoring has gone cold.

Nikolaj Ehlers leads all Jets with three goals and one assist in four games against the Stars. Niederreiter, Josh Morrissey and Gabriel Vilardi are tied with three points each.

Then it's Connor, Scheifele, Dylan DeMelo, and Haydn Fleury at two points each. No one on the fourth line has picked up a point this series, nor have Cole Perfetti or Vladislav Namestnikov. The Jets have no chance to come back in this series if Connor and Scheifele can't separate themselves from DeMelo and Fleury on that list — and it would help if Perfetti or Namestnikov scored or somebody bounced a goal in off a Stars' player's skate.

*Magic. The Jets need magic.*

The odds of a Winnipeg Jets comeback are minuscule. Realistically, there's no series win without multiple things going right — great goaltending, more control of play, great finishing and fewer careless penalties.

If, somehow, the Jets pull this off, they will need all of those things and good fortune, too. Maybe a Stars player will have to make an egregious mistake. Maybe Oettinger comes crashing back down to earth.

"We're going to have to go home and win the next one so we come back here (to Dallas)," Arniel said. "We've got to get the job done, focus in on this next game. Game 5. That's what it's all about. Work to make sure that we get ourselves back here to Dallas for a Game 6."

Go through the 32 of 352 teams that have pulled off a win like this before — most recently, the 2023 Florida Panthers in the first round against the Boston Bruins — and you'll find a Matthew Tkachuk superstar turn, a sudden offensive explosion from Carter Verhaeghe, and luck. Lots of luck. The Panthers scored 15 times in three games and won two of them in overtime, including Game 7, which they tied with a minute to go in the third period. Historic comebacks go hand in hand with historic collapses.

The Stars are not built to falter. Our post-deadline look at the Central Division gave Dallas the edge in the Central Division playoffs. Still, Winnipeg meets a crucial criterion for pulling off the unthinkable. Despite their 3-1 deficit and the angst that comes with it, the Jets are a legitimately good team.

It's a start, but only a start. The rest is up to them.

<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/6354838/2025/05/14/stars-nhl-playoffs-game-4-jets/>

### ***Dallas Stars — even at partial strength — look unstoppable. Look out, NHL***

By Mark Lazerus

DALLAS — Mikko Rantanen, as Mikko Rantanen does, used his size and strength to pin Neal Pionk against the end boards late in the second period in Tuesday night's Game 4, standing tall as the Winnipeg defenseman futilely tried to flail himself free. A moment later, Rantanen outmuscled Pionk for a loose puck and feathered a deft little backhand pass to Jason Robertson in the slot. Robertson caught the puck on his backhand, with Brandon Tanev right in front of him. With a split second to think and react, Robertson twisted himself around and snapped off a nasty little shot between a sprawling Tanev's legs.

Connor Hellebuyck actually got to this one, but it was a reminder that, oh, yeah, Robertson — two-time 40-goal scorer, one-time 109-point producer, 25-year-old borderline superstar — is on this team, too. And, oh, yeah, he's pretty darn good.

It's been easy to get lost in Mikko Mania, as Rantanen has put the Stars on his broad shoulders and carried them this far, with some significant help from the unflappable Jake Oettinger in goal. Posting at least 3 points in five of six consecutive playoff games is god-tier hockey, and so far, it's been enough for the Stars.

But the scary thing, the thing that should send a cold shiver down the spines of seven other teams, is that this isn't even the Stars' best. Not even close. This is the Stars at partial strength, with several high-profile players underperforming, and with their all-world defenseman, Miro Heiskanen, trying to hop onto a moving train mid-series— on a surgically repaired knee, no less.

Matt Duchene, a 30-goal scorer and the team's leading producer with 82 points this season, hasn't scored yet in the postseason. Neither has Robertson in the four games since he returned from a leg injury. Jamie Benn and Mason Marchment have just one goal each, and Tyler Seguin has just two. And until his Game 4 hat trick, Mikael Granlund only had one goal. Entering Game 4, Rantanen, Roope Hintz and Wyatt Johnston had combined for 18 of the Stars forwards' 25 goals through 10 playoff games. The Stars became contenders through their remarkable depth, but they've been top-heavy throughout this postseason.

And yet here they are, anyway, one game away from a return trip to the Western Conference final after a 3-1 win gave them a 3-1 series lead.

Can we even fathom what this team is capable of if and when everyone else gets going?

“Mikko, he’s been playing (at) such an incredible level, and I’m sure he’s going to keep doing that,” Granlund said. “But obviously we need some help.”

Granlund, Dallas’ initial splashy, Finnish trade-deadline acquisition, finally entered the main narrative in Game 4. From his very first shift, he looked like a man on a mission. He threw hits, he broke up Winnipeg scoring chances, and he scored three goals. Two came on the power play — one on a daring rush up the gut, one on a sharp-angle one-timer that put the game away. Another came when he kept it on a two-on-one with Hintz. Three times he shot at Hellebuyck from distance, and three times, he beat the soon-to-be three-time Vezina Trophy winner.

It was a virtuoso performance, on a par with some of Rantanen’s recent heroics.

And he’s, what, the seventh-best forward on this team? Sixth, if you’re feeling generous?

Imagine what it will look like if and when Robertson feels fully healed from the leg injury he suffered in the regular-season finale. Imagine what it will look like if and when Duchene gets back in a groove. Imagine what it will look like if and when Marchment gets in gear, and Seguin finds his touch, and Benn starts planting himself in the crease, and, well, you get the idea.

“Obviously, you want to score and perform,” Robertson said. “I know these guys hold themselves accountable. But we’re winning games. The exciting thing is we’re earning more games. You win a game, you earn more games, more opportunities. This is only the mid-second round, and our goal is to go the distance. There are going to be plenty of moments, ups and downs for everyone. Another person can be the hero (the next game). That’s what happens. You create new moments every game. That’s the beauty of the playoffs. You have a good game (next game), score a goal, it just changes everything.”

“You just need different guys to step up at different points,” Oettinger said. “Obviously, (Rantanen) has been on a different level. Next game, we’re going to need someone else.”

The biggest X-factor, of course, is Heiskanen. The perennial Norris Trophy candidate worked at a feverish pace to beat the clock and recover from Feb. 4 knee surgery in time to be part of this playoff run. In his first game back Tuesday, he was far from his usual self. He played just 14 minutes, 52 seconds, 10-plus minutes fewer than his usual ice time. He bobbled a couple of pucks, and when he made a rough turnover at the blue

line on a power play, he didn't have the legs to catch Kyle Connor on the ensuing short-handed breakaway, barely getting a stick on his hip and fortunate to be bailed out by Oettinger.

"It's a long time (since) the last game," Heiskanen said. "But it was fun to be back, and (the) guys helped me out there pretty well."

Now, Heiskanen at, say, 60 percent is still better than a heck of a lot of defensemen in the league. He's just that good, that heady. But if he's able to regain his form, his touch and his confidence in the coming days — and likely weeks — it gives the Stars a dream first pairing with Thomas Harley, two Norris-caliber defensemen leading from behind.

Up front, other teams have higher-end skill than the Stars do. Rantanen is probably the only Stars forward in a class with Toronto's Auston Matthews, Mitch Marner and William Nylander; or Florida's Matthew Tkachuk, Aleksander Barkov and Sam Reinhart; or Edmonton's Leon Draisaitl and Connor McDavid. But none of the other seven teams left in these playoffs can match Dallas' depth. No team in the league can. For Pete DeBoer's sake, their "fourth line" in Game 4 had Robertson and Johnston frequently playing with a double-shifting Rantanen.

DeBoer, for the record, isn't sweating his stars' statistics. Not yet, at least. One of his assistants, Misha Donskov, was an assistant coach for the Vegas Golden Knights when they won the Stanley Cup in 2023. He noted to DeBoer that Jonathan Marchessault went on to win the Conn Smythe that year after a slow start (no goals and two assists in his first seven games). That's something DeBoer is clinging to.

"(They're) used to producing at a regular-season (pace)," DeBoer said. "The playoffs are always a different animal, so I don't think you can compare. They're not even the same conversation, how you produce during the regular season and the way you do in the playoffs. And, really, I don't think it matters. All that matters this time of year is winning. We can say, 'Why isn't Matt Duchene (at) a point a game?' — but I don't think it's applicable. ... The stats don't matter this time of year. I'm happy with everybody. We're still alive, we're up in the series, and we're winning. I know those guys are going to come through when we need them."

If they do, look out. Because a fully realized Stars squad would be the team to beat in these playoffs.

Heck, even at partial strength, it might be.

## **Winnipeg Sun**

<https://winnipeg.sun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/backs-against-the-wall-jets-drop-game-4-in-dallas-face-elimination>

### ***Backs against the wall: Jets drop Game 4 in Dallas, face elimination***

By Paul Friesen

The NHL's top team in the regular season is one loss away from playoff elimination in the second round.

The Winnipeg Jets played their best road game of the postseason Tuesday in Dallas but it wasn't enough, the Stars winning, 3-1, and taking a 3-1 series stranglehold into Game 5 in Winnipeg on Thursday.

The Jets carried the play a good portion of the night but couldn't find the back of the net, stonewalled by Dallas goalie Jake Oettinger time and again.

"We had 70 shot attempts and scored one goal," head coach Scott Arniel told reporters in Dallas. "If we can't find more than one goal, we're not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team. I liked a lot of what we did five-on-five. I liked a lot of the opportunities that we created."

Nik Ehlers was the only one to capitalize, despite Winnipeg holding a 32-24 edge in shots on goal.

That's nine straight playoff losses on the road for the Jets, going back the last three years.

This time they weren't outclassed. Just outscored, clutch moments separating their top players, and their goalie, from the Stars'.

Special teams failed the Jets again, too, another recurring theme of this postseason.

Winnipeg got a power play with 4:53 to go when Stars captain Jamie Benn mauled Mark Scheifele, but came up empty.

Special teams also cost them at the start.

Yet another early Jets penalty led to a Stars power-play goal, a trend the Jets can't seem to break.

Dylan DeMelo grabbed an opponent's stick and Mikael Granlund scored some nine minutes into the first period, a low wrist shot from deep in the slot getting past Connor Hellebuyck on the Stars' fourth shot of the game.

“Probably wants the one back,” Arniel said.

Hellebuyck wasn't sure what to make of it.

“I had a clean enough look,” the goalie said. “It was just a damn perfect shot. Just above my pad and below my glove. I don't know, I need to review it. I need to review it, see it again.”

The Jets had their chances in the first, Gabe Vilardi with a couple, Cole Perfetti and Ehlers with their own. But they couldn't beat Oettinger.

Head coach Scott Arniel had swapped centres Adam Lowry and Vlad Namestnikov on his top two lines, Mason Appleton with Alex Iafallo on the bottom two.

By the end of the first period he was mixing and matching even more and the Jets had taken over, hitting the break with a 10-5 edge in shots.

“All our combinations had a lot of opportunities,” the coach said. “We just didn't put the puck in the net, and that's the bottom line this time of year. They're not going to be pretty. They're probably going to have to be ugly ones, and we're going to have to find a way to do that... you've got to work a little bit harder if it's not going in.”

The Jets tied it 1:03 into the second on a goal Oettinger should have had, Ehlers firing his third of the playoffs through the goalie's legs from a sharp angle right after the expiration of a Jets power play.

“It gave us some new looks,” Ehlers said of the new lines. “We played a really good game. We need to score on those chances that we're getting.”

They had the man advantage again a few minutes after Ehlers' goal but couldn't make it count, their official power-play count falling to 1-for-15 in the series.

Then came the turning point.

At one end, Oettinger robbed Kyle Connor with a leg save in close.

At the other, Granlund beat Hellebuyck again after a Nino Niederreiter turnover gave Dallas a two-on-one, and the Jets would enter the third period down, 2-1.

“That was a big moment,” Arniel acknowledged.

Things went from grim to potentially bleak when Jets defenceman Haydn Fleury took a double-minor for high-sticking early in the third.



A valiant Jets kill – they nearly tied it on a shorthanded breakaway from Connor – ended in vain when Granlund capped his hat-trick with three seconds left in the penalty.

“Man... it was an unbelievable kill by us,” Arniel said. “That’s a seeing-eye dog, a heck of a shot. I mean, right under the bar from the short side.”

Hellebuyck allowed at least three goals for the ninth time in 11 playoff games this year, the 18th time in 21 games including the previous two postseasons.

A lack of finish, too, cost the Jets in the swing game of this series, Connor in particular getting the chances that could have swung Game 4.

The Jets will try to beat the odds by winning three straight games with their backs to the wall, beginning Thursday.

<https://winnipegsun.com/sports/hockey/nhl/winnipeg-jets/friesen-stars-best-outshining-jets-best-from-the-net-out>

### ***FRIESEN: Stars' best outshining Jets' best, from the net out***

By Paul Friesen

It’s one of the oldest cliches in the book, and Winnipeg Jets coach Scott Arniel has flipped to that page a few times already in these playoffs.

If his team’s best players don’t start outplaying those of the Dallas Stars, the book will slam shut on the most promising season in franchise history.

The Jets had the better of the Stars in many ways in Game 4, but a lack of finish from their top scorers and the lack of the big save from their award-winning goalie has them one loss from hitting the golf course.

Or, in the case of Connor Hellebuyck, from hitting the fishing hole.

Hellebuyck may be the odds-on favourite for another Vezina Trophy, but he was the second-best goalie on the ice in his team’s 3-1 loss in Dallas on Tuesday.

Kyle Connor, Gabe Vilardi and Mark Scheifele may have had their chances, but the Jets’ top three goal scorers during the season came up empty.

That’s a deadly combination of misfires, and the Jets find themselves one loss from seeing their dreams of a sip from the Stanley Cup die prematurely on the vine.

Meanwhile, Stars’ Feb. 1 trade acquisition Mikael Granlund was scoring three times on Tuesday, providing a deadly counter-punch to that of trade-deadline acquisition Mikko Rantanen, who produced the hat-trick in Game 1.

Through four games, Connor, Vilardi and Scheifele have shared a hat between them.

It's a lopsided look, one team's best players outperforming the other's, leaving the latter with the unenviable task of winning three straight or taking their Presidents' Trophy and going home.

Arniel's message, of course, can't be that ominous.

He tried to focus his players on Thursday alone.

"Don't lose your last game," is the message Arniel preferred. "Real simple. Don't lose your last game. So it's all about what's happened at home. Get our crowd in behind us. I don't care if we're homers. But we're going to have to go home and win the next one so we come back here.

"Game 5 – that's what it's all about."

Game 4 was all about a goal here versus a save there.

Granlund provided the former against Hellebuyck, Dallas goalie Jake Oettinger the latter.

Not that Hellebuyck was bad. There was no need to get the hook out this time.

But he did need to stop Granlund's first, a wrist shot from the high slot.

Arniel conceded his goalie would probably want that one back, but quickly pivoted to the other end of this losing equation.

"We've got to get him some run support," the coach said. "He'll do his job. We've got to get him the lead. Make this team chase us, instead of us chasing them like we have in the last couple of games."

Instead, another early penalty and another early Dallas power-play goal. Wasn't it supposed to be the Jets' power play that helped decide this series?

The Jets came back from that blow, but not the second: a second-period Connor chance on the doorstep, the 41-goal winger firing it into Oettinger's pads.

It was no disaster on its own. But when Nino Niederreiter coughed up the puck and handed Dallas a two-on-one in the next breath, it was halitosis on ice.

Just like that, the Jets were down, 2-1, going into the third period, despite turning in a rock-solid 40 minutes.

There was one more chance at creating the game-turning play, the puck once again on Connor's stick, this time on a shorthanded breakaway early in the third.

If you'd pick someone to have that chance at that time...

"That's the guy," Arniel said. "Especially you look over the course of the season against Dallas, KC scored a lot of goals. That was a big moment."

Oettinger won that duel, too, and the Jets gave up the back-breaker with just three seconds left in the penalty.

It wasn't a weak goal, by any stretch – Granlund's one-timer was a rocket – but it wasn't the game-saving stop, either.

"I leave it all out there every night," Hellebuyck said. "I'm doing my best. Sometimes it's a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little change, one little bounce and things can start going our way."

Hellebuyck appeared and sounded as down as we've seen him. Then again, we don't usually see him right after losses, especially in the playoffs.

"This is pretty raw," he said. "It's been, I don't know, maybe five minutes since the end of the game. That being said, I'm really looking forward to the next one. Leave it all out there."

He and his teammates had the plane ride home to get the bitter taste from their mouths, then a full day to regroup and find some slivers of hope in the splinters.

NHL history tells us the Jets have a nine percent chance of coming back in this series.

Nik Ehlers chose a more simple equation.

"You need to win four games to move on," Ehlers said. "They're at three, we're at one. It can't be more simple than that. And I think with the crowd that we have at home, the amount of energy that they give to us every single game, (we) want to repay that by playing another few games in Winnipeg."

This team hasn't been good at fending off elimination over the years. It did just that, though, in dramatic fashion in the first round against St. Louis, raising hopes of a storybook season.

The Jets will either add another chapter on Thursday, or leave room only for the epilogue.

**ESPN.com**

[https://www.espn.com/nhl/story/\\_/id/45137142/mikael-granlund-first-career-hat-trick-powers-dallas-stars](https://www.espn.com/nhl/story/_/id/45137142/mikael-granlund-first-career-hat-trick-powers-dallas-stars)

### ***Mikael Granlund's first career hat trick powers Dallas Stars***

By Greg Wyshynski

The Dallas Stars' 3-1 win in Game 4 against the Winnipeg Jets on Tuesday night was a contrast in offensive efficiency. The Jets converted just once on 72 shot attempts. Dallas center Mikael Granlund, meanwhile, needed only three shot attempts in the game to score three goals. His hat trick was all the offense the Stars needed to take a commanding 3-1 series lead, moving one win away from their third straight trip to the Western Conference finals.

"Obviously, the job is not done. We've got a lot of work to do. [But] that was a good win," Granlund said.

It was the first career hat trick for Granlund, a 13-year veteran whom the Stars acquired from the San Jose Sharks in a trade back in February. Three goals on three shots, all of them sailing past Jets goalie Connor Hellebuyck, who remained winless on the road in the 2025 postseason.

Granlund's first goal came at 8:36 on the power play, as he skated in on three Jets defensemen and fired a snap shot past Hellebuyck from the top of the slot.

"I was just shooting it somewhere and it went in," Granlund said.

"I got a clean enough look. It was just a damn perfect shot, just above my pad and below my glove," Hellebuyck lamented.

"Obviously, he probably wants the first one back, the wrister," Jets coach Scott Arniel said of Hellebuyck. "At the end of the day, we've got to get him some run support. Get him a lead."

Granlund's second shot and second goal came on a play started by Mikko Rantanen, whose league-leading point total now stands at 19 for the playoffs. His outlet pass found Granlund in the neutral zone, sparking a 2-on-1 with Roope Hintz. Granlund kept the puck and roofed it to give Dallas a 2-1 lead after Nik Ehlers had tied the game for Winnipeg earlier in the second period.

"When you pass all the time, you can surprise the goalie sometimes when you shoot the puck. It's good to shoot once in a while," said Granlund, who had twice as many assists (44) as goals (22) in the regular season.

Granlund's third and final shot attempt of the game was on another Dallas power play in the third period, following a double-minor penalty to defenseman Haydn Fleury for high-sticking Hintz.

Defenseman Miro Heiskanen, in the lineup for the first time since Jan. 28 after missing the last 32 regular-season games and first 10 playoff games because of a knee injury, collected the puck after Matt Duchene rang it off the post. Heiskanen slid it over to Granlund for a one-timer that brought him to his knees on the ice. After the shot beat Hellebuyck at 7:23 of the third period, waves of hats hit the ice in celebration of Granlund's three-goal night.

It was fitting that Rantanen and Heiskanen had points on Granlund's hat trick. This was the first game that the Stars' so-called "Finnish Mafia" played together, as Heiskanen was injured before Granlund and Rantanen joined the team. Those three skaters joined countrymen Hintz and defenseman Esa Lindell in helping Dallas to victory.

"It was fun for sure. Fun to finally be on the ice with them," Heiskanen said.

Goaltender Jake Oettinger did the rest with 31 saves, many of them on dangerous Winnipeg chances. But in the end, all the Stars needed were three shot attempts, while the Jets' voluminous offensive night produced only one goal.

"Oettinger made some big stops. But we had 70 shot attempts. We have to get more than one goal," Arniel said. "If we can't find more than one goal, we're not going to win hockey games, especially [against] this team."

Dallas will attempt to close out the series on Thursday night in Winnipeg.

### **Winnipeg Free Press**

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/05/13/granlunds-hat-trick-grounds-jets>

### ***Granlund's hat trick grounds Jets Season hangs by a thread after Oettinger backstops Stars to 3-1 victory***

By: Mike McIntyre

DALLAS — Winnipeg Jets owner Mark Chipman paced back-and-forth in the hallway as team trainers scurried to load equipment bags on to a waiting truck. General manager Kevin Cheveldayoff and assistant Larry Simmons stood silently nearby with grim expressions on their faces. You could tell this one hurt. A lot.

Inside the visiting locker room at American Airlines Center, players shuffled past each other, save for goaltender Connor Hellebuyck and forward Nikolaj Ehlers who were

called upon to stand in front of a media horde. As the questions flowed their way, long pauses often followed in their search for adequate answers.

Who are these Jets?

They're certainly not the powerhouse squad that took the NHL by storm during the regular season, with a deadly power play, no shortage of primary and secondary scoring, terrific defending, poise under pressure and world-class goaltending that all contributed to winning the Presidents' Trophy.

Instead, they appear to be an emotionally fragile group that is wilting under an intense spotlight, one simply unable to win a game away from the comforts of home now facing an unceremonious end to their Stanley Cup dreams.

A 3-1 loss on Tuesday night to the Dallas Stars leaves the Jets in a 3-1 deficit in their best-of-seven series. They face the daunting task of needing to win three straight elimination games, starting Thursday at Canada Life Centre.

"This is pretty raw. It's playoffs and it's been, I don't know, maybe five minutes since the end of the game. Every loss is frustrating," said Hellebuyck, who along with his teammates has now lost nine straight playoff games on the road spanning three years and four different opponents.

Winnipeg has been outscored a staggering 45-14 in that span, including 25-8 in five straight defeats in enemy territory this spring.

"If I had the answer to why, we would have gotten one at some point," said Ehlers, who scored Winnipeg's lone goal in this one. "I don't know. I actually thought we played a really good game."

That might be the most puzzling thing of all for the Jets. They actually did control large segments of play, put up a whopping 72 shot attempts (compared to just 45 from Dallas) yet still came out on the wrong end of what felt like a "must win" game.

So where did this all go wrong?

*GOALIE WOES CONTINUE:* The good news is Hellebuyck stopped the first shot he faced — something he'd only done six times in 10 previous playoff games this spring. The other four times ended with the red light going off behind him.

However, the fourth one of the night beat him — and it's another example of one you'd expect Hellebuyck to make. With Dallas on the power play, Mikael Granlund skated into the Winnipeg zone and, using defenceman Neal Pionk and a subtle screen, ripped a wristshot that beat the five-time Vezina Trophy nominee just 8:36 into the game.

This was the 11th goal to elude Hellebuyck from outside 30 feet already in these playoffs. That's an average of one per game, which is alarming to say the least. He simply hasn't been good enough.

"I had a clean enough look. It was just a damn perfect shot, just above my pad and below my glove," Hellebuyck explained. "I don't know, I need to review it. I need to review it, see it again."

Granlund's second goal of the night may not have had the same foul odour, but it's another one Hellebuyck likely wants back. The veteran Finnish forward fired from just inside the faceoff circle to Hellebuyck's left during a two-on-one rush, restoring the Dallas lead at 17:52 of the second period.

Nino Niederreiter had turned the puck over a few seconds earlier, leading to the odd-man rush. Like his goaltender, he also needs to be better.

The third and final goal of the game came at the tail end of a four-minute power play for Dallas at 7:23 of the final frame, with Granlund once again doing the damage. This time, Hellebuyck had no chance on his bar-down blast. It came shortly after Kyle Connor was stopped on a shorthanded breakaway.

"Probably wants the one back, the first one, the wrister coming in," Jets head coach Scott Arniel said when asked for an assessment of his goaltender's play.

"But at the end of the day, we've got to get him some run support. He'll do his job. We've got to get him some run support. We've got to get him the lead, we've got to get out in front. Make this team chase us, instead of us chasing them like we have in the last couple of games."

*JUGGLING ACT:* Arniel did an extreme makeover with his forward lines, making tweaks to all four in an attempt to generate more offence.

Alex Iafallo moved up to play with Kyle Connor and Mark Scheifele, while Gabe Vilardi dropped down on a new-look second line comprised of captain Adam Lowry and Ehlers. Cole Perfetti and Vlad Namestnikov skated on a third trio with Niederreiter, while Mason Appleton was bumped to the fourth line beside Morgan Barron and Brandon Tanev.

Arniel also made one change on the blue-line, inserting veteran Luke Schenn on the third pair with Haydn Fleury while making Colin Miller a healthy scratch.

"I thought it was great. It worked out good. It matched up well. All the lines had zone time," said Arniel.

Except, of course, for finding the back of the net. It certainly doesn't help Hellebuyck's case that Jake Oettinger was once again the best goaltender on the ice, stopping 31 of 32 shots that came his way. Hellebuyck finished with 21 saves.

“If we can’t find more than one goal, we’re not going to win hockey games, especially against this hockey team,” said Arniel.

“We’ve got to get more than one goal off of those (shot attempts). Maybe that’s get driving harder than that. Finding those rebounds, screening, whatever it is. We’ve done it, we’ve done it in the past and we’ve got to find a way to do it the next game.”

*NEVER A BAD IDEA TO SHOOT:* Ehlers has never met a puck he didn’t want to shoot — a mindset that would benefit some of his pass-happy teammates to adopt at times.

The latest example of why that’s never a bad idea came early in the second period, just as a Winnipeg power play had expired. Ehlers made a great play in the Dallas offensive zone to keep the puck in, then seemed to catch Oettinger by surprise with a sneaky shot from a tough angle that tied the game 1-1.

Ehlers began these playoffs with just four goals in 40 career postseason games. The pending unrestricted free agent now has three in his last three outings.

*KEY PLAY:* Granlund’s third of the night was the dagger. He’s now the second Finnish trade addition to burn the Jets for a hat trick in this series, with Mikko Rantanen accounting for all three goals in the Game 1 victory in Winnipeg.

*THREE STARS:*

1. DAL C Mikael Granlund: 3 goals
2. DAL G Jake Oettinger: 31 saves
3. WPG LW Nikolaj Ehlers: 1 goal

*EXTRA, EXTRA:* The Stars welcomed back No. 1 defenceman Miro Heiskanen, who had been sidelined since late January with a knee injury. He was eased back in, playing just 14:52 while managing the primary assist on Granlund’s third goal.

Winnipeg went 0-for-3 on the power play and are now just 1-for-16 in the series. Dallas went 2-for-4 as the Jets continue to be second-best in the special teams battle.

The Jets flew home following the game and will now get ready for their next biggest game of the year.

“Real simple. Don’t lose your last game,” Arniel said of the message to his group.

“We’re going to have to go home and win the next one so we come back here. We’ve got to get the job done, focus in on this next game. Game 5. That’s what it’s all about. Work to make sure that we get ourselves back here to Dallas for a Game 6.”

Added Hellebuyck: “Just win one game. Leave it all out there. I leave it all out there every night. I’m doing my best. Sometimes it’s a heartbreak, but all it takes is one little



change, one little bounce and things can start going our way. We're a good team, so we can really rack (the wins) up, but we've just got to worry (about) one at a time."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/05/14/we-need-to-win>

***'We need to win'***

***Jets players aware of daunting task at hand with Dallas up 3-1 in series***

By: Ken Wiebe

Will it take a three-game winning streak or a series of three one-game winning streaks to keep the season alive?

No matter how you slice it, psychologically or otherwise, the Winnipeg Jets have reached the fork in the road where the room for error has transformed from slim to none.

By dropping the 3-1 decision to the Dallas Stars on Tuesday night, the Jets will face elimination for the second time in the 2025 Stanley Cup playoffs.

By now, everyone knows how Game 7 against the St. Louis Blues turned out – thanks in part to the Manitoba Miracle that literally and figuratively brought a province to its feet, first in disbelief after a pair of six-on-five goals with the goalie on the bench in favour of an extra attacker sent the game to a fourth period.

Then, in exaltation after Jets captain Adam Lowry helped his team advance to the second round for the first time since 2021.

So, it's clear the Jets can handle the pressure cooker that comes with putting your collective season on the line.

The issue now is whether or not they can avoid a knockout punch on three separate occasions in order to reach the NHL's Final Four.

Never mind the daunting nature of the task at hand.

The Jets can't post a three-game winning streak without getting the first one and the opportunity to do so comes on Thursday at Canada Life Centre, where the Jets are 5-1 this spring – including a tidy 4-0 victory in Game 2 that left the series even.

A team that has prided itself on its ability to turn the page after debriefing the night before will once again try to achieve that goal.

Unlike most of the previous four road games played in the playoffs, the video session won't resemble sifting through the rubble and seeking positive reinforcement.

By generating a total of 72 shot attempts on Tuesday, the Jets were able to create enough quality looks to win the hockey game.

But a sparkling performance from Stars goalie Jake Oettinger, who made 31 saves, limited the Jets to a single and solitary goal.

That goal came on a heads-up play at the end of a Jets' power play by Nikolaj Ehlers, who was actually looking to pass the puck to the backdoor before he caught Oettinger cheating ever so slightly.

It was the only misstep of the contest for Oettinger, who has been the best goalie in this series through four games – even with Connor Hellebuyck recording a 21-save shutout in Game 2.

This was a night when the much-ballyhooed Jets' offence let down its Vezina-winning goaltender, not the other way around.

What is also true is that Hellebuyck gave up a goal on a snapshot from distance in the first period from Mikael Granlund that needed to be stopped.

When it wasn't, it left the Jets in a precarious position of chasing the game – something that has become far too familiar for them in this series.

Outside of Game 2, the Jets have been playing from behind far too often and that's a big part of the reason they've ended up on the losing side of the ledger three times through four games.

The level of urgency is sure to come up for the Jets.

There isn't a single player that is ready for this dream season to end, something that was apparent in the aftermath of Tuesday's loss.

"We know what the message is," Hellebuyck told reporters when asked about what might have been said in the room by Jets head coach Scott Arniel. "We know what the stakes are."

Arniel, himself, had a simple message when asked about the mentality required.

"Real simple," he explained. "Don't lose your last game."

That could be easier said than done, considering this edition of the Stars has yet to lose consecutive games through 11 outings in these Stanley Cup playoffs and are a highly motivated bunch after being eliminated by the Edmonton Oilers in the Western Conference final last spring.

Dallas has been knocking at the door for years and is trying to get over the top for the first time since 1999, when that Stars' championship team included Winnipeggers Mike Keane and Grant Ledyard and future Hall of Famer Eddie Belfour of Carman.

The Jets are chasing the first NHL title in franchise history and laid the groundwork for this run by putting together an outstanding regular season, one that resulted in a first Central Division crown, a Western Conference title and a Presidents' Trophy.

Those experiences, coupled with some of the disappointments from the prior two playoff losses to the Vegas Golden Knights and Colorado Avalanche were supposed to regenerate some of that scar tissue – something Jets centre Mark Scheifele touched on prior to the start of the postseason.

There's little doubt the Jets are battling and have put some of those valuable lessons to use here, but the road to the ultimate goal includes 16 victories and so far, this group has managed five.

Going out with a whimper simply isn't an option for the Jets, not after all of the growth they've shown over the course of the past eight months or so.

This is a team that started the season with eight consecutive victories, lost a game and then rattled off seven straight wins.

The 15-1 start was the best in NHL history and essentially punched the Jets ticket to the playoffs in November.

As they managed the highs and lows of the marathon campaign, the Jets battled through adversity and pushed back all comers when it came to the division, the conference and first overall.

The Jets know what they look like when they're at their very best and right now, they're very best is exactly what's going to be required to keep this season alive.

"Absolutely, you need to win four games to move on," said Ehlers. "They're at three, we're at one. It can't be more simple than that. We need to win.

"And I think with the crowd that we have at home, the amount of energy that they give to us every single game, (we) want to repay that by playing another few games in Winnipeg."

<https://www.winnipegfreepress.com/breakingnews/2025/05/13/zebras-weigh-in-on-jets-dallas-game-3-talking-points>

## ***Zebras weigh in on Jets-Dallas Game 3 talking points Ref shin pad swipe and game-winning goal hotly-contested incidents***

By: Mike McIntyre

DALLAS — An unpenalized whack to a referee's shin pads by an angry player and a controversial game-winning goal have become major talking points in the hotly-contested playoff series between the Winnipeg Jets and the Dallas Stars.

Although the NHL has opted for the silent treatment surrounding the two incidents, which occurred during Sunday's Game 3 between the two clubs, the same can't be said for the hockey world at large as debate rages on.

The Free Press spoke on Tuesday with a pair of former league officials who agreed to give their takes on the condition of anonymity.

Let's break them down in detail:

***INCIDENT #1:*** Dallas forward Mason Marchment, upset at what he thought was an undetected slash by Jets centre Mark Scheifele, uses his stick to strike referee Graham Skilliter on the leg at the end of the second period.

***THE CALL ON THE PLAY:*** Nothing. Not during the game itself or even after the fact, despite Rule 40.1 which states "Any player who deliberately applies physical force in any manner against an official, in any manner attempts to injure an official, physically demeans, or deliberately applies physical force to an official solely for the purpose of getting free of such an official during or immediately following an altercation shall receive a game misconduct penalty."

***UPON FURTHER REVIEW:*** "In my mind that is an automatic 10 games (suspension)," official No. 1 told us, noting former Anaheim Ducks forward Antoine Vermette received that suspension from the league for slashing a linesman in 2017 because he was upset at how the puck had been dropped during a faceoff.

He said the action itself, rather than the severity, calls for strict sanctions to remind all players that referees and linesman are off-limits no matter how upset you might be.

"I will say personally that it does send a terrible message to every person out there, especially kids, that acts like that are in any way acceptable in any sport," he said. "It's not acceptable and never should be. We have enough issues with abuse at the minor hockey level and this doesn't help."

Both officials we spoke to speculated that Skilliter might not have even realized what Marchment had done in the heat of the moment.

“I will say personally that it does send a terrible message to every person out there, especially kids, that acts like that are in any way acceptable in any sport.”

“When I initially saw it, I was like, ‘Oh, man, how did the ref not do something?’ said official No. 2.

“And I watched it again, I don’t think he even knows he got hit, right? Usually when you have a play where you know the player is going to yell at you, you almost intentionally ignore the player. You look past them, do your best job not to antagonize them.”

However, it would have been clear as day after the fact, especially since Marchment came out at the start of the third period and was caught by cameras apologizing to Skilliter. Ultimately, the referee did not file an “abuse of official” report and the NHL decided no sanctions would be taken such as a fine and/or suspension.

“It can’t just be black-and-white You need some layers. Like, putting your hand on him versus punching him can’t be the same crime, right?” said official No. 2.

“If it had happened to me, I’d have killed the play right there and given him a 10-minute misconduct. And then the league could have stepped in. I’m a little bit surprised that nothing was done after the fact.”

Both officials speculated that Skilliter likely spoke to other referees, including the union, before ultimately deciding no further action was necessary.

Does that mean it’s now open season on the men in stripes?

“No, if anything, I think it’ll be heightened awareness,” said official No. 2. “That anything happening down the road is going to be dealt with swiftly and severely.”

*INCIDENT #2:* Dallas defenceman Alex Petrovic knocks a puck with his skate which goes off Jets goaltender Connor Hellebuyck’s stick and into the Winnipeg net to give the Stars a 3-2 lead in a game they’d go on to win 5-2.

*THE CALL ON THE PLAY:* A good goal, both as it happened and then following a nearly 10-minute video review. Ultimately, referees deemed that while Petrovic did use a kicking motion on the puck, Hellebuyck negated the illegal act by “propelling” it into his own net. If they had deemed he simply deflected it, it would not have counted based on NHL rules.

*UPON FURTHER REVIEW:* “If they are going to rule that a kick, then that is a textbook no-goal based on how the rule is written,” said official No. 2. “That’s not control by

(Hellebuyck) by any means. He's scrambling to try and block it when the puck goes in the net. That's the reason the rule was put in there."

No argument from official No. 1.

"Do I think it was propelled? No. I think he made a legitimate attempt to stop the puck and it deflected. I don't know what the goaltender is supposed to do in that situation other than try to stop the puck," he said.

"The grey area becomes where the goaltender goes to make a save and tries to direct it to the corner, but instead it goes in the net. That's an intentional action that is misplayed. That I don't believe is what happened here."

The Jets felt they got robbed on this play, and both officials would seem to agree. Except official No. 2 thinks the NHL also messed up by finding Petrovic guilty of a kick.

"I don't think that was a distinct kicking motion," he said.

In essence, two wrongs here ultimately made a right in terms of the final verdict.

"I'm glad it was allowed, I thought it should be a goal, but not for the reasons they stated," said No. 2. "Before we had video review, nobody would have said 'Boo,' nobody would have watched that 10 minutes later and gone 'Oh, we got screwed because it wasn't reviewed.' It was like they stuck their fingers here where they didn't need to be."

So how did this all come to fruition? According to both officials, it would have been the NHL itself which halted play before the puck could be dropped to say they wanted a further look — not Skilliter or his referee partner, Chris Rooney. And that led to a painstaking back-and-forth.

"I can only guess here that the referees did not feel it was kicked. They had a good angle on it. But Toronto (the league office) said 'Hold on,'" said No. 2.

"I think the reason it took so long was because there was probably some disconnect between Toronto and the referees. Toronto saying it was kicked, the referees looking at it and saying it wasn't. And possibly coming up with some compromise as to how do we allow this goal and maintain integrity."

## **Dallas Morning News**

<https://www.dallasnews.com/sports/stars/2025/05/13/finnish-them-another-big-night-for-a-stars-player-from-finland-pushes-jets-to-the-brink/>

***Finnish them: Another big night for a Stars player from Finland pushes Jets to the brink***

***Mikko Rantanen steps aside as countryman Mikael Granlund takes star turn in Game 4.***

By Tim Cowlshaw

The depths of Team Finland, right here in Dallas, know no bounds.

In a postseason that has been completely owned by Mikko Rantanen, he was all too happy to step aside for 24 hours Tuesday to allow Miro Heiskanen to take center stage. The Stars' 30-minute man on defense was returning to the ice for the first time since suffering a knee injury Jan. 28 against Vegas. Coach Pete DeBoer announced at the morning skate that Heiskanen would be a game-time decision, which meant, for all practical purposes, he was back.

So, naturally, the star of Game 4 was — Mikael Granlund, also known as the third part of the Stars' Finnish line, which now has the Winnipeg Jets thinking about the finish of their season.

Despite winning the Presidents' Trophy as the club with the NHL's best record, the Jets trail Dallas 3-1 and still have not won a road game this entire postseason. The Stars kept Winnipeg's road record the opposite of spotless when Granlund produced a hat trick for a 3-1 Dallas victory.

"What he does on the ice is one thing," DeBoer said, "but his leadership in our Finnish group there, he's kind of the elder statesman. He's won internationally. He's got a lot of respect from that group."

Granlund's heroics — a goal in each period — helped offset the fact that the Stars did not have much going for them early Tuesday at the AAC. Through two periods, the Jets had outshot them 20-13 and had the far better true scoring chances on their side. But they didn't have a goalie playing at even an average NHL level which remains the most baffling story of the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Connor Hellebuyck, the Team USA goalie who started while Dallas' Jake Oettinger served as his backup in the 4 Nations Face-Off in February, had his fifth poor road game of the postseason. Hellebuyck is almost certain to win his third Vezina Trophy when awards are handed out in June, but he had given up at least five goals in the first four road games against the Blues and Stars. Even with a smaller output from Dallas in

Game 4, Hellebuyck did not distinguish himself. Granlund's first goal came after entering the zone unattended and firing straight at him from about 40 feet off.

Goal.

"I'm sure that's the one he would want back," Jets coach Scott Arniel said.

The second goal actually came on a better scoring opportunity but it was a 2-on-1 where the Winnipeg defenseman was taking away the cross-ice pass as he is supposed to do. So Hellebuyck needed to stop what was right in front of him from his left hand side. Granlund did as as many have done with success in the playoffs — shoot high at Hellebuyck's glove hand — and the Stars took a 2-1 lead into the third period.

"You know it's good to shoot every once in a while," Granlund said.

In between, Winnipeg got its only score just after the close of a power play with Nikolaj Ehlers beating Oettinger from an extreme angle to tie the score.

But in the third, Roope Hintz — the other Finnish forward who used to be known as the Stars' best player in the playoffs two years ago — put Dallas on the power play for four minutes by taking a high stick from defenseman Haydn Fleury. And it took nearly the entire allotted time (3:57 to be precise) before Heiskanen fed a perfect pass from the point to Granlund on the right side. He whipped a shot past Hellebuyck for the goal that gave the Stars a two-goal lead and removed whatever anxiety remained for the night.

Winnipeg was given one last gasp of a chance when Jamie Benn took a roughing penalty with 4:53 to play but the Jets didn't mount any kind of attack until the very end, and the chants of "Otter's Better" rang true when he stopped a blast from defenseman Dave Pionk as time on the power play expired. Oettinger finished with 31 saves on 32 shots.

This was the third hat trick in five games for the Stars — all from Finns, of course. Rantanen's hat trick in Game 7 saved the Colorado series and his hat trick at Winnipeg in Game 1 represents the only road win in this series Dallas may need to finish the job. Granlund followed up Tuesday with the first playoff hat trick of his career. Who knows what lies ahead for Hintz, and, at this rate, you figure Heiskanen and Esa Lindell to sneak into the goal-scoring column.

Dallas is one win from returning to its third straight Western Conference finals, and while much of the roster and attack looks the same, the trade deadline additions of Rantanen and Granlund couldn't rank any bigger right now as the Stars look stronger than ever.

Hellebuyck, the game's best goaltender until the games start to really count, certainly couldn't disagree.



<https://www.dallasnews.com/sports/stars/2025/05/13/five-thoughts-from-stars-jets-game-4-granlunds-hat-trick-puts-dallas-in-drivers-seat/>

***Five thoughts from Stars-Jets Game 4: Granlund's hat trick puts Dallas in driver's seat***

***The Stars are one victory from advancing to the Western Conference finals.***

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Dallas Stars center Mikael Granlund (64) skates through the hats after scoring a hat trick...View Gallery

The Dallas Stars have pushed the Winnipeg Jets to the brink.

After splitting in Winnipeg, the Stars took control on home ice, winning back-to-back games, including a 3-1 victory in Game 4 Tuesday night at American Airlines Center.

Forward Mikael Granlund, whom Dallas acquired ahead of the trade deadline in a deal that included Cody Ceci, scored his first career playoff hat trick to lead the Stars.

The Stars now hold a 3-1 lead as the series returns to Winnipeg for Game 5. The Jets need to win three games in a row to extend their season, and the Stars have not lost three games in a row this playoff run.

Here are five thoughts from the important Game 4 win:

Related:Finnish them: Another big night for a Stars player from Finland pushes Jets to the brink

Advertisement

***Stars capitalize on critical opportunity***

When the Stars dropped Game 4 in Colorado last series, it wasn't a big deal.

The series returned to Dallas tied 2-2, and the Stars had home ice in two of the last three games. They won their two home games to win the series.

But against the Jets, Dallas doesn't have home-ice advantage. Losing Game 4 would've given the Jets home-ice advantage in a three-game series.

But the Stars won what may be the most important game of the series to give them their first two-game lead of the playoffs.

Even if Winnipeg can take care of business on home ice Thursday, the Stars can secure the series at American Airlines Center on Saturday — or in another Game 7, if necessary, Monday at Canada Life Centre.

*A Finn not named Mikko Rantanen steals the show*

The focus for the last six games, or so, has been on Mikko Rantanen, the Stars' trade-deadline acquisition who leads the NHL in points this postseason.

But one of his countrymen and linemates, also acquired at the trade deadline, was the bigger star in Game 4.

Granlund, whom Dallas added in early February alongside Cody Ceci in a trade with San Jose, scored three goals in the Stars' win.

His first was on the power play in the first period when he carried the puck through the neutral zone, dodged a defender and took a shot at Connor Hellebuyck from distance to put the Stars on the board. He had also drawn the penalty to get the Stars on the power play.

After the Jets tied the game in the second period, Granlund and Roope Hintz found themselves in a 2-on-1 situation, and Granlund kept the puck, shooting and scoring to give the Stars a 2-1 lead.

Granlund completed the hat trick midway through the third period when Hintz drew a Jets' high-sticking double-minor. As the four-minute power play wound down, Granlund added to Dallas' lead.

Granlund had scored just one goal in the playoffs before Tuesday.

While he stole the spotlight from Rantanen, his linemate still assisted on the second goal, bringing his point total this playoffs to 19.

*Jake Oettinger continues to look like best goalie*

Stars goalie Jake Oettinger has had the chance to go head-to-head with the league's best goalie in Hellebuyck, but Oettinger has looked like the more reliable netminder through four games.

Oettinger made 31 saves en route to the victory Tuesday. He looked locked in from the start and mostly weathered the push from Winnipeg in the second period. He did allow a goal just out of a Winnipeg power play.

He also made some key stops in the third, including a breakaway shorthanded attempt and a late Jets power play after a Jamie Benn roughing call.

Hellebuyck again looked shaky on the road, as he has all playoffs, facing fewer shots and making just 21 saves. The first two goals were ones he'd typically save in the regular season, especially Granlund's first, which was a direct wrist shot from just below the blue line.

*Miro Heiskanen noticeable in his return*

For the first time in 105 days, the Stars had Miro Heiskanen back in the lineup.

The defenseman made his 2025 Stanley Cup playoff debut in Game 4 after not seeing the ice since Jan. 28 when he suffered a knee injury that required surgery in early February.

But the Stars were patient in returning Heiskanen to the lineup, and it proved to be for good reason, as Heiskanen looked ready, even in limited ice time.

The defenseman skated 14:52, played limited time on the power play and had no shots on goal. He recorded his first point since returning, assisting on Granlund's third goal.

But some of his greater contributions were on the defensive end, showing why he's Dallas' most reliable defenseman.

The Stars used seven defensemen Tuesday to limit Heiskanen's ice time, so his minutes and role will likely continue to increase as the series goes on.

#### *Power play stays hot*

Stars coach Pete DeBoer has been quite pleased with his special teams in the playoffs, especially his penalty kill, which has shut down two of the best power plays in the league in Colorado and Winnipeg.

But Dallas' power play has been among the best in the league and leads all teams left in the playoffs at 32.4%.

The Stars went 2-for-4 on the power play Tuesday night, scoring on their opening power play and again when Hintz drew a double minor in the third period.

Granlund scored both of Dallas' power-play goals.

The Jets went 0-for-3 on the power play Tuesday.