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Wild Find Their Offense with a 6-2 Home Victory Over the Jets



Mandatory Credit: Marilyn Indahl-USA TODAY Sports



By [Heather Rule](#) - April 15, 2018

While Mother Nature won't shut off the snow machine outside, somebody turned on the goal machine inside Xcel Energy Center.

The Minnesota Wild responded to a series deficit with a 6-2 victory over the Winnipeg Jets in Game 3 Sunday night in St. Paul. The home team got goals from six different players and points from 13 players as they used a four-goal second period to propel themselves to a playoff victory for the first time in this best-of-seven matchup with the Jets.

The game included a lot of firsts: The first victory in the series for the Wild, the first NHL/playoff goal for [Jordan Greenway](#), the first NHL playoff goal for [Marcus Foligno](#) and the first NHL playoff assists for [Nick Seeler](#), to name a few. Their six goals is also a franchise record for a home playoff game. They've previously scored five goals three times, and their playoff record is seven goals (Game f5 in Vancouver in 2003).

"This win gives us a lot of confidence," Foligno said. "We can beat this team."

The Wild improve to 7-6 all-time in Game 3 situations and bucked a trend. It was just the second time in the past seven playoff games at Xcel Energy Center that the Wild have come away with the victory.

For the third time this series, the Wild found themselves in a 1-0 hole, although this time the goal from [Blake Wheeler](#), his first of the series, on the power play just 4:50 into the game as [Matt Cullen](#) sat in the box for a slashing penalty. Wheeler snuck a puck past [Devan Dubnyk](#) who didn't quite hug the side of the post close enough to stop the puck from getting through. It was the first Jets shot of the game.

Not wanting to get into a deeper deficit, the Wild needed to tie the game before the first period was up. They didn't have to wait too long.



Giles Ferrell

@gilesferrell

Mikael Granlund cleans up a rebound to tie the game. [#mnwild](#)
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The physical play in this series continued once again, and the officials showed they wouldn't be afraid to send guys to the penalty box to try and keep things under control. The early whistles led to a lengthy 5-on-3 opportunity for the Wild, who cycled the puck back-and-forth in the offensive zone but weren't able to score.

After multiple Matt Dumba blasts from the point, the Wild finally cashed in 5-on-4 to tie the game 1-1. It was [Mikael Granlund](#) who buried [Mikko Koivu's](#) shot.

"It made us believe that we could get another one," said coach [Bruce Boudreau](#).

The Wild took a 2-1 lead with two minutes, 10 seconds left in the first period when [Zach Parise](#) scored from his office in front of the crease on another Koivu shot. It's Parise's third goal in as many games. He came into the playoffs as one of the top scorers since the beginning of March.

With a lead headed into the first intermission, the Wild stayed after it and took a 3-1 lead just 3:32 into the period with a quick shot from near the blue line from Dumba. It wasn't his trademark blast from the point, but he took a quick shot with a ton of players screening Hellebuyck's view. [Daniel Winnik](#) and [Joel Eriksson Ek](#) got the helpers.

The breathing room went away a few minutes later when [Tyler Myers](#) (who later left the game with an injury) sent a puck past Dubnyk. Both goals Dubnyk surrendered were probably ones he'd like to have back. He played well the first two games of the series, and this time his teammates finally picked him up.

To end the second period, the Wild scored three goals in a span of three minutes, 43 seconds to put the game out of reach for the Jets. First, it was [Eric Staal](#). The team's leading scorer in the regular season finally got on the playoff scoresheet with a shot that beat Hellebuyck upstairs. Granlund helped make the play happen with a spin-around pass to find Staal as he headed toward the side of the net.

Eric Staal: You have to bring that same type of energy to Game 4



“You know that when [Staal’s] going, that usually the rest of the team is going,” Boudreau said. “I thought we got really good games from our big players.”

Just 20 seconds later – with five minutes left in the second – rookie Greenway made it a 5-2 game. He found the loose puck in the high slot with his back to the net, quickly turned and fired off a quick shot that beat the goaltender. It was his first goal in the NHL, let alone the playoffs.



Giles Ferrell
@gilesferrell

Jordan Greenway - @JGreenway12 - scores his first career NHL goal to give the #mnwild a 5-2 lead.



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"It really bodes well for the future here," Boudreau said, of Greenway.

With 1:37 left in the second, Foligno capped off the goal spurt with his first career NHL playoff goal that came in a right-place, right-time fashion. The [Jared Spurgeon](#) shot bounced off Foligno's body as he stood at the top of the goal crease. Seeler had the secondary assists on the Greenway and Foligno goals.

Seeler nearly had his first career goal – shorthanded – in the second period when he was fed a great pass from Winnik. The puck slid behind Hellebuyck who nearly put the puck in the net himself but found it in time to slide it out of the crease.

Minnesotan Nick Seeler played in his first home playoff game



The Wild registered just nine shots on goal in the second period, and four of them found the back of the net. That's not a great ratio if you're Jets netminder Hellebuyck, which is why he was lifted at the start of the third period in favor of [Steve Mason](#).

The final 20 minutes turned into a formality, as the damage on the scoreboard had already been done by the Wild. Despite the favorable ratio of goals, the Wild were outshot for a third straight

game, 31-29. To be fair, that category didn't really matter as much in this game.

Boudreau said this response from his team in Game 3 was needed, though he added he thinks his team can still play better.

"I think everybody knows if you lose Game 3, how difficult it is, especially playing these guys," Boudreau said. "I think desperation is the best word. When you're down two, it's still a big hurdle."

Special teams were a big part of this game with so many penalties. The Wild went 2-for-3 on the power play with goals on their first two chances in the first period. The Wild are 3-for-8 with the man advantage in this series. The Jets went just 1-for-5 on their power play on Sunday.

"Our game is based on some speed," said Jets coach Paul Maurice. "And that was pretty much lacking in our game tonight.

"We didn't move the puck well."

Now, the Wild find themselves in a much better position than being on the brink of elimination down 0-3. One more win at home evens that series and would extend it to at least six games. If the Wild lose next game and go down three games to one, it's a spot they've certainly been in before.

"It was a huge game," Staal said. "The building was energetic, and we got to the gritty areas and got the job done."

In goal:

Dubnyk (1-2) with 29 saves on 31 shots. Hellebuyck (2-1) with 16 saves on 22 shots in the first two periods. Mason with seven saves on seven shots in the third period.

Tidbits:

- Koivu had a two-assist game, giving him a total of four helpers in the series so far. He's looking for his first goal.
- The Wild out-hit the Jets 9-7 in the first period. However, the Jets still own this category and out-hit the Wild 26-19 for the game.
- Foligno had a team-high three hits. [Dustin Byfuglien](#) had a game-high five hits for the Jets.
- The Jets got into town Sunday morning because of the blizzard conditions Saturday, which diverted the team to Duluth and then back to Winnipeg for the night. "I don't know if it made us worse, but I can say for a fact, it certainly didn't make us better," Maurice said.
- Cullen and [Jonas Brodin](#) also each had an assist in the game.

Up next:

The Wild get a chance to even the series on their ice with a game four contest Tuesday in St. Paul.