

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

Wednesday | **March 31, 2021** | 6:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Broadcast: ESPN Rochester, AHLTV



CLEVELAND MONSTERS

GAME NOTES

ROCHESTER AMERICANS



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (6-3-1-1) begin a busy stretch of three games in four nights tonight as they welcome the Cleveland Monsters (6-5-1-0) to The Blue Cross Arena for the first time season.

The 6:05 p.m. contest will be the second of six scheduled meetings between the two teams this season as Rochester opened the season-series with a 7-3 victory in the only other get-together back on Feb. 12 in Cleveland.

The game will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester and AHLTV.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks erased a two-goal deficit to force overtime before suffering a 4-3 setback to the Syracuse Crunch last Friday at The Blue Cross Arena.

The contest was Rochester's first in more than two weeks following a 16-day layoff due to COVID-19 protocols and the fifth of 12 meetings with Syracuse this season. Despite the loss, the Amerks are now 3-0-1-0 in their last four games on home ice dating back to Feb. 10.

Rookie forward **Brandon Biro** factored in on all three Amerks goals, scoring twice, including the game-tying marker in the third period, while also adding an assist in the middle frame on **Oskari Laaksonen's** first American Hockey League goal.

Remi Elie notched his second multi-point effort of the season as he collected a pair of helpers. **Mattias Samuelsson**, **Casey Fitzgerald** and **Jack Quinn** all notched an assist with Quinn extending his point streak to three games (1+2) dating back to March 6.

Rookie goaltender **Stefanos Lekkas**, who signed a professional tryout (PTO) on Mar. 15, made his Amerks/AHL debut. The 25-year-old netminder made 25 saves but took the defeat.

POWER UP

Now 11 games into the campaign, Rochester's power-play has gone 14-for-45 with a 31.1% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 14 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only three off the AHL lead behind the Chicago Wolves.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in nine of their first 11 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in two of their last five outings overall.

THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester comes into the week owning three of the AHL's top scoring rookie defensemen in **Oskari Laaksonen**, **Mattias Samuelsson** and **Ryan Jones**, all of whom have combined for 19 points (3+16) while appearing in all 11 games so far this season.

Laaksonen and Samuelsson are both tied for seventh in the league in assists and 12th in points among all first-year defensemen. Samuelsson has four assists in his last four games, including a two-assist effort against Syracuse on March 6.

Rochester is 1-0-0-0 when all three players record a point in the same game.

2020-21 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
J-S Dea	9	4	8	12	2	6
Steven Fogarty	10	5	3	8	10	-1
Remi Elie	10	3	5	8	4	5
Arttu Ruotsalainen	10	3	5	8	2	-2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	2	1-1-0	68	.932	2.51
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	8	5-2-1	244	.904	3.19
Stefanos Lekkas	1	0-0-1	25	.862	3.84

2020-21 MONSTERS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Trey Fix-Wolansky	9	4	5	9	2	-6
Tyler Sikura	12	4	5	9	6	-11
Carson Meyer	9	3	5	8	0	5
Nathan Gerbe	10	3	5	8	12	-6

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Mattias Kivlenieks	3	3-0-0	105	.938	2.27
Brad Thiessen	8	3-4-1	217	.900	3.03

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Cleveland Monsters

Rochester Americans

6-5-1-0	.....	Record	.....	6-3-1-1
3-4-0-0	.....	Home Record	.....	3-1-1-0
3-1-1-0	.....	Road Record	.....	3-2-0-1
6-3-1-0	.....	Last 10 Games	.....	6-2-1-1
6-5-0-0	.....	Record When Scoring First	.....	3-1-0-0
3.33 (11th)	.....	Goals-For Per Game	.....	3.45 (8th)
3.08 (12th)	.....	Goals-Against Per Game	.....	3.27 (T-16th)
22.5% (7th)	.....	Power-Play	.....	31.1% (1st)
80.6% (16th)	Penalty Kill	79.2% (20th)
5-2 W vs. TEX	Last Game	4-3 OTL @ SYR
Apr. 3 vs. GR	Next Game	Apr. 2 vs. SYR



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YOUTH MOVEMENT

Rochester's roster features 13 incoming rookies ready to make a splash in their first season in the American Hockey League, most of whom are products of the NCAA in forwards **Brandon Biro** (Penn State), **Dawson DiPietro** (Western Michigan), **Dominic Franco** (Army West Point) and **Patrick Polino** (R.P.I.); defensemen **Ryan Jones** (Nebraska-Omaha), **Nick Welsh** (St. Mary's) **Griffin Luce** (Michigan) and **Mattias Samuelsson** (Western Michigan) and goaltender **Stefanos Lekkas** (U. of Vermont).

Jack Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in the 2020 NHL Draft, rounds out Rochester's rookie class this season. The highly touted 19-year-old is coming off an explosive 52-goal season for the Ottawa 67's in 2019-20, during which he became just the eighth player since 2000-01 to reach the 50-goal mark in his NHL Draft Year. He finished the season second in the Ontario Hockey League in goals and tied for fifth with 15 power-play tallies while also adding 37 assists.

Quinn made his professional debut with Rochester back on Feb. 18 against Utica, recording an assist on the game-tying third-period goal before scoring the shootout-clinching goal on a dazzling effort in the second round. During the most recent matchup with the Comets on Mar. 10, Quinn scored his first pro goal, a power-play marker, to open the scoring for Rochester. Quinn is the third eighth overall pick of the Sabres in the last five years to spend time in Rochester, joining **Alexander Nylander** (2016) and **Casey Mittelstadt** (2017), and the second to make his pro debut with the Amerks following Nylander, who spent parts of three seasons in Rochester.

STAND AND DEALIVER

After leading the Amerks in points (39) and holding a share of the team-lead in goals (15) during the 2019-20 season, his first in Rochester, forward **Jean-Sebastien Dea** is again the team's top point-getter this season. By posting a season-high three points on a goal and two assists on March 6 against Syracuse, the Laval, Quebec, native became the first Amerks skater this season to reach double digits in points with 12 (4+8) through nine games.

Currently on recall with the Buffalo Sabres, Dea, who has notched at least one point in seven of his first nine games this season, has already recorded four multi-point games after posting six in 57 contests last season. He also paces all Rochester skaters with an on-ice rating of plus-six.

FINN-ISHING TOUCH

In his first season in North America, forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has posted eight points through his first 10 games on three goals and five assists. The Oulu, Finland, native began the slate by recording a point in each of his first four games and comes into the week riding a four-game point streak, including goals in back-to-back games for the first time this season.

Back with the Amerks following a brief three-day stint on the Sabres taxi squad, **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen**, who's started eight of Rochester's first 11 games this season, is tied for eighth among all goaltenders with five wins.

SCOUTING THE MONSTERS

Cleveland comes into the matchup on the heels of a 5-2 win over the Texas Stars in the final meeting of a three-game set between the two teams. The Monsters are also 4-2-0-0 in their last six games.

After leading the Monsters as a rookie with a 12 goals in 43 games in 2019-20, forward **Trey Fix-Wolansky** is again atop the team's scoring leaders with a team-high four goals and nine points through nine games.

AMERKS-MONSTERS 2020-21 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
C.J. Smith	1	2	1	3	0	1
J-S Dea	1	2	0	2	0	3
Mattias Samuelsson	1	1	1	2	2	3

GOALTENDER

Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.935	3.00
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CLEVELAND

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Zac Dalpe	1	1	0	1	5	-2
Nathan Gerbe	1	1	0	1	0	0
Dillion Simpson	1	1	0	1	0	1

GOALTENDER

Brad Thiessen	1	0-1-0	6	.818	6.13
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2020-21 SEASON SERIES GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Feb 12	W	7-3	34-46	2-3	5-6
Mar. 31					
Apr. 10					
Apr. 14					
Apr. 17					
May 8					

SERIES NOTABLES

Amerks forward **Andrew Oglevie** scored his first career hat trick back on Nov. 30, 2019 against Cleveland, single-handedly outscoring the Monsters to lead the Amerks to a 3-2 win.

Rochester holds a record of 30-7-4-4 over Cleveland since the start of the 2011-12 campaign and earned a point in each of the last eight games, which includes all seven meetings last season.

Last season in the head-to-head series, all seven games were decided by one goal, including five that went beyond regulation.

Monsters forward and assistant captain Nathan Gerbe spent five seasons in the Buffalo Sabres organization from 2008-13 and was named the AHL's Rookie of the Year in 2008-09 after leading all first-year players with 56 points (30+26) in 57 games for the Portland Pirates. In 105 career games with the Monsters, Gerbe has recorded 83 points 25 goals and 58 assists since joining Cleveland for the 2017-18 season.



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