

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

Saturday | **April 3, 2021** | 7:00 PM ET | Upstate Medical University Arena | Broadcast: ESPN Rochester, AHLTV



SYRACUSE CRUNCH

GAME NOTES

ROCHESTER AMERICANS



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (6-5-1-1) look to get back on the winning track tonight as they take on the North Division rival Syracuse Crunch (8-5-1-0) for the second straight night at Upstate Medical University Arena.

The 7:00 p.m. contest will be the seventh of 12 scheduled meetings between the two teams this season with the Amerks holding a 3-2-1-0 record so far.

The game will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester and AHLTV. The North Division matchup will also be the second of three straight meetings between the two clubs.

LAST TIME OUT

The Crunch scored three times in the first period and added three more in the third to come away with a 6-2 win over the Amerks Friday at Blue Cross Arena in the first of three straight meetings between the intrastate rivals.

The loss gave Rochester back-to-back home losses for the first time all season and extended the team's winless streak to four straight games.

Forwards **Arttu Ruotsalainen** (1+1) and **Andrew Oglevie** (0+2) each factored in on both Amerks goals in the third period while **Brett Murray** rounded out the scoring for Rochester with his fourth goal of the season on the power-play.

Rookie goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** made 21 saves while making his 10th start in 13 games for Rochester. The Finland native is tied for ninth in the AHL in wins and has made 25 or more saves in six of his last nine appearances dating back to a career-best 43-save performance at Cleveland on Feb. 12.

Netminder **Billy Christopoulos** relieved Luukkonen late in the third period of Friday's night's tilt. Christopoulos made two saves on three shots he faced in his American Hockey League debut while becoming the fourth different netminder to see time with the Amerks this season.

POWER UP

Now 13 games into the campaign, Rochester's power-play has gone 16-for-55 with a 29.1% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 16 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only two off the AHL lead behind the Chicago Wolves, who have played in three more games than Rochester.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 11 of their first 13 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in two of their last seven outings overall.

THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester comes into the weekend 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 13 games so far this season.

Laaksonen and Samuelsson are both tied for 10th in the league in assists and 15th in points among all first-year defensemen. Samuelsson has four assists in his last six 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
Arttu Ruotsalainen	12	4	6	10	2	-3
Steven Fogarty	10	5	3	8	10	-1
Brett Murray	12	4	4	8	2	-2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	2	1-1-0	68	.932	2.51
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	10	5-4-1	289	.892	3.49
Stefanos Lekkas	1	0-0-1	25	.862	3.84

2020-21 CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Boris Katchouk	13	5	5	10	10	8
Otto Somppi	14	4	6	10	8	6
Alex Barre-Boulet	7	5	4	9	0	2
John Ludvig	12	2	6	8	13	3

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Christopher Gibson	2	2-0-0	62	.925	2.51
Spencer Martin	4	2-2-0	113	.911	2.72
Samuel Montembeault	8	4-3-1	203	.902	2.75

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch

Rochester Americans

8-5-1-0	.....	Record	.....	6-5-1-1
3-4-0-0	.....	Home Record	.....	3-3-1-0
5-1-1-0	.....	Road Record	.....	3-2-0-1
7-3-0-0	.....	Last 10 Games	.....	4-4-1-1
6-0-0-0	.....	Record When Scoring First	.....	3-1-0-0
3.64 (T-5th)	.....	Goals-For Per Game	.....	3.15 (T-14th)
2.86 (8th)	.....	Goals-Against Per Game	.....	3.62 (23rd)
18.0% (14th)	.....	Power-Play	.....	29.1% (1st)
78.5% (20th)	Penalty Kill	76.8% (25th)
6-2 W @ ROC	Last Game	6-2 L vs. SYR
Apr. 3 vs. ROC	Next Game	Apr. 3 @ 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 10 points through his first 12 games on four goals and six assists. The Oulu, Finland, native began the slate by recording a point in each of his first four games and comes into the weekend with six points (3+3) over his last six games, 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 10 of Rochester's first 13 games this season, is tied for ninth among all goaltenders with five wins.

SCOUTING THE CRUNCH

Coming off a 6-2 win over the Amerks last night, Syracuse returns to the ice having won five straight and seven of its last eight to move one game ahead of the Amerks in the AHL's North Division standings. The Crunch have also won five straight on the road dating back to March 3, outscoring the opposition 23-11, including 11-1 in the first period over that span.

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2020-21 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
J-S Dea	4	1	6	7	0	4
Brett Murray	5	3	2	5	0	-1
Remi Elie	6	2	3	5	0	2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	1	1-0-0	2	.949	2.00
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	4	2-2-0	14	.864	3.59
Stefanos Lekkas	1	0-0-1	4	.862	3.84

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Boris Katchouk	6	3	4	7	6	7
Grigori Denisenko	4	3	1	4	2	3
John Ludvig	5	2	2	4	9	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Samuel Montembeault	3	2-0-1	9	.885	2.93
Spencer Martin	3	1-2-0	10	.892	3.38

2020-21 SEASON SERIES GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Feb. 10	OTW	4-3	26-23	2-3	1-1
Feb. 20	W	3-2	32-39	0-3	3-4
Mar. 1	L	4-3	34-25	2-6	2-2
Mar. 6	W	4-2	27-29	2-5	6-8
Mar. 26	OTL	4-3	25-29	1-3	2-2
Apr. 2	L	6-2	27-29	1-4	3-5
Apr. 3					
Apr. 7					
Apr. 21					
Apr. 24					
May 1					
May 15					

SERIES NOTABLES

The Amerks have scored a power-play goal in 10 of their last 14 games against Syracuse dating back to last season, going 15-for-55 (27.3%) with the man-advantage over that span.

Amerks defenseman **Dylan Blujus** spent time with the Crunch after being drafted by the Tampa Bay Lightning in 2012. He played his first three seasons with the Syracuse from 2014-2017, recording 49 points (11+38) in 151 games.

The Amerks are 15-9-2-1 in their last 27 contests against Syracuse.

Syracuse head coach Benoit Groulx spent two seasons behind the Amerks bench from 2008-10, leading the team to a postseason berth in 2010.



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