ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

Wednesday | April 7, 2021 | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Broadcast: ESPN Rochester, AHLTV



SYRACUSE CRUNCH

GAME NOTES



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (7-5-1-1) and Syracuse Crunch (8-6-1-0) clash for the third time in six nights tonight as the intrastate rivals close out a three-game series at The Blue Cross Arena.

The 7:05 p.m. contest will be the eighth of 12 scheduled meetings between the two teams this season with the Amerks holding a 4-2-1-0 record thus far, including a 1-1-1- mark at home.

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

LAST TIME OUT

In a game highlighted by near-perfect execution on special teams and a combined seven goals in the first period, the Amerks halted Syracuse's five-game win streak and ended a four-game winless streak of their own on Saturday with a 5-3 victory at Upstate Medical University Arena.

With the victory, the Amerks have taken four of the first seven contests against the Crunch this season, which includes three of four in Syracuse.

Brett Murray (2+1) powered the Amerks offense by notching a point on three of the team's four goals of the night, marking the first three-point effort of his career. **Arttu Ruotsalainen** (1+2) had a three-point night as well, all in the first period, picking up his second straight multi-point effort and adding his fourth goal in six games. Newcomer **Griffin Luce** (1+0) scored his first pro goal, which proved to be the eventual game-winner, while fellow rookie **Jack Quinn** (1+1) posted his first multi-point game.

Rookie goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** (6-4-1) made his third consecutive start in the crease for Rochester and stopped 25 of the 28 shots he faced. The Finland native is tied for eighth in the AHL in wins and has made 25 or more saves in seven of his last 10 appearances dating back to a career-best 43-save performance at Cleveland on Feb. 12.

POWER UP

Now 14 games into the campaign, Rochester's power-play has gone 19-for-59 with a 32.2% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 19 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only one off the AHL lead behind only the San Diego Gulls, who have played in 12 more games than Rochester coming into this week.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 12 of their first 14 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in three of their last eight outings overall, including three on Saturday alone.

FINN-ISHING TOUCH

After leaving Finland in January as Liiga's top point-getter, forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has taken in his first season in North America by storm with a team-leading 13 points (5+8) through his first 13 games. The Oulu, Finland, native began the slate by recording a point in each of his first four games and and now shows nine points (4+5) over his last seven outings, including goals in back-to-back games twice over that span.

Earlier this week, Ruotsalainen, who has collected all eight of assists this season on the power-play to rank second in the AHL in that category, was reassigned from Rochester to the Buffalo Sabres' taxi squad. He becomes the 12th different Amerks player this season to earn a recall to the big club.

2020-21 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS						
SKATER	GP	G	Α	PTS	PIM	+/-
Arttu Ruotsalainei	n 13	5	8	13	2	-2
J-S Dea	9	4	8	12	2	6
Brett Murray	13	6	5	11	2	0
Oskari Laaksone	n 14	1	8	9	2	-2
GOALTENDER		GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski		2	1-1-0	68	.932	2.51
Ukko-Pekka Lu	ukkone	n 11	6-4-1	316	.893	3.45
Stefanos Lekka	IS	1	0-0-1	25	.862	3.84

2020-21 CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS							
SKATER	GP	G	Α	PTS	PIM	+/-	
Boris Katchouk	14	6	6	12	12	9	
Otto Somppi	15	4	7	11	10	6	
Alex Barre-Boulet	t 8	6	4	10	0	10	
John Ludvig	13	2	6	8	13	4	
GOALTENDER		GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA	
Christopher Gibson		2	2-0-0	62	.925	2.51	
Spencer Martin		5	2-3-0	113	.894	3.19	
Samuel Montembeault		8	4-3-1	203	.902	2.75	

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch	Rochester Americans
8-6-1-0	decord7-5-1-1
3-5-0-0 Hom	ne Record3-3-1-0
5-1-1-0 Roa	d Record 4-2-0-1
7-3-0-0 Last	10 Games4-4-1-1
6-1-0-0Record Wh	en Scoring First3-1-0-0
3.60 (3rd) Goals-F	or Per Game3.29 (10th)
3.00 (T-10th) Goals-Ag	ainst Per Game3.57 (T-23rd)
17.6% (17th) Po v	ver-Play32.2% (1st)
75.4% (26th) Per	nalty Kill77.2% (24th)
5-3 L vs. ROC La s	st Game5-3 W @ SYR
Apr. 10 vs. UTI Ne	kt GameApr. 9 @ UTI





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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 DEA-LIVER

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 among the team's top point-getters this season. By posting a season-high three points on a goal and two assists on March 6 against Syracuse, he became the first Amerks skater this season to reach double digits in points with 12 (4+8) through nine games.

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

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 22 points (3+19) while appearing in all 14 games so far this season.

Laaksonen and Samuelsson are tied for third and seventh in the league in assists and ninth and 12th in points among all first-year defensemen, respectively. Samuelsson has five assists in his last seven games, while Laaksonen has four points over his last four, including his first AHL goal.

SCOUTING THE CRUNCH

Having seen its five-game win streak halted Saturday night at the hands of the Amerks, Syracuse returns to Rochester winners in seven of its last nine contests. 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.

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AMERKS-CRU	NCH ZUZ	U-ZI SEA	SON SEKI	IF2 RKF4	KDOWN	
ROCHESTER						
SKATER	GP	G	Α	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Murray	6	5	3	8	0	1
Arttu Ruotsalaine	en 6	3	5	8	2	0
J-S Dea	4	1	6	7	0	4
GOALTENDER		GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski		1	1-0-0	2	.949	2.00
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen		5	3-2-0	17	.872	3.48
Stefanos Lekkas		1	0-0-1	4	.862	3.84
SYRCAUSE						
SKATER	GP	G	Α	PTS	PIM	+/-
Boris Katchouk	7	4	5	9	8	8
Grigori Denisenk	o 5	3	2	5	2	3
Taylor Raddysh	6	2	3	5	2	1
GOALTENDER		GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Samuel Montembeault		3	2-0-1	9	.885	2.93
Spencer Martin		4	1-3-0	15	.875	3.82
2020-21 SEAS	SON SERI	IES GAMI	E-BY-GAN	IE BREAI	(DOWN	
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 Mar. 6	L W	4-3 4-2	34-25 27-29	2-6 2-5	2-2 6-8	
Mar. 26	OTL	4-2 4-3	27-29 25-29	2-5 1-3	6-8 2-2	
Apr. 2	L	6-2	27-29	1-4	3-5	
Apr. 3	W	5-3	27-30	3-4	1-	
Apr. 7						
Apr. 21						

SERIES NOTABLES

Apr. 24 May 1 May 15

The Amerks have scored a power-play goal in 11 of their last 15 games against Syracuse dating back to last season, going 18-for-59 (30.5%) with the manadvantage 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 16-9-2-1 in their last 28 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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