



AMERKS DAILY PRESS CLIPS

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Amerks Sign Three To Professional Tryouts
By Staff Report
Amerks.com

The Rochester Americans announced today that the team has signed forwards Brent Gates and Brendan Warren and goaltender Stefanos Lekkas to Professional Tryouts (PTO).

Gates, 23, joins the Amerks after splitting the 2020-21 season with the Indy Fuel and Tulsa Oilers (ECHL), recording 21 points on eight goals and 13 assists in 35 games. The 6-foot-2, 196-pound forward has also notched an assist in two games with the San Diego Gulls (AHL) this season.

During the 2019-20 campaign between the Gulls and Oilers, Gates combined for 14 goals and 11 assists for 25 points in 45 contests. Gates ranked second among all Tulsa rookies in goals (10) while finishing second in both assists (10) and points (20) in 25 games before the season was cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The second-year pro has appeared in 28 career AHL games with the Gulls, totaling eight points (5+3) while also adding 41 points (18+23) over 60 contests with Tulsa.

Prior to turning pro, the Grand Rapids, Mich., native completed a four-year collegiate career at the University of Minnesota (Big-10), where he registered 85 points (42+43) in 148 games with the Gophers from 2015-2019. As team captain during his senior season, Gates finished third on the team with 18 assists and 31 points, both career-highs. In addition to being a three-time member of the All Big-10 Academic team, he helped Minnesota win two-straight Big-Ten regular-season champions in 2016 and 2017.

Gates was originally drafted in third-round (80th overall) by the Anaheim Ducks in the 2015 NHL Draft.

Warren, 23, comes to Rochester after starting the 2020-21 campaign with the Jacksonville Icemen (ECHL), recording 21 points (8+13) in 39 games. The 6-foot-1, 191-pound forward ranks fourth among all Icemen skaters with 13 assists and 21 points while being fifth on the club in goals (8).

As a rookie with Jacksonville last season, Warren represented the Icemen at the 2020 ECHL All-Star Classic. He finished tied for team-lead in goals (14) among all first-year skaters and second in points (28) and fourth in assists (14) in 47 games.

Prior to turning pro, the Carleton, Mich., native completed a four-year collegiate career at the University of Michigan (NCAA), where he registered 45 points (18+27) in 149 games with the Wolverines from 2015-2019. As a Freshman, Warren helped the maize and blue claim the Big-10 Conference Championship while skating in all 38 games and registering 17 points (5+12).

Warren was originally drafted in third-round (81st overall) by the Arizona Coyotes in the 2015 NHL Draft.

Lekkas, 25, returns for his second stint with the Amerks after making 25 saves in his AHL debut against Syracuse on March 26. He began the 2020-21 season with the Fort Wayne Komets (ECHL), posting a 7-2-2 record with a 2.15 goals-against average and a .914 save percentage in 11 games. The 6-foot, 200-pound netminder currently leads all ECHL rookie goaltenders in goals-against average while ranking third in wins and fourth in save percentage.

Prior to turning pro, the Elburn, Illinois, native completed a four-year collegiate career at the University of Vermont (H-East), where he finished with a 45-69-20 career record and made 3,913 saves, the most in Hockey East history and fifth-most in NCAA history. As a junior, he appeared in all 34 games while posting a 2.27 goals-against average and a .930 save percentage en route to earning Hockey East Second All-Star Team honors.

He left Vermont after 134 games with the Catamounts, the second-most in program history by a goaltender, ranking first in save percentage (.918), third in goals-against average (2.61) and fourth in wins (45) and shutouts (7).

Prior to joining Vermont, Lekkas played three seasons with the Sioux Falls Stampede of the United States Hockey League, backstopping the team its second Clark Cup championship in 2015 after leading league with nine postseason wins.

Nissan Amerks Alumni Spotlight | Jody Gage
By Staff Report
Amerks.com

As part of our 65th anniversary celebration this season, we're honoring the past in the present by reconnecting with those who helped shape the Amerks into one of the most storied franchises in American Hockey League history.

Amerks Multimedia Journalist Suzie Cool recently caught up with Amerks and American Hockey Hockey League Hall of Famer Jody Gage for this week's Amerks Alumni Spotlight, presented by Nissan.

The three-time Calder Cup winner discusses his 11 seasons in Rochester and his evolution into becoming the most decorated and accomplished player to ever wear an Amerks sweater.

Amerks Fall To Cleveland In Series Opener
By Staff Report
Amerks.com

The Rochester Americans (8-6-2-1) opened a three-game series against the Cleveland Monsters (9-5-1-0) with a 9-2 loss Saturday at The Blue Cross Arena.

The contest, which stopped Rochester's three-game point streak (2-0-1-0), was the third of six scheduled meetings between the two teams this season. The Amerks, who are 30-9-4-4 record against the Monsters since the start of the 2011-12 season, opened the season-series with a 7-3 victory over the Monsters, but Cleveland has since claimed the last two meetings.

Rookie defenseman Griffin Luce opened the scoring with his second goal of the campaign 1:37 into the first period while team captain Steven Fogarty, who was reassigned earlier in the day from the Buffalo Sabres, chipped in his sixth marker of the slate. Despite playing in his first game with Rochester since Mar. 10, Fogarty now shares the team lead in goals.

Rookie goaltender Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (7-5-2) made his sixth consecutive start in the crease for Rochester and 11th in the last 12 games. The rookie netminder finished with 22 saves and ranks eighth in the AHL in wins. The Finland native has made 25 or more saves in nine of his last 13 appearances dating back to a career-best 43-save performance at Cleveland on Feb. 12.

Cleveland, which has outscored its opposition 18-7 over its current four-game win streak, improved to 8-2-0-0 in the last 10 games. Defensemen Jake Christiansen and Thomas Schemitsch both tallied four-point nights (1+3) while forwards Liam Foudy (1+2) and Tyler Sikura (1+1) also recorded multi-point outings as well. Blueliner Adam Clendening registered a pair of helpers in the win. Carson Meyer, Matthew Struthers, Tyler Angle, Josh Dunne and Nathan Gerbe completed the scoring for the Monsters.

Netminder Matiss Kivlenieks improved to 4-0-0 on the campaign as he made 12 saves.

After seeing Rochester taking a one-goal lead and a pair of penalties in succession, the Monsters flipped a 1-0 deficit into a 2-1 advantage as they tallied two goals in 34 seconds.

On its second power-play of the frame, Angle pounced on a loose rebound out in front of Luukkonen before Dunne snapped in his second of the season as he kept the puck inside the offensive zone. Rochester attempted to rim the puck around the boards but Dunne stepped in from the point and wristed a shot into the net with 10:58 to go in the period.

The visitors added one goal to their total at the 13:33 mark, when Struthers snuck in the backdoor and netted his first of the season after receiving a pass from Clendening. Christiansen was also credited with his second secondary assist of the night as he handed Clendening the puck atop the right point.

Prior to the end of the opening period, the line of Fogarty, Jack Quinn and Remi Elie kept the puck inside the Monsters zone along with defensemen Casey Fitzgerald and Mattias Samuelsson. Moments later, after Kivlenieks lost his goal stick, Fogarty stepped out from the corner and slipped the puck between the right pad of the netminder and the post to make it a 3-2 game going into the first intermission.

With his secondary assist, Quinn as recorded three points (1+2) over his last four games while Fitzgerald, who has seven points (2+5) through 16 contests, is one point shy from matching his career-best.

In the second period, the Monsters turned up the pressure and limited Rochester to a season-low three shots on net while adding 15 much like the first frame.

Cleveland used its quick-strike scoring as Meyer and Gerbe both scored their fifth and fourth goals of the season, respectively, midway through stanza. After the fifth marker of the night, Luukkonen was replaced by Billy Christopoulos with 6:25 left to play.

Rochester was able to successfully kill off its third penalty of the night, but Cleveland scored late in the period to take a 6-2 cushion into the final period of play.

The Monsters, ahead by four goals and holding a 30-10 shot advantage, tacked on a two additional special teams goals to pull farther ahead, one from Sikura on the power-play and the other from Schemitsch while Cleveland was shorthanded.

Foudy capped off the scoring on the night with Cleveland's fourth power-play goal with just eight minutes left in regulation.

Luce opened the scoring for the Amerks, their third straight contest that they scored first and seventh overall, just 1:37 into the game. Cleveland countered the deficit with three goals during each of the three periods and blanked Rochester over the final 40 minutes.

The same two teams are set to face-off again on Wednesday, April 14 when the Amerks host the Monsters in a rematch at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time is slated for a 6:05 p.m. start and will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester and AHLTV.

Amerks captain after 9-2 embarrassment: 'you have to have pride'

By Kevin Oklobzija

Pickin' Splinters

Philosophers have been known to ponder the age-old question, if a tree falls in the forest, does it make a sound if there's no one nearby to hear it?

Hockey fans can ask a similar question: If a team gets schooled 9-2 on home ice but there were no fans in the building to suffer through it, did it really happen?

For the Rochester Americans, the unfortunate answer is yes, it happened, and boy was it ugly.

The Cleveland Monsters, exploiting an undermanned and overly tired Amerks team, turned a tight 3-2 contest into a laughter on Saturday night at Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial.

The Monsters, playing for the first time in a week, scored six times in a span of 19 minutes and 17 seconds between the middle of the second period and middle of the third, doing pretty much as they pleased.

The Amerks franchise hadn't given up nine goals on home ice since April 8, 2008, when the Syracuse Crunch put up 10.

But in reality, this was almost a somewhat predictable outcome. A talented Cleveland team playing an Amerks team missing too many talented forwards (Jean-Sebastien Dea, C.J. Smith, Arttu Ruotsalainen and Andrew Oglevie), an Amerks team that was playing for the third time in four nights.

"We were coming off three in four and they were fresh and they took advantage," Amerks coach Seth Appert said. "I don't think our young guys pushed through the fatigue."

No one in an Amerks sweater, young or old, provided much in the means of push-back. This was a roll over and pray it ends soon.

"You're not going to win every game but you can't give up," said center Steve Fogarty, who was reassigned in the morning by the Buffalo Sabres and was on the ice for goals four-eight by Cleveland. "You have to have pride in the jersey and your teammates and one another and yourself. We left our goalie out to dry to night and it's just simply not going enough."

The game actually started well for the Amerks. Griffin Luce scored only 1:37 into the game when his wrist from above the left circle sailed past screened goalie Matiss Kivlenieks.

The Monsters scored three times Tyler Angle, Josh Dunne and Matthew Struthers in a span of 5:05 to take a 3-1 lead, but Fogarty's goal at 15:16 of the first period pulled the Amerks back to within one.

"We kept it 3-2 for a long stretch," Appert said, "We gave up an unfortunate one that broke our back. It ricochets off an official and becomes a two-on-one and that deflates us. It shouldn't but it did."

From the time Carson Meyer scored that game-breaker at 12:30 of the second period, the rout was on in what became share-the-wealth-night for the Monsters. They had nine different goal-scorers, and it got so boring they didn't go through the traditional high-five/hand-tap line at the bench after each goal.

How bad was it? Cleveland outshot the Amerks 36-14, scoring five times on 27 shots against Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen before he was mercifully pulled after a lack of support.

"Every night you have to find a way to bring it," Luce said. "Being tired is just an excuse."

Oh, and the really good news: Cleveland comes back to downtown Rochester to play the Amerks on Wednesday night.

Sabres make roster move, send Steven Fogarty to Amerks
By Bill Hoppe
Buffalo Hockey Beat

The Buffalo Sabres this morning recalled forward Jean-Sebastien Dea from the AHL to the taxi squad and sent winger Steven Fogarty from the taxi squad back to the Rochester Americans.

Dea, 27, went pointless in one game for the Sabres earlier this season. He has scored four goals and 13 points in 11 outings with the Amerks this year.

Meanwhile, Fogarty, 27, has played seven games for the Sabres this season, recording one goal and three points. Fogarty, the Amerks' captain, has registered five goals and eight points in 10 AHL outings this year.

The Amerks host the Cleveland Monsters tonight.