

Saturday | **December 18, 2021** | 7:00 PM ET | PPL Center | Game 374 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (13-8-0-0) open the back-end of a four-game road swing tonight as they close out their season series with the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (6-11-4-1) at the PPL Center. The 7:05 p.m. matchup will be the second and final meeting between the two teams this season and will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks come into the matchup having won five of their last seven games. Following a season-long eight-game winless streak (0-5-2-1), the Phantoms have responded with three straight wins.

## HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Tonight's contest is the first against the Phantoms in Allentown since the Amerks were blanked by a 4-0 back score on Jan. 18, 2020. With Rochester's 5-4 overtime win over the Phantoms earlier this season, the Amerks show a 3-0-1-0 record against Lehigh Valley over the last five years on home ice compared to an 0-2-0-1 mark in Allentown in that same timeframe.

Rochester has earned at least one point in six of the last eight games against Lehigh Valley dating back to Dec. 30, 2016, going 4-2-1-1 over that span. In each of the eight contests over that stretch, the winning team has scored at least three goals.

## VIEW FROM ROCHESTER

With five players performing at or near a point-per-game pace, the Amerks have the AHL's second-best offense and are currently averaging just under four goals per game. Collectively, Rochester's 81 goals this season are second-most in the North Division and rank fourth overall in the AHL.

The Amerks enter the weekend with four of the league's top 20 point-getters in **Jack Quinn**, **JJ Peterka**, **Sean Malone** and **Michael Mersch**. Quinn led all AHL rookies in scoring for the second straight month and is currently fifth in the league in points (24) and sixth in goals (11) through 17 games this season.

Peterka enters tonight with 14 points (3+11) over his last 16 games dating back to Oct. 30. With 19 points (4+15) on the season, he's tied for the team lead in assists (15) with **Peyton Krebs** and is fourth on the team in scoring.

Coming off his team-leading 12th goal last Friday against Laval, Mersch is tied for second in the AHL in goals and is on pace to reach the 15-goal mark for the fifth time in eight years. He has totaled 20 points (12+8) and five multi-point outings over his last 19 games. The Amerks captain began that stretch with a five-game goal-scoring streak, the longest of his career and the longest in the AHL this season, while his five-game point marked his longest since posting a career-best seven-game point streak back in 2015.

Malone has been one of Rochester's most consistent point-getters as of late. Malone, who became the second Amerk this season to reach the 20-point mark, has produced 10 points (6+4) over his last seven games, including three power-play tallies over that span. The fifth-year pro has recorded multi-point showings in four of his last seven games.

Rochester's power-play is presently tops in the AHL after scoring 21 times on 76 opportunities for a league-best 27.6% conversion rate. In just the last six games alone, the Amerks have gone 10-for-24 on the man-advantage, including scoring four in the 7-3 win over Hershey back on Nov 26. Mersch, Malone and Quinn share the team lead with four power-play goals each.

## 2021-22 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jack Quinn	17	11	13	24	10	-2
Michael Mersch	21	12	8	20	8	0
Sean Malone	21	8	12	20	16	1
JJ Peterka	21	4	15	19	8	1
Peyton Krebs	16	2	15	17	16	-10

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	5	2-1-0	98	.899	2.82
Aaron Dell	3	3-0-0	86	.905	3.01
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	12	6-6-0	308	.888	3.42
Mat Robson	3	2-1-0	76	.826	5.87

\* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

## 2021-22 PHANTOMS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Morgan Frost*	16	3	12	15	8	-2
Gerry Mayhew	22	9	5	14	18	-8
Garrett Wilson	21	5	8	13	56	-4
Max Willman*	13	8	2	10	19	0
Adam Clendening	20	3	7	10	12	-3

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Pat Nagle	4	3-0-1	78	.907	2.09
Samuel Ersson	3	0-2-1	66	.892	2.74
Felix Sandstrom	15	3-7-2	355	.896	3.08

\* = Currently on recall with Philadelphia

## 2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Lehigh Valley Phantoms	Rochester Americans
6-11-4-1	<b>Record</b> ..... 13-8-0-0
3-4-3-0	<b>Home Record</b> ..... 7-3-0-0
3-7-1-1	<b>Road Record</b> ..... 6-5-0-0
3-4-2-1	<b>Last 10 Games</b> ..... 6-4-0-0
3-5-2-0	<b>Record When Scoring First</b> ..... 9-3-0-0
2.50 (30th)	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b> ..... 3.86 (2nd)
3.23 (21st)	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> ..... 3.76 (30th)
12.5% (30th)	<b>Power-Play</b> ..... 27.6% (1st)
80.0% (24th)	<b>Penalty Kill</b> ..... 80.3% (22nd)
3-1 W @ HFD	<b>Last Game</b> ..... 4-2 L @ CLT
Dec. 21 vs. HER	<b>Next Game</b> ..... Dec. 19 @ HER



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# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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## FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **Jack Quinn**, **JJ Peterka**, **Peyton Krebs** and **Linus Weissbach** who have combined for 68 points (21+47) through the team's 20 games this season.

Despite missing the last four games, Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in 2020, ranks second among all AHL rookies in goals (11) and points (24). Named the AHL Rookie of the Month for October, he is one of only 16 players in the AHL this season to reach the 20-point mark and he, **Sean Malone** and **Michael Mersch** are the only Amerks to accomplish the feat.

Peterka, meanwhile, is third amongst all first-year players with a team-high 15 assists while his 19 points are tied for fifth-most. He and Quinn, taken just 26 picks apart from one another by the Buffalo Sabres in the 2020 NHL Draft, currently make up one of only four rookie duos across the entire AHL to rank inside the top four on their team in scoring.

With an assist Tuesday against Charlotte, Krebs has amassed 17 points on two goals and 15 assists in 16 games this season, tying for ninth among all AHL rookie skaters.

Despite missing the previous seven games, Weissbach comes into the contest with three points (1+2) over his last four games. Weissbach, who was Buffalo's seventh-round selection (192nd overall) in the 2017 NHL Draft, has totaled eight points through his first 14 games.

## THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Second-year defenseman **Oskari Laaksonen** has recorded an assist in six of his last nine games. The Finnish blueliner leads the league with a team-high 11 power-play assists as all but one of his 12 assists this season have come on the power-play.

With his second goal of the season during Wednesday's contest with the Checkers, Amerks rookie defenseman **Mattias Samuelsson** has notched 11 points (2+9) over his last 12 outings and is already within one point of matching his offensive output from his truncated 2020-21 campaign. Samuelsson ranks fourth among all Amerks rookies with 12 points and is tied for third in the AHL among all first-year blueliners with 10 assists. Samuelsson had entered the week by having produced multi-point efforts in back-to-back outings for the first time in his pro career.

## SCOUTING THE PHANTOMS

Lehigh Valley comes into the matchup with only six wins through its first 22 games so far on the campaign, half of which came in the team's last three games. Lehigh Valley's six victories this season are tied for fewest in the AHL and fewest in the Eastern Conference. The Phantoms also opened the season with seven straight losses, going 0-5-2-0 over that span.

The Phantoms will be without the services of their leading goal-scorer Morgan Frost, who was promoted to the big club back on Nov. 24. Prior to earning his first-career recall to the Flyers, the second-year pro produced three goals and a team-high 12 assists in 16 games this season.

Third-year goaltender Felix Sandstrom has handled much of the goaltending duties this season for the Phantoms as he has appeared in a career-high 15 games. The Gavle, Sweden, native has been one of five different netminders to appear in a game for Lehigh Valley. He boasts a 3-7-3 record this season and one shutout along with a 3.07 goals-against average.

## AMERKS-PHANTOMS 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

### ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Murray	1	2	0	2	0	1
JJ Peterka	1	1	0	1	2	0
Linus Weissbach	1	1	0	1	0	1
Oskari Laaksonen	1	0	1	1	0	1

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	1	1-0-0	4	.875	3.69

### LEHIGH VALLEY

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Morgan Frost	1	1	2	3	0	2
Connor Bunnaman	1	1	0	1	0	0
Gerry Mayhew	1	1	0	1	2	2
Garrett Wilson	1	1	0	1	0	2

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Felix Sandstrom	1	0-0-1	4	.826	3.74

## 2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Nov. 19	SOW	5-4	24-32	1-2	4-5

## SERIES NOTABLES

Tonight's contest features three players selected in the 2020 NHL Draft, which includes Lehigh Valley's Tyson Foerster (1st round, 23rd overall) and Rochester's **Jack Quinn** (1st round, 8th overall) and **JJ Peterka** (2nd round, 34th overall).

In addition to Quinn, Peterka and Foerster, Rochester's **Peyton Krebs** (17th, 2019) and Lehigh Valley's German Rubstov (22nd overall, 2016) and Cam York (14th overall, 2019) all were taken in the first round of the NHL Draft.

Lehigh Valley captain and five-time AHL All-Star Cal O'Reilly spent two seasons with the Amerks, recording 71 points on 15 goals and 56 assists in 94 games from 2015 to 2017. O'Reilly served as Rochester's captain during both seasons and represented the Amerks at the 2016 AHL All-Star Classic.

Phantoms forward Max Willman is a former draft pick of the Buffalo Sabres. He was selected in the fifth round in 2014, the same draft year as current Amerks forward **Ryan MacInnis** and current Sabre **Victor Olofsson**.

Lehigh Valley goaltender Pat Nagle posted a 0-2-0 record in two appearances with Rochester during the 2014-15 campaign.



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