

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

SIX-TIME CALDER CUP CHAMPIONS 1965 | 1966 | 1968 | 1983 | 1987 | 1996

Sunday | **January 2, 2022** | 3:00 PM ET | XL Center | Game 446 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (16-9-0-0) close out their two-game New England road swing this afternoon when they take on the Hartford Wolf Pack at XL Center. The 3:00 p.m. matinee will be the first of two meetings between the Eastern Conference foes 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 boast a 7-3-0-0 record in their last 10 games following a 5-3 defeat yesterday afternoon in Springfield while Hartford enters the matchup showing a 4-4-0-2 mark in that same span.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Tonight is just the 28th all-time meeting between Rochester and Hartford with the Amerks owning a 15-10-2 record. The Amerks have won 10 of the last 17 meetings with the Wolf Pack, including both get-togethers during the 2019-20 campaign. In five of the last six meetings between the two clubs, the visiting team has come away with the victory.

Dating back to the 2017-18 season, Rochester has earned wins in three of the last five contests against Hartford while also recording at least one point in seven of the previous nine tilts, going (5-2-0-2). Despite the Amerks outshooting the Wolf Pack 109-86 in the first period of the last eight matchups, the teams have combined for just eight goals (5-ROC, 3-HFD).

VIEW FROM ROCHESTER

With five players performing at or near a point-per-game pace, the Amerks have the AHL's top-producing offense and are currently averaging just under four goals per game. Collectively, Rochester's 97 goals this season are most in the American Hockey League.

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**. Despite missing the last eight games due to illness, Quinn remains second among all AHL rookies in goals (11) and points (24), good for ninth overall.

After earning and appearing in his first two NHL games with Buffalo earlier this week, Peterka returned to the Amerks lineup Saturday, notching a team-high three points on one goal and two assists. The rookie forward has 23 points (5+18) in 24 games this season and is third among all rookies in points, trailing only Quinn and Stockton's Jakob Pelletier. **Peyton Krebs**, who also made his Sabres debut Wednesday against New Jersey, earned the primary assists on Alex Tuch's second-period goal Saturday versus Boston. It marked his first point with Buffalo after he has amassed 19 points on four goals and 15 assists in 18 games with Rochester.

POWER UP

Now 25 games into the season, Rochester's power-play has gone 25-for-90 with a 27.8% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 25 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only one off the AHL lead behind only the Springfield Thunderbirds.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 16 of their 25 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in six overall, including a season-high four goals in the 7-3 win over Hershey back on Nov. 26. a

Rochester scored a power-play in seven straight games between Nov. 17 and Dec. 8, the longest such streak in the AHL this season.

2021-22 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Michael Mersch	25	16	14	30	12	4
Jack Quinn	17	11	13	24	10	-2
JJ Peterka	24	5	18	23	8	0
Sean Malone	23	9	13	22	16	1
Peyton Krebs*	18	4	15	19	16	-9

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	8	4-2-0	182	.892	3.23
Aaron Dell	4	4-0-0	113	.904	2.94
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 HARTFORD OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Johnny Brodzinski*	23	10	14	24	18	0
Anthony Greco	24	7	15	22	2	-2
Zac Jones*	21	4	13	17	8	-3
Tim Gettlinger*	21	8	8	16	16	2
Tanner Fritz	23	4	11	15	16	5

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Keith Kinkaid*	13	10-1-2	356	.906	2.78
Adam Huska	8	2-4-2	214	.922	2.26
Francois Brassard	2	1-1-0	55	.902	3.00

* = Currently on recall with NYR

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Hartford Wolf Pack	Rochester Americans
14-7-2-2	Record 16-9-0-0
9-3-0-1	Home Record 8-3-0-0
5-4-2-1	Road Record 8-6-0-0
4-4-0-2	Last 10 Games 7-3-0-0
5-3-0-0	Record When Scoring First 11-4-0-0
3.24 (9th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.88 (1st)
2.92 (11th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.72 (30th)
19.8% (12th)	Power-Play 27.8% (1st)
80.5% (T-21st)	Penalty Kill 81.1% (19th)
4-0 L vs. PRO	Last Game 5-3 L @ SPR
Jan. 7 @ ROC	Next Game Jan. 6 vs. SYR



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MERSCH LEADING BY EXAMPLE

With an assist yesterday afternoon in Springfield, Mersch became the first Amerk this season and just the second in the AHL to reach the 30-point mark.

He has totaled 28 points (16+12) and seven multi-point outings over his last 22 games to move into second in the AHL in scoring with 30 points (16+14) on the season, trailing only Chicago's Andrew Poturalski for most in the league. 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.

With a league-leading 16 goals this season, Mersch has doubled his output from the previous season in three fewer games and is on pace to reach the 20-goal mark for the fifth time in eight years and the first time since the 2018-19 season as a member of the Texas Stars.

He's also on pace to reach the 20-goal mark in the fewest amount of games since 2015-16 when he scored 20 in 35 games with the Ontario Reign. He finished that season with 24 goals in only 52 appearances while also appearing in 17 games with the Los Angeles Kings.

Mersch is on pace become the first Amerk to score 20 goals in the fastest amount of games since Luke Adam reached the mark in 31 games during the 2013-14 season.

Over Mersch's last five contests, he has produced 11 points on four goals and seven assists as well as three straight multi-point outings dating back to Dec. 15.

REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE

This week the Amerks recalled defensemen **Nick Boka** and **Matthew Cairns**, and forward **Lukas Craggs** from the Cincinnati Cyclones (ECHL) while also signing forwards **Ara Nazarian**, **Jacob Pritchard** and **Wyatt Ege** and defenseman **David Drake** all to Professional Tryouts (PTO).

Before scoring his first AHL goal, the eventual game-winner, Wednesday night versus Providence, Nazarian started the 2021-22 season with six goals and 12 assists for 18 points in 27 games for the Jacksonville Icemen (ECHL). He ranked third among all Jacksonville skaters in both assists and points and was tied for third on the team in goals.

Pritchard also made his Amerks debut on Wednesday night and came to Rochester after starting the 2021-22 season with eight goals and eight assists for 16 points in 19 games with the Reading Royals (ECHL). He paced all Royals skaters in both goals and points and is tied for team-lead in assists.

Craggs earned his second recall of the season to Rochester after registering 21 points on (6+15) in 21 contests with the Cyclones. Additionally, Craggs scored one goal in six games with the Amerks. Boka showed 12 points (5+7) in 18 games. Cairns made his AHL debut against the Bruins, recording a pair of shots after plotting six points (1+5) in 27 appearances with the Cyclones.

Drake appeared in his first game in the Flower City Wednesday against Providence. With the primary assist on Mersch's first-period goal, it marked his first point in the AHL since April 13, 2018, as a member of the Lehigh Valley Phantoms.

AMERKS-WOLF PACK 2019-20 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Zach Redmond	2	1	3	4	0	3
Scott Wilson	2	2	0	2	0	0
Remi Elie	1	1	1	2	0	2
Tage Thompson	1	0	2	2	2	2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Andrew Hammond	2	2-0-0	2	.967	0.97

HARTFORD

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Filip Chytil	1	1	0	1	0	1
Boo Nieves	2	1	0	1	0	-2
Matt Beleskey	2	0	0	1	4	-1
Vitali Kravtsov	1	0	0	1	0	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Adam Huska	1	0-0-1	2	.946	1.85
Igor Shestkerin	1	0-1-0	4	.895	4.00

2019-20 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Nov. 22	W	4-0	38-25	1-3	3-3
Oct. 13	SOW	3-2	38-35	0-3	3-3

SERIES NOTABLES

Through 25 games so far this season, the Amerks have used 13 different defensemen. Of the 13, 10 have notched at least one point while eight have recorded one goal. This week alone, four have made their Rochester debuts (Cairns, Drake, Ghafari and Ege) and two produced their first AHL points (Drake and Ghafari).

Both Rochester (11-4-0-0) and Hartford (5-3-0-0) enter today with winning records this season when scoring the game's first goal. The Amerks have scored 35 goals in the third period, which are most in the AHL this season.

Goaltender **Aaron Dell** has backstopped the Amerks to four straight wins through his first four starts with Rochester. Until now, the netminder has never began a season with a win in each of his first four starts at either the NHL or AHL level. He's is on pace to match his career-best seven-game win streak he posted from March 20 to April 7, 2015 with Worcester. In each of his four appearances this season, he has made 30 or more saves, three of which he finished with 30.

Rochester has not played Hartford at XL Center since Oct. 13, 2019. The Amerks fell behind 2-0 late in the second period but tallied a pair of third-period goals, including the game-tying tally with 13 seconds left in regulation. To complete the 3-2 come-from-behind win, current Sabre and former Amerk Tage Thompson scored the lone goal in the shootout.



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