

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Saturday | **January 8, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 484 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (18-10-0-0) close out their busy stretch of three games in four nights in a rematch with the Syracuse Crunch (10-10-2-1) tonight at Upstate Medical University Arena. The 7:00 p.m. contest will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have won 10 of their last 13 games and are 6-4-0-0 over their previous 10 after picking up a 5-2 decision last night against Hartford. Syracuse enters the matchup showing a 5-5-0-0 mark in that same span.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

The Amerks have scored a power-play goal in 14 of their last 24 games against Syracuse, going 24-for-88 (27.3%) with the man-advantage over that span.

Rochester has collected at least one point in 23 of the last 36 games against Syracuse dating back to the start of the 2018-19 campaign, going 19-13-3-1.

Over the last five years, the Amerks have posted a 14-7-2-0 record on the road against the Crunch compared to a 9-11-2-1 mark when the teams have met in the Flower City. In the only other meeting this season in Syracuse, Rochester doubled up the Crunch 4-2 back on Nov. 27.

BALANCING ACT

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. With a league-best 107 goals this season, the Amerks are currently the only team to surpass the 100-goal mark so far in 2021-22.

The Amerks own three of the league's top 12 point-getters in veteran forward **Michael Mersch** and rookie forwards **Jack Quinn** and **JJ Peterka**. Mersch enters the weekend leading the AHL in goals and ranking second in points while Quinn and Peterka are second and third in rookie scoring, respectively. Quinn is also second among all AHL rookies in goals (12) and Peterka continues to pace all first-year players with a team-high 19 assists.

After making his NHL debut with the Buffalo Sabres last week and appearing in the team's final two games of the 2021 calendar year, Peterka returned to the Amerks lineup last weekend, notching five points on two goals and three assists. For his efforts, the rookie forward was named the **AHL's Player of the Week** for the period ending Jan. 2, 2022. He became the second Amerk this season to earn the weekly honors, joining goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen**.

POWER UP

Now 28 games into the season, Rochester's power-play has gone 26-for-100 with a 26.0% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 26 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only two off the AHL lead behind only the Springfield Thunderbirds.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 17 of their first 28 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.

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	28	16	14	30	12	3
Jack Quinn	19	12	14	26	15	-2
JJ Peterka	27	6	19	25	8	2
Sean Malone	23	9	13	22	16	1
Peyton Krebs*	18	4	15	19	16	-9

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	5	5-0-0	141	.910	2.76
Michael Houser	10	5-3-0	232	.896	3.08
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 SYRACUSE OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Gabriel Dumont	23	11	9	20	36	-3
Cole Koepke	19	6	11	17	8	-1
Charles Hudon	21	6	11	17	22	-7
Sean Day	21	2	11	13	19	-2
Jimmy Huntington	23	6	6	12	11	-2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Amir Miftakhov*	12	3-4-2	255	.907	2.65
Max Lagace	9	5-3-0	173	.869	3.38
Hugo Alnefelt	6	2-3-1	127	.864	3.56

* = Currently with Orlando (ECHL)

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch	Rochester Americans
10-10-2-1	Record 18-10-0-0
4-6-0-1	Home Record 9-4-0-0
6-4-2-0	Road Record 9-6-0-0
5-5-0-0	Last 10 Games 6-4-0-0
6-5-1-0	Record When Scoring First 12-4-0-0
2.95 (x)	Goals-For Per Game 3.82 (1st)
3.30 (x)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.57 (30th)
20.9% (9th)	Power-Play 26.0% (1st)
77.9% (27th)	Penalty Kill 82.4% (T-13th)
5-3 W vs. HER	Last Game 5-2 W vs. HFD
Jan. 12 @ LAV	Next Game Jan. 12 vs. UTI



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MERSCH LEADING BY EXAMPLE

With an assist last night versus Hartford, Mersch became the first Amerk this season and just the second player in the AHL to reach the 30-point mark. He's now reached the mark six times in his eight-year pro career.

Mersch has totaled 17 points (9+10) and four multi-point efforts over his last 14 games dating back to Nov. 24. He's been held scoreless just four times over that span 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 well on his way to 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 eight 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. He's also the lone Amerk to appear in all 28 games this season.

FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **JJ Peterka**, **Jack Quinn**, **Peyton Krebs** and **Brandon Biro**, all of whom have combined for 85 points (25+60) through the first 28 games this season.

Peterka has moved to within four points of the AHL rookie scoring lead following his five-point weekend which garnered him Player of the Week honors. He leads all first-year players with a team-high 19 assists while his 25 points are third-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 respective team in scoring.

Coming off a two-point effort in last night's 5-2 win over Hartford, Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in 2020, ranks second among all AHL rookies in goals (12) and points (26) in 19 games. Named the AHL Rookie of the Month for October, he is one of only eight league rookies this season to reach the 20-point mark and he, Peterka, Mersch and **Sean Malone** remain the only Amerks to accomplish the feat.

Currently on recall with Buffalo, Krebs has amassed 19 points on four goals and 15 assists in 18 games, tying for ninth among all AHL rookie skaters.

Biro, meanwhile, has 10 points (4+6) over his last 11 games dating back to Nov. 27. He also has three multi-point efforts in five games over that span.

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jack Quinn	3	2	3	5	5	1
Sean Malone	2	2	1	3	8	2
Mark Jankowski	2	1	2	3	2	2
JJ Peterka	3	1	2	3	0	2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	2	1-1-0	4	.902	2.05
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.875	3.00

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Simon Ryfors	3	2	1	3	2	-3
Gabriel Dumont	3	2	0	2	7	-4
Cole Koepke	2	1	1	2	0	0
Charles Hudon	2	0	2	2	10	-4

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Max Lagace	1	1-0-0	1	.944	1.00
Amir Miftakhov	1	0-1-0	3	.897	3.07
Hugo Alnefelt	1	0-1-0	4	.810	4.04

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 22	W	5-3	22-24	0-3	5-6
Nov. 27	W	4-2	30-25	3-5	2-5
Jan. 5	L	2-1	18-16	0-5	2-3

SERIES NOTABLES

Of the 14 different defensemen the Amerks have used this season, 12 have notched at least one point while eight have recorded one goal.

Rochester enters tonight having scored 34 goals in the opening period of play this season, which are most in the AHL. Conversely, the Crunch have only scored 19 times in the first 20 minutes of regulation, which are fewest in the Eastern Conference.

Goaltender **Aaron Dell** has backstopped the Amerks to five straight wins through his first five starts with Rochester. Until now, the netminder has never began a season with a win in each of his first five 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 five appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against.

Crunch defenseman Ryan Jones spent the 2020-21 campaign with the Amerks, recording seven points (1+6) while being the lone skater to appear in all 29 games last season. Additionally, forward Remi Elie was also with Rochester from 2018-2021, tallying 55 points (31+24) in 99 career games.



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