

Friday | **January 21, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse | Game 552 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (19-11-2-1) look to snap their three-game winless skid tonight in the first of back-to-back meetings against the North Division rival Cleveland Monsters (12-11-4-3) at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse. Game time is slated for a 7:00 p.m. start and will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have earned points in 14 of their last 20 games dating back to Nov. 19 and are 4-3-2-1 over their previous 10 games to move within three points of Utica for first place in the AHL's North Division standings.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Rochester holds a record of 32-12-4-4 against Cleveland over the last 10 years dating back to the start of the 2011-12 campaign and has earned a point in 10 of the last 15 games.

The Amerks have scored 10 power-play goals in their last 12 games against Cleveland dating back to the start of the 2019-20 season, going 10-for-48 (20.8%) with the man-advantage over that span. Conversely, Rochester's penalty kill unit has been successful in 48-of-59 shorthanded opportunities (81.4%) against.

AMERKS LEADING THE WAY

The Amerks own two of the league's top five point-getters in rookie forward **Jack Quinn** and veteran forward **Michael Mersch**. They rank fourth and fifth in the AHL in scoring, respectively, while Quinn, despite currently being on recall with the parent Buffalo Sabres, is tied for the league lead in goals with Chicago's Andrew Poturalski and Stefan Noesen.

Quinn scored his team-leading 18th goal of the season early in the second period Wednesday, giving him seven goals and 11 points in his first seven games since returning to the lineup on Jan. 5. Quinn paces all AHL rookies in both goals (18) and points (35) while his team-high six power-play goals are also second-most among all first-year players.

Mersch extended his current point streak to four games with an assist on Quinn's second-period goal. He also has points in five of his last six games as inches closer to the 300-point mark for his AHL career.

With five players currently performing at or just below a point-per-game pace, Rochester has the AHL's second-most productive offense behind only the Ontario Reign. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the most goals in the AHL with 125 and are one of only 11 teams this season to surpass the 100-goal mark so far in 2021-22.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Now 33 games into the season, Rochester's power-play has gone 32-for-121 with a 26.4% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 32 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and are one shy of the AHL lead behind only the Springfield Thunderbirds.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 20 of their first 33 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in eight 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	+/-
Jack Quinn*	24	18	17	35	15	-6
Michael Mersch	33	17	17	34	14	2
JJ Peterka	27	6	19	25	8	2
Sean Malone	23	9	13	22	16	1
Brandon Biro	26	5	16	21	8	7

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell*	5	5-0-0	141	.910	2.76
Michael Houser*	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	12	6-6-0	308	.888	3.42
Mat Robson	6	3-1-2	156	.848	4.81
Charles Williams	1	0-1-1	29	.829	6.13

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 MONSTERS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brendan Gaunce	30	10	11	21	20	-4
Jake Christiansen	25	5	15	20	17	2
Tyler Angle	29	4	15	19	10	5
Kevin Stenlund	23	5	13	18	12	-3
Liam Foudy*	24	6	11	17	6	5

* = Currently on recall with Columbus

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Cam Johnson	3	1-0-1	68	.932	1.89
Jean-Francois Berube	12	4-5-3	335	.905	3.02
Jet Greaves	6	2-3-0	150	.893	3.65

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Cleveland Monsters	Rochester Americans
12-11-4-3	Record 19-11-2-1
4-6-1-1	Home Record 10-4-2-1
8-5-3-2	Road Record 9-7-0-0
3-5-2-0	Last 10 Games 4-3-2-1
8-2-3-1	Record When Scoring First 13-4-1-0
3.00 (T-17th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.79 (T-1st)
3.30 (23rd)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.70 (29th)
16.7% (27th)	Power-Play 26.4% (1st)
77.8% (25th)	Penalty Kill 80.5% (20th)
5-3 L vs. GR	Last Game 3-2 OTL vs. SYR
Jan. 22 vs. ROC	Next Game Jan. 22 @ CLE



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QUINN-TESSENTIAL QUALITIES

Quinn became the first AHL player this season and just the 17th player in Amerks franchise history to score four goals in a game in the 6-5 overtime loss to Belleville on Jan. 15. More impressively, he scored all four goals consecutively, including the game-tying tally with 3.3 seconds remaining in regulation.

He's the first Amerk to have a four-goal game since Rochester native Derek Whitmore single-handedly outscored Hamilton on Nov. 25, 2011 (5-2 W).

With 18 goals through his first 24 games, he's on pace to become the first Amerk to score 20 goals in the fewest number of games since Luke Adam reached the mark in 31 games during the 2013-14 campaign.

He was named the **AHL's Rookie of the Month for October** after leading all first-year players with 10 points (5+5) through the first month of the regular season. In just six games to begin the season, Quinn surpassed his offensive output from his truncated 2020-21 campaign, and became the first AHL player to reach the 10-point mark this season.

Quinn has been held scoreless just four times all season and hasn't gone more than one game without recording a point. He comes into the weekend having recorded 11 multi-point performances this year. More impressively, the Amerks are a near-perfect 10-0-1-0 this season when Quinn registers a multi-point game, including 6-0-1-0 on home ice.

On Nov. 12, Quinn became the first AHL rookie since Frank Vatrano in 2015-16 to score eight goals through his first 10 games of the season.

His 1.48 points per game is third-best among all AHL players with at least 20 games.

MERSCH LEADING BY EXAMPLE

With an assist on Jan. 7 against Hartford, Mersch became the first Amerk this season and just the fourth 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 21 points (10+11) and four multi-point efforts over his last 19 games dating back to Nov. 24. He's been held scoreless just five times over that span to move into a fifth-place tie in the AHL in scoring with 34 points (17+17) on the season. 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 streak marked his longest since posting a career-best seven-game point streak back in 2015.

With 17 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 has appeared in all but one of Rochester's 61 games dating back to last season, including the lone player to appear in all 33 contests in 2021-22.

AMERKS-MONSTERS 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jack Quinn	2	2	1	3	0	0
JJ Peterka	2	1	2	3	2	3
Mattias Samuelsson	2	0	3	3	2	2
Brandon Biro	1	0	2	2	0	2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	2	1-1-0	4	.947	2.02

CLEVELAND

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brendan Gaunce	2	1	1	2	0	-1
Justin Danforth	2	1	0	1	0	-1
Carson Meyer	2	1	0	1	7	-2
Tristian Mullin	2	1	0	1	0	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Daniil Tarasov	1	1-0-0	3	.893	3.00
Jean-Francois Berube	1	0-1-0	4	.840	4.00

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Nov. 12	L	4-3	43-28	0-4	2-3
Nov. 27	W	4-0	25-32	0-2	4-4
Jan. 21					
Jan. 22					
Mar. 18					
Mar. 19					
Apr. 1					
Apr. 2					



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THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester has one of the top-scoring defenseman in the AHL in **Oskari Laaksonen**, who recorded a career-high four assists in last Wednesday's 7-6 win over Utica, including three in the first period and three of which came on the power-play. He finished two assists shy of tying the franchise record for most in a single game.

Laaksonen, who boasts six points (1+5) in his last six games since the turn of the New Year, leads all Rochester blueliners and is tied for third among all AHL defensemen in scoring with 21 points (3+18) in 29 games. He also paces the league with 16 power-play assists as all but two of his 18 assists this season have come on the man-advantage. Equally as impressive, 18 of Laaksonen's 21 points this season have been on the power-play.

Rookie defenseman **Mattias Samuelsson**, who's currently on recall with the Buffalo Sabres, recorded two assists in last Saturday's overtime loss to Belleville, giving him 15 points (2+13) in 20 games. He produced multi-point efforts in back-to-back outings for the first time in his pro career on Dec. 8 and Dec. 10. Samuelsson ranks sixth in scoring among all AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are fifth-most.

He made his Sabres season debut at Ottawa on Tuesday, becoming the 13th different player to appear in a game for both Buffalo and Rochester.

Coming off his first three-point outing since the 2019-20 season, **Ethan Prow** is tied for 11th amongst blueliners in assists (14) and 13th in points (18).

The veteran defenseman has totaled exactly 100 points (31+69) over his last 145 American Hockey League games dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **Jack Quinn**, **JJ Peterka**, **Peyton Krebs** and **Brandon Biro**, all of whom have combined for 101 points (33+68) through the first 33 games this season.

Coming off his first four-goal game this past Saturday, Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in 2020, is back atop the AHL rookie scoring lead, pacing all first-year players in both goals (18) and points (35) in 24 games. Quinn became the 101st AHL player this season to make his NHL debut when he took the ice against the Tampa Bay Lightning on Jan. 11. He finished with team-highs in shots (3) and shot attempts (6) while earning 16:30 of total ice time. He returned to the Sabres a day after scoring his team-leading 18th goal for Rochester and was rewarded with his first two NHL points, including a goal against Vezina Trophy winner and Stanley Cup champion Braden Holtby in the Sabres' 5-4 loss to the Dallas Stars on Jan 20.

Peterka is tied for fifth in rookie scoring with 26 points (6+20) despite missing each of the last five contests due to COVID-19 protocols. He is second among all first-year players with a team-high 20 assists. He and Quinn, taken just 26 picks apart from one another by Buffalo in the 2020 NHL Draft, currently make up one of only three rookie duos across the entire AHL to rank inside the top three on their respective team in scoring.

Biro has 16 points (5+11) over his last 15 games dating back to Nov. 27. He also has five multi-point efforts in 11 games over that span, which includes a season-high three-point (1+2) performance last Wednesday against Utica. He comes into the weekend showing one goal and five assists over his last four games.

MOVIN' ON UP

Players that have appeared in at least one game this season for both Rochester and Buffalo:

FORWARDS (7)

Mark Jankowski
Ryan MacInnis
Brett Murray
Arttu Ruotsalainen
Peyton Krebs
Jack Quinn*
JJ Peterka*

DEFENSEMEN (3)

Casey Fitzgerald*
Ethan Prow*
Mattias Samuelsson

GOALTENDERS (3)

Aaron Dell
Michael Houser
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen

* = Made NHL debut

SERIES NOTABLES

Of the 14 different defensemen the Amerks have used this season, 13 have notched at least one point while eight have recorded one goal. Additionally, of the 20 different forwards to appear in one game for Rochester, 18 have scored a goal and 19 have produced a point.

Rochester enters tonight as the only team in the AHL to have scored at least 40 goals in all three periods this season. Additionally, the Amerks have scored the most first- and third-period goals among any other team and have outscored the opposition 41-30 through the opening 20 minutes.

During the 2019-20 season, all seven games between Cleveland and Rochester were decided by one goal, including five that went beyond regulation. Over that same span, Rochester posted a 4-0-1-2 record.

In the last meeting with the Monsters back on Nov. 13, Amerks netminder **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** stopped all 32 shots he faced for his first American Hockey League shutout to backstop Rochester to a 4-0 win.

Monsters forward **Jusitn Danforth** spent parts of two seasons with the Amerks from 2016-18, recording seven points (4+3) over 20 games. He was named the 2017-18 ECHL Rookie of the Year with the Cincinnati Cyclones.

Amerks forward **Ryan MacInnis** is set to face his former team for the third time and returns to Cleveland for the first time after appearing in 121 career games for the Monsters over the last three seasons, including a brief five-game stint in 2020-21.

The sixth-year pro posted his best season with Cleveland during the 2019-20 campaign when he established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (7), assists (23) and points (30) to finish second on the team in scoring.



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