

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wednesday | **February 9, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | Blue Cross Arena | Game 398 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (22-14-2-1) return home tonight to close out their season series with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins (18-17-2-3) at The Blue Cross Arena. The 7:05 p.m. contest 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 have earned points in 17 of their last 27 games dating back to Nov. 19 while Wilkes-Barre/Scranton enters tonight 7-2-1-0 in its previous 10 contests, which includes a 4-0-1-0 mark in the last five.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

After being swept in the two-game season-series in 2017-18 against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Rochester has gone a perfect 6-0-0-0 in the six meetings since, the team's second-longest active win streak against any opponent.

The Amerks have scored 10 power-play goals in their last six games against the Penguins dating back to the start of the 2017-18 season, going 10-for-29 (34.5%) with the man-advantage over that span. Conversely, Rochester's penalty kill unit has successfully cleared 18 of the 19 shorthanded opportunities (94.7%) against in that same timeframe.

Since the start of the 2017-18 campaign, Rochester has outscored Wilkes-Barre/Scranton 32-12, while also outshooting the Penguins 204-184.

AMERKS LEADING THE WAY

The Amerks own two of the league's top 13 point-getters in veteran forward **Michael Mersch** and rookie sensation **Jack Quinn**. Both Mersch and Quinn, who is currently on recall with the parent Buffalo Sabres, rank among the AHL's top five goal-scorers and are eighth and 13th in overall scoring with 39 and 35 points, respectively.

Quinn scored his 18th goal of the season early in the second period against Syracuse back on Jan. 19, 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 goals (18) and ranks third in points (35) while his team-high six power-play goals are also second-most among all first-year players.

Mersch saw his career-best nine-game point streak halted in last Friday's loss to Charlotte. He has points in 10 of his last 13 games as he inches closer to the 40-point mark for the fifth time in his career.

With five players currently performing at or just below a point-per-game pace, Rochester has the AHL's third-best offense. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the second-most goals in the AHL with 145. Rochester has scored four goals or more in all but one of its 22 wins this season dating back to its 5-3 win over Syracuse on Oct. 22.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

At the halfway point of the season, Rochester's power-play has gone 36-for-138 with a 26.1% conversion rate that is currently second-best in the AHL. The Amerks' 36 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and are six shy of the AHL lead behind the Ontario Reign.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 23 of their first 40 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.

2021-22 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Michael Mersch	40	19	20	39	16	0
Jack Quinn*	24	18	17	35	15	-6
JJ Peterka	34	10	24	34	12	1
Brandon Biro	33	7	22	29	10	10
Ethan Prow	36	4	20	24	4	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	7	6-1-0	194	.911	2.70
Michael Houser	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	12	6-6-0	308	.888	3.42
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 PENGUINS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Valtteri Puustinen*	40	13	14	27	10	-4
Alexander Nylander	39	15	10	25	4	-9
Felix Robert	35	10	11	21	28	8
Pierre-Oliver Joseph	32	6	15	21	24	5
Sam Poulin	36	6	12	18	33	-7

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Alex D'Orio	14	6-6-1	328	.901	2.71
Filip Lindberg	7	4-2-0	184	.915	2.76
Tommy Nappier	10	4-4-2	228	.887	3.20

* = Currently on recall with Pittsburgh

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

W-B/Scranton Penguins	Rochester Americans
18-17-2-3	Record 22-15-2-1
11-9-2-0	Home Record 12-6-2-1
7-8-0-3	Road Record 10-9-0-0
7-2-1-0	Last 10 Games 3-4-2-1
13-4-2-3	Record When Scoring First 15-6-1-0
2.60 (31st)	Goals-For Per Game 3.63 (3rd)
3.08 (18th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.65 (29th)
12.3% (31st)	Power-Play 26.1% (2nd)
78.5 (24th)	Penalty Kill 79.0% (22nd)
2-1 OTL vs. PRO	Last Game 5-2 L @ TOR
Feb. 11 vs. BEL	Next Game Feb. 11 @ PRO



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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 has 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.

Despite again being out of the lineup for an extended period of time for the second time this season, Quinn is one of only two AHL rookies with at least six power-play goals this season, joining San Jose's Scott Reedy.

MERSCH LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Mersch will become the first Amerk and just the eighth player in the AHL this season to reach the 40-point mark on his very next point. In doing so, he will have reached the mark for the fifth time in his eight-year pro career.

Mersch has totaled 26 points (12+14) and four multi-point efforts over his last 26 games dating back to Nov. 24. He's been held scoreless just seven times over that span to move into eighth in the AHL in scoring with 39 points (19+20) 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 recent nine-game point streak surpassed his his previous career-best mark of seven he set during the 2014-15 season.

Mersch is also set to become just the fourth AHL player to join the 20-goal club on his next goal. It will mark the fifth time in eight years that he reached the mark and the first time since the 2018-19 season as a member of the Texas Stars.

When he reaches the 20-goal mark, he will have done so in the second-fewest number 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 69 games dating back to last season, including the lone player to appear in all 40 contests in 2021-22.

AMERKS-PENGUINS 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Mark Jankowski	1	1	0	1	0	0
Ryan MacInnis	1	1	0	1	0	1
Brett Murray	1	1	0	1	0	1
Matej Pekar	1	1	0	1	2	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	1	.976	1.00

WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Sam Poulin	1	1	0	1	0	1
Jordy Bellerive	1	0	1	1	4	1
Nathan Legare	1	0	1	1	0	1
Niclas Almari	1	0	0	0	0	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Filip Lindberg	1	0-1-0	5	.844	5.01

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Nov. 10	W	5-1	32-42	2-4	6-6
Feb. 9					

DELL-IVERING IN THE CREASE

Goaltender **Aaron Dell** began his Amerks career with an impressive six straight wins through his first six starts with Rochester. Up until this season, the veteran netminder had never began a season with a win in each of his first six starts at either the NHL or AHL level.

With a win tonight should he get the start, Dell will match his career-best 7-1-0 mark when he posted one from March 20 to April 10 during the 2014-15 season with Worcester. In six of his seven appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against.



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THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester has two of the league's top point-producing defensemen in **Oskari Laaksonen** (3+21) and **Ethan Prow** (4+20), who enter the week tied for sixth in scoring amongst all blueliners with 24 points each in 36 games.

Laaksonen, who boasts nine points (1+8) in his last 13 games since the turn of the New Year, also paces all defensemen with 17 power-play assists as all but four of his 21 assists this season have come on the man-advantage. Equally as impressive, 19 of his 24 points have come on the power-play.

His best performance of the season came back on Jan. 12 when he recorded a career-high four assists in the 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

In addition to being tied for sixth in scoring, Prow's 20 assists are currently seventh-most among all defensemen. With six points in his last six games, including a two-assist effort on Jan. 29 against Utica, he remains on pace to capture his third straight 30-point season in the AHL. The veteran defenseman has totaled 105 points (31+74) over his last 152 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Prior to earning his second recall of the season to the Buffalo Sabres, rookie defenseman **Mattias Samuelsson** recorded two assists in the overtime loss to Belleville on Jan. 15, giving him 15 points (2+13) in 22 games. Samuelsson is tied for eighth in scoring among AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are also eighth-most. With his Sabres season debut at Ottawa on Jan. 18, he became the 13th different player to appear in a game for both Buffalo and Rochester.

FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **Jack Quinn**, **JJ Peterka**, **Linus Weissbach** and **Brandon Biro**, all of whom have combined for 118 points (44+74) through the first 40 games this season.

Despite being sidelined again for the second time this season, Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in 2020, continues to pace all first-year players in goals (18) while ranking third in 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 then returned to the Sabres a day after scoring his 18th goal of the season 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 fourth in rookie scoring with 34 points (10+24) after picking up his 10th goal of the year against Charlotte on Friday. He also ranks third among all first-year players with a team-high 24 assists. He and Quinn, taken just 26 picks apart from one another by Buffalo in the 2020 NHL Draft, currently make up the only three rookie duos across the entire AHL to rank inside the top three on their respective team in scoring.

Biro has been one of the team's most consistent point-getters as of late with 24 points (7+17) over his last 22 games dating back to Nov. 27. He has seven multi-point efforts in 18 games over that span. He comes into the week tied for sixth in scoring among all first-year skaters with 29 points (7+22) in 33 games, which included a career-long six-game point streak (2+6).

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 nine have recorded at least 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 46 goals in all three periods this season. Additionally, the Amerks have scored the second-most first and third-period goals among any other team and have outscored the opposition 49-37 through the opening 20 minutes.

Over his last 15 games since the turn of the New Year, Amerks forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has tallied 15 points on six goals and nine assists, a stretch which began with a three-point effort versus Hartford on Jan. 2. Ruotsalainen has also turned in a multi-point effort in five games over that same span and had a career-best eight shots against Utica on Jan. 12. The Finnish forward has recorded at least one shot in 33 of 34 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

Penguins assistant coach Kevin Porter spent parts of five seasons with Rochester and was a five-time team captain from 2012-14 and 2017-2020. In 269 career games with the Amerks, Porter notched 68 goals and 116 assists for 184 points to rank 35th all-time in franchise history among all forwards.

Penguins captain Taylor Fedun patrolled the Amerks blueline for parts of three seasons (2016-19), leading Rochester to two playoff appearances. The 33-year-old veteran defenseman and two-time assistant captain for the Amerks produced 44 points (8+36) in 83 games.

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton forward Alexander Nylander began his professional career in Rochester after being drafted eighth overall in the 2016 NHL Draft by the Buffalo Sabres. Nylander recorded 86 points (30+56) in 165 career games with Rochester from 2016-19.



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