

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Sunday | **February 20, 2022** | 3:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 729 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (24-16-3-2) close out their first three-in-three weekend of the season today as they host the North Division rival Laval Rocket (20-14-3-0) for a 3:05 p.m. matinee at The Blue Cross Arena. All of the action will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have earned at least one point in four of their last six games and 22 of the last 34 dating back to Nov. 19. The Rocket enter today having won three of their last four and have points in six of their last eight.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Today's matchup is the fourth of eight meetings between the North Division rivals this season and first since the Amerks earned a 5-3 victory back on Dec. 10 in the previous get-together. Rochester has claimed the first three matchups this season and have outscored the Rocket 15-11 thus far.

Rochester enters tonight showing a 16-3-0 all-time record against Laval. Additionally, the Amerks have won eight straight and 12 of the last 13 games against the Rocket dating back to the 2017-18 campaign.

The Amerks are 7-2-0-0 all-time since the start of the 2017-18 campaign on home ice versus Laval. Rochester has have outscored the Rocket 27-20 while holding Laval to two or fewer goals in all but two games.

AMERKS TRIFECTA LEADING THE WAY

The Amerks own three of the league's top point-getters in veteran forward **Michael Mersch** and rookie sensations **JJ Peterka** and **Jack Quinn**. Mersch and Quinn, who is currently on recall with the Buffalo Sabres, rank among the AHL's top 10 goal-scorers. Peterka (13+27) and Mersch (19+20) are tied for 10th and 15th in overall scoring with 40 and 39 points, respectively.

Mersch, who despite seeing his career-best nine-game point streak halted in the 5-2 loss to Charlotte on Feb. 4, has points in 10 of his last 19 games as he inches closer to the 40-point mark for the fifth time in his career.

After scoring just four times through the first three months of the season, Peterka has notched 20 points (9+11) in 17 games to begin 2022, including goals in back-to-back games on three different occasions over that span.

Quinn continues to pace all AHL rookies in goals (18) and ranks fifth in points (35) while his team-high six power-play goals are also second-most among all first-year players.

Rochester enters the weekend with the AHL's fourth-best offense. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the third-most goals in the AHL with 159 behind only the Ontario Reign and Utica Comets.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 40-for-160 with a 25.0% conversion rate that is currently second-best in the AHL. The Amerks' 40 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and are six shy of the AHL lead behind Ontario.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 25 of their first 46 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in nine 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	+/-
JJ Peterka	40	13	27	40	16	0
Michael Mersch	46	19	20	39	27	-5
Brandon Biro	38	9	27	36	12	9
Jack Quinn*	24	18	17	35	15	-6
Ethan Prow	42	6	23	29	6	-4

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	10	7-2-1	275	.911	2.68
Michael Houser	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	15	7-7-1	389	.894	3.16
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 ROCKET OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jesse Ylönen	27	8	13	21	10	-9
Jean-Sebastien Dea	35	14	5	19	14	-9
Kevin Roy	33	6	13	19	10	1
Louie Belpedio	36	6	11	17	53	-5
Laurent Dauphin*	18	11	5	16	12	-6

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	11	7-3-1	290	.918	2.53
Cayden Primeau	17	8-7-1	469	.911	2.85
Michael McNiven	10	4-3-1	220	.876	3.72

* = Currently on recall with Montreal

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Laval Rocket	Rochester Americans
20-14-3-0	Record24-17-3-2
13-3-2-0	Home Record 13-6-2-1
7-11-1-0	Road Record 11-11-1-1
6-3-1-0	Last 10 Games 3-5-1-1
13-3-0-0	Record When Scoring First16-6-1-0
3.27 (9th)	Goals-For Per Game3.46 (4th)
3.35 (26th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.57 (29th)
18.0% (T-23rd)	Power-Play 25.0% (2nd)
81.8% (10th)	Penalty Kill80.7% (18th)
5-2 L @ SYR	Last Game 6-3 L @ SYR
Feb. 21 @ TOR	Next GameFeb. 25 @ SYR



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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 second Amerk and just the 15th 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 32 games dating back to Nov. 24 to move into 15th 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 previous career-best mark of seven he set during the 2014-15 season.

Mersch is also set to become just the ninth player this season 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 75 games dating back to last season, including the lone player to appear in all 46 contests in 2021-22.

AMERKS-ROCKET 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Michael Mersch	3	4	2	6	2	1
Jack Quinn	2	1	3	4	0	1
Oskari Laaksonen	3	1	2	3	2	0
Ryan MacInnis	3	1	2	3	2	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Mat Robson	1	1-0-0	3	.906	3.00
Aaron Dell	1	1-0-0	3	.914	3.02
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	5	.848	4.71

LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Ryan Poehling	2	1	3	4	0	-1
Lukas Vejdemo	3	2	1	3	0	0
Jean-Sebastien Dea	3	1	2	3	2	-1
Alex Belzile	3	0	3	3	2	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Cayden Primeau	2	0-2-0	8	.852	4.09
Michael McNiven	1	0-0-1	6	.769	5.70

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. Until now, the veteran netminder had never begun a season with a win in each of his first six starts at either the NHL or AHL level.

With a win against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton on Feb. 9, Dell matched 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 eight of his nine appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against.

WINNING BY NUMBERS

Rochester enters tonight as the only AHL team to have scored at least 50 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 52-41 through the opening 20 minutes.

The Amerks have scored four or more goals in all but three of their 24 wins this season, two of which have come on home ice. Each of Rochester's 11 road victories have come with three or more goals despite being outscored 96-77 through their first 24 road games.



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THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester has two of the league's top point-producing defensemen in **Ethan Prow** (6+23) and **Oskari Laaksonen** (4+22), who enter the weekend tied for fourth and eighth in scoring amongst all blueliners, respectively.

In addition to being fourth in scoring, Prow's 23 assists are just one more than Laaksonen and are currently fifth-most among all defensemen. With 11 points over his last 12 games, including a third-period goal against Providence on Feb. 11, he remains on pace to capture his third straight 30-point season in the AHL. The veteran defenseman has totaled 110 points (33+77) over his last 157 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 18 games since the turn of the New Year, also paces all defensemen with 18 power-play assists as all but four of his 22 assists this season have come on the man-advantage. Equally as impressive, 21 of his 26 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.

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 12th in scoring among AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are 10th-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 135 points (49+86) through the first 46 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 fifth 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 second in rookie scoring with 40 points (13+27) after becoming the first Amerk skater this season to reach the 40-mark last night. He also ranks tied for third among all first-year players and 10th overall with 27 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 team in scoring.

Biro has been one of the team's most consistent and impressive point-getters with 31 points (9+23) over his last 27 games dating back to Nov. 27. He has nine multi-point efforts in 23 games over that span, including five straight to open the month of February. He ranks third among all rookies with a team-high 27 assists and is fifth with 36 points in 38 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 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.

Over his last 21 games since the turn of the New Year, Amerks forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has tallied 19 points on six goals and 13 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 37 of 39 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

Over the last 19 games in the head-to-head series with the Rocket, the Amerks have scored three or more goals 15 times, which includes 10 of the last 11 games in Laval.

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 29	W	4-3	22-35	1-3	3-4
Oct. 30	OTW	5-6	26-33	1-1	2-3
Dec. 10	W	5-3	32-33	0-2	2-2
Feb. 20					
Mar. 9					
Apr. 6					
Apr. 9					
Apr. 13					



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