

Friday | **February 25, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | Upstate Medical University Arena | Game 754 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (24-18-3-2) kick off another three-in-three weekend tonight as they make their second trip to downtown Syracuse in less than a week to take on the intrastate rival Syracuse Crunch (20-19-4-1). The North Division matchup gets underway at 7 p.m. and will be carried live on 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have earned at least one point in four of their last seven games and 22 of the last 35 dating back to Nov. 19. The Crunch, meanwhile, have won three of their last four and have points in six of their last nine contests.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Tonight's meeting is the sixth between the North Division rivals since Jan. 5 and the eighth of 12 overall this season. The Amerks claimed the first two meetings, but Syracuse has responded with five straight wins since, including a 2-1 victory in the previous get-together just six nights ago.

Tonight's matchup begins a stretch in which the Amerks and Crunch will face-off five times over the next month between now and March 26, which includes twice in three-day span.

The Amerks have scored a power-play goal in 17 of their last 28 games against Syracuse, going 29-for-100 (29.0%) with the man-advantage over that span. Additionally, Rochester has collected at least one point in 23 of the last 39 games against the Crunch dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

AMERKS FOURSOME LEADING THE WAY

The Amerks own three of the league's top point-getters in veteran forward **Michael Mersch** and rookie sensations **JJ Peterka**, **Brandon Biro** and **Jack Quinn**. Mersch ranks among the AHL's top 20 goal-scorers while Peterka, Biro and Quinn collectively comprise one-half of the AHL's top six scoring rookies coming into the weekend.

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 18 games to begin 2022, including goals in back-to-back games on three different occasions over that span.

Despite being out with another long-term injury, Quinn continues to pace all AHL rookies in goals (18) and ranks sixth 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 sixth-best offense. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the third-most goals in the AHL with 160 behind only the Ontario Reign and Utica Comets.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 40-for-165 with a 24.2% 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 nine shy of the AHL lead behind Ontario.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 25 of their first 47 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	41	13	27	40	16	-2
Michael Mersch	46	19	20	39	27	-5
Brandon Biro*	39	9	27	36	16	6
Jack Quinn*	24	18	17	35	15	-6
Ethan Prow	43	6	24	30	6	-5

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	16	7-8-1	412	.892	3.23
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Gabriel Dumont	44	23	17	40	64	-2
Charles Hudon	39	18	12	30	40	-11
Cole Koepke	38	13	13	26	12	5
Sean Day	41	5	19	24	21	0
Alex Barré-Boulet	27	3	20	23	18	-1

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Hugo Alnefelt	14	8-4-2	300	.888	2.86
Amir Miftakhov	21	6-8-3	441	.895	2.92
Max Lagace	13	5-6-0	238	.869	3.32

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch	Rochester Americans
20-19-4-1.....	Record24-18-3-2
11-8-0-1.....	Home Record13-7-2-1
9-11-4-0.....	Road Record11-11-1-1
5-4-1-0.....	Last 10 Games3-5-1-1
14-8-3-0.....	Record When Scoring First16-6-1-0
2.86 (23rd).....	Goals-For Per Game3.40 (6th)
3.18 (23rd).....	Goals-Against Per Game3.60 (29th)
20.1% (12th).....	Power-Play24.2% (2nd)
74.8% (29th).....	Penalty Kill80.6% (18th)
4-1 L @ BEL.....	Last Game5-1 L vs. LAV
Feb. 26 vs. UTI.....	Next GameFeb. 26 vs. TOR



ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
@AMERKSPR | @AMERKSHOCKEY

Warren Kosel | Senior Director of Public & Media Relations | 1.585.286.9928
Ryan Harr | Public & Media Relations Coordinator | 1.585.286.9940

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **February 25, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | Upstate Medical University Arena | Game 754 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



PETERKA PLAYING TO PERFECTION

With his primary assist last Saturday against Syracuse, forward **JJ Peterka** took over the team's scoring lead while also becoming the first Amerk this season and 14th player in the league to reach the 40-point mark.

Since **Jack Quinn** suffered a lower-body injury with the Buffalo Sabres on Jan. 20, Peterka has helped carried the load for the Amerks offense as he has produced seven goals and seven assists for 14 points in 14 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 20 points (9+11) in 18 games to start the New Year. The 20-year-old has also registered six multi-point games over that stretch which also featured three, three-point outings.

Peterka made his highly anticipated NHL debut on Dec. 28 as Buffalo hosted New Jersey before visiting the New York Islanders the very next day. Following his return to the Amerks, he totaled five points on two goals and three assists in two games before being honored as the **AHL's Rookie of the Month of the Week** for the period ending Jan. 2, 2022.

Peterka has been held scoreless just six times since Dec. 19 and hasn't gone more than one game without recording a point during that same span. More impressively, the Amerks are a near-perfect 9-2-0-0 this season when Peterka registers a multi-point game, including 5-0-0-0 on home ice.

With 40 points (13+27) through 41 games, Peterka is the first Amerks rookie to reach the 40-point mark since former Amerk and current Sabre Rasmus Asplund posted 41 on 10 goals and 31 assists in 75 games during the 2018-19 slate.

He has posted a team-leading 11 multi-point outings this season, including four three-point efforts, along with five game-winning assists.

BIRO BLAZES HIS WAY TO THE NHL

Rookie forward **Brandon Biro** has been one of the team's most consistent and impressive point-getters with 31 points (9+23) over his last 28 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, prompting a well-deserved NHL recall by the Buffalo Sabres earlier this week.

Biro became the eighth different forward and 14th player overall this season to appear in at least one game with the Sabres and Amerks after making his NHL debut on Wednesday against the Montreal Canadiens. The Alberta native took 17 shifts over 13:30 of ice-time while skating on a line alongside former Amerks Rasmus Asplund and Mark Jankowski.

He's also the second undrafted player in the organization this season to make his NHL debut for Buffalo, joining defenseman **Ethan Prow**, and the fifth different Amerks to skate in their first NHL game with the Sabres.

Despite currently being on recall, Biro's 27 assists are tied with fellow rookie **JJ Peterka** for the team lead and third-most among all first-year players. He's also fifth in rookie scoring with 36 points in 39 games and tied for third with five power-play goals.

After producing just five assists in his first seven games, the former Penn State standout has not gone consecutive games without a point since Nov. 27 and has led the Amerks in scoring with 31 points (9+23) over that span.

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jack Quinn	5	3	3	6	5	0
Ryan MacInnis	5	3	1	4	12	0
Oskari Laaksonen	6	2	1	4	2	0
JJ Peterka	5	1	3	4	2	-2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	3	1-2-0	6	.917	2.06
Mat Robson	1	0-0-1	3	.893	2.96
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.875	3.00
Aaron Dell	1	0-1-0	5	.833	5.03

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/
Gabriel Dumont	7	5	3	8	11	0
Simon Ryfors	7	2	3	5	4	-2
Alex Barré-Boulet	5	0	5	5	0	3
Cole Koepke	5	3	1	4	4	4

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Max Lagace	1	1-0-0	1	.944	1.00
Hugo Alnefelt	3	2-1-0	7	.915	2.33
Amir Miftakhov	3	1-2-0	8	.901	2.69

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
Jan. 8	L	3-1	32-31	1-3	0-2
Jan. 19	OTL	3-2	30-28	0-3	1-1
Jan. 28	L	2-1	26-22	1-1	1-1
Feb. 19	L	6-3	30-31	3-5	3-4
Feb. 25					
Mar. 2					
Mar. 11					
Mar. 13					
Mar. 26					

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 began 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.



ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

@AMERKSPR | @AMERKSHOCKEY

Warren Kosel | Senior Director of Public & Media Relations | 1.585.286.9928

Ryan Harr | Public & Media Relations Coordinator | 1.585.286.9940

Friday | **February 25, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | Upstate Medical University Arena | Game 754 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester has two of the league's top point-producing defensemen in **Ethan Prow** (6+24) and **Oskari Laaksonen** (4+22), who enter the weekend fifth and 10th in scoring amongst all blueliners, respectively.

In addition to being fifth in scoring, Prow's 24 assists are just two more than Laaksonen and are currently fifth-most among all defensemen. With an assist last Sunday, Prow who has 12 points (2+10) over his last 13 games dating back to Jan. 22, captured his third straight 30-point season in the AHL. The veteran defenseman has totaled 111 points (33+78) over his last 158 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 19 games since the turn of the New Year, also ranks second among 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 13th in scoring among AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are 10th-most.

FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **JJ Peterka**, **Brandon Biro**, **Jack Quinn** and **Linus Weissbach**, all of whom have combined for 135 points (49+86) through the first 47 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 sixth 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.

Despite having gone eight games without a goal, Weissbach has four assists in as many games. After opening the month of February with points in three straight games, he's totaled eight points (1+7) in 10 games this month, his highest output in a single month this season.

With Peterka already at 40 points and both Biro and Quinn closing in on the mark, the Amerks are guaranteed to have multiple rookies finish the regular season with 40 or more points for the first time since the 2005-06 season.

MOVIN' ON UP

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

FORWARDS (8)

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

DEFENSEMEN (3)

Casey Fitzgerald*
Ethan Prow*
Mattias Samuelsson

GOALTENDERS (3)

Aaron Dell
Michael Houser
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen

* = Made NHL debut

WINNING BY NUMBERS

Rochester enters tonight as one of two AHL teams to have scored at least 51 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 52-44 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.

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 22 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 38 of 40 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

In the first two games with Syracuse, Rochester outscored the Crunch 9-5 while earning a pair of wins. In the five games since, the Amerks have been held to just one goal in three of the five despite outshooting Syracuse four times and losing all five games.

The Amerks are in the middle of a stretch in which they're facing off against North Division opponents in 17 consecutive games.



ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
@AMERKSPR | @AMERKSHOCKEY

Warren Kosel | Senior Director of Public & Media Relations | 1.585.286.9928
Ryan Harr | Public & Media Relations Coordinator | 1.585.286.9940