

Saturday | **Feb. 26, 2022** | 2:35 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 764 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester, CW Rochester



GAME NOTES



TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (25-18-3-2) continue their three-in-three weekend today when they host the Toronto Marlies (23-14-3-1) in the front-end of a home-and-home series at The Blue Cross Arena. The afternoon matinee gets underway at 2:35 p.m. and 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 five of their last eight games and 23 of the last 36 overall dating back to Nov. 19. The Marlies, meanwhile, have have points in eight of their last 10 contests dating back to Jan. 24.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

After posting a 1-3-0-0 record against the Marlies in 2017-18, Rochester has gone 10-5-1-0 in the last 16 meetings since, which includes a near-perfect 5-1-0-0 mark during the 2018-19 campaign.

Since the start of the 2016-17 season, Rochester has outscored Toronto 98-96, while the Marlies have outshot the Amerks 948-945. There have been five shutouts since 2016-17 with four of the five coming in Toronto.

Over the last 30 games in the head-to-head series with the Marlies, the Amerks have scored two or more goals in 24 contests, which includes 10 games where they have produced five or more tallies. Coming into today's matchup, the Amerks are 11-9-1-0 in their last 21 games against the Marlies over the last five seasons.

AMERKS FOURSOME LEADING THE WAY

The Amerks own four 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 22 points (9+13) in 19 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 162 behind only Ontario and Charlotte.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 40-for-166 with a 24.1% 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 48 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	42	13	29	42	16	-1
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	44	7	24	31	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	17	8-8-1	466	.901	3.08
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 MARLIES OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Seney	36	13	25	38	51	12
Joseph Duszak	31	4	27	31	36	3
Alex Steeves	30	15	15	30	14	5
Joey Anderson	32	17	9	26	15	6
Semyon Der-Arguchintsev	9	14	14	23	16	-13

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Erik Källgren	22	13-6-1	559	.909	2.88
Joseph Woll	9	5-3-0	275	.905	3.54
Mitchael Hutchinson	11	4-4-3	319	.896	3.43

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Toronto Marlies	Rochester Americans
23-14-3-1	Record 25-18-3-2
12-6-2-1	Home Record 13-7-2-1
11-8-1-0	Road Record 12-11-1-1
6-2-2-0	Last 10 Games 3-5-1-1
12-6-2-3	Record When Scoring First 16-6-1-0
3.49 (4th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.38 (6th)
3.37 (27th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.54 (29th)
19.7% (14th)	Power-Play 24.1% (2nd)
81.5% (T-12th)	Penalty Kill 80.8% (16th)
6-4 L vs. LAV	Last Game 2-1 OTW vs. SYR
Feb. 27 vs. ROC	Next Game Feb. 27 @ TOR



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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 nine assists for 16 points in 15 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 22 points (9+13) in 19 games to start the New Year. The 20-year-old has also registered seven 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 10-2-0-0 this season when Peterka registers a multi-point game, including 5-0-0-0 on home ice.

With 42 points (13+29) through 42 games, Peterka is the first Amerks rookie to reach the 40-point mark since former Amerk and current Sabre Rasmus Asplund posted 41 points on 10 goals and 31 assists in 75 games during the 2018-19 season. He leads the team and is eighth in the AHL with 29 assists.

He has posted a team-leading 12 multi-point outings this season, including four three-point efforts, along with six 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.

After rejoining the Amerks from his one-game stint with Buffalo, Biro's 27 assists rank fourth-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-MARLIES 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Linus Weissbach	3	2	1	3	2	-2
Michael Mersch	3	1	2	3	2	0
JJ Peterka	3	1	2	3	0	1
Mark Jankowski	2	0	3	3	0	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	0-1-0	2	.900	2.03
Aaron Dell	1	1-0-0	3	.900	3.00
Mat Robson	1	0-1-0	4	.867	4.03

TORONTO

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Seney	3	3	1	4	0	-1
Semyon Der-Arguchintsev	3	0	4	4	0	-1
Nick Robertson	2	1	2	3	4	1
Joey Anderson	1	2	0	2	0	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Hutchinson	1	1-0-0	2	.938	2.02
Andrew D'Agostini	1	0-0-0	3	.857	3.84
Erik Källgren	2	1-1-0	5	.868	4.10

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 23	W	7-3	28-30	1-1	0-0
Nov. 5	L	4-1	31-22	0-2	5-6
Feb. 5	L	5-2	31-32	1-3	3-4
Feb. 26					
Feb. 27					
Mar. 25					



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 10 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 **Ethan Prow** (7+24) and **Oskari Laaksonen** (4+22), who enter the weekend fourth and 12th in scoring amongst all blueliners, respectively.

In addition to being tied for fourth in scoring (31 points), Prow's 24 assists are just two more than Laaksonen and are currently tied for fifth-most among all defensemen. With last night's overtime-winning goal, Prow, who has 13 points (3+10) over his last 14 games dating back to Jan. 22, has totaled 112 points (34+78) over his last 160 American Hockey League contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 20 games since the turn of the New Year, also ranks second among defensemen with 18 power-play assists, trailing only Ontario's Jordan Spence in that category, 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 137 points (49+88) through the first 48 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 nine games without a goal, Weissbach has four assists in his last five games. After opening the month of February with points in three straight games, he's totaled eight points (1+7) in 11 games this month, his highest output in a single month this season.

With Peterka already at 42 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 52 goals in all three periods this season. Additionally, the Amerks have scored the third-most first and third-period goals among any other team and have outscored the opposition 52-45 through the opening 20 minutes.

The Amerks have scored four or more goals in all but four of their 25 wins this season, two of which have come on home ice. In 10 of Rochester's 11 road victories have come with three or more goals despite being outscored 98-78 through their first 25 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 23 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 39 of 41 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

In 20 of the last 25 meetings between the two teams dating back to the 2016-17 season, the team that scored first has gone on to come away with the victory. Additionally, in 16 of the last 17 meetings, the winning team has scored at least four goals dating back to the 2017-18 season.

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



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