

Sunday | **February 27, 2022** | 4:00 PM ET | Coca-Cola Coliseum | Game 776 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (25-19-3-2) and Toronto Marlies (24-14-3-1) are back in action again for the second straight day as the home-and-home series shifts north of the border today for a 4 p.m. rematch at Coca-Cola Coliseum. The contest 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 nine games and 23 of the last 37 overall dating back to Nov. 19. The Marlies, meanwhile, have have points in nine of their last 11 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 10-6-1-0 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, Toronto outscored Rochester 102-96, while also outshooting the Amerks 988-967. There have been six shutouts since 2016-17 with four of the six coming in Toronto.

Over the last 31 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 11-10-1-0 in their last 22 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 the rookie trio of **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 20 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 eighth 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 10th-best offense. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the fourth-most goals in the AHL with 162.

## POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 40-for-171 with a 23.4% conversion rate that is currently fourth-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 49 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	43	13	29	42	16	-3
Michael Mersch	46	19	20	39	27	-5
Brandon Biro	40	9	27	36	16	6
Jack Quinn*	24	18	17	35	15	-6
Ethan Prow	45	7	24	31	6	-5

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	11	7-3-1	311	.912	2.71
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	37	14	25	39	51	13
Joseph Duszak	32	4	28	32	38	3
Alex Steeves	31	16	15	31	14	5
Joey Anderson	33	18	11	29	15	8
Semyon Der-Aguchintsev	38	10	14	24	16	-12

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Erik Källgren	23	14-6-1	581	.912	2.74
Michael Hutchinson	11	4-4-3	319	.896	3.43
Joseph Woll	9	5-3-0	275	.905	3.54

## 2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Toronto Marlies	Rochester Americans
24-14-3-1.....	<b>Record</b> .....25-19-3-2
12-6-2-1.....	<b>Home Record</b> .....13-8-2-1
12-8-1-0.....	<b>Road Record</b> .....12-11-1-1
7-2-1-0.....	<b>Last 10 Games</b> .....3-5-1-1
18-1-1-1.....	<b>Record When Scoring First</b> .....16-6-1-0
3.50 (4th).....	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b> .....3.31 (T-9th)
3.29 (25th).....	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> .....3.55 (29th)
19.6% (15th).....	<b>Power-Play</b> .....23.4% (4th)
82.1% (T-11th).....	<b>Penalty Kill</b> .....80.9% (16th)
4-0 W @ ROC.....	<b>Last Game</b> .....4-0 L vs. TOR
Mar. 2 vs. ABB.....	<b>Next Game</b> .....Mar. 2 vs. SYR



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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 16 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 22 points (9+13) in 20 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 seven 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 43 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 ninth 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 29 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 tied for sixth in rookie scoring with 36 points in 40 games and tied for fourth with five power-play goals.

After producing just five assists in his first seven games, the former Penn State standout has not gone more than two straight games without a point since Nov. 27, leading the team 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	4	2	1	3	2	-4
Michael Mersch	3	1	2	3	2	0
JJ Peterka	4	1	2	3	2	-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	2	1-1-0	6	.913	3.02
Mat Robson	1	0-1-0	4	.867	4.03

### TORONTO

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Seney	4	4	1	5	0	0
Joey Anderson	2	2	3	5	0	2
Semyon Der-Aguchintsev	4	1	4	5	0	1
Nick Robertson	2	1	2	3	4	1

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Hutchinson	1	1-0-0	2	.938	2.02
Erik Källgren	3	2-1-0	5	.857	2.25
Andrew D'Agostini	1	0-0-0	3	.857	3.84

## 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	L	4-0	22-40	0-5	5-6
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 nine of his 11 appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against. He posted a season-high 36 saves yesterday against Toronto.



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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 fifth and 12th in scoring amongst all blueliners, respectively.

In addition to being fifth in overall scoring with 31 points, Prow's 24 assists are just two more than Laaksonen and are currently tied for fifth-most among all defensemen. After scoring the overtime game-winner on Friday, Prow, who has 13 points (3+10) over his last 15 games dating back to Jan. 22, has totaled 112 points (34+78) over his last 161 American Hockey League contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 21 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 49 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 eighth 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 10 games without a goal, Weissbach has four assists in his last six games. After opening the month of February with points in three straight games, he's totaled eight points (1+7) in 12 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 today as the only AHL team 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 52-46 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. Ten of Rochester's 12 road victories have come with three or more goals despite being outscored 97-79 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 24 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 40 of 42 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

In 21 of the last 26 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 17 of the last 18 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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