

Friday | **March 4, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | CAA Arena | Game 789 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (26-19-3-2) head north of the border tonight for the first of back-to-back meetings with the Belleville Senators (24-21-0-0) at CAA Arena. The North Division tilt gets underway at 7:00 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 six of their last 11 games. The Senators have a 7-3-0-0 record in their previous 10 outings while showing a record of 10-11-0-0 through their first 21 home games this season.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Rochester is 10-11-1 all-time against Belleville while being outscored 81-74 through the first 22 meetings with the Senators. The last two games against the Senators back on Jan. 14 and Jan. 15 were Rochester's first two losses beyond regulation this season as well as the first two that required overtime in 22 all-time meetings between the North Division rivals dating back to the 2017-18 campaign. The 4-3 shootout loss on Jan. 14 was also the first shootout loss for Rochester on home ice since Feb. 26, 2020.

The Amerks boast a 6-1-3-0 record in their 10 matchups against the Senators north of the border with their only regulation loss over that span coming earlier this season during Rochester's previous visit to Belleville. Rochester has scored two or more goals in 19 of the previous 22 get-togethers, which includes 13 games where they have produced four or more tallies.

VIEW FROM ROCHESTER

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-third of the AHL's top eight 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 24 points (9+15) in 22 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 month of March with the AHL's eighth-best offense. Averaging just under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the third-most goals in the AHL with 170.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 43-for-182 with a 23.6% conversion rate that is currently third-best in the AHL. The Amerks' 43 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and are eight shy of the AHL lead behind Ontario.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 26 of their first 51 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in 10 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	45	13	31	44	18	-6
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	47	8	24	32	6	-3

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	12	7-3-1	316	.913	2.67
Michael Houser	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	19	9-9-1	521	.898	3.21
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

2021-22 SENATORS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jake Lucchini	45	14	18	32	8	3
Egor Sokolov	37	14	17	31	14	14
Andrew Agozzino	39	14	12	26	41	-3
Roby Jarventie	43	8	16	24	22	-4
Michael Del Zotto	20	9	13	22	10	3

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Filip Gustavsson	9	4-3-0	200	.909	2.65
Mads Sogaard	23	11-11-0	562	.901	2.94
Kevin Mandolese	15	8-5-0	375	.904	3.06

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Belleville Senators	Rochester Americans
24-21-0-0	Record 26-20-3-2
10-11-0-0	Home Record 13-9-2-1
14-10-0-0	Road Record 13-11-1-1
7-3-0-0	Last 10 Games 3-5-1-1
18-4-0-0	Record When Scoring First 17-6-1-0
3.11 (14th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.33 (8th)
3.07 (T-17th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.59 (29th)
19.0% (21st)	Power-Play 23.6% (3rd)
82.0% (T-9th)	Penalty Kill 81.2% (14th)
3-2 OTW @ HFD	Last Game 6-3 L vs. SYR
Mar. 5 vs. ROC	Next Game Mar. 5 @ BEL



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PETERKA PLAYING TO PERFECTION

With his primary assist on Feb. 19 against Syracuse, forward **JJ Peterka** took over the team's scoring lead while also becoming the first Amerks 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 11 assists for 18 points in the last 18 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 24 points (9+15) in 22 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 a team-high 44 points (13+31) through 45 games, Peterka is the first Amerks rookie to reach the 40-point mark since Rasmus Asplund had 41 points (10+31) in 75 games during the 2018-19 season. Peterka also leads the team and is tied for seventh in the AHL with 31 assists.

Coming into the weekend, he's one of only five AHL rookies currently leading his respective team in scoring.

A PRODUCTIVE FEBRUARY FOR MURRAY

After being held scoreless in four games in January, **Brett Murray** responded with his best offensive showing of the season in February, leading the Amerks with 12 points on seven goals and five assists while appearing in all 13 games during the month.

Murray scored more than half of his 13 goals in February. He opened the month with four goals in his first five games, including a season-best three straight games from Feb. 5 to Feb. 9.

He also began and ended the month with multi-point efforts, highlighted by a career-best four-point effort (1+3) in the 5-3 win at Toronto on Feb. 27.

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 12 appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against. He posted a season-high 36 saves last Saturday against Toronto.

AMERKS-SENATORS 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jack Quinn	4	5	1	6	2	-6
Michael Mersch	4	3	2	5	0	-1
Brandon Biro	4	0	5	5	4	0
Ethan Prow	4	1	2	3	0	-3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Mat Robson	1	0-0-1	3	.914	2.77
Aaron Dell	1	1-0-0	3	.900	3.00
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	0-1-0	6	.793	6.01
Charles Williams	1	0-0-1	6	.829	6.13

BELLEVILLE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Egor Sokolov	4	4	3	7	0	4
Jake Lucchini	4	2	4	6	0	2
Cole Reinhardt	4	2	4	6	4	4
Jonathan Aspirot	3	1	3	4	4	3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Kevin Mandolese	1	1-0-0	3	.909	3.00
Mads Sogaard	2	1-1-0	7	.854	3.39
Filip Gustavsson	1	1-0-0	5	.808	5.04

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 27	L	7-3	33-30	1-6	2-2
Nov. 3	W	4-3	24-30	2-5	2-4
Jan. 14	SOL	4-3	24-36	0-6	3-3
Jan. 15	OTL	6-5	26-35	2-3	1-2
Mar. 4					
Mar. 5					
Apr. 9					
Apr. 15					



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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** (8+24) and **Oskari Laaksonen** (4+22), who enter the weekend fifth and 14th in scoring amongst all blueliners, respectively.

Prow, who reached the 30-point mark for the third straight year in the AHL, is also tied for seventh with 24 assists, which are just two more than Laaksonen. After scoring twice in three games this past weekend, including the overtime game-winner last Friday in Syracuse, Prow has recorded 14 points (4+10) over his last 17 games and has totaled 113 points (35+78) over his last 163 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 23 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 14th 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 142 points (49+93) through Rochester's first 51 games this season.

Back from his second recall of the season to Buffalo, Quinn, the Sabres' 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 12 games without a goal, Weissbach has notched seven assists in his last eight games. He finished the month of February with 11 points (1+10) in 13 games, including a season-high three-assist effort at Toronto this past Sunday to bring the month to a close.

With Peterka already at 44 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 2006-07 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 the only AHL team to have scored at least 53 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 54-49 through the opening 20 minutes.

The Amerks have scored four or more goals in all but four of their 26 wins this season, two of which have come on home ice. Additionally, 11 of Rochester's 13 road victories have come with three or more goals despite being outscored 100-84 through their first 26 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 24 different forwards to appear in one game for Rochester, 19 have scored a goal and 21 have produced a point.

Over his last 26 games since the turn of the New Year, Amerks forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has tallied 24 points on 10 goals and 14 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 seven games over that same span, including back-to-back two-goal games for the first time in his AHL career. The Finnish forward has recorded at least one shot in 42 of 44 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

Tonight's contest features five players selected in the 2020 NHL Draft, which includes Belleville's Egor Sokolov, Roby Jarventie and Cole Reinhardt and Rochester's **Jack Quinn** and **JJ Peterka**.

Tonight's game is the Amerks 5,000th regular-season game in team history. The club will become just the second AHL team (Hershey Bears) and eighth team in professional hockey history to have played in 5,000 contests.



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