

Saturday | **March 5, 2022** | 7:00 PM ET | CAA Arena | Game 801 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (26-19-3-2) go for the weekend sweep tonight as they take on the North Division rival Belleville Senators (24-21-1-0) for the second time in as many nights at CAA Arena. The rematch 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 seven of their last 12 games. The Senators have a 6-3-1-0 record in their previous 10 outings while showing a record of 10-11-1-0 through their first 22 home games this season.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Rochester is 11-11-1 all-time against Belleville despite being outscored 83-77 through the first 23 meetings with the Senators. Each of the last three games between the two clubs have been decided beyond regulation, including last night's 3-2 overtime win for Rochester. In the Jan. 14 and Jan. 15 games, it marked Rochester's first two losses beyond regulation this season as well as the first two that required overtime in 23 all-time meetings between the North Division rivals dating back to the 2017-18 campaign.

The Amerks boast a 7-1-3-0 record in their 11 matchups against the Senators north of the border with their only regulation loss over that span coming earlier this season. Rochester has scored two or more goals in 20 of the previous 23 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 25 points (9+16) in 23 games to begin 2022, including goals in back-to-back games on three different occasions over that span.

Having returned to the lineup Friday after missing the previous 17 games, Quinn is second among 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 rookies.

Rochester has the AHL's ninth-best offense. Averaging under four goals per game, the Amerks have scored the third-most goals in the AHL with 173.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 43-for-188 with a 22.9% conversion rate that is currently fourth-best in the AHL. The Amerks' 43 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and are 10 shy of the AHL lead behind Ontario.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 26 of their first 52 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	46	13	32	45	18	-6
Michael Mersch	46	19	20	39	27	-5
Brandon Biro	40	9	27	36	16	6
Jack Quinn	25	18	17	35	15	-7
Ethan Prow	48	8	24	32	6	-3

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	13	8-3-1	347	.916	2.60
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	46	14	19	33	8	4
Egor Sokolov	38	14	17	31	14	12
Andrew Agozzino	40	15	12	27	41	-2
Roby Jarventie	44	8	16	24	24	-5
Michael Del Zotto	21	9	14	23	10	5

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Filip Gustavsson	10	4-3-1	218	.905	2.66
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
24-21-1-0	Record 27-20-3-2
10-11-1-0	Home Record 13-9-2-1
14-10-0-0	Road Record 14-11-1-1
6-3-1-0	Last 10 Games 4-5-1-0
18-4-1-0	Record When Scoring First 17-6-1-0
3.09 (14th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.33 (9th)
3.067(18th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.56 (29th)
18.4% (24th)	Power-Play 22.9% (4th)
82.5% (8th)	Penalty Kill 81.7% (12th)
3-2 OTL vs. ROC	Last Game 3-2 OTW @ BEL
Mar. 9 vs. PRO	Next Game Mar. 9 vs. LAV



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PETERKA FLOURISHING IN SECOND HALF

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 12 assists for 19 points in the last 19 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 25 points (9+16) in 23 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 45 points (13+32) through 46 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 sixth in the AHL with 32 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. Before this season, 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 10 of his 13 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	5	5	1	6	2	-7
Michael Mersch	4	3	2	5	0	-1
Arttu Ruotsalainen	3	3	2	5	2	-1
Brandon Biro	4	0	5	5	4	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	2	2-0-0	5	.921	2.41
Mat Robson	1	0-0-1	3	.914	2.77
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	5	4	3	7	0	2
Cole Reinhardt	5	3	4	7	4	4
Jake Lucchini	5	2	5	7	0	3
Jonathan Aspirot	4	1	4	5	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	2	1-0-1	8	.830	3.87

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	OTW	3-2	21-33	0-6	5-5
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 16th 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 last weekend, including the overtime game-winner last Friday in Syracuse, Prow has recorded 14 points (4+10) over his last 18 games and has totaled 113 points (35+78) over his last 164 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 24 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 15th in scoring among AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are 11th-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 144 points (50+94) through Rochester's first 52 games this season.

Back from his second recall of the season to Buffalo, Quinn, the Sabres' eighth overall pick in 2020, ranks second among all first-year players in goals (18) and is eighth in points (35) in 25 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.

With his first goal in 13 games last night against Belleville, Weissbach has notched eight points (1+7) in his last nine 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 45 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 one of only three AHL teams to have scored at least 54 goals in all three periods this season. Additionally, the Amerks have scored the fourth-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 five of their 27 wins this season, two of which have come on home ice. Additionally, 12 of Rochester's 14 road victories have come with three or more goals despite being outscored 102-87 through their first 27 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 27 games since the turn of the New Year, Amerks forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has tallied 27 points on 12 goals and 15 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 eight games over that same span, including three consecutive two-goal games for the first time in his AHL career. The Finnish forward has recorded at least one shot in 43 of 45 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**.

Rochester is one of just three teams to have three different rookies (Quinn, Peterka, Weissbach) reach the 10-goal mark, joining the Charlotte Checkers and Toronto Marlies.



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