

# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wednesday | **March 9, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 824 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (27-21-3-2) open a grueling stretch of four games in five nights tonight when they welcome the Laval Rocket (25-19-3-0) back to Rochester for a North Division showdown at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time slated for a 7:05 p.m. start and will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have earned at least one point in seven of their last 13 games. The Senators have a 5-5-0-0 record in their previous 10 outings while showing a record of 9-12-1-0 through their first 22 road games this season.

## HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

Tonight's contest is the fifth of eight meetings between the North Division rivals and first since the Amerks suffered a 5-1 defeat back on Feb. 20 in the previous get-together. The loss was Rochester's first this season to Laval and also the first game between the two teams not decided by a goal.

Rochester enters tonight showing a 16-4-0 all-time record against Laval. Prior to the 5-1 loss on Feb. 20, the Amerks had won eight straight and 12 of the previous 13 games against the Rocket dating back to the start of the 2017-18 campaign.

The Amerks are 7-3-0-0 all-time since the start of the 2017-18 season on home ice versus Laval. Rochester has outscored the Rocket 28-25 while holding Laval to two or fewer goals in all but three games thus far.

## VIEW FROM ROCHESTER

Rochester remains in the thick of what is shaping up to be a very tight race to the finish among its fellow North Division opponents. The Amerks have played the most games (53) in the Division with some teams having as many as six games in hand on Rochester entering this week, including that of Laval.

The Amerks currently sit in fourth place with 23 games remaining and the top five teams in the North Division are guaranteed to clinch a playoff spot.

After scoring just four times through the first three months of the season, **JJ Peterka** has notched 26 points (9+17) in 24 games to begin 2022, including goals in back-to-back games on three different occasions over that span.

Having returned to the lineup this past Friday after missing the previous 17 games, **Jack Quinn** is second among all AHL rookies in goals (19) and tied for sixth in points (38) while his team-high seven power-play goals are also second-most among all rookies.

Rochester has the AHL's eighth-best offense. Averaging under four goals per game, the club have scored the fourth-most goals in the AHL with 178 and rank second in the North Division behind only the Utica Comets.

## POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Rochester's power-play has gone 45-for-194 with a 23.2% conversion rate that is currently fourth-best in the AHL. The Amerks' 45 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 27 of their first 53 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in 11 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	47	13	33	46	18	-7
Michael Mersch	46	19	20	39	27	-5
Jack Quinn	26	19	19	38	17	-8
Brandon Biro	40	9	27	36	16	6
Ethan Prow	49	9	24	33	6	-5

## 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	20	9-10-1	547	.894	3.36
Mat Robson	10	5-3-2	265	.877	3.78

## 2021-22 ROCKET OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jean-Sebastien Dea	45	16	11	27	18	-10
Rafaël Harvey-Pinard	44	10	16	26	16	15
Jesse Ylönen	37	10	14	24	12	-14
Kevin Roy	40	7	15	22	12	-4
Xavier Ouellet	36	5	16	21	26	-14

## GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	15	9-5-1	388	.919	2.38
Cayden Primeau	23	11-9-1	632	.912	2.80
Michael McNiven	11	4-4-1	232	.869	4.04

\* = Currently on recall with Montreal

## 2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Laval Rocket	Rochester Americans
25-19-3-0	<b>Record</b> .....27-21-3-2
16-7-2-0	<b>Home Record</b> .....13-9-2-1
9-12-1-0	<b>Road Record</b> ..... 14-12-1-1
5-5-0-0	<b>Last 10 Games</b> .....4-6-0-0
18-6-0-0	<b>Record When Scoring First</b> .....17-6-1-0
3.23 (11th)	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b> .....3.36 (8th)
3.28 (23rd)	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> ..... 3.60 (29th)
17.8% (T-25th)	<b>Power-Play</b> ..... 23.2% (4th)
82.8% (8th)	<b>Penalty Kill</b> .....81.6% (T-13th)
5-2 L vs. SPR	<b>Last Game</b> ..... 6-5 L @ BEL
Mar. 11 @ LHV	<b>Next Game</b> ..... Mar. 11 vs. SYR



## ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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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 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 13 assists for 20 points in the last 20 games.

More impressively, Peterka, who was taken 34th overall in the 2020 NHL Draft by the Sabres, has netted 26 points (9+17) in 24 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 46 points (13+33) through 47 games, Peterka is the first Amerks rookie to reach the 45-point mark since Justin Bailey had 45 points (20+25) in 70 games during the 2015-16 season. Peterka also leads the team and is tied for sixth in the AHL with 33 assists.

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

## A PRODUCTIVE STRETCH 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 has scored more than half of his 14 goals since 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.

## RACE TO 20

After the cancellation of the remainder of the 2019-20 season and a truncated 2020-21 campaign failed to produce a 20-goal scorer for just the fourth time in franchise history, the Amerks could potentially have several by season's end with seven players currently with 10 or more goals.

**Michael Mersch** and Quinn will both reach the mark on their next goal, despite Quinn appearing in 20 fewer games than Mersch. Murray remains on pace with a career-high 14 goals through his first 29 games of the season while Peterka and **Arttu Ruotsalainen** are right on his heels with 13 and 12, respectively, coming into the week.

## AMERKS-ROCKET 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

### ROCHESTER

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

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Mat Robson	1	1-0-0	3	.906	3.00
Aaron Dell	1	1-0-0	3	.914	3.02
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	2	1-1-0	9	.850	4.48

### LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jean-Sebastien Dea	4	2	2	4	2	0
Ryan Poehling	2	1	3	4	0	-1
Lukas Vejdemo	3	2	1	3	0	0
Rafaël Harvey-Pinard	4	1	2	3	0	4

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Cayden Primeau	3	1-2-0	9	.893	3.04
Michael McNiven	1	0-0-1	6	.769	5.70

## 2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 29	W	4-3	22-35	1-3	3-4
Oct. 30	OTW	6-5	26-33	1-1	2-3
Dec. 10	W	5-3	32-33	0-2	2-2
Feb. 20	L	5-1	28-30	0-5	3-4
Mar. 9					
Apr. 6					
Apr. 9					
Apr. 13					



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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** (9+24) and **Oskari Laaksonen** (4+22), who enter the weekend fifth and 22nd 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 ninth with 24 assists, which are just two more than Laaksonen. His nine goals trail only Belleville's Michael Del Zotto and Grand Rapids' Ryan Murphy for most by a defenseman this season. After scoring last Saturday in Belleville, Prow has recorded 15 points (5+10) over his last 19 games. Additionally he has totaled 114 points (36+78) over his last 165 AHL contests dating back to the 2018-19 campaign.

Laaksonen, who boasts 11 points (2+9) in his last 25 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 17th in scoring among AHL rookie defensemen while his 13 assists are 14th-most.

## FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **JJ Peterka**, **Jack Quinn**, **Brandon Biro** and **Linus Weissbach**, all of whom have combined for 149 points (51+98) through Rochester's first 53 games this season.

Quinn, the Buffalo Sabres' eighth overall pick in 2020, ranks second among all first-year players in goals (19) and is tied for sixth in points (38) in 26 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 Friday against Belleville, Weissbach has notched eight points (1+7) in his last 10 games. He finished the month of February with 11 points (1+10) in 13 games, including a season-high three-assist effort on Feb. 27 at Toronto to bring the month to a close.

With Peterka already at 46 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 54-52 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 108-92 through their first 28 road games.

## SERIES NOTABLES

Of the 14 different defensemen the Amerks have used this season, 13 have notched at least one point while 10 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 28 games since the turn of the New Year, Amerks forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has tallied 28 points on 12 goals and 16 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 44 of 46 games with Rochester dating back to the start of the 2020-21 campaign.

Over the last 20 games in the head-to-head series with the Rocket, the Amerks have scored three or more goals 15 times, which includes 10 of the last 11 games in Laval.

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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