

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **October 14, 2021** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 9 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans open their 67th season in the American Hockey League tonight in a North Division showdown against the Toronto Marlies at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time is slated for a 7:05 p.m. start.

The Amerks and Marlies, who enter their 18th season in the AHL, will meet a total of eight times during the 2022-23 regular season, with tonight's matchup representing the first of four in the Flower City.

Following tonight's season-opener, the two teams will meet again north of the border on Saturday afternoon as the home-and-home series shifts to Toronto's Coca-Cola Coliseum for a 4:00 p.m. rematch.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST TORONTO

Toronto went 4-2-0-0 in the six-game series in 2021-22, and entering tonight, have won two of the last three meetings between the two teams. The Amerks earned just one point in the three get-togethers in Rochester last season and over the last five years show a 4-6-1-1 mark compared to a 8-4-0-0 record in Toronto.

Since the start of the 2016-17 season, Toronto has outscored Rochester 105-104, while also outshooting the Amerks 1,054-1,027. There have been six shutouts since 2016-17 with four of the six coming in Toronto.

In the last 33 games against Toronto, the Amerks have scored two or more goals in 26 contests, which includes 11 games where they have produced five or more tallies. Coming into tonight's matchup, the Amerks are 12-10-1-1 in their last 24 games against the Marlies spanning the last five seasons.

Tonight marks the fifth time in the last six years in which Rochester opens the season against a divisional opponent.

OPENING THE SEASON

Tonight's season-opener with Toronto marks the first time since Oct. 9, 2010 that Rochester is scheduled to open the season versus the Marlies and the first at home since an 8-5 win over Toronto to begin the 2012-13 campaign.

The Amerks enter the new season with a 33-26-7 all-time record in season-opening games and have outscored the opposition 244-228 dating back to when the puck first dropped on Rochester's inaugural season in 1956.

MERSCH TO LEAD AMERKS LEADERSHIP GROUP

Veteran forward **Michael Mersch** returns for third season in Rochester and second as the team's captain, overseeing an Amerks leadership group that also includes two alternate captains in forward **Sean Malone** and defenseman **Ethan Prow**. Both Malone and Prow served as alternates in 2021-22.

On top of captaining the Amerks to the North Division Finals of the 2022 Calder Cup Playoffs, Mersch finished last season with 54 points on 26 goals and 28 assists, all of which were, or matched, career totals in the league and pushed him over the 20-goal mark for the fifth time in his pro career.

The nine-year pro has appeared in 470 career AHL games between the Amerks, Texas Stars, Ontario Reign and Manchester Monarchs, totaling 318 points (156+162). Additionally, Mersch, a five-time 20-goal scorer in the AHL who won a Calder Cup with Manchester in 2015, has skated in 17 career NHL contests with the Los Angeles Kings.

2021-22 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
JJ Peterka	70	28	40	68	28	-3
Jack Quinn	45	26	35	61	23	-6
Michael Mersch	65	26	28	54	39	-3
Arttu Ruotsalainen	57	18	33	51	26	-9
Ethan Prow	70	10	39	49	6	-5

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA	
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	35	15-14-6	997	.900	3.28
Aaron Dell	22	12-7-1	612	.909	2.91
Michael Houser	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98

2021-22 MARLIES OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Seney	62	17	42	59	81	16
Joseph Duszak	61	7	45	52	62	3
Alex Steeves	58	23	23	46	37	0
Joey Anderson	56	26	16	42	19	8
Bobby McMann	61	24	11	35	16	-2

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA	
Michael Hutchinson	28	11-10-4	759	.899	3.23
Erik Kallgren	26	15-8-1	569	.904	3.02
Joseph Woll	15	6-7-0	419	.907	3.36

REMEMBERING THE LEGENDARY JOE CROZIER - 1929-2022

Perhaps one of the most recognizable and iconic figures in Amerks franchise history, **Joe Crozier** was instrumental in the formation of one of the American Hockey League's most successful and distinguished organizations through an impressive run of achievements. Crozier guided the Amerks through "Golden Age", winning the franchise's first three Calder Cup championships in four years while cementing Rochester's status in the hockey world.

In six memorable years as coach of the Amerks, Crozier compiled a record of 260-155-30, making him the winningest coach at the time. He is one of only six head coaches to win at least three Calder Cups.

In the 66-year history of the Amerks, Crozier ranks third all-time in coaching victories and first in points percentage among Amerks coaches with more than 100 victories. In addition to winning three Calder Cups as Amerks head coach, Crozier also posted a 39-27 record in the postseason, guiding Rochester to a berth in the finals in five of his six years behind the bench.

He was a charter member of the Amerks Hall of Fame in 1986 and was later inducted into the American Hockey League Hall of Fame on January 30, 2012 as part of the Class of 2012.



ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

@AMERKSPR | @AMERKSHOCKEY

Warren Kosel | Senior Director of Public & Media Relations | 1.585.286.9928

Ryan Harr | Public & Media Relations Coordinator | 1.585.286.9940

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APPERT YEAR THREE

Seth Appert enters his third season as head coach of the Amerks in 2022-23 after being named to the position on August 18, 2020.

Appert is 48-44-9-4 over his first two seasons behind the Amerks bench, which includes a 37-win campaign in 2021-22 that culminated with an extended playoff run as part of team's first playoff appearance in four years.

After leading Rochester to a fifth-place finish in the AHL's North Division standings and becoming the sixth straight head coach to reach the 30-win mark in his first full season at the helm, Appert spearheaded one of the most impressive playoff runs in nearly two decades.

Under Appert, the Amerks won their first playoff series since 2005 and advanced to the third round of Calder Cup Playoffs for the first time since 2004, first sweeping Belleville in the play-in round before ousting Utica, one of the AHL's top teams in the regular season, in the best-of-five North Division Semifinals.

YOUTH MOVEMENT TAKES OVER ROCHESTER

Of the 25 players on Rochester's Opening Night roster, 11 are Buffalo Sabres draft picks, including two first-round selections.

Isak Rosen (14th overall,) and **Jiri Kulich** (28th overall) come to the Flower City as members of Buffalo's first-round selections in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Rosen spent the 2021-22 season with Leksands in Sweden, where he made his debut in the Swedish Hockey League. He led all 17-year-olds with the Leksands U20 as he posted 35 points (21+14) in 38 games. Kulich, meanwhile, spent most of last season with HC Energie Karlovy Vary of Czechia's top pro league as a 17-year-old, appearing in a career-high 49 games. He tallied 14 points on nine goals and five assists while also notching four points (2+2) in two games with HC Energie Karlovy Vary.

Aleksandr Kisakov (2nd round, 2021), **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** (2nd round, 2017), **Oskari Laaksonen** (3rd round, 2017), **Brett Murray** (4th round, 2019), **Filip Cederqvist** (5th round, 2019), **Sean Malone** (6th round, 2013) **Lukas Rousek** (6th round, 2019), **Linus Weissbach** (7th round, 2017), **Tyson Kozak** (7th round, 2021) round out the Sabres NHL Draft picks.

Rochester's lineup could feature five players making their North American professional debuts as well as a total of seven rookies. **Kohen Olischefski** and **Lukas Rousek** both skated with Rochester during 2021-22 but are still first-year skaters.

DEPTH ON DEFENSE

Excluding **Peter Tischke**, **Mitch Eliot**, and **Oskari Laaksonen**, the other five defensemen patrolling Rochester's blueline have all appeared in at least four NHL games, including newcomers **Kale Clague** and **Chase Priskie**.

Ethan Prow finished third in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen with 49 points (10+39) in 70 games during his first season with Amerks in 2021-22. It was also the second time in three AHL seasons he reached the 10-goal mark. He made his NHL debut last year which featured his first NHL goal on his first NHL shot at the age of 29 against New Jersey on Dec. 29.

Lawrence Pilut returns for his second stint in Rochester after spending the last two seasons with Traktor Chelyabinsk of the KHL, where he recorded 39 points on seven goals and 32 assists in 97 contests. He also produced 10 points (1+9) in 20 postseason contests

AMERKS-MARLIES 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Linus Weissbach	6	2	4	6	6	-2
Brett Murray	4	2	3	5	7	-2
Arttu Ruotsalainen	4	2	3	5	0	-1
JJ Peterka	6	1	3	4	2	-6

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	3	1-1-1	7	.918	2.28
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	+/-
Joey Anderson	6	3	3	6	0	4
Semyon Der-Arguchintsev	5	1	5	6	0	2
Brett Seney	6	4	1	5	2	3
Bobby McMann	5	1	3	4	6	-2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Hutchinson	2	2-0-0	4	.933	1.93
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	W	5-3	32-36	3-8	3-3
Mar. 25	SOL	3-2	28-30	1-4	4-4

SERIES NOTABLES

In 22 of the last 28 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 18 of the last 20 meetings, the winning team has scored at least four goals dating back to the 2017-18 season.

This weekend's home-and-home series with the Marlies will be the first time the Amerks open the season with back-to-back games opposite a Canadian-based team since splitting a two-game set with the Cape Breton Oilers on Oct. 6 and 7 to begin the 1995-96 campaign. Rochester would later go on to win the Calder Cup, the franchise's sixth and most recent championship.

The Amerks are 2-0-0-0 all-time in the season-opener against the Marlies and have outscored Toronto, 12-7. Rochester won the most recent season-opening contest on Oct. 9, 2010.



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