

Friday | **November 18, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 208 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

For the second time this month, the Rochester Americans (7-4-1-1) host the Utica Comets (3-5-1-1) in the front-end of a home-and-home series beginning tonight at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time is slated for a 7:05 p.m. start and will be carried live on 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

Tonight represents the 14th of 15 straight contests against North Division opponents to open the season for the Amerks. Its Rochester's longest stretch of the season against divisional foes. Rochester and Utica will play more seven times (three home and four road) during the 2022-23 season.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST UTICA

Dating back to the start of the 2021-22 season, the intrastate rivals have alternated wins with each team winning at home to split the season series thus far.

In the first meeting of this season, Rochester trailed 3-1 entering the final minute of the second period before erupting for four straight unanswered goals, including two in 22 seconds, to storm back and claim a 5-3 win over the Comets on Nov. 4.

The next night, the Amerks fell behind by a pair of goals three minutes into the third period versus Utica but saw their rally fall short in a 2-1 loss.

Home ice has proven to be beneficial for both teams, especially Rochester, which has won five of its first six and has recorded at least one point in all six matchups. Utica, meanwhile, is winless on the road this season and remains the only team without a road win coming into this weekend.

LAST TIME OUT

For the second straight game, the Amerks were unable to hold a third-period lead, conceding a late goal to the Belleville Senators before ultimately falling in the shootout, 3-2, this past Saturday at CAA Arena.

Despite the shootout defeat, the Amerks show a 7-4-1-1 record through the first 13 games of the season and have points in six of their last seven to remain in second place in the North Division with 16 points.

Forwards **Brendan Warren** and **Aleksandr Kisakov** both scored their second goals of the season in the second and third periods, respectively. Warren has tallied three points (2+1) over his last five outings while Kisakov has goals in back-to-back games to go along with an assist. Rookies **Filip Cederqvist** and **Tyson Kozak** each tallied an assist while **Chase Priskie** also earned his first assist as an Amerk.

Goaltender **Beck Warm** (0-0-2) appeared in his second straight game, making 32 saves in his first start as an Amerk. The netminder also recorded his first professional point with an assist on Warren's goal.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Coming into tonight, 11 of the Amerks' 44 goals this season have come on the power-play, which are tied for 11th-most among any team in the AHL. By going 11-for-47 while on the man-advantage, Rochester is ranked sixth in the league with a 23.4% conversion rate.

The Amerks' 10 power-play goals at home are tied for most in the league this season, going for 10-for-28 through their first six home matchups.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brandon Biro	12	3	9	12	-2	2
Linus Weissbach	13	6	5	11	-5	20
Lukas Rousek	13	4	7	11	-2	4
Isak Rosen	13	2	7	9	-3	0
Mason Jobst	12	2	6	8	3	4

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	4	1-1-0	84	.913	2.79
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07
Beck Warm^	2	0-0-2	37	.881	3.52

*=Currently on recall with Buffalo

^ = Currently reassigned to Cincinnati (ECHL)

2022-23 COMETS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brian Pinho	10	7	3	10	1	2
Andreas Johnsson	6	2	7	9	2	6
Nolan Foote	11	5	3	8	-2	2
Brian Halonen	11	3	2	5	-3	17
Tyce Thompson	7	2	3	5	-3	2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Akira Schmid*	4	2-1-1	90	.918	1.97
Nico Daws	5	1-3-0	108	.908	2.41
Isaac Poulter	2	0-1-1	62	.827	6.31

*=Currently on recall with New Jersey

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Utica Comets	Rochester Americans
3-5-1-1	Record 7-4-1-1
3-1-1-1	Home Record 5-0-1-0
0-4-0-0	Road Record 2-4-0-1
3-5-1-1	Last 10 Games 5-3-1-1
6-1-1-0	Record When Scoring First 4-1-1-1
2.80 (26th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.38 (T-10th)
3.40 (22nd)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.31 (21st)
20.0% (16th)	Power-Play 23.4% (6th)
75.0% (T-23rd)	Penalty Kill 72.5% (28th)
8-3 L @ SYR	Last Game 3-2 SOL @ BEL
Nov. 19 vs. ROC	Next Game Nov. 19 @ UTC



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YOUTH MOVEMENT LEADING ROCHESTER

Third-year forward **Brandon Biro** has emerged as the team's early-season leader, picking up where he left off last season with a team-high nine assists and 12 points through his first 12 games. Dating back to last season, the Sherwood Park, Alberta native has totaled 14 points (5+9) over his last 15 games and hasn't gone more than one game without a point over that span.

Second-year forwards **Lukas Rousek** and **Linus Weissbach** remain at a close second with 11 points each, including a team-high six goals from Weissbach. He comes into tonight with four points over his last seven appearances, including goals in three straight games over that span. His six goals are currently five off the league-lead. Like Biro, Rousek hasn't gone more than two games all season without a point.

First-year forwards **Isak Rosen** (2+7) and **Jiri Kulich** (2+6) pace the team's rookies with nine and eight points, respectively, while being tied for 13th and 16th in the AHL scoring race amongst all first-year skaters.

Rosen, the Sabres' first-round selection in 2021 (14th overall), 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. Rosen is tied for fourth among all AHL rookies with seven assists, just three back of the league-leader.

At age 18, Kulich, Buffalo's first-round selection (28th overall) in 2022, is among the youngest players in the AHL. Kulich shows six assists in his first 13 games of the young season, tying him for 12th in the league among all first-year players in that category. The Kadan, Czech Republic, native also leads all Rochester skaters with 36 shots on goal.

HOME-COOKING FOR THE AMERKS

The Amerks have earned at least one point in all six home games so far this season, boasting a 5-0-1-0 mark within the friendly confines of The Blue Cross Arena. It's the team's best start at home since 2006-07, when the club posted a 10-0-1-0 start, including winning their first nine straight. The team's win streak was snapped in last Friday's 6-5 overtime loss to Cleveland.

Four of the five victories this season on home ice have come when the team trailed entering the final 20 minutes of regulation while all five wins have come by way of four or more goals. Rochester has outscored its opposition 13-5 after the start of the third period and has outshot the visitors 49-45.

Rochester is one of three teams that have yet to lose in regulation at home this season, joining Hershey and Hartford in that regard. The Amerks and Bears are also the only two teams with points in each home contest.

SCOUTING THE COMETS

The Comets come into the matchup sitting in seventh place in the AHL's North Division standings with a 3-5-1-1 overall record and are coming off an 8-3 loss to the Syracuse Crunch on Saturday.

Newcomer Brian Pinho paces all Utica skaters with seven goals while his 10 points also lead the team. Pinho, who spent the last four seasons with Hershey, has recorded a point in all but one game so far this season, including a goal in four straight and six of his last seven outings.

Among the newest additions to Utica's roster this season is third-year forward and Rochester native **Jack Dugan**. The former McQuaid Jesuit standout is tied for third on the team with four assists through eight games.

AMERKS-COMETS 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Ethan Prow	2	1	2	3	0	2
Anders Bjork	2	1	1	2	0	2
Brett Murray	2	1	1	2	0	3
Brandon Biro	2	0	2	2	0	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	1	0-1-0	2	.913	2.06
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.925	3.00

UTICA

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Nolan Foote	2	2	1	3	0	-1
Brian Pinho	2	2	1	3	0	0
Brian Halonen	2	1	0	1	0	1
Samuel Laberge	2	0	1	1	2	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Nico Daws	2	1-1-0	6	.860	3.03

2022-23 GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Nov. 4	W	5-3	20-40	1-4	3-4
Nov. 5	L	2-1	23-23	0-1	2-2

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, the Amerks have used 12 different defensemen, which is tied for most in the AHL with Toronto. Seven of the 12 have recorded at least one point while four have scored. **Ethan Prow** is the only defenseman to appear in all 13 games this season and has skated in 83 of the 89 games dating back to the start of the 2021-22 campaign.

Amerks defenseman **Mitch Eliot** played his first two pro seasons with the Comets during the team's affiliation with the Vancouver Canucks. In 53 games with the Comets, he produced four goals and nine points.

Comets forward Tyce Thompson is the younger brother of former Amerks and current Buffalo Sabres forward **Tagge Thompson**.

Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen has stopped 98 of the 108 shots he faced this season after the second period. Prior to his recall Thursday, he was tied for the lead with six wins, while ranking fifth in minutes (527) and saves (238).

Utica returns one of the AHL's top goaltending tandems from last season in Nico Daws and Akira Schmid, both of whom also spent considerable time in New Jersey. Despite currently being on recall with the Devils, Schmid ranks third among all AHL goaltenders with a 1.97 goals-against average.



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