

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **Dec. 9, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 340 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester, The CW Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (11-8-1-1) host the intrastate rival Utica Comets (7-7-3-1) tonight in a North Division showdown at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time is 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 contest can also be viewed live locally on CW Rochester.

Tonight's matchup is the fifth between the two teams this season and the first of two games between the North Division opponents in the month of December. The cross-town foes will meet one more time in 2022 as Utica returns to the Flower City on Wednesday, Dec. 28 after the Christmas break.

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 least once at home and on the road to split the season series thus far.

In the four meetings this season, the home team won the first two games only to have the visitor earn the victory in the last two contests. All but one of the previous four matchups between the two teams have been one-goal games.

Each team has two players with four points in the season series in **Ethan Prow** (1+3), **Brett Murray** (1+3), Brian Pinho (2+2) and Nolan Foote (3+1).

Dating back to last season, Rochester has earned at least one point in six of the last eight games against Utica. Additionally, both teams have four wins in their last 10 games and have at least six wins each this season when scoring first.

LAST TIME OUT

Rochester opened the scoring in the first period only to see the Syracuse Crunch tack on five straight unanswered goals to hand the Amerks a 5-1 loss Wednesday at The Blue Cross Arena.

Despite Rochester dropping back-to-back regulation losses for just the second time all season, the club has earned at least one point in seven of its last 12 games and boast an 11-8-1-1 record overall. The Amerks remain in second in the North Division with 24 points through their first 21 games of the campaign, trailing Toronto by only three points but with a game in hand.

Forward **Brett Murray** scored his team-leading ninth goal of the season while **Jeremy Davies** and **Michael Mersch** recorded the assists. Murray has recorded nine points (4+5) over the last eight games dating back to Nov. 18 and is tied for the team-lead with 15 points on the season.

Goaltender **Malcolm Subban** (2-2-0) appeared in his fourth contest of the season but suffered the loss. Subban, who entered the contest with back-to-back wins, made 23 saves in the losing effort.

POWER-PLAY PROFICIENCY

Coming into the weekend, 16 of the Amerks' 68 goals this season have come on the power-play, which are tied for 17th-most among any team in the AHL. By going 16-for-72 while on the man-advantage, Rochester is 10th in the league with a 22.2% conversion rate.

The Amerks' 13 power-play goals at home are tied for sixth-most in the league this season, going 13-for-42 through their first 10 home matchups.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brett Murray	21	9	6	15	4	13
Linus Weissbach	21	8	7	15	-7	26
Brandon Biro	15	5	10	15	-4	2
Jiri Kulich	21	5	9	14	-5	2
Lukas Rousek	21	4	10	14	-2	6

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07
Michael Houser	8	3-3-0	198	.900	3.19
Beck Warm^	2	0-0-2	37	.881	3.52
Malcolm Subban	4	2-2-0	104	.874	3.74

*=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	17	8	6	14	-1	4
Andreas Johnsson*	12	3	10	13	2	10
Nolan Foote	19	6	4	10	-4	6
Jack Dugan	17	3	7	10	4	16
Reilly Walsh	18	2	8	10	0	18

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Akira Schmid*	4	2-1-1	90	.918	1.97
Nico Daws	11	4-5-1	267	.908	2.57
Isaac Poulter	4	1-1-2	115	.865	4.35

*=Currently on recall with New Jersey

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Utica Comets	Rochester Americans
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7-7-3-1 **Record** 11-8-1-1

4-3-2-1 **Home Record** 7-2-1-0

3-4-1-0 **Road Record** 4-6-0-1

4-3-3-0 **Last 10 Games** 4-4-1-1

7-2-1-1 **Record When Scoring First** 6-3-1-1

2.94 (23rd) **Goals-For Per Game** 3.24 (14th)

3.11 (16th) **Goals-Against Per Game** 3.48 (24th)

21.3% (14th) **Power-Play** 22.2% (10th)

74.1% (26th) **Penalty Kill** 73.0% (28th)

7-3 W @ BEL **Last Game** 5-1 L vs. SYR

Dec. 10 vs. SYR **Next Game** Dec. 10 @ TOR



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WELL BALANCED OFFENSE

With four points (2+2) over his last six games, which includes a two-point outing on Nov. 23 versus the Providence Bruins, **Linus Weissbach** has a share of the team-lead with 15 points through 21 games. More impressively, the second-year pro has already scored half as many goals from last season and has matched his career-high of two game-winning goals.

Despite missing six games due to injury, third-year forward **Brandon Biro** remains among the team's offensive leaders, picking up where he left off last season with 10 assists and 15 points through his first 15 games. Dating back to last season, Biro has totaled 17 points (7+10) over his last 18 games dating and hasn't gone more than one game without a point over that span. He also leads the team with five multi-point games.

Brett Murray, one of three Amerks with 15 points on the season, is also on pace to surpass the career-high 15 goals he scored in 2021-22. Murray enters the week with nine goals in only 21 games this season, including four over his last six appearances. Murray has been one of Rochester's top point-getters over the last eight games, showing nine points (4+5) and three straight multi-point efforts over that span.

Despite being two of the youngest players in the AHL this season, rookie forwards **Isak Rosen** (3+11) and **Jiri Kulich** (5+9) are both tied for 14th in scoring amongst all first-year skaters with 14 points each. Rosen is also tied for fourth among all AHL rookies with a team-high 11 assists.

HOME-COOKING FOR THE AMERKS

The Amerks have earned at least one point in eight of their first 10 home contests so far this season, boasting a 7-2-1-0 mark and 15 points within the friendly confines of The Blue Cross Arena. Rochester opened the season with five straight home wins, marking the team's best start since 2006-07.

Five of the seven victories this season in the Flower City have come when the team trailed entering the final 20 minutes of regulation while all seven wins have come by way of four or more goals. Rochester has outscored its opposition 18-11 after the start of the third period and has outshot the visitors 95-81.

Prior to Wednesday's loss to Syracuse, Rochester was the only AHL team with only one regulation loss on home ice.

SCOUTING THE COMETS

The Comets come into the matchup sitting in sixth place in the AHL's North Division standings with a 7-7-3-3 overall record. Since picking up its first road win of the season back on Nov. 18, Utica has gone 3-0-1-0 in the last four contests away from the Adirondack Bank Center.

Brian Pinho paces all Utica skaters with eight goals while his 14 points also lead the team. Pinho, who spent the last four seasons with Hershey, opened the season with at least one point in 10 of his first 11 games, including a goal in five straight to open the month of November.

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 10 points through 17 games. A fifth-round selection of the Vegas Golden Knights in the 2017 NHL Draft, Dugan led the NCAA in scoring with 52 points (10+42) in 34 games and was a Hobey Baker Award finalist in 2019-20 at Providence College.

AMERKS-COMETS 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brett Murray	4	1	3	4	0	4
Ethan Prow	4	1	3	4	0	2
Anders Bjork	2	1	1	2	0	2
Mason Jobst	4	1	1	2	2	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	2	1-1-0	4	.922	2.03
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.925	3.00
Malcolm Subban	1	0-1-0	3	.880	3.06

UTICA

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brian Pinho	3	3	1	4	0	-2
Nolan Foote	4	2	2	4	0	-3
Brian Halonen	4	1	2	3	2	2
Reilly Walsh	4	0	3	3	2	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Nico Daws	4	2-2-0	11	.882	2.78

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
Nov. 18	L	3-2	26-25	0-1	3-3
Nov. 19	W	3-2	24-28	1-4	2-3

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, the Amerks have used 12 different defensemen, which is third-most in the AHL behind Toronto and Cleveland. Ten of the 12 Amerks have recorded at least one point while seven have scored. **Ethan Prow** is the only defenseman to appear in all 21 games this season and has skated in 91 of the 97 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**.

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. Daws has played in all four games opposite the Amerks this season and ranks 16th in the league with a 2.57 goals-against average.



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