

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wed. | **Dec. 28, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 453 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester, The CW Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (14-9-1-1) get back to work following the holiday break tonight as they host the Utica Comets (12-9-3-1) in a North Division showdown at The Blue Cross Arena. The 7:05 p.m. matchup 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 sixth between the two teams this season and the second of two in the month of December. The cross-town foes will remain idle until the two clubs wrap up their season-series with a pair of games in April.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST COMETS

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

Each team has two players with at least four points in the season series in **Ethan Prow** (1+3), **Brett Murray** (1+3) and **Brandon Biro** (0+4) for Rochester and Brian Pinho (3+2) and Nolan Foote (3+1) for Utica.

Dating back to last season, Rochester has earned at least one point in six of the last nine games against Utica.

LAST TIME OUT

A night after making a regular-season career-high 45 saves in a near-perfect performance, goaltender **Malcolm Subban** was flawless after stopping all 30 shots he faced to backstop the Amerks to a 4-0 shutout win over the Charlotte Checkers on Dec. 17 at Bojangles' Coliseum.

With the win, the Amerks swept the weekend set in Charlotte after doubling up the Checkers 4-2 on the night before and closed out their three-game road swing by taking all six points.

Brandon Biro continued his torrid start to the month of December by recording his fourth straight multi-point outing – and fifth over a six-game stretch this month – with a goal and an assist while **Linus Weissbach** also duplicated the effort to become the second Amerks forward that weekend to reach the 10-goal mark, joining **Brett Murray** in that regard.

A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER FOR SUBBAN

After suffering a defeat in his season-debut, Subban has gone 5-1-0 since, including three straight wins dating back to a 4-3 shootout victory against the first-place Toronto Marlies on Dec. 10.

After his 23-save effort against the Marlies, including all three shooters in the shootout, he went on to have himself a 75-save weekend in Rochester's two-game sweep over the Charlotte Checkers. His 4-0 shutout win was Subban's first in the AHL since April 8, 2017, with the Providence Bruins.

Subban, whose started three straight and four of the last five games, boasts a 5-2-0 record with a 2.82 goals-against average, a .910 save percentage and one shutout in seven appearances with the Amerks this season.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brandon Biro	19	7	16	23	0	4
Brett Murray	24	10	9	19	4	18
Linus Weissbach	25	10	9	19	-4	30
Lukas Rousek	25	7	11	18	0	6
Jiri Kulich	24	6	10	16	-5	2

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Malcolm Subban	7	5-2-0	202	.910	2.82
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07
Michael Houser	9	3-4-0	213	.895	3.17
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
Graeme Clarke	25	9	12	21	6	12
Nolan Stevens	22	8	10	18	4	15
Brian Pinho	24	8	10	18	0	6
Reilly Walsh	25	3	12	15	-5	24
Nolan Foote	26	9	4	13	-4	8

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Akira Schmid	5	3-1-1	110	.909	2.18
Nico Daws	15	7-6-1	369	.900	2.83
Isaac Poulter	4	1-1-2	115	.865	4.35

*=Currently on recall with New Jersey

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Utica Comets	Rochester Americans
12-9-3-1	Record 14-9-1-1
6-4-2-1	Home Record 7-3-1-0
6-5-1-0	Road Record 7-6-0-1
6-3-1-0	Last 10 Games 6-4-0-0
8-3-0-1	Record When Scoring First 8-4-1-1
3.36 (T-12th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.28 (15th)
3.24 (20th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.32 (T-22nd)
22.5% (T-9th)	Power-Play 19.1% (20th)
75.0% (26th)	Penalty Kill 73.7% (29th)
7-5 W @ CLE	Last Game 4-0 W @ CLT
Dec. 30 vs. LH	Next Game Dec. 30 vs. BEL



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WELL BALANCED OFFENSE

With eight points (4+4) over his last 10 games, which includes a two-point outing at Charlotte on Dec. 17, **Linus Weissbach** is four points back from the team-lead with 19 points (10+9) through 25 games. More impressively, he has already scored half as many goals from last season and has established a new career-high of three game-winning goals.

Brett Murray, one of three Amerks with at least 19 points on the season, is also on pace to surpass the career-high 15 goals he scored in 2021-22. Murray enters the final week of December tied with Weissbach for the team lead in goals (10) in only 24 games this season, including five over his last nine appearances.

Forward **Lukas Rousek** enters the week with seven goals and 11 assists while being one of five Amerk skaters to appear in all 25 games. In 44 career games with Rochester, the Czech Republic native has registered 22 points (8+14) and is a perfect two-for-two in the shootout.

Despite being two of the youngest players in the AHL, rookie forwards **Jiri Kulich** (6+10) and **Isak Rosen** (3+12) remain among the team's scoring leaders. Kulich's 16 points tie him for 21st among all AHL rookies while Rosen's 12 assists are tied for 10th-most. Both players are representing their respective countries at the 2023 World Junior Championship in Canada. They each have three points through their first two games of the tournament with Kulich currently leads all players with three goals after scoring a hat trick in Czechia's 9-0 rout of Austria on Tuesday.

BIRO PILING UP THE POINTS

Despite missing six games due to injury, third-year forward **Brandon Biro** is atop the team's scoring lead following four straight two-point outings. He currently paces the Amerks in assists (16) and points (23) through 19 games. Dating back to last season, Biro has totaled 23 points (9+16) over his last 22 games and hasn't gone more than one game without a point over that span.

In Rochester's 4-0 win over Charlotte on Dec. 17, Biro, who also leads the team with nine multi-point games, matched a career-high five shots on goal.

Since the start of the 2022 the calendar year, Biro has posted 17 multi-point outings in 48 games, totaling 52 points on 16 goals and 36 assists. The Amerks are 10-5-1-1 when Biro records more than two points in a game and have outscored the opposition 68-57.

SCOUTING THE COMETS

The Comets come into the matchup sitting in fourth place in the AHL's North Division standings with a 12-9-3-1 overall record. Since picking up its first road win of the season back on Nov. 18, Utica has points in 11 of its last 15 games and show a 9-4-2-0 record during that span.

Graeme Clarke paces all Utica skaters with nine goals while his 21 points also lead the team. Named the AHL's Player of the Week for the period ending Dec. 25, Clarke has produced nine points over his last four games.

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 fifth on the team with 13 points through 23 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	5	1	3	4	0	1
Ethan Prow	5	1	3	4	0	-1
Brandon Biro	3	0	4	4	0	-1
Lukas Rousek	5	2	0	2	4	-2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	3	1-2-0	7	.899	2.37
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	4	3	2	5	0	0
Nolan Foote	5	2	2	4	0	-1
Tyce Thompson	5	0	4	4	2	0
Brian Halonen	5	2	1	3	4	-5

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Nico Daws	5	3-2-0	13	.893	2.63

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
Dec. 9	L	5-2	28-20	1-5	0-1

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, the Amerks have used 13 different defensemen, which is third-most in the AHL behind Belleville, San Diego, Toronto and Cleveland. Eleven of the 13 have recorded at least one point while seven have scored. **Ethan Prow** is the only defenseman to appear in all 25 games this season and has skated in 95 of the 101 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 Amerk and current Buffalo Sabres forward **Tage Thompson**.

Both Rochester (3-0-0-0) and Utica (4-0-0-0) enter tonight's matchup riding a win streak and have six wins in their last 10 games. The teams have also recorded points in seven of the previous 10 road contests.



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