

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wednesday | **March 1, 2023** | 7:00 PM ET | Place Bell | AHL Game 840 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (26-20-3-1) continue their season-long five-game road swing tonight with the first of back-to-back meetings against the Laval Rocket (21-22-7-2) at Place Bell. Game time is slated for a 7:00 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, who are in the middle of their busiest stretch of the season with six games in nine days, carry a three-game win streak into the matchup after going a perfect 3-0-0-0 last weekend. Rochester has also earned a point in four straight games, going 3-0-1-0 over that span.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST ROCKET

After the Amerks claimed the first three meetings in 2021-22, the Rocket have responded with points in seven of the previous 10 meetings between the two teams, posting a 6-3-1-0 record over that span.

Rochester shows a 3-2-0-0 mark through the first five games of the season series, winning twice at home and once on the road. **Jiri Kulich** leads all Amerks with six points (3+3) in five games opposite the Rocket.

Rochester boasts a 20-8-1-0 record all-time against the Rocket, which includes a near-perfect 10-3-0-0 mark at home dating back to the start of the 2017-18 campaign.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks stormed out to a 5-0 lead courtesy of five different goal-scorers and never looked back on their way to a decisive 5-1 win over the Providence Bruins in the weekend finale Sunday afternoon at Amica Mutual Pavilion.

The line trio of **Mason Jobst** (1+1), **Linus Weissbach** (1+1) and **Michael Mersch** (0+2) combined for two goals and four assists to help the Amerks complete the season sweep over the Bruins. **Brandon Biro**, **Jiri Kulich**, and **Mitch Eliot** all scored once while **Lukas Rousek** and **Lawrence Pilut** both chipped in one assist.

Goaltender **Malcolm Subban** (13-10-1), who carried a shutout into the final 20 minutes of regulation, stopped 41 of the 42 shots he faced against his former team to earn his second straight win.

SUBBAN SHOULDERING THE WORKLOAD

After suffering a defeat in his season-debut on Nov. 18, Subban has gone 13-9-1 since over his last 23 starts, including seven straight wins between Dec. 10 to Jan. 14. The seven-game win streak was the longest of his pro career and the third-longest streak among all AHL goaltenders behind Toronto's Joseph Woll and Calgary's Dustin Wolf.

He was the first Amerks goaltender to post seven straight wins since Jonas Johansson won nine consecutive contests during the 2019-20 campaign.

Subban had arguably his best performance of the season during a 75-save weekend in Rochester's two-game sweep over the Charlotte Checkers in mid-December. A night after stopping a regular-season career-high 45 saves, Subban was flawless in a 30-save shutout on Dec. 17, his first in the AHL since April 8, 2017, with the Providence Bruins.

Subban has topped the 30-save mark seven times in his last 19 starts dating back to Dec. 16.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Lukas Rousek	50	11	26	37	-2	20
Brandon Biro	40	10	26	36	1	10
Linus Weissbach	48	16	18	34	-7	43
Jiri Kulich	42	15	18	33	-2	10
Michael Mersch	39	12	20	32	2	14

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Malcolm Subban	24	13-10-1	674	.907	2.88
Michael Houser	14	6-5-1	354	.903	2.95
Eric Comrie	3	1-2-0	79	.898	3.03
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07

*=Currently on recall with Buffalo (NHL)

^ = Currently reassigned to Cincinnati (ECHL)

2022-23 ROCKET OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Anthony Richard	45	23	28	51	-1	38
Peter Abbandonato	46	10	28	38	5	8
Joël Teasdale	39	19	10	29	-3	21
Jesse Ylönen*	36	9	20	29	-1	16
Brandon Gignac	40	10	18	28	5	14

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	26	10-12-3	636	.888	3.19
Cayden Primeau	24	9-9-5	720	.902	3.35
Joseph Vrbetic^	4	2-1-0	74	.871	4.05
Philippe Desrosiers^	1	0-0-1	24	.828	4.84

*=Currently on recall with Montreal (NHL)

^ = Currently reassigned to Trois-Rivieres (ECHL)

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Laval Rocket vs Rochester Americans

21-22-7-2	Overall Record	26-20-3-1
12-5-5-2	Home Record	13-10-2-0
9-17-2-0	Road Record	13-10-1-1
5-4-1-0	Last 10 Games	6-3-1-0
14-6-3-1	Record When Scoring First	16-7-1-1
3.62 (T-3rd)	Goals-For Per Game	3.26 (9th)
3.65 (28th)	Goals-Against Per Game	3.28 (23rd)
24.0% (22nd)	Power-Play	19.9% (11th)
73.8% (31st)	Penalty Kill	78.9% (24th)
3-2 L @ TOR	Last Game	5-1 W @ PRO
Mar. 3 vs. ROC	Next Game	Mar. 3 @ LAV



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BIRO PILING UP THE POINTS

Despite missing six games due to injury, third-year forward **Brandon Biro** has blazed his way atop the team's scoring leaders following a productive December in which he led the team with 16 points (6+10) in 10 games. He recorded multi-point efforts in seven of his 10 appearances, including six straight between Dec. 9 and Dec. 30 before closing out the month with an assist in the 3-2 win in Toronto.

Biro, who made his NHL debut with the Buffalo Sabres last season, currently is one point back of the team lead in points (36) and shares the team-lead in assists (26) through 40 games. His seven-game point streak to close out the 2022 calendar year was the longest of his career.

Dating back to last season, Biro has totaled 77 points on 22 goals and 55 assists over his last 88 games and hasn't gone more than seven games without a point since Nov. 27, 2021. The Penn State University product is currently has riding a three-game point streak where has five points (1+4).

KULICH NAMED WEEK'S BEST

Earlier this week, Amerks rookie forward **Jiri Kulich** was named the **Howies Hockey Tape/AHL Player of the Week** for the period ending Feb. 26, 2023. Kulich tallied six points in three games to help spark the Rochester offense to a three-win, 20-goal weekend.

On Friday evening, Kulich recorded his first career two-goal game, his first three-point effort and his first game-winning goal, leading the Amerks to an 8-4 win over Laval. On Saturday, he notched a pair of assists as Rochester rolled to a 7-1 win at Springfield. And on Sunday afternoon, Kulich's unassisted breakaway goal helped the Amerks put away a 5-1 victory at Providence.

Buffalo's first-round choice (28th overall) in the 2022 NHL Draft, Kulich has compiled 16 points in his last 13 games and has totaled 15 goals and 18 assists for 33 points in 42 games for Rochester on the season.

The 18-year-old native of Kadan, Czech Republic, also earned a silver medal and was named to the tournament all-star team at the 2023 IIHF World Junior Championship last month.

PROWESS ON THE BLUELINE

Entering the Jan. 19 game against Laval, **Ethan Prow** was the only Amerks defenseman to appear in every game this season. Overall, he has skated in 117 of the 123 games dating back to the start of the 2021-22 campaign.

In 47 games this season, Prow is tied for 18th in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen with 28 points while his 23 assists are currently tied for 14th-most at his position. This season marks the fourth straight in which the veteran defenseman has reached the 20-assist mark and the fifth consecutive year with 20 or more points, which includes an abbreviated campaign overseas in 2020-21.

The seventh-year pro has posted 16 points (3+13) in his last 22 outings dating back to Dec. 28 and comes into tonight with one goal and eight assists over his last 12 games.

He leads all Amerks defensemen with five multi-point outings, including a two-goal effort in the 4-3 win at Syracuse back on Jan. 7, and has never gone more than five games all season without a point.

AMERKS-ROCKET 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jiri Kulich	5	3	3	6	0	3
Michael Mersch	3	4	1	5	0	3
Anders Bjork	5	2	3	5	0	4
Brandon Biro	5	1	4	5	2	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	2	1-0-0	3	.929	2.48
Malcolm Subban	3	2-1-0	9	.898	3.01
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	0-1-0	6	.760	7.62

LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Anthony Richard	5	3	3	6	0	-4
Peter Abbandonato	5	1	5	6	2	-2
Brandon Gignac	3	1	4	5	0	3
Lucas Condotta	5	4	0	4	6	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	4	1-3-0	12	.876	3.37
Cayden Primeau	2	1-0-0	5	.898	3.54

2022-23 GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 28	L	8-1	32-35	0-3	1-3
Oct. 29	W	5-1	31-32	0-2	3-3
Jan. 11	W	3-1	17-42	0-1	2-2
Jan. 18	L	5-2	34-23	0-3	4-5
Feb. 24	W	8-4	34-24	1-2	1-1

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, the Amerks have used 36 different players. All but four players have recorded a point while 23 have scored. Laval, meanwhile, has used 37 players of which 33 have at least one point and 28 have scored.

Laval's goaltending duo of Kevin Poulin and Cayden Primeau have a combined 9-9-1 record in 20 career games against Rochester. **Michael Houser** (1-0-0) has faced Laval twice during the regular season and appeared in two games during last year's playoff run.

Through 50 games this season, the Amerks and Rocket have met five times with Rochester holding a 3-2-0-0 record. The Amerks boast an 8-3-0-0 mark in the Flower City over the last five years compared to a 6-3-1-0 mark in Place Bell. Of the Amerks final 26 contests of the 2022-23 slate, the team will face off with Laval three times, including twice over a three-day span this week.

Rocket goaltender Cayden Primeau who is currently in his fourth season with Laval, is the nephew of former Amerk Wayne Primeau, a member of the 1996 Calder Cup-winning team.



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EARNING THEIR STARS AND STRIPES

With 14 points (8+11) over his last 27 games, **Linus Weissbach** is three points back from the team-lead with 34 points (16+18) through 45 games. He matched his career-high of 16 goals from last season and has already established a new personal-best of four game-winning goals. Weissbach is currently riding his second four-game point-streak of the season and enters the week with goals in three straight games.

Brett Murray, one of six Amerks with at least 30 points on the season, has already established career-highs in goals (16) from the 2021-22 season. The fourth-year pro comes into tonight with 22 points (11+11) in his last 35 games and has recorded at least one shot in all but five games during that span dating back to Nov. 23.

Anders Bjork has already doubled his personal-best in points (25) and set career-highs in both goals (8) and assists (17) while appearing in an AHL career-high 41 games. Bjork has 17 points (4+13) in his last 22 games, which includes a pair of three-assist efforts during that stretch. (Dec. 28)

With four points (2+2) over his last five games, **Sean Malone** reached the 20-point in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his career. Through 31 contests in his fifth season with the Amerks, Malone has 11 goals and 12 assists.

Amerks captain **Michael Mersch** shows 23 points (11+12) over his last 25 games dating back to Dec. 17. With the exception of the abbreviated 2020-21 season, Mersch has reached the 20-point mark in all eight full seasons of his professional career. In 11 games in the month of February, Mersch tallied 10 points (5+5) while having at least one shot in eight of the 10 contests.

Through 44 games, defenseman **Jeremy Davies** established a career-high with eight goals, including three game-winning goals, two of which have come in overtime. Over his last five games, the Quebec native has collected two goals and three assists.

Rookie **Isak Rosen** has posted 10 points (5+5) in 15 games since Jan. 21. In Saturday's 7-1 victory over Springfield, Rosen, the Sabres' first-round selection (14th overall) in the 2021 NHL Draft, notched his first-career three-point game as well as his first-ever two-goal outing. Overall, three of his eight goals on the season have come while on the power play. Rosen is one of only two rookies this season to reach the 20-point mark.

Mitch Eliot tied his previous career-high in goals (3) Sunday at Providence, reaching the mark in 24 fewer games than then 2021-22 campaign.

SCOUTING THE ROCKET

The Rocket come into the matchup sitting in fifth place in the AHL's North Division standings with a 21-22-7-2 overall record and have points in 10 straight home games, going 7-0-2-1 over that span dating back to Dec. 28.

Laval forward Anthony Richard has a team-best 23 goals and 51 points in 45 games. Earlier this season, he posted the second-longest goal-scoring streak in the AHL and his eight-game point streak was tied for the eighth-longest. A 2023 AHL All-Star selection, Richard has nine points (1+8) over his last seven outings and begins the week tied for seventh in the AHL in goals and ninth in points, respectively.

The Rocket have used Kevin Poulin and Cayden Primeau for much of season in the crease as they have combined for a 19-21-8 mark in 50 games.

JOBST HAVING A CAREER YEAR

Mason Jobst has made the most of his second opportunity with the Amerks as the fourth-year pro is in the process of assembling a career-year.

Through 39 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (8), assists (14) and points (22).

With an assist in the 5-4 overtime win in Belleville on Feb. 4, Jobst reached the 20-point mark for the first time in his pro career, becoming then the ninth different Amerk to eclipse the mark.

Since the turn of the New Year, Jobst has amassed five goals and nine points over his previous 13 games, including his first career hat trick in the 7-5 loss to the first-place Toronto Marlies back on Jan. 14. Jobst single-handedly outscored Toronto in the second period with back-to-back goals before netting what was the go-ahead goal in the third period.

Jobst has totaled 35 points (12+23) over 65 career games with the Amerks dating back to last season.

WORKING OVERTIME

The 3-2 overtime loss on Feb. 19 against Syracuse was Rochester's 11th game this season -- and just third in 2023 -- that went beyond regulation for the Amerks.

The Amerks are 6-3 in overtime and show an even 1-1 mark in shootouts.

Rochester has played in the 13th-fewest overtime games in the AHL this season.

Rochester tied an AHL record with 29 overtime games in 2017-18.

DEPTH LEADS AMERKS TO PRODUCTIVE WEEKEND

The Amerks had arguably their best weekend of the season to close out the month of February, winning three straight games in as many days while outscoring the opposition 20-6 to begin a stretch of six games over a nine-day span.

After opening the weekend with an 8-4 win over Laval on Friday, Rochester scored seven straight unanswered goals, including three on the power-play, on their way to a dominating 7-1 win over Springfield on Saturday. The Amerks then put the finishing touches on the 20-goal weekend by scoring four first-period goals and never looking back on their way to a decisive 5-1 win at Providence on Sunday.

Of the 23 different skaters to appear in at least one game last weekend, 18 had one point or more, 15 tallied at least one assist and 12 scored one or more goal. Five skaters registered a multi-assist game while three posted a multi-goal game.

Forwards **Jiri Kulich** (3+3), **Lukas Rousek** (1+5), **Brandon Biro** (1+4), **Linus Weissbach** (3+2), **Anders Bjork** (0+4) all paced the club last weekend.

Goaltenders **Malcolm Subban** (2-0-0) and **Michael Houser** (1-0-0) manned the pipes for Rochester, combining for a .943 save percentage and a 2.00 goals against average in the three games.



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