

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **March 3, 2023** | 7:00 PM ET | Place Bell | AHL Game 853 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (26-20-3-1) have a chance at redemption tonight as they meet the Laval Rocket (21-22-7-2) in the back-end of a two-game set at Place Bell. Game time between the North Division rivals 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, come into tonight's matchup with a 3-1-0-0 record over their last four games and have earned points in four of their last five overall, going 3-1-1-0 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 eight of the previous 11 meetings between the two teams, posting a 7-3-1-0 record over that span.

Rochester shows a 3-3-0-0 mark through the first six games of the season series, winning twice at home and once on the road. **Brandon Biro** leads all Amerks with eight points (4+4) in six games opposite the Rocket.

Rochester boasts a 20-9-1-0 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

Brandon Biro scored once in each period for his first professional hat trick, but it wasn't enough for the Amerks as they came up on the short end of a 7-5 loss in a high-scoring affair against the Rocket Wednesday at Place Bell.

Along with Biro (3+0) extending his point streak to four games, **Lukas Rousek** (0+2) and **Lawrence Pilut** (0+1) also pushed theirs to four. **Jeremy Davies** (0+2) notched a pair of assists while **Tyson Kozak** and **Mason Jobst** rounded out the scoring with their fourth and ninth goals of the season, respectively. Forwards **Filip Cederqvist** and **Brett Murray** chipped in an assist.

Goaltender **Malcolm Subban** (13-11-1), who earned his third start in the last four games, stopped 28 of the 35 shots he faced.

SUBBAN SHOULDERING THE WORKLOAD

After suffering a defeat in his season-debut on Nov. 18, Subban has gone 13-10-1 since over his last 24 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 20 starts dating back to Dec. 16.

2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brandon Biro	41	13	26	39	1	10
Lukas Rousek	51	11	28	39	-1	20
Linus Weissbach	49	16	18	34	-10	43
Jiri Kulich	43	15	18	33	-2	10
Michael Mersch	40	12	21	33	0	14

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	14	6-5-1	354	.903	2.95
Malcolm Subban	25	13-11-1	702	.902	3.05
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	46	23	30	53	1	38
Peter Abbandonato	47	11	28	39	5	8
Joël Teasdale	40	19	10	29	-3	21
Brandon Gignac	41	11	18	29	7	14
Jesse Ylönen*	36	9	20	29	-1	16

GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	26	10-12-3	636	.888	3.19
Cayden Primeau	25	10-9-5	749	.900	3.42
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	Rochester Americans
22-22-7-2	Overall Record 26-21-3-1
13-5-5-2	Home Record 13-10-2-0
9-17-2-0	Road Record 13-11-1-1
5-4-1-0	Last 10 Games 5-4-1-0
15-6-3-1	Record When Scoring First 16-7-1-1
3.68 (1st)	Goals-For Per Game 3.29 (9th)
3.68 (28th)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.35 (24th)
24.0% (T-2nd)	Power-Play 20.0% (T-12th)
73.8% (31st)	Penalty Kill 79.0% (T-23rd)
7-5 W vs. ROC	Last Game 7-5 L @ LAV
Mar. 3 vs. RFD	Next Game Mar. 4 vs. BEL



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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, is currently tied for the team's scoring lead with 39 points in 41 games after scoring his first pro hat trick on Wednesday. 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 80 points on 25 goals and 55 assists over his last 89 games and hasn't gone more than seven games without a point since Nov. 27, 2021. The Penn State product is currently riding a four-game point streak, showing eight points (4+4) over that span.

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 20th in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen with 28 points while his 23 assists are currently tied for 16th-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	+/-
Brandon Biro	6	4	4	8	2	-1
Lukas Rousek	6	1	6	7	0	1
Jiri Kulich	6	3	3	6	0	3
Michael Mersch	4	4	1	5	0	3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	2	1-0-0	3	.929	2.48
Malcolm Subban	4	2-2-0	16	.870	4.07
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	0-1-0	6	.760	7.62

LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Anthony Richard	6	3	5	8	0	-2
Peter Abbandonato	6	2	5	7	2	-2
Brandon Gignac	4	2	4	6	0	5
Lucas Condotta	6	4	1	5	6	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Kevin Poulin	4	1-3-0	12	.876	3.37
Cayden Primeau	3	2-0-0	10	.880	4.15

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
Mar. 1	L	7-5	34-35	1-4	1-1

SERIES NOTABLES

So far this season, the Amerks have used 36 different players. All but four players have recorded a point while 24 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 10-9-1 record in 21 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 51 games this season, the Amerks and Rocket have met six times with both club showing a 3-3-0-0 record. The Amerks boast an 8-3-0-0 mark in the Flower City over the last five years compared to a 6-4-1-0 mark in Place Bell. Of the Amerks' final 25 contests of the 2022-23 slate, the team will face off with Laval twice more.

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 28 games, **Linus Weissbach** is five points back from the team-lead with 34 points (16+18) through 49 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 coming off his second four-game point streak of the season and has goals in three of his last four games entering the weekend.

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 23 points (11+12) in his last 36 games and has recorded at least one shot in all but five games during that span dating back to Nov. 23.

With four points (2+2) over his last six games, **Sean Malone** reached the 20-point in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his career. Through 32 contests in his fifth season with the Amerks, Malone has 11 goals and 12 assists.

Amerks captain **Michael Mersch** shows 24 points (11+13) over his last 26 games dating back to Dec. 17. More impressively, with 33 points in 40 games, he's well on his way of reaching the 40-point mark for the sixth time in his nine-year pro career. The Calder Cup winner is also a five-time 20-goal scorer, reaching the mark four times in his first five seasons and again last season when he scored a career-high 26 goals.

Through 45 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 six games, the Quebec native has collected two goals and five assists.

Rookie **Isak Rosen** has posted 10 points (5+5) in 16 games since Jan. 21. In last 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 22-22-7-2 overall record and have points in 11 straight home games, going 8-0-2-1 over that span dating back to Dec. 28.

Laval forward Anthony Richard has a team-best 23 goals and 53 points in 46 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 11 points (1+10) over his last eight outings, including four multi-point efforts over that span.

Originally a fourth-round selection (100th overall) of the Nashville Predators in 2015, Richard enters the weekend tied for ninth in the AHL in both goals and ninth in points. He's hasn't gone more than two games all season without recording at least one point

Kevin Poulin and Cayden Primeau have split the goaltending duties for most of the season, combining for a 20-21-8 record in 51 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 40 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (9), assists (14) and points (23).

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 six goals and 10 points over his previous 14 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 36 points (13+23) over 66 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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