

Saturday | **March 4, 2023** | 7:05 PM ET | CAA Arena | AHL Game 862 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (26-21-4-1) close out their season-long five-game road swing tonight with a North Division showdown against the Belleville Senators (23-27-4-1) at CAA Arena. Game time between the North Division rivals 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 Amerks, who are playing their sixth game in nine days tonight, come into tonight's matchup with a 3-1-1-0 record through their first five games of the stretch and have earned points in five of their last six overall, going 3-1-2-0 over that span.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks built a 3-0 lead four minutes into the second period only to see the Laval Rocket responded with four straight unanswered goals, including the game-winner with 2:53 gone in overtime, to escape with a 4-3 win Friday at Place Bell.

Jeremy Davies (1+1) notched a pair of points for his third consecutive two-point outing over his last five games while **Jiri Kulich** and **Mason Jobst** completed the scoring with their 16th and 10th goals of the season.

Goaltender **Michael Houser** (6-5-1) made a season-high 42 saves, his most since stopping 44 on March 28, 2014.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT AGAINST SENATORS

Despite boasting a 3-3-1-1 record in the eight-game series last season against Belleville, Rochester shows a 15-10-5-2 mark over the last five years between the two teams.

Rochester is 15-15-2 all-time against Belleville despite being outscored 117-109 through the first 32 meetings with the Senators. Five of the last 12 matchups have been decided beyond regulation, including both games in the play-in round of the 2022 Calder Cup Playoffs.

Both the Amerks and Senators have scored six goals each in the third period during the season-series while producing at least once in the second period in five of the last six games. Additionally, each of the teams have produced six goals in each of their last wins.

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	42	13	26	39	1	10
Lukas Rousek	52	11	28	39	-1	20
Linus Weissbach	50	16	19	35	-9	45
Jiri Kulich	44	16	18	34	-1	10
Michael Mersch	41	12	21	33	0	16

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	15	6-5-2	396	.904	3.02
Eric Comrie	3	1-2-0	79	.898	3.03
Malcolm Subban	25	13-11-1	702	.902	3.05
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07

*=Currently on recall with Buffalo (NHL)

^ = Currently reassigned to Cincinnati (ECHL)

2022-23 SENATORS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Egor Sokolov	55	17	30	47	-15	44
Jake Lucchini	44	14	26	40	-22	6
Angus Crookshank	54	20	14	34	-22	21
Cole Cassels	47	7	23	30	-4	19
Scott Sabourin	46	16	13	29	3	173

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dylan Ferguson	7	3-3-0	169	.904	2.92
Mads Sogaard*	21	6-9-2	513	.898	3.30
Kevin Mandolese	15	6-7-2	391	.889	3.32
Antoine Bibeau	20	9-8-1	483	.894	3.43

*=Currently on recall with Ottawa (NHL)

HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Belleville Senators **Rochester Americans**

23-27-4-1..... **Overall Record**..... 26-21-4-1

14-13-1-1..... **Home Record** 13-10-2-0

9-14-3-0 **Road Record** 13-11-2-1

5-4-1-0..... **Last 10 Games** 5-3-2-0

12-7-0-1..... **Record When Scoring First** 16-7-2-1

3.09 (18th) **Goals-For Per Game** 3.26 (9th)

3.67 (30th) **Goals-Against Per Game** 3.34 (24th)

19.7% (14th)..... **Power-Play** 19.9% (T-12th)

76.7% (29th) **Penalty Kill** 79.0% (T-23rd)

4-1 W vs. RFD..... **Last Game** 4-3 OTL @ LAV

Mar. 8 @ LAV **Next Game**..... Mar. 10 vs. HFD



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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 42 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 90 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 48 games this season, Prow is tied for 19th in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen with 29 points while his 24 assists are currently tied for 13th-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 17 points (3+14) in his last 23 outings dating back to Dec. 28 and comes into tonight with one goal and nine assists over his last 13 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-SENATORS 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Ethan Prow	6	0	6	6	6	-3
Michel Mersch	4	3	2	5	0	0
Sean Malone	3	1	4	5	4	3
Lukas Rousek	6	1	4	5	10	-3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Beck Warm	1	0-0-1	2	.941	1.85
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	1	1-0-0	3	.870	2.84
Malcolm Subban	2	1-1-0	7	.857	3.62
Michael Houser	1	1-0-0	4	.852	3.94
Eric Comrie	1	0-1-0	4	.857	4.08

BELLEVILLE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Egor Sokolov	6	3	7	10	2	4
Viktor Lodin	4	1	5	6	10	4
Ridly Greig	3	3	2	5	6	3
Scott Sabourin	5	1	3	4	8	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Antoine Bibeau	1	1-0-0	2	.926	1.85
Mad Sogaard	4	2-1-1	13	.895	3.27
Kevin Mandolese	1	0-0-1	4	.867	3.79

2022-23 GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 19	OTW	4-3	30-23	2-6	2-3
Nov. 12	SOL	3-2	27-35	0-2	0-0
Dec. 30	W	5-3	27-31	2-3	3-4
Jan. 4	L	5-1	30-29	1-5	4-5
Feb. 2	L	5-3	38-19	0-5	6-6
Feb. 2	OTW	5-4	30-27	3-9	4-5

SERIES NOTABLES

Amerks goaltender **Malcolm Subban** played his junior career with the Belleville Bulls of the OHL, who play at the CAA Arena. Subban totaled a 64-42-6 record and eight shutouts in 118 career games. During his final season with the Bulls, he helped Belleville finish first in the East during the regular season by posting a career-best 29 wins in 46 appearances.

So far this season, both Rochester and Belleville have used at least five different goaltenders. It marks the third straight season that the Amerks have used at least five different netminders. The Amerks have used a different netminder in five of the six games versus the Senators. Mads Sogaard and **Malcolm Subban** are the only two goaltenders to appear in multiple games so far between the two teams in the season-series.

Tonight is the Amerks final regular season game at CAA Arena this season.



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EARNING THEIR STARS AND STRIPES

With seven points (3+4) over his last six games, **Linus Weissbach** is four points back from the team-lead with 35 points (16+19) through 50 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 five games entering the weekend.

Brett Murray, one of six Amerks with at least 31 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 37 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 seven games, **Sean Malone** reached the 20-point in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his career. Through 33 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 27 games dating back to Dec. 17. More impressively, with 33 points in 41 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 46 games, defenseman **Jeremy Davies** established a career-high with nine goals, including three game-winning goals, two of which have come in overtime. Over his last eight games, the Quebec native has collected three goals and seven assists.

Rookie **Isak Rosen** has posted 10 points (5+5) in 17 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 the 2021-22 campaign.

SCOUTING THE SENATORS

The Senators come into the matchup sitting in sixth place in the AHL's North Division standings with a 23-27-4-1 overall record and have a 14-13-1-1 mark on home ice.

Belleville forward Egor Sokolov has a team-best 30 assists and 47 points in 55 games. Earlier this season, he posted his second career hat-trick and second four-point game as he scored three times to go with an assist. Ten of his 47 points this season have come in the six games versus the Amerks. A 2023 AHL All-Star selection, Sokolov has seven points (5+2) over his last eight outings, including a two-goal game over that span.

A second-round selection (61st overall) of the Ottawa Senators in 2020, Sokolov enters the weekend tied for 20th in the AHL in both assists and points. He's hasn't gone more than four games all season without recording at least one point

In 154 career games with Belleville, Sokolov has 51 goals and 71 assists.

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 41 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (10), assists (14) and points (24).

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 seven goals and 10 points over his previous 15 games, including his first career hat trick in the 7-5 loss to the first-place Toronto Marlies back on Jan. 14. He comes into tonight riding a three-game point streak, which includes goals in three straight games for the first time in his professional career.

Jobst has totaled 37 points (14+23) over 67 career games with the Amerks dating back to last season.

WORKING OVERTIME

The 4-3 overtime loss last night against Laval was Rochester's 12th game this season -- and just fourth in 2023 -- that went beyond regulation for the Amerks.

The Amerks are 6-4 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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