

# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **Apr. 14, 2023** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 1128 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester, CW Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The playoff-bound Rochester Americans (35-25-6-3) return home for the final weekend of the 2022-23 regular season tonight when they host the Belleville Senators (29-30-6-4) 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 Amerks have earned 20 out of a possible 26 points over their last 13 games and are currently riding a season-long 10-game point streak (7-0-2-1), which dates back to March 21. It marks Rochester's longest since the club posted a 12-game point streak from Nov. 1 to Dec. 6 during the 2019-20 campaign, going 10-0-1-1 over that span.

## LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks scored five straight unanswered goals, including four in the third period, as they cruised to a 5-1 victory over the Utica Comets this past Saturday at Adirondack Bank Center.

**Isak Rosen** scored twice while defensemen **Ethan Prow** and **Matt Bartkowski** recorded two points each with a goal and an assist. **Brett Murray** also scored while **Peter Tischke**, **Mason Jobst**, **Michael Mersch**, and **Chris Jandric**, who made his professional debut, all produced an assist.

Goaltender **Michael Houser** improved his record to 9-7-2 as he turned aside 20 shots in his third straight appearance opposite the Comets, during which he has a perfect 3-0-0 mark, including a shutout.

## AMERKS CLINCH FOURTH STRAIGHT PLAYOFF BERTH

With three games remaining in the 2022-23 regular season, Rochester sits in third place in the AHL's North Division standings, three points ahead of the Utica Comets, and five ahead of the Laval Rocket, who currently lead the Cleveland Monsters by three points for the fifth and final playoff spot.

The Amerks officially punched their ticket to the postseason by way of a 3-2 overtime win over Syracuse last Friday night coupled with Cleveland's come-from-behind regulation win against Laval. It marks the team's fourth straight playoff appearance dating back to the 2018 postseason. Including last year's memorable postseason run which saw Rochester advance to the North Division Finals, the Amerks have qualified for the Calder Cup Playoffs 47 times in the past 66 years.

## SUBBAN SHOULDERING THE WORKLOAD

Subban, whose started three of the last four games for Rochester, boasts a 19-13-5 record with a pair of shutouts this season. He won seven straight between Dec. 10 to Jan. 14, marking the longest win streak of his pro career.

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

Subban, who is 5-0-4 over his last nine starts, 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.

It's the first time Subban has had multiple shutouts in a season since earning three during the 2014-15 campaign with Providence. His career-high 19 wins are tied for 12th-most among all netminders coming into the weekend.

## 2022-23 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Lukas Rousek*	68	15	40	55	-2	24
Brandon Biro	49	16	35	51	4	12
Brett Murray	68	22	25	47	2	37
Jiri Kulich	60	23	22	45	-5	16
Linus Wiessbach	66	19	23	42	-12	49

## GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	20	9-7-2	511	.908	2.74
Malcolm Subban	37	19-13-5	1,030	.905	2.91
Eric Comrie	3	1-2-0	79	.898	3.03
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07

\*=Currently with Buffalo (NHL)

^=Currently reassigned to Cincinnati (ECHL)

## 2022-23 SENATORS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Egor Sokolov	67	19	36	55	-19	58
Jake Lucchini	58	18	33	51	-19	6
Cole Cassels	61	11	35	46	1	35
Angus Crookshank	68	25	19	44	-18	29
Maxence Guenette	69	4	34	38	-17	23

## GOALTENDER

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dylan Ferguson	12	7-3-0	262	.910	2.68
Mads Sogaard	21	6-9-2	513	.898	3.30
Kevin Mandolese	17	6-8-3	452	.890	3.33
Antoine Bibeau	23	9-10-2	581	.894	3.51

\*=Currently on recall with Ottawa (NHL)

## HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

**Belleville Senators** vs **Rochester Americans**

29-30-6-4	<b>Overall Record</b>	35-25-6-3
18-14-1-3	<b>Home Record</b>	18-11-4-1
11-16-5-1	<b>Road Record</b>	17-14-2-2
4-3-0-3	<b>Last 10 Games</b>	7-0-2-1
16-8-2-2	<b>Record When Scoring First</b>	20-9-2-2
2.99 (21st)	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b>	3.26 (8th)
3.13 (T-13th)	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b>	3.24 (21st)
20.0% (13th)	<b>Power-Play</b>	20.9% (T-10th)
77.5% (26th)	<b>Penalty Kill</b>	81.8% (14th)
3-1 W vs CLE	<b>Last Game</b>	5-1 W @ UTC
Apr. 15 @ TOR	<b>Next Game</b>	Apr. 15 vs. CLE



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## ROUSEK OFF AND RUNNING

After an injury limited him to just 19 regular-season games during his rookie campaign, forward **Lukas Rousek** has taken his first full season by storm.

A 2023 AHL All-Star selection, Rousek currently leads the Amerks in assists (40) and points (55) in 68 games while his 15 goals are sixth-most.

Rousek, a sixth-round selection of the Buffalo Sabres in 2019, made his NHL debut on March 27 against Montreal, scoring a goal and adding an assist while logging 9:03 of time in the 4-3 shootout loss.

He scored his first NHL goal on his first shot on his first shift, the first Sabres player to do so since **Ethan Prow**.

He's the 27th player in Sabres franchise history to score a goal in their NHL debut with Buffalo and the 186th overall to record the first goal of their career as a member of the Sabres.

Rousek also added an assist later in the game, and by doing so, became the first Sabres skater to record a goal an assist in their NHL debut with Buffalo since former Amerk Maxim Afinogenov on Nov. 10, 1999 vs. Boston.

Rousek, who rejoined Buffalo on Thursday for his third recall of the season, shows 44 points (11+33) over his previous 53 games, including 16 points (4+12) in his last 15 appearances.

## AMERKS-SENATORS 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

### ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Michel Mersch	5	4	2	6	2	-1
Ethan Prow	7	0	6	6	6	-2
Linus Weissbach	7	2	3	5	2	-5
Sean Malone	4	1	4	5	4	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	3	1-2-0	10	.863	3.46
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	7	3	8	11	2	3
Viktor Lodin	4	1	5	6	10	4
Ridly Greig	3	3	2	5	6	3
Angus Crookshank	7	3	1	4	2	0

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Antoine Bibeau	1	1-0-0	2	.926	1.85
Dylan Ferguson	1	1-0-0	2	.909	2.01
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. 4	OTW	5-4	30-27	3-9	4-5
Mar. 4	L	3-2	22-24	1-3	3-4

## SERIES NOTABLES

With **Chris Jandric** making his Amerks debut against Utica on April 8, he became the 39th overall player to appear in one game with the Amerks in 2022-23 and the 16th defenseman. He was also the 20th different player to don the red, white and blue colors for the first time in their career.

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 seven 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.

## SHARING THE WEALTH

After producing three 20-goal scorers last season, the Amerks could potentially have five or more by the season's end.

**Jiri Kulich** (23) and **Brett Murray** (22) have already cracked the mark, both doing so back on March 26 versus Cleveland, while **Linus Weissbach** is closing on his first 20-goal campaign with a career-high 19 goals.

With Kulich and Murray becoming the first players this season to reach the 20-goal mark, the Amerks have now had at least one player from all but two seasons (excluding the COVID-19 shortened 2019-20 and 2020-21 seasons) in the 67-year history of the franchise score 20 or more goals dating back to Bronco Horvath's team-leading 37 tallies during the Amerks' inaugural 1956-57 campaign.

The last time Rochester had at least five different 20-goal scorers in the same season was during the 2018-19 campaign when the team had six.

## 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 133 of the 139 games dating back to the start of the 2021-22 campaign.

In 64 games this season, Prow, who recorded his first three-point outing of the season on March 10 against Hartford, is tied for 17th in scoring amongst all AHL defensemen with 40 points while his 34 assists are currently 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.

The seventh-year pro has posted 28 points (4+24) in his last 39 outings dating back to Dec. 28 and comes into tonight with two goals and 19 assists over his last 29 games.



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## EARNING THEIR STARS AND STRIPES

With 14 points (6+8) over his last 22 games, **Linus Weissbach** is 13 points back from the team-lead with 42 points (19+23) through 66 games. By scoring his 19th goal and 41st point of the season on April 5 against Syracuse, he established career-highs in both categories, surpassing the marks he set during his rookie campaign in 2021-22.

**Brett Murray**, who's inching closer to his first 50-point campaign, has captured career-highs in all offensive categories from last season, including goals (22), assists (26) and points (48). The fourth-year pro comes into tonight with 22 points (8+14) in his last 25 games and has recorded at least one shot in all but five games during that span dating back to Nov. 23.

With 10 points (5+5) over his last 25 games, **Sean Malone** reached the 20-point mark in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his career. Through 50 contests in his fifth season with the Amerks, Malone has 14 goals and 15 assists.

Amerks captain **Michael Mersch** shows 32 points (16+16) over his last 44 games dating back to Dec. 17. More impressively, with 42 points in 58 games, he reached the 40-point mark for the sixth time in his nine-year pro career. The former 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 63 games, defenseman **Jeremy Davies** established a career-high with 11 goals, reaching the mark for the first time in his pro career while also becoming the first Amerks defenseman this season to do so. Over his last 25 games, Davies has collected five goals and seven assists for 12 points.

Rookie **Isak Rosen** has posted 20 points (11+9) in 34 games since Jan. 21. In the 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, four of his 14 goals on the season have come while on the power-play. Rosen is one of only two rookies this season to reach the 30-point mark.

**Mitch Eliot** tied his previous career-high in goals (3) at Providence on Feb. 26, reaching the mark in 24 fewer games than the 2021-22 campaign.

## SCOUTING THE SENATORS

The Senators are currently in last place in the seven-team North Division and have been officially eliminated from playoff contention.

Belleville makes its final trip to Rochester fueled by forward Egor Sokolov's team-leading 36 assists and 55 points in 67 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. Eleven of his 55 points this season have come in seven games versus the Amerks.

A 2023 AHL All-Star selection, Sokolov, who returned to Belleville this morning following Ottawa's season-ending overtime loss to Buffalo last night, scored his first NHL goal on April 9 against the Tampa Bay Lightning.

A second-round selection (61st overall) of the Ottawa in 2020, Sokolov has posted 53 goals and 77 assists for 130 points in 166 career games with Belleville. Additionally, the 23-year old forward has skated in 12 contests with Ottawa, recording one point.

## A JOBST WELL DONE

**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 58 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already established career-highs in all offensive categories, including goals (14), assists (22) and points (36).

With an assist in the 2-1 loss in Hershey on March 18, Jobst reached the 30-point plateau for the first time in his pro career, becoming the ninth different Amerk this season to eclipse the mark.

Since the turn of the New Year, Jobst has amassed 11 goals and 23 points over his previous 32 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 with seven goals and 16 points over his previous 20 games, a stretch highlighted by a career-best three-game goal-scoring streak.

Jobst has totaled 49 points (18+31) over 84 career games with the Amerks dating back to last season.

## WORKING OVERTIME

Last Friday night's overtime win against Syracuse was the eighth time in the last 11 games -- and the 20th overall -- that went beyond regulation.

The Amerks are 7-6 in overtime this season and show a 4-3 mark in shootouts.

Rochester (.550) is one of 18 teams in the AHL this season with a .500 or better winning percentage in overtime games.

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

## KEEPING IT KULICH

Ever since returning from an impressive showing at the 2023 IIHF World Junior Championship in January, **Jiri Kulich** has not only emerged as one of the team's most consistent point-getters, but as the top prospect in the Buffalo Sabres pipeline.

The third of Buffalo's three first-round picks in last year's NHL Draft, Kulich currently leads the Amerks and is tied for sixth amongst all AHL rookies with 23 goals while his 45 points are tied for ninth-most.

With Kulich becoming the first player this season to score 20 goals, it marks the first time the Amerks had a rookie 20-goal scorer in back-to-back seasons (**Jiri Kulich** in 2022-23, **Jack Quinn** and **JJ Peterka** in 2021-22) since **Drew Stafford** in 2006-07 and **Clarke MacArthur** in 2005-06.

Kulich, the youngest regular player in the AHL, is only the fourth player in league history to score more than 20 goals during his 18-year-old season (turning 19 after Jan. 1) and first since Robert Dome of Syracuse recorded 21 in 1997-98. Kulich also becomes just the second Amerks player in franchise history to reach the mark as an 18-year-old since **Jozef Cierny** scored 27 during his only season in Rochester in 1992-93.

He was named the AHL's Player of the Week for period ending Feb. 26 after totaling six points while leading Rochester to its first three-win weekend.



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