

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Fri. | **Apr. 21, 2023** | 7:00 PM ET | Upstate Medical Univ. Arena | North Division Semifinals, Game 1 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans and Syracuse Crunch extend their rivalry into the postseason as the North Division rivals open the 2023 Calder Cup Playoffs tonight in Game 1 of the best-of-five North Division Semifinals at Upstate Medical University Arena. 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.

CLOSING THE SEASON

The Amerks closed out the regular season with a 4-1 win over the Cleveland Monsters, ultimately capping the year with a third-place finish in the AHL's North Division and eighth overall in the Eastern Conference with a 36-27-6-3 record and 81 points.

With the win over Cleveland in Sunday's regular-season finale, Rochester closed out its 67th AHL season by earning points in 19 of its final 26 games, including points in a season-long 10 straight games entering into April.

AMERKS PUNCH PLAYOFF TICKET

By punching their ticket into the 2023 Calder Cup Playoffs, it marks the 47th time in the 67-year history of the franchise that Rochester has advanced to the postseason. It's also the team's fourth straight playoff appearance dating back to the 2017-18 season.

Rochester's official clinching moment came by way of a 3-2 overtime win over Syracuse on April 7 coupled with Cleveland's come-from-behind regulation win against Laval Rocket.

AMERKS DRAW SYRACUSE TO BEGIN POSTSEASON

After more than 310 all-time meetings during regular season play, the second round series against the Crunch will mark only the fifth meeting in the postseason between the two teams.

It's the first playoff series between the intrastate rivals in five years since the Crunch swept Rochester 3-0 in the opening round in 2018. Prior to that, the Amerks claimed the previous three playoff series dating back to 1996.

Rochester is 157-138-19 all-time against Syracuse, which includes a 6-3-2-1 mark this season versus the Crunch. Four of the last five matchups between have been decided beyond regulation, including each of the last three.

The Crunch are heading to the Calder Cup Playoffs for the 17th time since joining the American Hockey League prior to the 1994-95 season.

PLAYOFFS OVER THE YEARS

Last spring's memorable playoff run was the first time in 18 years the Amerks advanced to the third round of the AHL's Calder Cup Playoffs after closing out the top-seeded Utica Comets with a 4-2 win in Game 5. In doing so, the Amerks were the only fifth-seed among the eight remaining teams to advance while the Comets, who owned the best record in the Eastern Conference during the regular season, became the only top seed to be eliminated. By defeating the Comets, the Amerks reached the Division Finals for the 11th time in the 67-year history of the franchise.

Rochester has been a part of 87 playoff series over the years, in which it has compiled a 217-210 record in 427 games during that time.

2022-23 AMERKS PLAYOFF SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
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GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
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2022-23 SYRACUSE PLAYOFF SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
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GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
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SERIES SCHEDULE - NORTH DIVISION "SERIES C" BEST-OF-FIVE

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
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Game 1 - Apr 21					
Game 2 - Apr 22					
Game 3 - Apr 28					
Game 4 - Apr 30*					
Game 5 - May 6*					
*If necessary					

AMERKS CALDER CUP CHAMPIONSHIPS

1995-96 vs. Portland

1986-87 vs. Sherbrooke

1982-83 vs. Maine

1967-68 vs. Quebec

1965-66 vs. Cleveland

1964-65 vs. Hershey



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HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

With tonight's playoff opener marking the 13th meeting overall in 2022-23, the Amerks and Crunch have been fairly acquainted all season long. The Amerks finished with a 6-5-1-0 record against Syracuse, claiming points in six of the seven matchups.

Both teams finished with six regulation wins in the head-to-head series, with each scoring nine goals in the second period and 36 overall against one another. Rochester tallied 11 goals in the opening frame compared to Syracuse's seven, however, the Crunch outscored the Amerks 17-15 in the final 20 minutes of regulation.

Rochester went 10-for-54 (18.5%) on the power-play this season against the Crunch while also showing an 89.2% success-rate on the penalty kill (33-for-37).

The Amerks outshot the Crunch 124-115 in the first period this season.

All four contests that went beyond regulation ended in a 3-2 score, which included the Crunch's shootout win on Mar. 21. Syracuse outshot Rochester 12-3 beyond regulation.

Both Rochester (19-3-1-1, first), (24-5-2-1, second) and Syracuse (19-4-1-0, first) (25-3-1-1, second) finished the season with winning records when leading after the first and second periods, respectively. On the other hand, both clubs had losing records when trailing after 40 minutes of play (ROC, 6-19-1-0) (SYR, 4-20-6-1).

Forward **Brandon Biro** (2+8) posted 10 points in the 10 games against the Crunch this season, which topped all Amerks. Biro, who finished with career-best 35 assists, had eight against the Crunch. **Lukas Rousek** finished the season-series with eight assists while skating in each of the 12 games. **Jiri Kulich** and **Brett Murray** each had five goals in 11 and 12 games, respectively.

Goaltender **Malcolm Subban** manned the pipes for seven games opposite Syracuse this season, posting a 3-2-2 record with a 2.71 goals-against average and a .921 save percentage.

Both teams had points in eight of their last 10 to close out the season.

SHARING THE WEALTH

The Amerks finished the regular season with three different 20-goal scorers for the second straight year.

Jiri Kulich (24) and **Brett Murray** (23) each cracked the mark, both doing so back on March 26 versus Cleveland, while **Linus Weissbach** also reached his first 20-goal campaign in last Friday's 7-4 loss to Belleville.

With Kulich, Murray and Weissbach all successfully reaching the 20-goal mark this season, 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.

2022-23 AMERKS REGULAR SEASON LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Lukas Rousek	70	16	40	56	-1	24
Brandon Biro	49	16	35	51	4	12
Brett Murray	71	23	26	49	-1	46
Linus Weissbach	69	20	27	47	-10	63
Jiri Kulich	62	24	22	46	-7	18

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	21	9-8-2	541	.906	2.80
Malcolm Subban	39	20-14-5	1,072	.903	2.94
Eric Comrie	3	1-2-0	79	.898	3.03
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	9	6-3-0	238	.898	3.07

2022-23 CRUNCH REGULAR SEASON LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Alex Barré-Boulet	69	24	60	84	24	58
Simon Ryfors	72	27	32	59	6	32
Gage Goncalves	71	13	41	54	6	34
Darren Raddysh	50	13	38	51	19	40
Trevor Carrick	60	15	31	46	15	45

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Jack LaFontaine	5	1-2-0	85	.924	2.36
Hugo Alnefelt	33	17-12-2	792	.904	2.77
Max Lagace	41	17-12-8	1,003	.888	3.34

2022-23 HEAD-TO-HEAD REGULAR SEASON BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch Rochester Americans

35-26-7-4 **Record** 36-27-6-3

17-11-7-1 **Home Record** 18-13-4-1

18-15-0-3 **Road Record** 18-14-2-2

5-2-2-1 **Last 10 Games** 6-2-2-0

23-9-2-2 **Record When Scoring First** 21-10-2-2

3.50 (5th) **Goals-For Per Game** 3.28 (8th)

3.32 (23rdth) **Goals-Against Per Game** 3.24 (22nd)

18.8% (16th) **Power-Play** 20.6% (13th)

79.9% (T-22th) **Penalty Kill** 81.9% (T-11th)

5-4 OTL vs. UTC **Last Game** 4-1 W @ CLE



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EARNING THEIR STARS AND STRIPES

With 19 points (7+12) over his last 26 games, **Linus Weissbach** finished nine points back of the team-lead with 47 points (20+27) in 69 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 was just one point away from his first 50-point campaign, captured career-highs in all offensive categories from last season, including goals (23), assists (26) and points (49). The fourth-year pro ended the season with 23 points (9+14) in his last 28 games and recorded at least one shot in all but five games during that span dating back to Nov. 23.

With 12 points (5+7) over the last 27 games, **Sean Malone** reached the 30-point mark in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his career. In 53 contests in his fifth season with the Amerks, Malone finished with 14 goals and 17 assists.

Amerks captain **Michael Mersch** showed 35 points (16+19) over the last 47 games dating back to Dec. 17. More impressively, with 45 points in 61 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.

In 66 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 the last 28 games, Davies collected five goals and seven assists for 12 points.

Rookie **Isak Rosen** posted 22 points (11+11) in 37 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 came while on the power-play. Rosen was 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 CRUNCH

Despite both teams finishing with the same number of points and Rochester having one more win, Syracuse edged out the Amerks on the final day with having one more regulation win.

The Crunch finished second in the North Division for the second straight year and have now finished among the top two teams five times dating back to the 2016-17 season.

Forward Alex Barré-Boulet is fresh off his best AHL season after setting career-highs in goals (24), assists (60) and points (84) in 69 games during the regular season. He finished the year second in the league in assists and points, falling one point short of the AHL's scoring lead, while reaching the 20-goal mark for the second time in three years.

He became the Crunch's all-time leader in goals, assists and points over the course of the season on his way to earning AHL First-Team All-Star honors for the 2022-23 season. He was also the AHL's top scoring rookie in 2018-19.

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2022-23 REGULAR SEASON HEAD-TO-HEAD

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brandon Biro	10	2	8	10	0	-4
Lukas Rousek	12	1	8	9	2	-4
Linus Weissbach	10	4	4	8	8	0
Linus Weissbach	12	3	5	8	2	4

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	4	3-1-0	11	.904	2.76
Michael Houser	1	0-0-1	3	.897	2.85
Malcolm Subban	7	3-2-2	19	.921	2.71

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/
Simon Ryfors	12	2	8	10	4	5
Darren Raddysh	8	2	7	9	4	6
Alex Barre-Boulet	12	1	8	9	2	2
Felix Robert	11	3	5	8	8	3

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Hugo Alnefelt	2	1-1-0	2	.951	1.22
Jack LaFontaine	1	0-1-0	1	.923	1.55
Max Lagace	11	5-3-1	31	.896	3.15

2022-23 REGULAR SEASON HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 21	W	4-3	32-20	1-4	3-4
Oct. 22	L	6-2	34-34	1-4	2-3
Nov. 2	W	7-2	21-26	1-5	3-3
Nov. 9	W	3-1	28-35	0-4	3-3
Dec. 7	L	5-1	24-28	0-5	1-1
Jan. 7	W	4-3	29-44	1-6	4-5
Feb. 11	W	4-1	30-33	1-4	2-2
Feb. 19	OTL	3-2	31-29	0-3	3-4
Mar. 11	L	4-2	35-39	2-7	6-6
Mar. 21	SOL	3-2	29-26	1-3	2-2
Apr. 5	OTL	3-2	20-30	1-5	2-2
Apr. 7	OTW	3-2	41-44	1-4	3-3



ROUND TWO | GAME ONE

SYRACUSE - 7:00PM | AHLTV | THE FAN ROCHESTER



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ROUSEK MADE UP FOR LOST TIME

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

A 2023 AHL All-Star selection, Rousek led the Amerks in assists (40) and points (56) in 70 games while his 16 goals were tied for fifth-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 Amerks last Saturday following his third recall of the season to Buffalo, finished with 45 points (12+33) over his final 55 games, including 17 points (5+12) in his last 17 appearances.

KEEPING IT KULICH

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

The third of Buffalo's three first-round picks in last year's NHL Draft, Kulich led the Amerks and finished tied for sixth amongst all AHL rookies with 24 goals while his 46 points are tied for 11th-most.

With Kulich becoming the first player this season to score 20 goals, it marked 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 this season, was 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 became 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.

WORKING OVERTIME

Rochester's April 7 overtime win at Syracuse was the eighth time over a stretch of 11 games -- and the 20th overall -- that went beyond regulation.

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

Rochester (.550) finished as one of 16 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.

PLAYOFFS BY THE NUMBERS

ALL-TIME PLAYOFF NOTES

Playoff Appearances: 47

87 Series:	46 wins	41 losses
427 Games Played:	217 wins	210 losses
212 Home Games:	128 wins	84 losses
215 Away Games:	91 wins	124 losses
75 Overtime Games:	33 wins	42 losses
36 Home Overtime Games:	20 wins	16 losses
39 Away Overtime Games:	13 wins	26 losses

GOAL-SCORING

1,416 Goals-For	1,359 Goals-Against
Home: 778 Goals-For	649 Goals-Against
Away: 638 Goals-For	710 Goals-Against

AMERKS ALL-TIME PLAYOFF SCORING LEADERS

POINTS

1	JODY GAGE	79
2	DOMENIC PITTIS	70
3	DAN FRAWLEY	46

GOALS

1	JODY GAGE	36
2	JIM PAPPIN	21
3	RAY SHEPPARD	20

ASSISTS

1	DOMENIC PITTIS	54
2	JODY GAGE	43
3	JIM WIEMER	34

GAMES PLAYED

1	JODY GAGE	81
2	DAN FRAWLEY	80
3	RANDY CUNNEYWORTH	67

GOALIE WINS

1	BOBBY PERREAULT	25
2	DARCY WAKALUK	21
	JACQUES CLOUTIER	21
4	STEVE SHIELDS	15



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