

# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Saturday | **October 14, 2023** | 4:00 PM ET | Coca-Cola Coliseum | AHL Game 24 | | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (0-0-1-0) embark on a three-game swing north of the border today against the Toronto Marlies at Coca-Cola Coliseum. The afternoon matinee is slated for a 4:00 p.m. start and will be carried on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks and Marlies, who enter their 19th season in the AHL and first under new head coach John Gruden, will meet six times during the 2023-24 regular season, with today being the first of three in Toronto.

Following today's matchup, the two teams will have to wait nearly four months to get reacquainted until the Amerks travel to Scotiabank Center on Feb. 19 for a contest at the home of the Toronto Maple Leafs.

## HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS AGAINST MARLIES

Today is the first meeting between the two clubs since Rochester ended Toronto's season in Game 3 of the North Division Finals this past Spring.

In the last 25 regular season games, Rochester has scored at least one goal in the first period 18 times, which includes a four-goal outing in the series-opener on Oct. 23, 2021. Toronto, on the other hand, has scored 23 times in the final 20 minutes of regulation, which includes a five-goal frame on Jan. 14, 2023.

Of the 32 different players to appear in at least one game for Rochester against Toronto last season, 21 recorded at least one point, and 14 scored one or more goals.

## LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks overcame an early 2-0 deficit by scoring three straight goals but were unable to earn the win Friday night as they fell, 4-3, in overtime to the Bridgeport Islanders at The Blue Cross Arena to open their 68th American Hockey League season. Rochester is 3-1-1-0 over its last five home openers dating back to the 2019-20 season.

Forward **Linus Weissbach** (1+1) paced the Amerks offense with a goal and an assist while **Isak Rosen** and **Brandon Biro** both scored their first markers of the season. **Ethan Prow**, **Jiri Kulich**, and **Brett Murray** all added an assist as did rookies **Ryan Johnson** and **Nikita Novikov**, who both made their AHL debuts. **Viktor Neuchev** also made his North American debut. Goaltender **Devin Cooley** stopped 38 of the 42 shots he faced in his Rochester debut.

## MERSCH TO LEAD AMERKS LEADERSHIP GROUP

Veteran forward **Michael Mersch** returns for fourth season in Rochester and third as the team's captain, overseeing an Amerks leadership group that also includes three alternate captains in forwards **Brandon Biro** and **Brett Murray** and defenseman **Ethan Prow**.

In addition to captaining the Amerks to the Eastern Conference Finals of the 2023 Calder Cup Playoffs, Mersch finished last season by matching a career-high 28 assists to go with 17 goals and 45 points.

The 10th-year pro has appeared in 531 career AHL games between the Amerks, Texas Stars, Ontario Reign and Manchester Monarchs, totaling 363 points (173+190). Additionally, Mersch, a five-time 20-goal scorer in the AHL who won a Calder Cup with Manchester in 2015, has skated in 17 career NHL contests with the Los Angeles Kings.

## 2023-24 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Linus Weissbach	1	1	1	2	2	0
Brandon Biro	1	1	0	1	0	2
Isak Rosen	1	1	0	1	0	0
Ryan Johnson	1	0	1	1	0	0
Jiri Kulich	1	0	1	1	0	0

## GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Devin Cooley	1	0-0-1	38	.905	3.98

## 2023-24 MARLIES OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
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## GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
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## 2023-24 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

### Toronto Marlies

### Rochester Americans

..... <b>Record</b> .....	36-27-6-3
..... <b>Home Record</b> .....	18-13-4-1
..... <b>Road Record</b> .....	18-14-2-2
..... <b>Last 10 Games</b> .....	6-2-2-0
..... <b>Record When Scoring First</b> .....	21-10-2-2
..... <b>Goals-For Per Game</b> .....	3.28 (8th)
..... <b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> .....	3.24 (22nd)
..... <b>Power-Play</b> .....	20.6% (13th)
..... <b>Penalty Kill</b> .....	81.9% (11th)
Oct. 15 vs. UTC .....	<b>Next Game</b> ..... Oct. 18 @ LAV

## 2022-23 SERIES BREAKDOWN @ TORONTO

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 15	L	3-1	26-40	0-3	2-4
Dec. 10	SOW	4-3	38-26	0-2	2-4
Dec. 31	W	3-2	13-36	0-2	3-3
Feb. 18	L	3-1	27-30	0-7	2-2



## ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

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## APPERT YEAR FOUR

**Seth Appert** enters his fourth season as head coach of the Amerks in 2023-24 after being named to the position on August 18, 2020.

Appert is 84-71-16-7 through his first 178 regular season games behind the Amerks bench, which includes a 37-win campaign in 2021-22 that culminated with an extended playoff run as part of team's first playoff appearance in four years.

Appert led the club to its most impressive and deepest playoff run in 23 years as they reached the Eastern Conference Finals. After losing three straight to close out the month of January, the resilient Amerks closed out the regular season going 14-8-4-2, earning points in 20 of their final 28 games.

After dropping their first two games of the Calder Cup Playoffs, the Amerks rattled off seven straight wins to complete the series comeback over the Syracuse Crunch before sweeping the top-seeded Toronto Marlies. The Amerks then came within two wins of advancing to the Calder Cup Finals.

## YOUTH MOVEMENT CONTINUES IN ROCHESTER

Of the 27 players on Rochester's season-opening roster, 13 are Buffalo Sabres draft picks, including three first-round selections.

**Isak Rosen** (14th overall) and **Jiri Kulich** (28th overall) both return for their second seasons in Rochester as members of Buffalo's first-round selections in 2021 and 2022, respectively. Kulich recorded 46 points (24+22) during his rookie campaign to be named to the inaugural AHL Top Prospects Team. He topped all Amerks in goals and finished eighth in the league in scoring amongst all rookies. Rosen ranked ninth on the team in points (37), recording 14 goals and 23 assists in 66 contests.

**Ryan Johnson** (1st round, 2019), **Viktor Neuchev** (3rd round, 2022), **Olivier Nadeau** (4th round, 2021), and **Nikita Novikov** (6th round, 2021) all began their North American professional careers after being selected by Buffalo. **Zach Metsa**, the captain of Quinnipiac's 2023 national championship team, will make his regular season debut after he skated in 13 games during Rochester's run to the Eastern Conference Finals.

**Aleksandr Kisakov** (2nd round, 2021), **Brett Murray** (4th round, 2019), **Filip Cederqvist** (5th round, 2019), **Lukas Rousek** (6th round, 2019), **Linus Weissbach** (7th round, 2017), **Tyson Kozak** (7th round, 2021) round out the Sabres NHL Draft picks.

## DEPTH ON DEFENSE

Excluding **Riley Stillman**, Novikov and Johnson, the other five defensemen patrolling Rochester's blueline all appeared in at least one game at some point in 2022-23.

**Ethan Prow** paced the team's blueliners in scoring for the second straight season with 41 points (6+35) in 70 games. The veteran defenseman reached the 40-point mark for the third time in four years and recorded more than 30 assists for the second straight season.

During the regular season in 2022-23, the current rostered blueliners of **Jeremy Davies**, **Joseph Ceconi**, **Kale Clague** and Prow combined for 21 goals and 57 assists for 78 points in 188 man games with Rochester. Johnson and Metsa both completed their collegiate careers while Novikov played the last two seasons in the KHL with the Moscow Dynamo.

## AMERKS-MARLIES 2022-23 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

### ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Lukas Rousek	8	4	4	8	2	2
Michael Mersch	8	1	6	7	2	-1
Mason Jobst	7	3	3	6	4	0

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	2	1-1-0	4	.937	2.04
Michael Houser	2	1-1-0	6	.864	3.10
Malcolm Subban	3	1-2-0	13	.851	4.35

### TORONTO

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Logan Shaw	8	2	11	13	6	2
Bobby McMann	7	10	0	10	0	4
Alex Steeves	7	2	3	5	6	1

### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Keith Petruzzelli	3	2-0-0	3	.954	1.26
Erik Källgren	5	1-2-1	16	.875	3.90

## SERIES NOTABLES

Rochester returns a total of 18 players from last year's team, the most in recent years, including the team's top nine point-getters.

Amerks goaltender **Dustin Tokarski** rejoins the organization for his second stint. The netminder of 399 career AHL games went 1-1-0 during a brief two-game stint with Rochester as part of the COVID-shortened 2020-21 campaign. He went 12-20-7 in 42 appearances with the Buffalo Sabres from 2021-23.

With his next game in the AHL, the two-time Calder Cup winner and AHL All-Star will become just the 18th goaltender in league history to play in 400 career games, a list that also includes former Amerks Bobby Perreault (512), Michael Leighton (507), Drew MacIntyre (440) and Ed Chadwick (417).

The 34-year-old Tokarski comes into the 2023-24 season ranked 18th all-time in games played and remains the only active goaltender on the list.

Two of the newcomers for Rochester include forwards **Graham Slaggert** and **Justin Richards** both joined the Amerks organization after spending the 2022-23 campaigns with the Toronto Marlies and Cleveland Monsters, respectively. **Devin Cooley** manned the goalcrease with the Milwaukee Admirals during the last two seasons.

Rochester went 5-for-35 (14.3%) on the power-play last season against the Marlies while also showing an 74.2% success-rate on the penalty kill (23-for-31).

In 25 of the last 36 meetings between the two teams dating back to the 2016-17 season, the team that scored first has come away with the victory. Additionally, in 24 of the last 28 meetings, the winning team has scored at least four goals dating back to the 2017-18 season.



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