

# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Sat. | **Dec. 16, 2023** | 6:05 PM ET | Mohegan Sun Arena at Casey Plaza | AHL Game 380 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



# GAME NOTES



## TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (12-7-2-1) conclude their week-long trek through the Atlantic Division tonight when they travel to Mohegan Sun Arena at Casey Plaza for a 6:05 p.m. contest with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins (13-9-3-0). All the action will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks and Penguins split the two-game series in 2022-23 with each club recording a home victory. Rochester enters tonight's matchup having earned at least one point in nine straight meetings against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton since the 2017-18 slate, the longest point streak against a single opponent. The Amerks picked up a 3-2 win on Jan. 25 at home before falling 5-4 in the shootout on Mar. 17 during their lone road game in Pennsylvania.

## HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS AGAINST THE PENGUINS

After being swept in the two-game season-series in 2017-18 against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Rochester has gone a near-perfect 8-0-0-1 in the nine meetings since. The Amerks' eight-game win streak over that span was also the longest active win streak against any opponent.

The Amerks have scored 11 power-play goals in their last nine games against the Penguins dating back to the start of the 2017-18 season, going 11-for-40 (27.5%) with the man-advantage over that span. Conversely, Rochester's penalty kill unit has successfully cleared 26 of the 28 shorthanded opportunities (92.9%) against in that same time frame.

Since the start of the 2017-18 campaign, Rochester has outscored Wilkes-Barre/Scranton 42-20, while also outshooting the Penguins 288-279.

## LAST TIME OUT

**Jiri Kulich** scored the game-tying goal in the closing minutes of regulation to force overtime before delivering the game-winner 2:51 into the extra frame to lift the Amerks to a 3-2 come-from-behind win over the Hartford Wolf Pack Friday at the XL Center.

Along with Kulich turning in a multi-point effort, **Brandon Biro** (1+1) totaled two points in the win. **Damien Giroux**, **Linus Weissbach** and **Isak Rosen** all added an assist.

Goaltender **Devin Cooley** (5-2-2) made 37 saves in his second straight appearance and ninth overall of the season. The fourth year netminder stopped 17 shots over the final 23 minutes of the contest.

## THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

The Amerks own two of the league's top scoring defensemen in **Jeremy Davies** and **Kale Clague**, who have combined for five goals and 26 points in Rochester's first 22 games of the season.

Davies, who scored a career-high 11 goals last season, including three game-winning tallies, is tied 14th amongst all AHL blueliners with 53 shots, which tops all Amerks defensemen. He's recorded at least one shot in all but three games this season. Davies, who closed out the month of October on a five-game point streak, has recorded one point in 11 of his first 21 games this season, never going more than three straight games without a point.

Clague, meanwhile, is tied for 15th among all rearguards with 12 assists in 20 games. Clague opened the campaign with three multi-point performances and enters the weekend with assists in four of his last seven games.

## 2023-24 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Jiri Kulich	21	15	6	21	2	8
Isak Rosen	18	8	12	20	5	4
Brandon Biro	13	7	7	14	2	10
Mason Jobst	18	7	7	14	-7	8

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Devon Levi*	2	1-1-0	70	.921	2.94
Devin Cooley	9	5-2-2	292	.898	3.64
Dustin Tokarski	8	4-3-1	242	.896	3.83

\*=Currently on recall with Buffalo

## 2023-24 PENGUINS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Rem Pitlick	25	7	12	19	-9	8
Ty Smith	24	4	15	19	-10	14
Alex Nylander	18	8	5	13	-1	4
Sam Houde	12	4	8	12	-2	2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Joel Blomqvist	15	7-4-2	342	.907	2.49
Magnus Hellberg	7	4-3-0	177	.912	2.73

## 2023-24 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton	Rochester Americans
13-9-3-0	<b>Record</b> 12-7-2-1
6-4-3-0	<b>Home Record</b> 5-2-2-0
7-5-0-0	<b>Road Record</b> 7-5-0-1
5-4-1-0	<b>Last 10 Games</b> 5-4-0-1
1-3	<b>Overtime Record</b> 5-2
0-0	<b>Shootout Record</b> 2-1
10-2-2-0	<b>Record When Scoring First</b> 6-2-0-1
2.92 (T-20th)	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b> 3.50 (4th)
2.96 (T-15th)	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> 4.09 (32nd)
20.6% (8th)	<b>Power-Play</b> 21.9% (4th)
87.9% (1st)	<b>Penalty Kill</b> 75.0% (31st)
Dec. 15 @ UTC (4-1 W)	<b>Last Game</b> Dec. 15 @ HFD (3-2 OTW)
Dec. 21 @ BEL	<b>Next Game</b> Dec. 20 @ CLE
J.D. Forrest (4th)	<b>Head Coach</b> Seth Appert (4th)



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## DYNAMIC DUO: THE SEQUEL

**Jiri Kulich** and **Isak Rosen** both return for their second seasons in Rochester after putting up one of the most impressive and productive seasons as teenagers in the history of the AHL during the 2022-23 campaign.

Kulich continued his torrid start to the season last night against Hartford, scoring his team-leading 14 and 15th goals in just his 21st game. Kulich, whose 24 goals last season were the second-most ever by an 18-year-old in league history, currently leads all players in the AHL in goals. The forward, who hasn't gone more than three games without a goal this season, joined Luke Adam (2013-14) and Jack Quinn (2021-22) as the only other Amerks skaters to score nine goals through their first 11 games.

With seven points over his last five games, which includes a career-best four point (2+2) effort in Cleveland on Nov. 18, Rosen is one behind Kulich for the team lead in scoring with 20 points as he recently returned from his first recall with the Sabres earlier this past week.

Back on Nov. 25, Kulich and Rosen both made their NHL debuts with the Buffalo Sabres against New Jersey Devils at Prudential Center

The duo has combined for 124 points (61+63) in 165 regular season games. Rochester boasts an impressive 21-3-2-1 record when they each record at least one point in the same game as well as a near-perfect 8-1-0-0 mark when they both score in the same game.

## LEVI'S WEEKEND IN ROCHESTER

Earlier this month, the Buffalo Sabres assigned rookie goaltender **Devin Levi** to the Amerks before promptly recalling him on Dec. 5. Levi, 21, is the only goaltender drafted in 2020 or later to appear in an NHL game this season. He owns 5-4-1 with an .898 save percentage in nine appearances

Levi made his AHL debut in Rochester's 3-2 shootout win on Dec. 1, making 40 saves while also becoming the fourth different goaltender to man the pipes for Rochester this season, joining **Michael Houser**, **Devin Cooley** and **Dustin Tokarski**. Rochester has used four or more netminders in each of the last three years since the 2020-21 campaign.

Levi won the Mike Richter Award, given annually to the top goaltender in men's college hockey, for the second straight year following the 2022-23 season. Levi is the only two-time winner in the award's history, which was introduced in 2014 and named in honor of former Wisconsin goaltender and Stanley Cup champion Mike Richter.

He led the nation again with a .933 save percentage, one year after he set the second-best mark in NCAA history with a .952 save percentage. He tied for third in the nation in both shutouts (6) and saves (1,183). Levi's 16-career shutouts are a Northeastern University school record.

The Quebec native finished his two seasons at Northeastern with a 38-22-6 record. His resume includes a Beanpot title, a Hockey East regular-season championship and an NCAA tournament appearance. Levi was also named Hockey East Player of the Year for the second consecutive season in 2022-23 and was one of 10 finalists for the Hobey Baker Award.

Internationally, he helped Canada win a silver medal at the World Junior Championship in 2021 while earning tournament MVP honors and later added a gold medal at the 2023 World Championship. He was also on the Canadian roster at the Beijing Olympics in 2022.



## SCORING IN BUNCHES

The Amerks come into the weekend with the AHL's fifth-best offense, averaging 3.50 goals per game through their first 22 games of the season. Their 77 goals are tied for 10th-most in the AHL.

Rochester has put up at least four goals in 10 of its first 22 games, including six outings with five goals or more.

The Amerks are a perfect 6-0-0-0 this season when scoring five goals in a game. Rochester is tied for fourth in the AHL with 26 first-period tallies this season.

## WORKING OVERTIME

Last night's overtime win was the fifth in the last eight games for Rochester that went beyond regulation, which includes two shootout decisions this month. Overall, the Amerks have gone to extra time 10 different times this season, including each of the first three games of the campaign.

Never before in the near 68-year history of the franchise have the Amerks opened a season with three consecutive overtime contests.

Rochester is the only team in the league with 10 games decided beyond regulation this season. Dating back to last season, 18 of Rochester's previous 35 regular-season games have required overtime to determine a winner.



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## A (JOB)ST WELL DONE

**Mason Jobst** is making the most with the Amerks as the fifth-year pro is in the process of duplicating his career year from 2022-23.

Through 18 games this season, the Speedway, Indiana, native has already scored half as many goals (7) from his career-high 38-point campaign last season when he notched 14 goals and 24 assists in 61 games.

Jobst reached the 30-point plateau for the first time in his pro career last season, being one of 10 different Amerks to eclipse the mark. He also was one of 10 to score double figures in goals as he finished with a person-best 14 in 61 games.

Since the turn of the New Year, Jobst has amassed 18 goals and 39 points over his previous 55 games, which includes two hat tricks, both of which have come on home ice. He comes into tonight with eight goals and 12 assists over his previous 26 contests and has only been held with a point in back-to-back appearances just two over that span.

Jobst has totaled 65 points (25+40) in 105 career games with the Amerks dating back to the 2021-22 season.

## TOKARSKI AMONG ELITE COMPANY

Veteran goaltender **Dustin Tokarski**, who missed the first eight games of the season due to an injury he sustained in training camp, made his season debut back on Nov. 3 against Utica.

In doing so, the two-time Calder Cup winner and AHL All-Star became 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).

Tokarski, who's in his second stint with the Amerks and 10th different AHL franchise, 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.

Currently in his 15th season, he joins Marcel Paille and Michael Leighton as the only goaltenders all-time to play at least 15 seasons in the AHL.

Tokarski, who's 4-3-1 in his first eight starts, recently surpassed the 10,000-save mark for his AHL career following a 31-save effort against Utica on Nov. 10. He also reached the 12,000-save mark for his pro career the week prior when he made his season debut against the Comets.

Entering this week, the 34-year-old Tokarski is two wins away from tying Nick Damore for 12th all-time in career wins (208). He also ranks 18th all-time in games played (407) and will tie Yann Danis for eighth all-time with his next shutout.

In addition to being a two-time Calder Cup winner (2012, 2019), Tokarski won a Memorial Cup with Spokane in 2008 followed by a gold medal with Canada at the 2009 World Junior Championship.

Tokarski has reached the 20-win mark five times over his 15-year pro career, including a career-best 32 wins in 2011-12 when he backstopped the Norfolk Admirals to a professional hockey record of 28 straight wins while leading the club to its and only Calder Cup.

## AMERKS-PENGUINS 2022-23 SEASON SERIES

### ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Jiri Kulich	2	1	2	3	2	1
Lukas Rousek	2	0	3	3	2	2
Jeremy Davies	2	2	0	2	2	2
Mason Jobst	2	1	1	2	0	1

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Malcolm Subban	2	1-0-1	6	.902	2.88

### WILKES-BARRE/SCRANTON

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Drake Caggiula	2	1	2	3	7	0
Valtteri Puustinen	2	0	3	3	0	2
Sam Houde	2	1	1	2	0	1
Mitch Reinke	2	0	2	2	0	-1

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Filip Lindberg	1	0-1-0	3	.897	3.05
Dustin Tokarski	1	1-0-0	4	.886	3.69

## 2022-23 SERIES BREAKDOWN VS. WILKES-BARRE

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Jan. 25	W	3-2	29-26	1-5	4-5
Mar. 17	SOL	5-4	35-36	0-3	3-4

## SERIES NOTABLES

Amerks netminder **Dustin Tokarski** spent parts of two years with the Penguins. The veteran goaltender posted a 21-21-2 record and two shutouts in 54 appearances during the 2019-20 and 2022-23 seasons.

Penguins assistant coach Kevin Porter spent parts of five seasons with Rochester and was a five-time team captain from 2012-14 and 2017-2020. In 269 career games with the Amerks, Porter notched 68 goals and 116 assists for 184 points to rank 35th all-time in franchise history among all forwards.

Penguins captain Taylor Fedun patrolled the Amerks blueline for parts of three seasons (2016-19), leading Rochester to two playoff appearances. The 35-year-old veteran defenseman and two-time assistant captain for the Amerks produced 44 points (8+36) in 83 games.

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton forward Alexander Nylander began his professional career in Rochester after being drafted eighth overall in the 2016 NHL Draft by the Buffalo Sabres. Nylander recorded 86 points (30+56) in 165 career games with Rochester from 2016-19.

Tonight's game marks head coach **Seth Appert's** 200th regular-season game as bench boss. Since the start of the 2020-21 campaign, Appert has guided the Amerks a 96-78-17-8 record as well as two straight playoff appearances, which includes a trip to the Eastern Conference Finals in 2022.



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