

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Friday | **February 2, 2024** | 7:00 PM ET | Place Bell | AHL Game 659 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (20-15-3-1) turn the page to February tonight as they venture north of the border for the first of back-to-back meetings with the Laval Rocket (18-17-4-2) at Place Bell. The North Division matchup 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.

The Amerks, who have won four of their last six games and collected points in eight of their last 11 overall, enter the weekend in third place in the AHL's North Division standings, two points ahead of Laval. Rochester also has two games in hand on the Rocket coming into the weekend.

Laval, which is 6-3-1-0 over its last 10 games, is looking to avoid four straight regulation losses for the second time since the final week of October the

HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS AGAINST LAVAL

Dating back to last season, Amerks forward **Jiri Kulich** has recorded eight goals, including four through the first six games of the 2023-24 season series, as well as five assists in 14 career contests against the Rocket.

Rochester has picked up at least one point in 15 of its first 20 road games in Laval, going 13-5-2-0 over that span. Conversely, since the start of the 2017-18 campaign, the Amerks have posted a near-perfect 14-3-0-0 mark at The Blue Cross Arena versus Laval, including all four meetings this season.

Rochester has never had a losing season versus the Rocket and have gone 4-3-1-0 in each of the last two seasons. The Amerks have a 5-1-0-0 mark through the first six games of the 2023-24 campaign.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks closed out their four-game homestand on the short end of a 2-1 decision against the Syracuse Crunch Wednesday at The Blue Cross Arena.

Mason Jobst scored his 10th goal of the season and 100th point in the AHL during the first period while defenseman **Joseph Cecconi** and **Ethan Prow** notched the assists. With the tally, Jobst became the fourth different Amerk this season to reach double figures in goals. Dating back to last season, the Ohio State University product has recorded 10 or more goals in back-to-back campaigns for the first time in his professional career.

Goaltender **Devon Levi** (2-2-0) made his fourth appearance with Rochester, turning aside 16 of the 18 shots he faced.

THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Jeremy Davies and **Kale Clague** are among the AHL's top scoring defensemen, having combined for eight goals and 37 points this season despite Davies missing the past five games due to injury.

Davies, who scored a career-high 11 goals last season, including three game-winning tallies, is tied for 17th amongst all defensemen with 83 shots. 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 15 of his first 33 games this season, never going more than four straight games without a point.

Clague, meanwhile, is tied for 18th among all blueliners with 17 assists. With an assist this past Saturday against Laval, Clague has now reached the 20-point mark in all three seasons in which he's played at least 35 games.

2023-24 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Isak Rosen	35	10	16	26	-4	6
Lukas Rousek	34	7	19	26	-1	10
Jiri Kulich	31	16	8	24	-2	16
Mason Jobst	34	10	14	24	-5	28

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Devon Levi	4	2-2-0	100	.901	2.76
Dustin Tokarski	15	7-6-2	419	.891	3.36
Devin Cooley	13	6-5-2	400	.897	3.53

2023-24 ROCKET OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Brandon Gignac	41	13	25	38	-1	34
Joshua Roy	37	12	19	31	-12	10
Phillippe Maillet	36	10	19	29	0	6
Logan Mailloux	41	10	18	28	-4	46

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kasimir Kaskisuo	5	4-0-0	151	.926	2.77
Jakub Dobeš	26	12-8-4	684	.894	3.39
Strauss Mann	15	2-9-2	342	.879	3.69

2023-24 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Laval Rocket	Rochester Americans
218-17-4-2.....	Record20-15-3-1
11-7-2-1.....	Home Record9-8-2-0
7-10-2-1.....	Road Record11-7-1-1
6-3-1-0.....	Last 10 Games6-3-1-0
0-4.....	Overtime Record6-3
2-2.....	Shootout Record3-1
11-5-1-1.....	Record When Scoring First11-4-1-1
3.40 (4th).....	Goals-For Per Game3.31 (10th)
3.71 (31st).....	Goals-Against Per Game3.64 (30th)
17.3% (21st).....	Power-Play19.0% (12th)
79.4 (25th).....	Penalty Kill76.6% (29th)
Jan. 31 vs UTC (4-3 L).....	Last Game Jan. 31 vs. SYR (2-1 L)
Feb. 3 vs ROC.....	Next GameFeb. 3 @ LAV
Jean François Houle (3rd)	Head CoachSeth 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. Both were named to the North Division All-Star roster for the upcoming 2024 AHL All-Star Classic, which will take place this weekend in San Jose, Cali.

Kulich's torrid start to the season has him tied for 16th in the AHL with a team-high 16 goals despite having only appeared in 31 games for Rochester. Among the players ahead of him, all but one have skated in at least 32 games. Of his 16 goals, four of them have been overtime game-winners, most in the league in that category. Only Ontario's Samuel Fagemo, who has 20 goals in 24 games this season, has scored more goals in fewer games across the AHL than Kulich.

Kulich, whose 24 goals last season were the second-most ever by an 18-year-old in league history, recently captained Czechia to a bronze medal at the 2024 World Junior Championship. He led all Czech skaters and tied for first in overall scoring with 12 points (6+6) in seven games, including his second four-point outing of the tournament in the bronze medal game.

He was named to the tournament's All-Star Team for the second straight year in his final appearance. The 8-5 win, which saw Czechia overcome a 5-2 deficit with four goals in less than a minute, gave the Czechs their second straight medal finish after winning silver last year.

With 13 points over his last 22 games, which includes a career-best four point (2+2) effort on Nov. 18, Rosen has a share of the team scoring lead with 26 points after returning from a seven-game stint with the Sabres last month. He is tied for third among all Amerks in goals (10) and has matched his totaled from last season in game-winning tallies through 35 games.

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

The duo have combined for 133 points (64+69) in 193 regular season games. Rochester boasts an impressive 22-3-2-1 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.

ROUSEK RACKING UP THE POINTS

Lukas Rousek has been the team's most consistent point-getter over the last month, performing at nearly a point-per-game pace as he shows 26 points (7+19) in 34 games with the Amerks.

Rousek, a sixth-round selection (160th overall) by the Sabres in the 2019 NHL Draft, has a team-best 19 assists and is tied with Rosen for the overall scoring lead while his seven goals are sixth. Among all Amerks who have appeared in at least 28 games, he is third in points per game (0.76).

The third-year pro and AHL All-Star saw his career-long 13-game point streak come to an end last Friday night. Dating back to Dec. 20, he totaled 14 points (4+10). It marked the longest point streak in the league with only Toronto's Alex Steeves having posted a longer point streak (16 games).

Rousek's point streak was the longest by an Amerk in 24 years since Hall of Famer **Domenic Pittis** had points in 14 straight contests from Jan. 22 to March 4 during the 1999-2000 campaign.



HEAD COACH SETH APPERT
100 WINS
BEHIND THE AMERKS BENCH

APPERT REACHES CENTURY MARK

The 3-2 win at Charlotte on Jan. 12 was a milestone win for **Seth Appert**, who became just the seventh head coach in the 68-year history of the franchise to reach 100 career victories with Rochester. He joins an impressive list that includes the likes of Amerks Hall of Famers Randy Cunneynworth, John Van Boxmeer, Joe Crozier, Mike Keenan, Chris Taylor and Brian McCutcheon.

On Dec. 16 against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, Appert also became the seventh head coach in team history to be behind Rochester's bench for 200 games.

Since the 2020-21 season, Appert has guided the Amerks to a 104-86-18-8 record as well as two straight playoff appearances, which included a trip to the Eastern Conference Finals in 2023.

It was the team's deepest playoff run in nearly 20 years and their first to the Conference Finals since the 2004 Calder Cup Playoffs.

NEW YEAR, NEW NEUCHEV

After producing just five points in his first 22 games, rookie forward **Viktor Neuchev** has unsurprisingly emerged as one of the team's leading scorers through the month of January.

Dating back to Dec. 29 and the turn of the New Year, Neuchev has erupted for 11 points on four goals and seven assists over his previous nine games, easily making him a contender for the AHL's Rookie of the Month for January.

Neuchev has recorded at least one point in seven games over that span, including a season-long six-game point streak from Dec. 29 to Jan. 20 which saw him score three goals and record eight points.

Buffalo's third-round selection (74th overall) in 2022, Neuchev's most impressive performance of the season came this past weekend, finding the back of the net for the third time in four games with the game-winning goal along with two assists in the 7-4 win over Laval. The three-point effort marked a season-high and was Neuchev's third multi-point outing in six games to begin the 2024 calendar year.

Of Neuchev's six goals this season, five have been scored on home ice and three have come against Laval. He currently leads all Amerks rookies with 16 points (6+10) in 30 games.



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TOKARSKI ON THE MOVE

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 7-6-2 in his first 15 starts, 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 six wins away from tying Red Almas for 11th all-time in career wins (218). He's also one game away from tying Neil Little for 16th all-time (415) and will tie Yann Danis for eighth all-time on his next shutout.

A JOLT OF JOST

Rochester's forward group was bolstered at the end of the 2023 calendar year with the addition of veteran forward **Tyson Jost**, a former first-round selection (10th overall) of the Colorado Avalanche in the 2016 NHL Draft.

The St. Albert, Alberta, native made his Amerks debut on Dec. 29 against Hershey and has since recorded 10 points (2+8) through his first 11 games, having earned at least one point in all but five games thus far.

Jost has totaled 17 points (7+10) in 25 career AHL games with the Amerks, San Antonio Rampage and Colorado Eagles over parts of three seasons. He's also recorded 138 points (56+82) over 442 career NHL games for Buffalo, Minnesota and Colorado, including 29 this season with the Sabres.

Jost spent one season at the University of North Dakota in 2016-17, amassing 35 points (16+19) in 33 games. He finished the campaign second on the club in both assists and points while ranking third in goals.

Before joining North Dakota, Jost totaled 149 points (97+65) in 97 career contests with the Penticton Vees (BCHL) from 2013-2016. During his final season, Jost was named Hockey Canada's Canadian Junior Hockey League (CJHL) National Player of the Year, as well as the CJHL's MVP and Top Forward. Additionally, he was also named the BCHL MVP as he amassed 42 goals and 104 points in 48 games, leading the BCHL in assists (62).

Internationally, Jost led Canada at the 2016 Under-18 World Championship in Grand Forks, where he set a new Canadian scoring record with 15 points in seven games. He led the tournament in scoring and was named the Top Forward while also earning a gold medal with Canada at the 2015 World Junior 'A' Challenge.

AMERKS-ROCKET 2023-24 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Mason Jobst	6	4	5	9	4	0
Kale Clague	5	1	6	7	4	0
Jiri Kulich	6	4	2	6	2	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	1	1-0-0	3	.927	2.86
Devin Cooley	2	3-0-0	9	.923	2.88
Michael Houser	1	1-0-0	4	.886	4.00
Eric Comrie	1	0-1-0	7	.788	7.08

LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Joshua Roy	6	3	3	6	4	-2
Mitchell Stephens	5	1	5	6	0	-1
Lisa Andersson	4	3	2	5	2	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Strauss Mann	2	0-1-2	11	.883	3.82
Jakub Dobeš	3	1-1-1	14	.878	4.64
Kasimir Kaskisuo	1	0-0-0	4	.600	15.72

2023-24 SERIES BREAKDOWN VS. LAVAL

DDate	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 18	OTW	5-4	35-44	1-5	4-5
Oct. 20	L	8-4	39-34	1-5	5-7
Oct. 27	W	7-4	42-40	2-4	5-6
Nov. 22	OTW	4-3	35-41	1-3	2-2
Nov. 24	OTW	3-2	35-34	1-4	3-3
Jan. 27	W	7-4	34-35	0-2	2-2

SABRES, AMERKS SWAP GOALIES

Earlier this week, the Buffalo Sabres loaned rookie goaltender **Devin Levi** from Buffalo and recalled netminder **Eric Comrie** to the big club.

Levi, who is 2-2-0 in four starts with the Amerks, joins **Eric Comrie**, **Michael Houser**, **Devin Cooley** and **Dustin Tokarski** to man the blue paint for Rochester this season. It marks the third straight year Rochester has had five or more goaltenders play in its net and first since a three-year stretch between 1995 and 1998.

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.



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