

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Saturday | **February 3, 2024** | 3:00 PM ET | Place Bell | AHL Game 675 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TODAY'S GAME OVERVIEW

Following a quick turnaround, the Rochester Americans (20-16-3-1) look to split the weekend set with a rematch against the Laval Rocket (19-17-4-2) this afternoon at Place Bell. The 3:00 p.m. matinee 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 seven games and collected points in eight of their last 12 overall, enter the weekend in a fourth-place tie in the AHL's North Division standings with Laval. Rochester also has two games in hand on the Rocket coming into the today's contest.

Laval, which is 6-3-1-0 over its last 10 games, is looking to earn its North Division leading 13th win on home ice this season. The club boasts a 12-7-2-1 record at Place Bell and has earned points in 15 of its first 22 home games.

HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS AGAINST LAVAL

Dating back to last season, Amerks forward **Jiri Kulich** has recorded eight goals, including four through the first seven games of the 2023-24 season series, as well as five assists in 15 career contests against the Rocket.

Rochester has picked up at least one point in 15 of its first 21 road games in Laval, going 13-6-2-0 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 5-2-0-0 mark through the first seven games of the 2023-24 campaign.

LAST TIME OUT

The Amerks and Rocket traded goals inside the first two minutes of the contest, but a four-goal run by Laval would propel the home team to a 6-2 win in the first of back-to-back meetings last night at Place Bell.

Lukas Rousek notched his eighth goal of the season during the first period while **Jeremy Davies**, who appeared in his 100th game as an Amerk after missing the previous five due to injury, closed out the scoring by adding his sixth in the final stanza. **Kale Clague** and **Joseph Ceconi** both earned an assist as did **Tyson Jost**.

Goaltender **Dustin Tokarski** (7-7-2) made his 16th appearance of the campaign, stopping 27 shots of the 32 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 nine goals and 39 points this season.

Davies, who scored a career-high 11 goals last season, including three game-winning tallies, is tied for 17th amongst all defensemen with 85 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 16 of his first 34 games this season, never going more than four straight games without a point.

Clague, meanwhile, is tied for 17th among all blueliners with 18 assists. With an assist last Saturday against Laval, Clague has now reached the 20-point mark in all three seasons in which he's played at least 35 games. He comes into the matchup showing seven points (2+5) over his last eight games.

2023-24 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Lukas Rousek	35	8	19	27	-1	10
Isak Rosen	36	10	16	26	-3	6
Jiri Kulich	32	16	8	24	-2	16
Mason Jobst	35	10	14	24	-7	30

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Devon Levi	4	2-2-0	100	.901	2.76
Dustin Tokarski	16	7-7-2	446	.888	3.47
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	42	13	28	41	2	36
Joshua Roy	38	13	19	32	-11	10
Phillippe Maillet	37	11	20	31	1	6
Xavier Simoneau	37	5	24	29	9	81

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Kasimir Kaskisuo	5	4-0-0	151	.926	2.77
Jakub Dobeš	27	13-8-4	708	.895	3.33
Strauss Mann	15	2-9-2	342	.879	3.69

2023-24 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Laval Rocket	Rochester Americans
19-17-4-2	Record 20-16-3-1
12-7-2-1	Home Record 9-8-2-0
7-10-2-1	Road Record 11-7-1-1
5-4-1-0	Last 10 Games 6-3-1-0
0-4	Overtime Record 6-3
2-2	Shootout Record 3-1
12-5-1-1	Record When Scoring First 12-4-1-1
3.50 (4th)	Goals-For Per Game 3.20 (10th)
3.62 (31st)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.65 (30th)
17.5% (21st)	Power-Play 18.4% (15th)
79.9 (25th)	Penalty Kill 76.6% (29th)
Feb. 2 vs ROC (6-2 W)	Last Game Feb. 2 @ LAV (6-2 L)
Feb. 8 @ TOR	Next Game Feb. 8 vs SYR
Jean François Houle (3rd)	Head Coach Seth Appert (4th)



ROCHESTER AMERICANS | MEDIA RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

@AMERKSPR | @AMERKSHOCKEY

Warren Kosel | Senior Director of Public & Media Relations | 1.585.286.9928

Ryan Harr | Public & Media Relations Coordinator | 1.585.286.9940



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DYNAMIC DUO: ALL-STAR BOUND

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 gets underway Sunday in San Jose, Cali.

Kulich's torrid start to the season has him tied for 18th in the AHL with a team-high 16 goals despite having only appeared in 32 games for Rochester. Among the players ahead of him, all but one have skated in at least 33 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 25 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 23 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 36 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 195 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 a team-high 27 points (8+19) in 35 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 has a one-point lead on Rosen in scoring while his eight goals are sixth. Among all Amerks who have appeared in at least 30 games, he is tops in points per game (0.77).

The third-year pro and AHL All-Star saw his career-long point streak come to an end last Friday night, stopping at 13 games. He totaled 14 points between Dec. 20 and Jan. 20, the second-longest point streak in the league behind only Toronto's Alex Steeves, who had a point in 16 straight 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 104-87-18-8 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 23 games, rookie forward **Viktor Neuchev** has unsurprisingly emerged as one of the team's leading scorers through the first week of February.

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 10 games.

Neuchev has recorded at least one point in eight 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 five 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 seven 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. Neuchev, who had a 40-goal season while playing for Russia's junior league during the 2021-22 campaign, currently leads all Amerks rookies with 16 points (6+10) and 50 shots in 31 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 7-7-2 in his first 16 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 weekend, the 34-year-old Tokarski is six wins away from tying Red Almas for 11th all-time in career wins (218). He's also two games away from tying Ed Chadwick for 16th all-time (417) 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 11 points (2+9) through his first 13 games, having earned at least one point in all but five games thus far.

Jost has totaled 18 points (7+11) in 26 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	7	4	5	9	6	-2
Kale Clague	6	1	7	8	10	-3
Jiri Kulich	7	4	2	6	2	0

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	2	1-1-0	8	.890	2.88
Devin Cooley	2	3-0-0	9	.923	2.88
Eric Comrie	1	0-1-0	7	.788	7.08

LAVAL

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Brandon Gignac	7	0	8	8	8	2
Lisa Andresson	5	5	2	7	2	2
Joshua Roy	7	4	3	7	4	-1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Strauss Mann	2	0-1-2	11	.883	3.82
Jakub Dobeš	4	2-1-1	16	.887	3.98
Kasimir Kaskisuo	1	0-0-0	4	.600	15.72

2023-24 SERIES BREAKDOWN VS. LAVAL

Date	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
Feb. 2	L	6-2	26-33	0-4	3-4

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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