

Fri. | Mar. 28, 2025 | 7:05 PM | Blue Cross Arena | AHL Game 996 | AHLTV on FloHockey, The Fan Rochester, CW Rochester

ROCHESTER AMERICANS GAME NOTES

Blue Cross Arena at the Rochester War Memorial | 1 War Memorial Square | Rochester, NY, 14614 | Amerks.com/Media | @AmerksPR



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

For a second straight weekend, the Rochester Americans (37-18-3-3) play three games in as many days, beginning Friday night at home as they take on the Bridgeport Islanders (14-42-4-3).

This is the second and final meeting in the season series between Rochester and Bridgeport. It's also the first time the Islanders are back at Blue Cross Arena since opening night of last season, where the team rallied to top Rochester by a 3-2 final in overtime 532 days ago.

In their only previous game this season, **Felix Sandström** registered a season-high 36 saves, while **Mason Jobst** scored twice against his former team to help the Amerks prevail with a 6-3 win at Total Mortgage Arena on Jan 4.. The game was the final win in Rochester's eight-game road win streak earlier in the season, which matched a franchise record.

HEAD-TO-HEAD RESULTS AGAINST BRIDGEPORT

Tonight is only the 24th all-time meeting between the two teams and the fourth since opening night in Rochester last season.

The Amerks have earned points in 14 of the last 15 meetings against Bridgeport dating back to the 2017-18 campaign and boast a 7-0-3-0 mark in the previous 10 home contests at The Blue Cross Arena.

In 17 of the last 19 meetings, the winning team has scored three or more goals, which includes at least one power-play tally in 12 contests over that same span.

Eleven of the previous 19 games between the two clubs have been decided beyond regulation, which includes seven of the last nine.

Tonight is the second to last game the Amerks face an Atlantic Division opponent in the 2024-25 regular season. The team shows an 8-6-1-1 record against the division, including a 3-2-1-1 mark at Blue Cross Arena.

LAST TIME OUT

Down 2-0 with just over a minute to play in the second period, defensemen **Nikita Novikov** and **Erik Brännström** scored 19 seconds apart for the Amerks on Sunday, beginning the charge of scoring four straight on their way to completing the rally for a 4-3 win over the Utica Comets. The game wrapped up the season series between the intrastate foes in what was a very one-sided rivalry this season, with Rochester displaying a 10-1-0-1 mark against Utica.

After tying the game going into the third, it was **Noah Östlund** scoring what was the go-ahead goal at the time just 1:10 into the final period. The game-winning goal ended up being an empty-net conversion from fellow Swede, **Anton Wahlberg**.

Devon Levi was stupendous in net yet again, registering 33 saves to pick up his 21st win of the season. The 23-year-old leads the North Division in wins and is fifth overall in the AHL.

Bridgeport last played Wednesday against the already playoff-bound Hershey Bears, dropping a 4-1 final to the back-to-back Calder Cup Champions. Team captain Cole Bardreau scored his fourth goal of the season as the lone conversion for the Isles, while Henrik Tikkänen made 26 saves in the losing effort. Bardreau, 31, is a native of Fairport, New York and played youth hockey for the Rochester Alliance at the AAA level. The Islanders also have forward Chris Terry, who is 12th all-time in AHL scoring.

2024-25 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Isak Rosén*	55	27	27	54	11	10
Brett Murray	55	23	17	40	11	25
Zachary Metsa	59	5	35	40	15	16

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Devon Levi	34	21-10-3	839	.916	2.27
Felix Sandström	16	11-4-1	386	.902	2.77
Michael Houser	14	5-4-2	292	.893	2.83

*=Currently with Buffalo Sabres (NHL)

2024-25 ISLANDERS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PIM
Chris Terry	61	19	40	59	-10	38
Brian Pinho	57	22	21	43	-9	8
Adam Beckman	51	16	22	38	-8	26

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Marcus Hogberg*	11	2-5-3	299	.898	3.26
Jakub Skarek	22	5-13-1	518	.884	3.52
Henrik Tikkänen	29	6-17-3	674	.867	4.01

*=Currently with New York Islanders (NHL)

2024-25 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Bridgeport Islanders Rochester Americans

14-42-4-3.....	Record	37-18-3-3
4-23-1-3.....	Home Record	16-10-2-1
10-19-3-0.....	Road Record	21-8-1-2
2-7-1-0.....	Last 10 Games	4-4-0-2
0-4.....	Overtime Record	4-3
0-3.....	Shootout Record	5-3
12-10-1-0.....	Record When Scoring First	21-9-1-1
15.7% (30th).....	Power-Play	18.7% (16th)
72.5% (31st).....	Penalty Kill	85.4% (3rd)
Mar. 26 vs. HER (4-1 L).....	Last Game	Mar. 23 vs. UTC (4-3 W)
Rick Kowalsky (2nd)....	Head Coach	Michael Leone (1st)

2024-25 SERIES BREAKDOWN VS. BRIDGEPORT

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Jan. 4	W	6-3	39-23	0-2	4-5
Mar. 28					



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PLAYOFF PICTURE

It's that time of year where playoff primer's are made, and fortunately for the Amerks, it doesn't appear as if they'll be down to the wire for clinching a spot. Now that's not to say Rochester won't be battling for playoff positioning until the very end of the 2024-25 regular season, but to get an "X" next to their name and a confirmed spot in the Calder Cup Playoffs, the team is staring at a magic number of nine.

At this point, Utica is the only team that cannot mathematically catch Rochester in the standings. The Amerks enter the final full week of March with 80 points and 11 games remaining. Two teams from the North Division will not qualify for the playoffs. The next club of focus for the Amerks would be the Belleville Senators, who have 66 points and are sixth in the division.

In simple terms, Rochester's magic number to clinch a playoff berth is 9. That number will decrease by the Amerks gaining points and/or Belleville losing points. For example, the Senators host the Lehigh Valley Phantoms Friday while the Amerks entertain Bridgeport. If the Amerks win and Belleville wins, the magic number will shrink to 7. If the Amerks win and Belleville loses in overtime or a shootout, the number drops to 6, and a Rochester win and Sens loss in regulation can decrease the number down to 5.

The Amerks can also be helped if Cleveland or Syracuse, who both have three-game weeks, were to lose all of their games in regulation. If this were to happen and the Amerks were to win all three of their games this coming weekend, Rochester could officially clinch a playoff berth as soon as this Sunday, March 30.

ENTER SANDMAN

Devon Levi hasn't been the only Amerks goaltender to put on a solid 2024-25 season, with veteran **Felix Sandström** backing up and standing tall when called upon all season. Last Saturday, the 10th-year pro returned to the crease for his first game in 35 days, turning aside 16 of 17 Syracuse shots to pick up the win.

That win was Sandström's 11th of the season and eighth consecutive victory. The Gavle, Sweden, native owns an 11-4-1 record as an Amerk and enters Friday having not lost a game in 112 days, with his most recent loss coming Dec, 6, 2024 in Charlotte. Additionally, each of Sandström's eight wins during this streak have come on the road. His last appearance on home ice was Nov. 23rd, 2024.

The 28-year-old was drafted by Philadelphia in the third round 10 years ago in 2015. He appeared in 30 NHL games over four seasons with the Flyers.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

Earlier in the week, the Buffalo Sabres signed forward **Tyler Kopff** to a two-year entry-level contract that begins in 2025-26. In the interim, the 6-foot-4, 215-pound forward out of Brown University will join Rochester on an Amateur Tryout contract (ATO) for the remainder of the current season.

Kopff, 21, recently completed his sophomore season at Brown University, where he led the team with 19 assists and finished second in scoring with 28 points (9+19) in 32 games for the Brown Bears. For his efforts, he earned Third Team All-ECAC honors and was one of only two players to garner First Team All-Ivy accolades for the 2024-25 season.

In ECAC conference games, the 6-foot-4, 215-pound forward compiled 22 points in 22 games to rank fifth in the conference in scoring. His 15 league assists also ranked fifth in the ECAC. He was also tied for the conference lead with five power-play goals.

His 28 points finished tied for 17th in the ECAC and his 0.90 points per game ranked 11th in the ECAC and 70th in the NCAA.

Prior to joining Brown, the Ridgewood, New Jersey, native played two seasons of junior hockey with the Coquitlam Express of the BCHL.



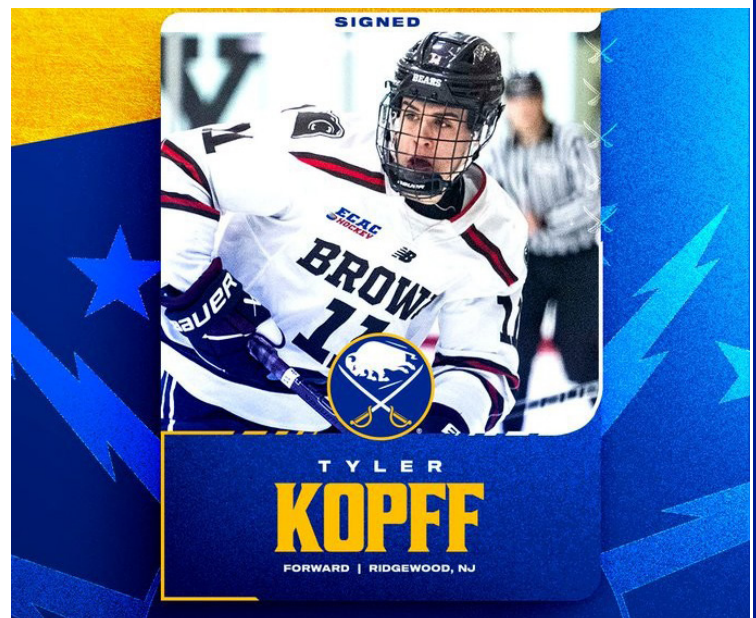
ROUSEK REACHES 200

Amerks forward **Lukas Rousek** reached a milestone last Saturday in Syracuse as the fourth-year pro skated in his 200th game as an Amerk. The Ostrov nad Ohri, Czechia, native has been with the Buffalo Sabres organization for six years, being drafted by the blue and gold in 2019 with the 160th overall pick in the sixth round.

In addition to his time as an Amerk, Rousek has skated in 17 NHL games with the Sabres, including 15 contests last season.

This season, the seasoned pro is fourth in team scoring, churning out six goals and 38 points. Rousek leads all forwards on the team with 32 assists and is 16th amongst all AHL forwards in that category.

Rousek has collected three assists over his last five games. In 201 career games as an Amerk, the winger has amassed 139 points (33+106). He is three points shy of matching his season totals from last year, and in 2022-23, Rousek led Rochester in scoring with his best season to date, collecting 56 points (16+40).



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