



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

DAILY PRESS CLIPS

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TONIGHT'S GAME: Cleveland @ Rochester

Rochester Amerks score four unanswered in win at Hershey
Pickin' Splinters
By: Paul Gotham/Amerks.com

Four straight unanswered goals, including two from veteran defenseman Zach Redmond, helped the Rochester Americans (8-3-1-0) flip the script in the second-leg of a home-and-home series with the Hershey Bears (5-7-0-1) at Giant Center. Saturday night's 4-1 victory for the Amerks was the 458th all-time meeting with the Bears and second in the last two nights between the AHL's two oldest teams.

With Rochester's victory and the Cleveland Monsters being idle tonight, the Amerks grabbed sole possession of first place in the AHL's North Division standings ahead of Wednesday night's matchup between the two teams at KeyBank Center in downtown Buffalo.

Redmond tallied his seventh and eighth goals of the season for the Amerks, who have collected 17 of a possible 20 points in their last 10 contests. The veteran blueliner shows 16 points (8+8) in his last 11 games while Kevin Porter and Dalton Smith rounded out the scoring. Goaltender Adam Wilcox, who came into the contest carrying a 5-0-2 record in his last seven appearances dating back to last year, made 27 saves in a winning effort.

Derek Hulak opened the game with his second goal of the season for Hershey, which saw their three-game win streak end. Rookie netminder Ilya Samsonov stopped 30 of 34 in his second straight start in as many nights but was given the loss.

The Bears, much like last night's tilt, struck for the game's first goal less than five minutes into opening period of play with a redirection goal from the right point. Connor Hobbs fired a shot from just inside the Amerks blueline towards Wilcox, but Hulak reached out his stick to change the angle of the shot and tipped the puck into the back of the net at the 3:35 mark.

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The veteran defenseman pinched into the zone from the left Samsonov before tucking the puck inside the left post for his first of two goals on the night and seventh of the season.

The game remained tied at 1-1 until Redmond rifled a one-timer that pinballed its way through net-front traffic before bouncing in just under the crossbar with 8:26 left in the second period.

As the Amerks held the puck inside the Hershey zone following the end of a Bears penalty, former Hershey forward Wayne Simpson spotted Redmond between the face-off circles. The Redmond blast from Simpson and Lawrence Pilut held up as the game-winning goal, his fourth of the season and a new career-high.

With eight goals already on the season, Redmond is on pace to become the first Amerks defenseman to reach the 10-goal mark in the fewest amount of games to start the season since T.J. Brennan during the 2012-13 campaign. Brennan, a two-time Eddie Shore Award winner and a five-time AHL All-Star, had nine goals by his 16th game that year and scored his 10th in just his 25th appearance of the season. Additionally, Redmond is also on pace to surpass his own career-mark of 15 he scored last season, having already scored more than half through just 12 games this season.

Hershey was given a chance to tie the game as the Amerks were whistled for a holding infraction at the 5:03 mark, but Porter and C.J. Smith erased any hope of a comeback as the duo entered the offensive zone on a 2-on-1 rush. While Smith's initial shot was denied, Porter swept the rebound behind the Hershey netminder to give the Amerks a two-goal cushion with 3:36 to play in the sandwich stanza.

Porter's goal was his third of the season, which also extended his point streak to a career-best seven games (2+5), while Smith pushed his streak to three games (2+1).

With the score 3-1 to start the final period of regulation, Dalton Smith put the final touches on the four-goal come-from-behind win as he chipped in a loose puck at the 7:19 mark. The tally was Smith's first of the campaign and assisted by Will Borgen and Eric Cornel.

For the seventh straight year, the Amerks make the annual trek down the New York State Thruway to play in the home of the Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday, Nov. 7 as they host the Cleveland Monsters in a North Division showdown at the KeyBank Center in Buffalo. The 7:05 p.m. contest will be the first of eight scheduled meetings between the two teams this season and can be heard live on The Sports Leader AM 950/ 95.7 FM ESPN Rochester as well as AHLTV.

A Friday's 6-pack after poor start dooms Rochester Amerks
Pickin' Splinters
By: Kevin Oklobzija

There's a pretty good chance an alarm clock will be missing from a Hershey, Pa., hotel on Saturday night.

Rochester Americans coach Chris Taylor could very well be using it at the Giant Center to make sure his team knows it's time to play the Hershey Bears.

The Amerks didn't seem to know when puck drop was on Friday night. They spotted the Bears a 3-0 lead in the first 18:24 and couldn't recover, losing 4-2 in front of 6,013 fans at Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial.

"We didn't start going until the second period," said winger C.J. Smith who scored his fifth goal of the season before Victor Olofsson connected on his sixth in a fallen-short third period rally. "We showed up too late."

How they continually start poorly on home ice is becoming troublesome and the Amerks know it.

"It starts in warmups," Smith said. "It doesn't start when the puck drops. It starts days before the game. It starts hours before the game."

The loss, the Amerks first in regulation since opening weekend, ended their streak of earning points in eight consecutive games (7-0-1).

"I don't care if we've won 10 games in a row, 20 games in a row, we have to prepare a little better," captain Kevin Porter said.

"That's on the leadership group."

Tonight's six-pack of post-game notables

1. Old-time Amerks vs. Bears ... sort of

Ah, just like the old days. A mere five seconds after the opening faceoff, the penalty box door opened.

Except unlike games in this rivalry two or three decades ago, when the penalties may very well have been for fighting, this one was for delay of game as Zach Redmond flipped the puck out of play.

That penalty was costly, too, because the Bears scored on the ensuing power play as Mike Sgarbossa tipped in a Travis Boyd point shot and with just 57 seconds elapsed, Hershey led 1-0.

2. Old-time Amerks vs. Bears ... for real this time

With the Amerks down 3-0, Dalton Smith and Yannick Veilleux tried to provide a spark on their shift in the 19th minute of the first period.

Smith barged into defenseman Lucas Johansen a moment after a whistle and in an instant all 10 skaters were in the corner.

Smith fought Liam O'Brien and as that scrap began, Veilleux fought Connor Hobbs.

"We just needed somebody to hit somebody," Taylor said. "We need a lot more of that."

The Amerks even ended up on the power play but couldn't take advantage of the spark or man advantage.

3. C.J. had plenty of jump

C.J. Smith may have been the Amerks best player. He fired seven of the Amerks' 34 shots at goalie Ilya Samsonov and scored once, his fifth goal of the season. His top-shelf wrister at 5:47 of the third period ended Samsonov's shutout bid and gave the Amerks hope.

"He shoots in stride and is very deceptive," Taylor said. "When you plant your feet, the goalie knows where it's going. C.J. keeps his feet moving and it throws the goalie off."

4. Wedgewood gets the hook

Scott Wedgewood started in goal but lasted only one period. He stopped six of nine shots. Adam Wilcox took over to start the second period, his fourth game action of the season and second on home ice.

Was Taylor pointing a finger at Wedgewood?

"It was everybody," Taylor said. "I'm not going to blame one goal, I'm not going to blame 10 guys."

5. A little desire and care is necessary

Riley Barber scored Hershey's second goal at 16:44, firing a shot past Wedgewood from high in the right circle after Danny O'Regan lost a faceoff to Sgarbossa.

But since faceoffs are often a 50/50 proposition, it's what happens after the draw that is so critical. Alex Nylander didn't do nearly enough to try to get to the puck or deny a shot.

He was easily tied up by Shane Gersich, allowing Barber a clear path to the puck, and then a shot.

Taylor also didn't like Andrew Oglevie's effort to get to the puck, either.

"I thought both guys got pushed to the sides, they didn't fight through it enough," Taylor said.

6. The crowd of 6,013 was a high for the season

Are fans figuring out the Amerks are (usually) pretty entertaining? Well, maybe, but that wasn't necessarily the case on Friday. More than 1,000 fans took part in the annual Word of Life event, which is why the upper bowl on the Broad Street end was so full.

Eric Cornel, former Sabres second-round pick, finds his way back on the radar
Buffalo Hockey Beat
By: Bill Hoppe

With Sabres prospect Eric Cornel understands he's playing for his future in his third season with the Rochester Americans.

Cornel's entry-level contract expires following the 2018-19 campaign, meaning Buffalo's regime, which did not draft the center, can simply walk away from him.

In his first two AHL seasons, Cornel, 22, struggled at times, never scoring more than nine goals or 18 points.

So Cornel, the 44th overall pick in 2014, has embraced the situation and evolved, Amerks coach Chris Taylor said.

"He's a smart kid, he knows, 'Hey, I got to do something about my career. I got to really focus on what I need to do, or it's going to be too late,'" Taylor said. "He's putting the work in. ... It's going to pay off for him."

On a first-place team featuring three of the AHL's top four scorers and a slew of prospects, Cornel has managed to stand out during the Amerks' torrid 7-2-1 start.

"He's been our unsung hero," said Taylor, whose Amerks host the Hershey Bears on Friday at Blue Cross Arena.

The 6-foot-2, 198-pound Cornel, an 83-point scorer in his final junior season, has seized a checking role, adding skill and speed to the third or fourth line and also killing penalties.

"That's allowed me to sort of play a bigger role, get more ice time, stay in the lineup," Cornel said. "It's exciting to be able to play a role like that you know has an impact on the team."

Taylor's praise is meaningful to Cornel.

"He's a guy as players we really respect," Cornel said. "We know that he's been through it just like us. I didn't even know that what I was doing was being noticed that much."

Taylor said Cornel's play has forced him to award him an increasing amount of playing time, a difficult task with three strong scoring lines.

"He earned his ice time, he keeps earning more and more," Taylor said. "It's hard not to play him. He competes, not just on the ice, but off the ice. ..."

"From where he came from three years ago to now, it's remarkable to me."

If Cornel keeps performing well, he could earn a promotion to the Sabres someday.

That would certainly make the Sabres' 2014 draft look a lot better. Other than winger Sam Reinhart, none of their other picks has played even one game for the team.

But that class still possesses some promise.

Cornel, one of three second-rounders, is back on the radar. Meanwhile, rookie winger Victor Olofsson, a seventh-round pick, 181st overall, is the AHL's leading scorer and was the league's Player of the Month for October.

While the Sabres picked Cornel high, his modest output early in his AHL career lowered expectations. With so many other Sabres prospects earning attention, some pressure has been taken off Cornel, who believes developing out of the spotlight can be beneficial.

"A year like this year, where I may not be expected to put up the points, that's kind of almost a good thing, because you might surprise people a little bit and the pressure's not there," said Cornel, who has compiled two goals and three points through 10 games.

Taylor has known Cornel since the Sabres drafted him and clearly respects the initiative the youngster has taken to change. "He's evolved into a guy that he's very reliable on both sides of the puck, he brings great energy," Taylor said. "He's a guy that can get in on the forecheck, disrupt it. He's a bigger guy than he looks. . . . He's got good speed, and he's built up his strength so he can knock guys off pucks now and get over pucks.

"I think he's developed into a player that can play (on the) third and fourth line and can give a lot of energy and score that timely goal you need. Those guys are . . . very valuable to your hockey team. People underestimate those type of players, they don't give them enough credit, but I do. Eric is such a valuable piece to our team."

Olofsson's honor

Taylor said he thinks of Olofsson's honor as an award all the Amerks can share. The Swede, 23, has scored five goals and 15 points in his first 10 AHL appearances.

"I've been very impressed," Taylor said of Olofsson's play. "The first couple games it took him a little bit to get adjusted, but after that, he figured it out.

"I look at this as a great award for him and also as a team award. He can't do it alone. That's a reflection of the power play, because he's on it, it's a reflection of his linemates (and) how well our team is doing to get those type of awards."

Amerks avenge Friday's loss to Hershey
C&C WorldWide
By: Staff Report

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The Bears, much like last night's tilt, struck for the game's first goal less than five minutes into opening period of play with a redirection goal from the right point. Connor Hobbs fired a shot from just inside the Amerks blueline towards Wilcox, but Hulak reached out his stick to change the angle of the shot and tipped the puck into the back of the net at the 3:35 mark.

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A slow -start first period costly for the Amerks

C&C WorldWide

By: Craig Potter

Amerks Another sluggish first period proved costly to the Rochester Americans on Friday night as the Hershey Bears scored 3 goals in the opening stanza and held on for a 3-2 victory before 6,013 fans at the Blue Cross Arena.

"We didn't have the type of start to the game as we had liked," said Amerks head coach Chris Taylor. "We had better second and third periods, but we cannot give any team a three-goal lead. Teams in this league are too good to try to have that kind of comeback."

"It starts in warmups," said forward C.J. Smith. "It doesn't start when the puck drops. It starts days before the game. It starts hours before the game."

Captain Kevin Porter added, "I don't care if we've won 10 games in a row, 20 games in a row, we have to prepare a little better. That's on the leadership group."

The Bears wasted little time when Amerks defenseman Zach Redmond shot the puck over the glass just 5 seconds into the contest for a delay of game penalty. Hershey converted on the ensuing power play for a 1-0 lead 52 seconds later.

The Bears tallied a pair of goals 2:20 apart late in the period for a 3-0 advantage.

"We talked about having a good start prior to the game and we were not able to do that," said Smith. "It was a tough break on the first shift to have the penalty, but I still don't think we responded until the second period and by that time it was already 3-0."

Adam Wilcox replaced starter Scott Wedgewood in the Rochester net to start the second period. Wilcox blanked the Bears the rest of the way as he turned aside all 14 shots.

The Amerks were outshot 9-6 in the first period, but Taylor was not about to put the blame on the goalie or any one person. "It was everybody," Taylor said. "I'm not going to blame one guy, I'm not going to blame 10 guys."

The Amerks took control of the game in the second and third period as they finished with a 36-24 shot advantage. However, they only scored twice on goals from C.J. Smith and rookie Victor Olofsson.

Smith's tally, his fifth of the season, came from a shot at the bottom of the right circle.

"We didn't start going until the second period," said Smith. "We showed up too late."

"He shoots in stride and is very deceptive," Taylor said. "When you plant your feet, the goalie knows where it's going. C.J. keeps his feet moving and it throws the goalie off."

Olofsson scored his sixth goal of the campaign after the Amerks pulled Wilcox for the extra attacker with 2:42 left in regulation. Hershey netminder Ilya Samsonov finished with 34 saves as he denied the Amerks the tying goal.

**NOTES* — The Amerks game was a mirror image of the Buffalo Sabres contest Thursday night in Ottawa as a slow start cost the Sabres, too. Buffalo fell behind 3-0 as an empty netter secured a 4-2 Senators victory. . . The Bears and the Amerks are the two oldest franchises in the AHL, but they only meet twice this season. The series this season concludes Saturday night in Hershey. The Bears have won 5 of the last 6 meetings dating back to the 2016-17 season and lead the lifetime series 213-190-54.

Amerks get back in the win column with 4-1 victory at Hershey
13 Wham
By: Staff Report

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Amerks Score Four Straight to Upend Hershey Bears, 4-1

Penn Live

By: Staff Report

The Hershey Bears battled the Rochester Americans on home ice and dropped a 4-1 decision on Saturday night at Giant Center.

The Bears continued the recent theme of scoring early in the first period. At 3:35, Derek Hulak received credit for his second goal of the season after a crisp redirect of a Connor Hobbs shot. Hobbs' received his team-leading sixth assist of the season on the play. Hershey goaltender Ilya Samsonov earned the starting nod after receiving the victory last night in Rochester. Samsonov was under siege in the first period and stopped 14 of 15 shots. The Americans cracked the scoreboard at 18:59 with a sharp-angle shot past Samsonov from Zach Redmond to tie the score before intermission.

Into the middle period, the Amerks tallied twice to grab a 3-1 advantage. Immediately after a Jonas Siegenthaler delay of game minor expired, Redmond scored his second of the night. Redmond unleashed a bullet through a maze of bodies and past Samsonov at the 11:34 mark. At 16:24, Rochester extended their lead on a shorthanded 2-on-1 rush. After an initial save by Samsonov, Kevin Porter scored his third goal of the season after depositing the rebound. Shots on goal were 26-17 Americans after 40 minutes.

Rochester added one more in the final period at 7:19. After an initial shot from William Borgen, Dalton Smith drove the net and scored on the rebound to round out a 4-1 final. Final shots on goal were 34-27 Americans. Hershey's special teams finished 0-for-3 on the power play and 4-for-4 on the penalty kill. The perfect night on the kill extended the team's streak to six straight games without allowing a power play goal.

The Hershey Bears return to the ice November 4 with their first match up this season against the Hartford Wolf Pack. It's Hershey's Hockey Fight's Cancer Night at Giant Center. The First 5,000 fans will receive a lavender T-Shirt, courtesy of Penn State Health. Joining the efforts of the National Hockey League, Hockey Fights Cancer unites the hockey community in support of cancer patients and their families. Players will be wearing lavender jerseys during the game that will be auctioned off post game to benefit the American Cancer Society and The Four Diamonds Fund. Ticket information is available online at HersheyBears.com.