

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wednesday | **January 12, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 502 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

The Rochester Americans (18-11-0-0) begin a four-game homestand tonight against the first-place Utica Comets (19-3-3-0) at The Blue Cross Arena. The 7:05 p.m. contest will be the fifth of 12 scheduled meetings between the intrastate rivals this season and will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM The Fan Rochester as well as AHLTV.

The Amerks have won 10 of their last 14 games and are 5-5-0-0 over their previous 10 after dropping a 3-1 contest in Syracuse Saturday night. Utica enters the matchup showing a 5-2-3-0 mark in that same span.

HEAD-TO-HEAD SERIES SNAPSHOT

The Amerks have won the previous two contests with the Comets which, includes a 4-3 overtime win in the previous get-together between the two teams on back on Dec. 8 after starting the season-series winless in the first three games. The Comets, who began the season with an AHL-record 13 straight win, have gone 6-3-3-0 in their previous 12 games. Utica has appeared in five games decided beyond regulation over that same span.

Dating back to the start of the 2016-17 campaign, Rochester has collected at least one point in 33 of the last 50 games against Utica, going 25-18-3-4 over that span. The Comets lead the season series 3-2-0-0 despite getting outshot in three of the first five meetings between the two teams.

BALANCING ACT

With five players performing at or near a point-per-game pace, the Amerks have the AHL's second-best offense and are currently averaging just under four goals per game. With a league-best 108 goals this season, the Amerks are currently one of only four teams this season to surpass the 100-goal mark so far in 2021-22.

The Amerks own three of the league's top 16 point-getters in veteran forward **Michael Mersch** and rookie forwards **Jack Quinn** and **JJ Peterka**. Mersch enters the week leading the AHL in goals and ranking fourth in points while Quinn and Peterka are second and third in rookie scoring, respectively. Quinn, who made his NHL debut last night, is also second among all AHL rookies in goals (12) and Peterka is second with a team-high 19 assists.

After making his NHL debut with the Buffalo Sabres last week and appearing in the team's final two games of the 2021 calendar year, Peterka returned to the Amerks lineup last weekend, notching five points on two goals and three assists. For his efforts, the rookie forward was named the **AHL's Player of the Week** for the period ending Jan. 2, 2022. He became the second Amerk this season to earn the weekly honors.

POWER UP

Now 29 games into the season, Rochester's power-play has gone 27-for-103 with a 26.2% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 27 goals on the man-advantage are most among all North Division teams and only four off the AHL lead behind only the Springfield Thunderbirds.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in 18 of their first 29 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in six overall, including a season-high four goals in the 7-3 win over Hershey back on Nov. 26.

Rochester scored a power-play in seven straight games between Nov. 17 and Dec. 8, the longest such streak in the AHL this season.

2021-22 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Michael Mersch	29	16	14	30	12	3
Jack Quinn	20	12	14	26	15	-3
JJ Peterka	27	6	19	25	8	2
Sean Malone	23	9	13	22	16	1
Peyton Krebs*	18	4	15	19	16	-9

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Aaron Dell	5	5-0-0	141	.910	2.76
Michael Houser	11	5-4-0	261	.900	2.98
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen*	12	6-6-0	308	.888	3.42
Mat Robson	3	2-1-0	76	.826	5.87

* = Currently on recall with Buffalo

2021-22 UTICA OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Chase De Leo	17	6	18	24	4	5
Fabian Zetterlund	21	9	9	18	6	7
Reilly Walsh	25	4	14	18	10	9
Nate Schnarr	22	7	9	16	4	11
Graeme Clarke	20	5	10	15	11	4

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Akira Schmid*	10	8-0-2	255	.944	1.60
Nico Daws	10	8-1-0	264	.926	2.15
Mareks Mitens	6	3-2-1	150	.877	3.45

* = Currently on recall with New Jersey

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Utica Comets	Rochester Americans
19-3-3-0	Record 18-11-0-0
11-2-1-0	Home Record 9-4-0-0
8-1-2-0	Road Record 9-7-0-0
5-2-3-0	Last 10 Games 5-5-0-0
12-0-3-0	Record When Scoring First 12-4-0-0
3.64 (3rd)	Goals-For Per Game 3.72 (2nd)
2.36 (1st)	Goals-Against Per Game 3.55 (29th)
21.3% (7th)	Power-Play 26.2% (1st)
85.7% (5th)	Penalty Kill 80.8% (21st)
2-1 L vs. HFD	Last Game 3-1 L @ SYR
Jan. 14 @ SYR	Next Game Jan. 14 vs. BEL



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

ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

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

Wednesday | **January 12, 2022** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Game 502 | AHL TV, The Fan Rochester



GAME NOTES



MERSCH LEADING BY EXAMPLE

With an assist last Friday against Hartford, Mersch became the first Amerk this season and just the fourth player in the AHL to reach the 30-point mark. He's now reached the mark six times in his eight-year pro career.

Mersch has totaled 17 points (9+8) and four multi-point efforts over his last 15 games dating back to Nov. 24. He's been held scoreless just five times over that span to move into fourth in the AHL in scoring with 30 points (16+14) on the season. The Amerks captain began that stretch with a five-game goal-scoring streak, the longest of his career and the longest in the AHL this season, while his five-game point marked his longest since posting a career-best seven-game point streak back in 2015.

With a league-leading 16 goals this season, Mersch has doubled his output from the previous season in three fewer games and is on pace to reach the 20-goal mark for the fifth time in eight years and the first time since the 2018-19 season as a member of the Texas Stars.

He's also on pace to reach the 20-goal mark in the fewest amount of games since 2015-16 when he scored 20 in 35 games with the Ontario Reign. He finished that season with 24 goals in only 52 appearances while also appearing in 17 games with the Los Angeles Kings.

Mersch is well on his way to become the first Amerk to score 20 goals in the fastest amount of games since **Luke Adam** reached the mark in 31 games during the 2013-14 season.

He's tied for the team lead with four power-play goals.

Mersch has appeared in all but one of Rochester's 57 games dating back to last season, including the lone player to appear in all 29 contests in 2021-22.

FANTASTIC FOUR

The Amerks currently own four of the AHL's top scoring rookies in **Jack Quinn**, **JJ Peterka**, **Peyton Krebs** and **Brandon Biro**, all of whom have combined for 85 points (26+59) through the first 29 games this season.

Coming off a two-point effort in last Friday's 5-2 win over Hartford, Quinn, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in 2020, is back to within five points of the AHL scoring lead. He enters the week second among all AHL rookies in goals (12) and points (26) in 20 games. Quinn became the 101st AHL player this season to make his NHL debut when he took the ice last night in Buffalo's 6-1 loss to the Tampa Bay Lightning. He finished with team-highs in shots (3) and shot attempts (6) while earning 16:30 of total ice time. He also became Buffalo's eighth player taken within the first two rounds of the NHL Draft under the age of 25 to appear in a game with the Sabres this season.

Peterka has moved to within a point of Quinn following his impressive five-point weekend to open the New Year, which garnered him Player of the Week honors. He is second among all first-year players with a team-high 19 assists while his 25 points are third-most. He and Quinn, taken just 26 picks apart from one another by the Buffalo Sabres in the 2020 NHL Draft, currently make up one of only four rookie duos across the entire AHL to rank inside the top four on their respective team in scoring.

Biro, meanwhile, has 10 points (4+6) over his last 11 games dating back to Nov. 27. He also has three multi-point efforts in five games over that span.

AMERKS-COMETES 2021-22 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Sean Malone	5	3	5	8	2	-2
Peyton Krebs	4	2	2	4	4	-2
Oskari Laaksonen	4	0	4	4	2	0
Brett Murray	4	2	1	3	5	1

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Michael Houser	1	0-0-0	1	.900	1.92
Mat Robson	1	1-0-0	3	.914	2.83
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	4	1-3-0	15	.821	4.42

UTICA

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Reilly Walsh	5	1	7	8	4	5
Alexander Holtz	3	3	1	4	0	1
Marian Studenic	4	3	1	4	6	2
Chase De Leo	3	2	2	4	2	2

GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Nico Daws	3	1-1-0	7	.897	2.53
Akira Schmid	3	2-0-1	7	.904	3.06

2021-22 HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 17	L	6-2	27-24	0-5	2-3
Nov. 17	L	3-2	27-12	1-6	3-4
Nov. 20	L	5-3	37-29	1-5	2-4
Nov. 24	W	4-2	23-29	1-3	2-2
Dec. 8	OTW	4-3	28-35	2-2	2-2

SERIES NOTABLES

Of the 14 different defensemen the Amerks have used this season, 12 have notched at least one point while eight have recorded one goal.

Rochester enters tonight having scored 34 goals in the opening period of play this season, which are most in the Eastern Conference. Conversely, the Comets have scored 34 times in the second period of regulation, which are tied for sixth-most.

Goaltender **Aaron Dell** has backstopped the Amerks to five straight wins through his first five starts with Rochester. Until now, the netminder has never began a season with a win in each of his first five starts at either the NHL or AHL level. He's is on pace to match his career-best seven-game win streak he posted from March 20 to April 7, 2015 with Worcester. In each of his five appearances this season, he has made 25 or more saves while also averaging 30 shots-against.

In the opening game of the season-series between Utica and Rochester, the lineup featured four selections from the 2020 NHL Draft in **Jack Quinn** (1st round, 8th overall), **JJ Peterka** (2nd round, 34th overall), Alexander Holtz (1st round, 7th overall) and Nico Daws (3rd round, 84th overall). All four have since made their NHL debuts this season.



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