



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

DAILY PRESS CLIPS

Saturday, October 28, 2017

TONIGHT'S GAME: Syracuse @ Rochester

Baptiste delivers late as Amerks win in OT

The Buffalo Star

By: Kevin Oklobzija

When the week began, Nick Baptiste didn't have a point. None. Zero. Nada. In six games.

This from a guy who piled up 25 goals and assisted on 16 others in only 59 AHL games with the Rochester Americans.

No, it wasn't like he'd gone a month and a half without production. But still, Baptiste is expected to contribute more than just superficially for the Amerks.

So surely there was a little relief on Wednesday for the third-year right winger when he scored a goal and helped set up two others in a 5-2 victory over the Laval Rocket in Quebec.

On his way, he may have figured.

And it showed on Friday night when he didn't do a whole heck of a lot in the first two periods during a rematch with the Rocket in downtown Rochester.

He righted the ship, however, when it mattered most, scoring twice in the final 1:35 to force overtime before Kyle Criscuolo won it with a short-handed goal 2:29 into the extra period. From down 3-0 after 40 minutes to a 4-3 victory.

"We're a resilient group," Baptiste said as the Amerks improved to 4-3. "We're in this room after the second period (when Laval led 3-0) and we think we're coming back, no problem."

It turns out he was correct, albeit with a few slight problems. Namely, figuring out how to get a puck past Laval goalie Charlie Lindgren. They did so by simply wearing him out, firing 29 shots on goal in the third period. Three went in, the first by Sahir Gill at 7:06 as a power play was ending.

Baptiste then sliced the deficit to 3-2 at 18:25 by slamming home the rebound of a mid-slot deflection by C.J. Smith.

Just 73 seconds later, he scored again, this time swatting in the rebound of Brendan Guhle's shot from the right circle.

"I put a lot of pressure on myself to be a leader," Baptiste said.

Part of that leadership comes from work ethic. Part comes from words. Such as nurturing Guhle, the rookie defenseman who can skate like the wind. "I've talked to him and told him, 'Your speed is a big part of your game but you don't always have to go 100 mph.' "

But he also needs to provide leadership with his offense and consistent play. He's still learning that part.

“I didn’t think he started the game very well but he found a way to get some life and some jump,” Taylor said. “That’s part of the process with him.”

There may have been a sense of false confidence for Baptiste after the breakout game Wednesday.

“I think you get overconfident,” Taylor said. “He’s still young, he’s still maturing.”

Baptiste insists he understands his role, that he’s not going to score 30 goals by doing magical things with the puck.

“I need to be good on the wall, be physical, use my speed,” he said. “I know I’m not going to go up to Buffalo and play on the first line. I need to play the right way.”

One of those players who very much played the right way on Friday was Guhle. He had two assists and seven shots.

“He had a great game,” Taylor said. “He was getting shots through, he did a lot of good things on the PK, his gaps were good. I really liked how he played.”

The winning goal came while the Amerks were killing a Kevin Porter slashing penalty, one of those old-habits-are-hard-to-break penalties that came just 54 seconds into overtime. He got back to deny a partial breakaway by Peter Holland but then hacked the Canadiens centerman.

The penalty didn’t hurt the Amerks, however, as Barry Goers turned the 3-on-4 situation into the winning rush.

He retrieved the puck near the corner to the right of goalie Linus Ullmark. With at least one teammate screaming “Hard” so he knew to ice it, Goers instead reversed direction, swung behind the net and gained speed as he started up the left wing.

“I saw nobody coming on me and the ‘D’ was pretty flat-footed so I just said, ‘Hey, let’s go,’ ” Goers said.

Goers veered right around defenseman Chris Terry at the Amerks blue line and suddenly he was away two-on-one. He passed to Criscuolo, whose shot from the right circle was stopped but he slammed in the rebound.

“We wanted to show our home fans we’re going to be a resilient bunch,” Criscuolo said.

Laval vs. Rochester game recap: Discipline trips up Rocket in loss to Americans *Habs Eyes On The Prize*

By: Scott Matla

Two days after handing the Laval Rocket a lopsided loss at Place Bell, the Rochester Americans were on the schedule again, this time on Rochester's home ice at the Blue Cross Arena.

Compared to Wednesday's game, the Laval roster was drastically different, with Nicolas Deslauriers shifted to playing defence and Martin Réway out, who, along with the Canadiens, agreed to let him take some time off to determine his future with the organization. Minus their top stars, the Rocket were in need of a disciplined effort to collect a win against the Amerks on Friday night.

It was a touch-and-go start to the opening period for the Rocket, once again dealing with discipline issues; something they've struggled with for most of this season. With Antoine Waked serving a minor for hooking the Rocket penalty kill went to work, and turned away several good Amerks chances. As the penalty expired the newly released Waked took a pass at centre ice, broke in on net, but was stoned by Linus Ullmark.

Then Jakub Jerabek took his turn in the box, also for hooking as the speed of the Amerks attack caught the Rocket defenders on their heels more than once. Thankfully the penalty kill was up to the task once more without allowing any real high-danger chances against Charlie Lindgren.

Then the Laval offence got to work. A heavy forecheck by Daniel Carr and Kyle Baun led to Stefan Leblanc having an open lane to the net, and he was able to score the opening goal. Carr's shot rebounded into the slot, and Leblanc had a clear lane right to the net, even with an Amerks defender getting a stick on the puck, it deflected past Ullmark and into the upper half of the net.

Shortly thereafter Niki Petti corralled a loose puck, then let a heavy wrist shot fly. He beat Ullmark, but left nothing more than a dent in the goal post as the puck pinged away. After trailing in shots 8-1 at one point, the Rocket closed the gap to 12-10 by period's end; not the worst situation considering two early penalty kills.

If the opening period was a back-and-forth affair, the second had the Rocket looking to land a knockout punch on the Americans. Laval came out like a house of fire, riding high on their late first period goal, while the Amerks looked to be back on their heels.

A good cycle by the Rocket allowed the second goal of the game to happen. Leblanc got a shot through on Ullmark who kicked a rebound out to Chris Terry. Terry spun and found a wide open Peter Holland, who slid home his third goal of the year.

Poor bounces and weak clearing efforts around the net cost Rochester dearly again on Laval's third goal of the game. Kyle Baun got the puck to Byron Froese in close to the net. Froese had his initial shot blocked, but collected the rebound and coolly backhanded it by a sprawling Ullmark.

The Rocket nearly added a fourth late in the period with David Broll of all players making a great defensive play on a loose puck. Ullmark stopped his shot and kept the Rocket at bay for the remainder of the period, despite being heavily outshot.

It seemed that the Rocket would finish off the Amerks in short order following the second period. A plucky Rochester side would not go away, however, and finally took advantage of the lack of discipline by their opponent. Despite killing off an extended five-on-three early in the period, Sahir Gill capitalized immediately after Yannick Veilleux left the penalty box.

The Rocket had a massive collapse to end the game, sitting back and relying on Lindgren to bail them out. The goaltender was able to hang on until the final two minutes.

With the goalie pulled, Rochester took the offensive zone with ease, and forced Brett Lernout to take an ill-timed penalty. Nick Baptiste converted on the power play to get his team within one.

Then a great keep at the blue line by Brendan Guhle set up Baptiste for the game-tying goal with 22 seconds left on the clock and forcing overtime.

Even with the extra attacker in the three-on-three period, the Americans broke in short-handed, and Kyle Criscuolo crashed the net on a rebound and sent Laval out of Rochester with a stinging loss.

Head coach Sylvain Lefebvre noted in his post-game talk with EOTP that his team needs to tighten up and take fewer penalties. He noted that giving up that many man advantages allows any team to get back in the game. The coach also admitted that they sat back far too much in the third period, and that not testing Ullmark much forced them to play on their heels.

Lindgren stopped 44 of 48 shots in the loss, and outside of the utter collapse around him in the closing minutes, he was nearly flawless on the night.

The Rocket will now travel to Ricoh Coliseum to face the Toronto Marlies tomorrow at 4:00 PM for their first meeting of the year.

Amerks rally past Laval in OT

C&C WorldWide

By: Craig Potter

Despite trailing 3-0 entering the third period, the Rochester Americans had confidence in themselves that they could prevail against the Laval Rocket.

The visitors from Quebec Providence, the new AHL affiliate of the Montreal Canadiens, were making their first-ever visit to the Flower City in the back end of the home-and-home series this week. The Amerks notched a 5-2 victory Wednesday in Laval.

The Rocket scored first once again, but this time established a 3-0 advantage after two periods of play, and led the Amerks 26-17 in shots before 2,856 fans at the Blue Cross Arena.

“It wasn’t fun getting booed off in the second period,” said Amerks coach Chris Taylor. “Goals are going to happen, mistakes are going to happen, but it’s how you respond to those mistakes that makes you a good team. We have good leadership that helped on the bench tonight.

“(Goalie Linus) Ullmark was good for us in the second period. It could have been five. That’s what we need him to keep it in control to give us a chance to comeback.”

The Amerks came out and dominated the third stanza as they fired a season-high 29 shots on Laval goalie Charlie Lindgren.

“Despite being down to enter the third, we talked as a group that we were only three shots away from tying the game,” Nick Baptiste said. “We knew if we got back to our game and played the right way, we could come back and win the game.”

Rochester, however, wasn’t able to capitalize until the final two minutes when they got a power play, and also pulled Ullmark for a 6-on-4 advantage with 1:53 remaining in regulation.

Baptiste, who tallied his first goal of the season Wednesday night, scored on the power play to cut the deficit to 3-2. Following the faceoff, which the Amerks control, Ullmark once again headed to the bench for a 6-on-5 advantage.

Baptiste fired home a rebound, off a Brendan Guhle shot, to knot the count at 3-3 and force the overtime.

In the extra period, team captain Kevin Porter was a victim of the new slashing rule as he was called for the penalty 54 seconds into the session as he was trying to stop a Rocket breakaway.

However, the Rocket never got a shot on goal. Defenseman Barry Goers brought the puck into the Laval zone, spotted Kyle Criscuolo and sent the puck to him.

“After winning the puck-battle behind the net, I saw no one was pressuring me,” Goers said. “I noticed their defensemen were flat-footed, so I figured I try to make a play. Crisuolo recognized what I saw and we had an odd-man rush.”

Crisuolo beat Lindgren for the game-winner.

“When I got the puck, I just tried to hold it and shoot far side,” said Crisuolo, who then buried his own rebound to complete the comeback.

“A win like this brings the group together,” said Taylor. “It was a good win, but we have to bring it tomorrow night. We have to be ready to play tomorrow and that is what good teams do, they bring it every night on a consistent basis.”

***NOTES** – The Amerks close out the first month of the campaign Saturday when they play host to the Syracuse Crunch at 7:05 pm. Rochester looks to improve to 3-0-0-0 against the Crunch after completing the 2-game sweep to begin the season...Dating back to last season, Rochester’s penalty kill has successfully killed off 44 of 50 penalties (88%) in its last 11 games...Rocket forward Nick Delauriers appeared in 5 games with the Amerks in 2013-14 before being traded by Buffalo to the Montreal Canadiens prior to the start of this regular season.

Sabres' Zach Redmond overcame stroke, severed artery to play in NHL

Olean Times Herald

By: Bill Hoppe

When Kim Howser spotted her son, Buffalo Sabres newcomer Zach Redmond, stretching on the family's dining room table that day almost five years ago, she said "pure panic" overwhelmed her.

Just weeks earlier, as some Winnipeg Jets extras skated prior to their Feb. 21, 2013 road game against the Carolina Hurricanes, Redmond nearly died in a harrowing accident on the PNC Arena ice.

As Redmond shadowed teammate Antti Miettinen, he fell backwards into the net. Miettinen also lost his balance, and the forward's skate blade went under Redmond's pant leg and sliced through his hockey sock, severing his right femoral artery and vein while also hitting the defenseman's groin, hamstring and quadriceps muscles.

"The minister called us in because he was that close to not making it," Howser told the Times Herald by phone Monday. "The entire family was called to North Carolina."

According to past accounts, the quick actions of teammate Anthony Peluso, assistant coach Perry Pearn and the Jets' medical staff probably saved Redmond, who lost more than half of his blood, Howser said. The femoral artery provides blood to the tissues of the leg.

Redmond, who was recalled by the Sabres on Saturday, underwent three hours of surgery and stayed in intensive care almost a week. He could've lost his leg. He left the hospital with more than 200 stitches holding him together.

So Howser, a retired surgical nurse, wasn't thrilled to see Redmond on the table with a yoga belt that day at home in Traverse City, Mich.

"I know what we tell our patients," she said. "When the stitches come out, you can get back to your normal activity, and here he is stitched up like nobody's business. I was a little shocked."

So Howser gave her son a blunt message.

"I said, 'If you pop those stitches, you don't have to worry, because I'm going to put an end to it,'" she said.

At that point, Redmond's career – he had played eight NHL games – looked iffy at best.

"In my heart, I wondered if he would ever play again at the NHL level," Howser said.

Shortly after that, Howser accompanied Redmond to the physical therapist. Watching him rehab so rigorously – "Another level that you can see he's working to get back to play hockey," she said – convinced her he would play again.

“When I saw what they were doing with him and how determined he was, I thought, ‘Wow, hot damn, he’s going to do it again,’” she said.

Yes, *again*. When Redmond was 15, he nearly lost his career after suffering a stroke.

“I’ve had the pleasure of going through a couple horrific events,” Redmond said following a Rochester Americans game Oct. 13 inside Blue Cross Arena. “Those things change your perspective. You don’t want to go through them, but you’re kind of better off for them. At the end of the day, you learn a little bit about yourself.”

First comeback

Today, Redmond, 29, is a veteran of 130 NHL contests. The Sabres traded winger Nick Deslauriers to the Montreal Canadiens for Redmond on Oct. 4, a swap of players looking for a fresh start.

“I don’t think (the deal) came as a surprise to anyone, and truthfully, I was elated to get a chance with Buffalo, an organization that treats their players so well,” said Redmond, who was summoned from the Amerks after defenseman Nathan Beaulieu suffered an upper-body injury Friday.

Familiarity has helped Redmond acclimate to his fourth organization. He previously played with Beaulieu and Sabres defenseman Zach Bogosian and winger Evander Kane.

“From the first calls that I got, everyone was super welcoming,” Redmond said. “The players, two days in, I felt like I had been here a full year.”

Redmond’s affable personality likely endears him to his teammates. Possibly because he endured so much uncertainty so young, Redmond is reflective, open to talking about how the harrowing incidents have altered his life and career.

“He’s a really high-energy guy, super positive, great to be around,” Kane said.

Everything, Redmond believes, happens for a reason.

“It seems like every time something happens there’s a dark period,” he said. “But it seems to kind of always make sense a little bit later on in life, just as far as maybe what (the) injury put me in a position to be in a different place at the right time. So that’s kind of been my career. I’m happy with how it’s went.”

By the time Redmond turned 15, his skills exceeded the talent levels in Traverse City, so he moved to Detroit to play for Compuware, a midget team.

During a tournament in Toronto that season, Redmond felt funny. His leg suddenly went numb.

“That was the beginning,” Howser said.

Redmond’s stroke temporarily paralyzed his right side.

“He couldn’t walk or use a pencil,” Howser said.

Redmond spent two and a half weeks in a Toronto hospital. But within a couple months, Howser said, he was back to normal.

“Through occupational therapy and speech therapy and *amazing* doctors and medical care, he recovered fully,” she said.

Still, early on, the prospects of Redmond resuming his burgeoning hockey career looked grim. A radiologist told his parents he couldn’t play again because he suffered a dissection in his brain, a tear along the inside wall of an artery, according to verywell.com.

“I can still feel the sinking feeling of, ‘How are we going to tell him?’” Howser said.

Howser and Redmond’s father, Dick, refused to believe his career was over. They never told him the stunning news.

Following a second opinion, the family learned a wave – Howser called it “an oddity” – caused the stroke. He could play hockey again.

“It was never a thought he wouldn’t play again in his mind,” she said.

So Redmond essentially picked up his career where he left off, joining the junior United States Hockey League’s Sioux Falls Stampede in 2005-06. The Atlanta Thrashers drafted him in the seventh round, 184th overall, in 2008.

Redmond played four years at Ferris State University, where he earned a marketing degree and captained the Bulldogs as a senior.

“The first time was devastating, because I was 15, 16, so determined, my career was just kind of taking off,” Redmond said. “I had just moved away from home that year, had a good year, was super excited for the future and everything. That hiccup was tough, but I was just blessed. Everything came back and (I) made a full recovery.”

Choosing to go on

Late in the 2012-13 season, Redmond traveled to Winnipeg to collect his belongings.

“We had no idea he wouldn’t be coming back home,” Howser said.

Redmond passed a physical examination, so the Jets offered him a conditioning stint with the St. John’s IceCaps, their AHL affiliate. Just 57 days after a blade severed an artery, he played the first of two rehab games.

Just weeks earlier, Redmond had to decide if he should keep playing. Howser said her son has always put hockey first. There wasn’t a Plan B.

“I had to figure out ... what was best for me and my family and if it made sense to go on and how I would recover, because it was a weird leg injury,” Redmond said. “I didn’t know how I’d be on the ice or anything. But again, it kind of worked out to where I was able to get through it, learn from that, grow from that.”

Howser said: “That was life-changing for him. At that time, he just knew that whatever was going to happen would happen.”

Redmond, of course, wasn’t always optimistic.

“Sometimes you just shake your head,” he said. “It’s like, ‘Why is this happening to me?’”

Whenever Redmond’s career picked up steam, he was nearly forced to give it up. But he said it was an “easy choice” to keep plowing forward.

“You can be crippled by what happened and never recover from it, or you can just put it behind you and move forward and do what you can to play the game you love,” he said. “So for me, it wasn’t all that difficult. I wanted to play, I still loved it and I had to make it work.

“It was just kind of what I needed to do. Both times for me, I guess, it was pretty easy for me to get up and get out of bed and get going.

Sabres Notebook: Learning curve for faceoff violations; Redmond happy with Buffalo
Buffalo News

By: John Vogl

Jason Pominville had just been penalized for a faceoff violation, and he quickly started a discussion with the officials. He looked angry.

In reality, the Sabres forward just wanted to know what he did wrong.

The crackdown on faceoff violations continues to be a work in progress for NHL players and officials. Judging by Pominville's comments, the adjustment period could extend for a while.

Officials penalized Pominville in Vegas on Tuesday after he stepped in for previously ejected Jack Eichel. A second violation earns a two-minute penalty, something Pominville knew. What he didn't know was how he violated the draw.

"Obviously, I wasn't happy, but I was just wondering," Pominville said. "What I was saying was I felt the Golden Knights center was over top of me. I'm supposed to set second when we're in the O-zone, so if I set second and his stick ends up being over top of mine, how is it possible that I moved first? That was my point.

"I was just kind of asking questions to really figure out what I did wrong."

The officials, who are learning on the fly just like the players, took Pominville's point under advisement.

"The ref was great," Pominville said. "He was like, 'You might be right. I might be completely wrong as well.' But he said he'll take a look at it and let me know.

"It's frustrating because everyone's unsure and you're kind of hesitant going in there. You don't want to take a penalty, but you want to win the draw."

It's certainly a fine line, as teams continue to discover. Vancouver was penalized Friday when it visited Buffalo.

"I thought it would be little bit quicker than it seems to be happening, but it's not like one team or one guy has got it figured out," Sabres forward Sam Reinhart said. "Hopefully, in this locker room we get it figured out."

The penalties will continue to happen because, as Pominville said, forwards won't just give up on the draw even with a trip to the box hanging over their heads.

"It's in the back of your mind all the time," Pominville said. "You don't want to flinch or be the guy that takes that penalty, but at the same time it's such a big difference if you win the faceoff and get the puck right away. It's the offensive zone, so you want to make sure you keep possession of it.

"If you look back at a couple years ago, guys were probably cheating quite a bit. It was getting to that point where they wanted to make an adjustment, and it's been an adjustment for a lot of guys because it is way different."

Zach Redmond knew a trade was coming. The defenseman just didn't know where he would end up.

As a guy who grew up liking Alexander Mogilny, he was thrilled it was Buffalo.

The Sabres acquired Redmond from Montreal earlier this month in exchange for forward Nicolas Deslauriers. Redmond reported to Rochester after the deal, and the Sabres called him up for the first time Saturday.

He was a healthy scratch against Boston as Taylor Fedun stepped in for injured Nathan Beaulieu. Still, putting on the uniform for pregame warm-ups was a nice first step after the trade.

"I was super happy," the 29-year-old said in TD Garden. "I'm sure some guys aren't as aware when they're getting traded, but I just kind of had a feeling. There were a lot of defensemen up there, and they'd signed a ton in the offseason. There were kind of rumors, and I kind of had a feeling, so it wasn't a complete shock to me."

"To come to a place like Buffalo, it's not too far from home," the Michigan native said. "I grew up kind of following the Sabres, so it was great for me."

Redmond was tied for the Amerks' team lead in points (three) and assists (two) after four games, which earned him the call.

"I enjoyed it down there," said the 6-foot-2, 212-pounder. "It's kind of free-flowing, and they love the D to get up in the offense, which I love to do as well. I think it should be a smooth transition. Just waiting on getting in."

Amerks recall Devante Stephens

Buffalo News

By: Amy Moritz

The Rochester Americans went to the ECHL to get some depth on the blue line. The Amerks called Devante Stephens from the Cincinnati Cyclones.

Stephens made his pro hockey debut on Oct. 14, playing against Kalamazoo for the Cyclones. The 20-year-old had played in two games for Cincinnati.

Before turning pro, Stephens played three seasons with the Kelowna Rockets in the Western Hockey League. He had 57 points (19 goals, 38 assists) in 203 games in the major-junior league. He sets career-highs in goals (13), assists (22), and points (35) last season.

The Amerks have three games in four days this week, playing at Laval on Wednesday then host Laval on Friday before welcoming back Syracuse to Blue Cross Arena on Saturday.

Steve Moses' Winding Road Through Professional Hockey

PHPA.com

By: Spencer Walker

The career of a professional hockey player can be a roller coaster ride with many twists and turns along the way in hopes of making it to the NHL. The journey for **Steven Moses** has been no different. Although he's been playing at the professional level for the past seven years throughout North America and Europe, he's back in the American Hockey League and still yearns to accomplish more.

Moses spent his junior hockey career with the Boston Jr. Bruins of the Eastern Junior Hockey League, scoring 96 points in 97 games. Growing up in Massachusetts, college hockey was very prevalent in the area. Moses spent a lot of his childhood at the rink and made it a goal of his from a young age to one-day play college hockey.

In 2008, Steven Moses made his goal a reality, suiting up for the University of New Hampshire (UNH) where he would study business with a focus on finance. Moses would go on to complete a four-year career at UNH, tallying 98 points in 148 games, and credits his time there for allowing him to put in the work needed to reach the next level.

"I was a small kid growing up in my teens, it took me a little bit of time to develop physically and put a little weight on so it was nice to go to college. It was a little less hockey, which I think is a negative thing. You only play 35-40 games but it gives you a chance to train hard in the gym and learn how to put some weight and muscle on. So in that sense I was really able to mature physically while I was at school."

Following his senior season at UNH, Moses signed a try out agreement with the New York Rangers and was assigned to their American Hockey League affiliate, the Connecticut Whale, where he gained valuable professional experience.

"Connecticut was a great learning experience. I was young and still in school. I was getting work sent to me by my professors so it was a really cool time. Obviously playing your first pro game, scoring your first pro goal are things that you remember. I think it really prepared me for the following season, my first full year of pro."

However, with an NHL lockout looming the following season, Moses had his eyes set on Europe. Knowing that the AHL would be log jammed with NHL quality players Moses signed a 1-year contract with Jokerit of the Finnish Liiga. He enjoyed a successful first professional season, scoring 22 goals and adding 16 assists in 55 games, finishing second in team scoring.

"I signed a one-year contract with Jokerit when I first went over there and it ended up being the best thing that happened to me," said Moses. "I always had intentions of coming back to North America and it was always my goal. The first year was really good and I was playing well and felt like I needed some more time there so I signed an extension to stay with Jokerit. I loved the city and the organization so I was happy to stay there."

After signing a 2-year extension, Moses appeared in 42 games in 2013-14 notching 12 goals and 11 assists. The following season he was faced with a unique situation.

Prior to the 2014-15 season, Jokerit announced that it would be joining Russia's Kontinental Hockey League (KHL). Teams changing leagues is rare in professional sports and Moses became one of the few players to experience what it was like to be on a team that changed leagues.

"It was complicated, players had multi-year contracts which were all essentially void. I had signed a multi-year contract after my first year, the second year of which was void because the team was joining the KHL. I ended up signing a new one-year contract to play with Jokerit in the KHL."

The move to the KHL provided a challenging transition for Moses. "Of course the KHL is a more competitive league. It's a big difference from playing in the Finnish league to the KHL. Travel is a lot different, the logistics of the league is more similar to the NHL, flying to every game and staying in hotels for long road trips. That was an adjustment for everyone. It was fun being part of that team that joined the KHL because we had a great team and had a lot of success."

In his first KHL season, Moses scored 36 goals, setting a single season KHL goal scoring record. He also added 21 assists to tally 57 points in 60 games, the best year of his career to date.

His on-ice success did not go unnoticed by NHL scouts. Following a career year, Moses earned the opportunity to return to North America for a chance to fulfill his childhood dream of playing in the NHL. Although he had several offers, Moses had specific criteria for how he would select his new home.

"The quickest way I sorted through the offers was giving priority to teams that were willing to give me a 1-way deal. There were a number of teams that were willing to do that." Moses was not interested in a rebuild, instead electing to sign with the Nashville Predators. "Nashville was really the only playoff team in that group. They went to the playoffs and lost to Chicago in 6 or 7 games the year before. They made the case they didn't want to make many changes, they wanted to bring me in and that's about it."

Heading into his first season with an NHL contract, Moses hoped to have an impressive showing at training camp. "Training camp didn't go as planned. No hard feelings, that's just the way it goes in sports." Moses was assigned to the Milwaukee Admirals of the AHL where he recorded 7 points in 16 games. However, Moses' time in the AHL was short lived. Having originally turned down significantly more money to sign with the Predators, Moses made a financial decision to return to the KHL.

While in North America, Moses' KHL rights were bought from Jokerit by powerhouse St. Petersburg. When Moses returned to the KHL, he found himself playing alongside former NHL stars **Ilya Kovalchuk** and **Pavel Datsyuk**. Playing with two future Hall of Famers was a special moment in Moses' hockey career which gave him the opportunity to watch and learn from some of the best.

“The was great, it was really an honor to play with just not those two but we had a tremendous team, some of the best Russian players in the world are playing in St. Petersburg which is evident by their success this season and our success last year.”

After three seasons with St Petersburg, Moses made the decision to return to North America, signing an American Hockey League contract with the Rochester Americans, the AHL affiliate of the Buffalo Sabres. Although Moses enjoyed his time in the KHL, he was not satisfied with his first stint in North American professional hockey, and felt as though the time was right to give it another shot.

“I wasn’t fully satisfied with the amount of time I gave it last time when I signed with Nashville. I just thought if there was ever going to be another chance I wanted to put my best foot forward and give it another shot and be satisfied with that before I turn the page and continue to play in Europe at some point.”

With the NHL electing to skip the upcoming Winter Olympics, it was not a deciding factor in his decision to return home from Russia, but admits it did have an impact on the type of contract he was willing to sign. Players on NHL 2-way contracts are not eligible to play in the Olympics, however, players on AHL contracts are eligible. “A big part of my reason for signing a one-way American League deal was to leave myself available for the Olympics. I didn’t want to play in the minors on a two-way contract and eliminate any chances of playing in the Olympics.”

Moses spent much of last season battling injuries and illness. Going into the 2017-18 season, he is looking to regain his love for the game, but also hasn’t forgotten the importance of team success.

“When you’re on a team you want to win, whether that’s winning the championship or winning every game you play. Last year it was a really challenging year for me personally, the first of my career where I was out more than half the year with an injury. I was struggling with that mentally of not being able to play the game that you love. I really just wanted to get back to enjoying the game. I think that is something that gets overlooked. I sort of lost the passion for the game last season, so I really just want to focus on enjoying the game and playing hockey, and let the chips fall where they may after that.”

Colin Blackwell Has Two Goals, Assist As Americans Get Past Rocket

The Canadian Press

By: Staff Report

Colin Blackwell had two goals and an assist to lead the Rochester Americans over the Laval Rocket 5-2 on Wednesday night in American Hockey League action.

Nicholas Baptiste scored once and added two helpers for the Americans (3-3-0). Casey Nelson and Sahir Gill also chipped in while Linus Ullmark stopped 37 shots.

Chris Terry and Nick Deslauriers replied for Laval (4-3-1). Zachary Fucale made 22 saves in defeat.

Rochester was scoreless on five power plays and the Rocket went 1 for 6.

Amerks Blast Laval In First-Ever Meeting

C&C WorldWide

By: Staff Report

The Rochester Americans won their first game ever against the Laval Rocket, 5-2, on Wednesday night in the first game of a home-and-home series.

The first period ended in a 2-2 tie as former Buffalo Sabre Nick Deslauriers put the Rocket with an unassisted tally.

Colin Blackwell scored his first goal as an Amerk to tie the contest less than two minutes later.

Laval regained the lead a 1:24 later, but Sahir Gill also netted his first goal for Rochester midway through the stanza to knot the count once more.

Despite being outshot 14-6 during the second period and taking three minor penalties, the Amerks escaped the frame with the 3-2 lead, but it did not take long for Rochester to double its cushion to a pair of goals early in the final stanza.

Nick Baptiste tallied his first goal of the season, which proved to be the game-winner, 7:08 into the second stanza.

Blackwell added his second goal in the third period as Baptiste picked up his second assist of the night on the marker.

With Blackwell's 3-point (2+1) performance, it established a career-high in both goals and points while the two-goal effort was his first multi-point game since Jan. 12, 2016 as a member of the Rockford IceHogs.

Defenseman Casey Nelson closed out the scoring with his first goal of the season at the 16:19 mark.

Linus Ullmark recorded 37 saves in gaining the win.

The two teams square off against one another on Friday at 7:05 pm at the Blue Cross Arena.

***NOTES** — Former Amerks defenseman Mike Milbury was the color commentator with announcer Mike Emrick on the NBCSN Wednesday night telecast of the Buffalo Sabres game in Columbus against the Blue Jackets. They mentioned the Amerks many times throughout the telecast, including the final 5-2 score in favor of Rochester. They also mentioned that Don Cherry was a former Amerks coach as well as Columbus coach John Tortorella being a former Amerks coach as well. They briefly talked about how rough the AHL was back then with Milbury fighting a Syracuse player in the hallway.