



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

DAILY PRESS CLIPS

Friday, November 3, 2017

TONIGHT'S GAME: Hershey @ Rochester

Sabres Notebook: Justin Falk expected to make season debut on defense

Buffalo News

By: John Vogl

When last season ended, Nick Baptiste essentially said it was Buffalo or bust this year. Until this week, the right winger wasn't with Buffalo.

"I have a lot more to give," Baptiste admitted Thursday. "I've got better in me, just all around in my game."

The stark realization came recently in Rochester. He got sent down during training camp after failing to impress in two preseason contests. Then, in the opening five games with the Amerks, he had no points and was minus-3.

"I wasn't working hard enough in my own end," Baptiste said in Gila River Arena. "I was too worried about scoring and getting points and contributing offensively. I got away from playing hard, playing fast."

It was a disappointing drop for a guy who felt he proved last year he belonged in Buffalo.

"What you think you deserve and what you get are two different things," Sabres coach Phil Housley said before facing the Arizona Coyotes. "I didn't say he had a poor camp. I think the rookie camp he had some good games after a little bit of a slow start, so it's something that he can learn from."

The knowledge sank in for Baptiste on Oct. 25. He had one goal, two assists and plus-4 rating against Laval. He scored twice in the rematch two nights later, with both goals coming in the final 1:35 to tie the game and send Rochester toward an overtime victory.

He was kept off the score sheet Saturday, but the signs of life earned him a recall for the Sabres' road trip.

"The last three games have been better than I started off, but for me it's not really points," the 22-year-old said. "I've got to worry about playing my game well, using my speed, playing hard defensively. I think that's why I got called up. I was playing kind of the right way, and that's what I've got to do."

The Sabres have noticed the difference.

"Just watching him on film, I think he's getting to the net harder," Housley said. "He's cleaning up some second opportunities, which is good because that's an area of focus that we've had."

While the recent success led to Wednesday's recall, it likely won't earn Baptiste a spot in the lineup Thursday. The Sabres are expected to dress Matt Moulson in place of injured Justin Bailey, leaving Baptiste to watch.

"It's an honor to be back up here," Baptiste said. "This team is where I want to be for my career. I want to be playing in Buffalo, and I want to be playing for the Sabres. I've got to work hard to make that a reality.

"I've said this before: I'm not going to come in here and steal someone's job on the top line. I've got to earn my way up. I might start on the fourth line and just work hard and do the little things to help this team win."

Amerks, Monroe County join forces to promote recycling

13 WHAM News

By: Staff Report

The Rochester Americans hockey team are working with Monroe County to push for America Recycles Day.

The annual promotional day is on Wednesday, November 15. That night, the Amerks take on the Binghamton Devils at 7:05 at the Blue Cross Arena. The game will feature free ticket deals and a recycling-themed giveaway.

Fans at the game will be handed a reusable shopping bag as a postgame giveaway. Any fan who brings a recyclable item to Monroe County's Ecopark on November 4, 8 or 15 will get a free ticket voucher to the game.

Any fans who bring plastic bags to the game will receive a voucher per person, which is good for 75 percent off one regular-priced ticket. The voucher can be redeemed for that night's game, or any remaining 2017-18 Wednesday night Amerks home game.

America Recycles Day reminds people to recycle or reuse their plastic bags, instead of throwing them into the garbage.

Monroe County's Ecopark is located at 10 Avion Drive in Chili.

Don't put plastic bags in the recycling bin. Give them to the Amerks

Democrat & Chronicle

By: Eric Brant

The term "reusable bag" shows a little something about the wastefulness that is built into our culture. It suggests that the default is to use a "bag" once, for the 20 minutes it takes to get your macaroni, orange juice and strawberries home from the store.

And indeed Americans use more than 380 billion single-use plastic bags and wraps each year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency.

Worldwide, the figure is estimated at about 1 trillion. That's about 2 million bags each minute. Plastic bags are cheap to make but they don't biodegrade quickly and most are not recycled. So they are just piling up, by the billions, causing problems around the world.

If you have a plastic bag, or a few dozen, bring them to the Nov. 15 Amerks game against the Binghamton Devils and get 75 percent off the price of a ticket. The promotion is part of the America Recycles Day event at the Blue Cross Arena. This year Monroe County and the Amerks are encouraging people to recycle plastic bags properly and avoid them when they can.

Many people think that the recycle sign on plastic bags indicates that they can be thrown in the curbside bin. Don't do this! Plastic bags are not recycled through the curbside recycling program and cause major havoc when they end up at the Monroe County Recycling Center. Workers often have to shut down the facility to clean out all the bags that are gunking up the gears. Earlier this year plant manager Todd Lewis said that plastic bags are the No. 1 cause of operational downtime.

To recycle plastic bags you must return them a retailer or supermarket, which will have recycling bins to collect them. Properly recycled bags can be made into things like lawn furniture, playground equipment or picnic tables.

Bags thrown in the garbage or left to float as litter often make their way into waterways, where they cause all kinds of problems. Plastic bags in the ocean look like squid or jellyfish, causing sea animals to eat them. In February, a rare goose-beaked whale washed up on the shore of Norway with about 30 plastic bags in its stomach. Many turtles eat them and their intestines get blocked, causing them to starve to death.

Many coastal communities have passed ordinances to ban single-use bags. They are among more than 150 cities and counties in the United States with legislation aimed at curbing plastic bag use. Some retailers are voluntarily implementing measures to discourage the use of plastic bags. Locally, the grocery store Price-Rite, for example, charges for disposable bags, which gives people a financial incentive to bring reusable ones.

A video I made about plastic bags gunking up the gears at the recycling center will be playing at the America Recycles Day Amerks game. You can get a free ticket voucher by bringing any recyclable item to Monroe County's EcoPark on Nov. 4, 8 or 15. The EcoPark is located at 10 Avion Drive in Chili and collects things like syringes, printer cartridges, packing foam, batteries

and fluorescent lights. It is open Wednesdays from 1 to 6:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. For a full list of accepted items call (585) 753-7600 or visit www.ecoparkmcny.com.

If you bring a plastic bag to the America Recycles Day game, you can get 75 percent off your ticket. Everybody who attends will get a free reusable bag.

Baptiste gets the call for injured Bailey as Sabres prep for road trip

Buffalo News

By: Mike Harrington

Just before practice opened Wednesday in HarborCenter, the Sabres announced they have recalled winger Nicholas Baptiste from Rochester and after the workout coach Phil Housley revealed Justin Bailey is battling a lower-body injury.

Both players will be on the Sabres' upcoming road trip, which features games Thursday in Arizona and Saturday in Dallas.

"We thought we'd bring an extra forward," Housley said. "Bailey has a lower body injury and is day to day so we wanted to keep him off the ice with the possibility of him playing tomorrow. And we wanted to have somebody to come with us."

In eight games with Rochester, Baptiste is tied for the team lead with three goals and is third on the club with five points. He had a pair of goals in the final two minutes of the third period Friday as the Amerks came back to force overtime against Laval in a game they eventually won, 4-3.

Baptiste, 22, had three goals and an assist for the Sabres in 14 games last year, his first taste of the NHL. But he did not make much of an impact during training camp this year and was never really in the competition to make the roster as free-agent signee Seth Griffith earned the call.

Baptiste has 41 goals and 33 assists in the AHL the last three seasons. He had 25 goals and 16 assists for the Amerks last year.

The Sabres made no changes to their lines at practice Wednesday. Seth Griffith simply slipped into Bailey's spot, which could be occupied by Baptiste on Thursday. Justin Falk is expected to get his first game of the season on defense after missing the first 12 games with a lower-body injury.

The practice lineup Wednesday:

Kane-Eichel-Pominville
Pouliot-O'Reilly-Okposo
Girgensons-Reinhart-Griffith
Moulson-Larsson-Nolan

Scandella-Ristolainen
McCabe-Tennyson
Falk-Antipin (Fedun extra)

Sabres Notebook: Justin Falk expected to make season debut on defense

Buffalo News

By: Mike Harrington

The Sabres figure to have a big addition on defense Thursday night as 6-foot-5 Justin Falk will likely make his season debut in the game against the Arizona Coyotes.

Falk has not played this season due to an undisclosed lower-body injury that flared up during the preseason. Falk played 52 games for the Sabres last season, collecting eight assists while playing the most games in a season for one team in his career. His previous high was 47 with Minnesota in 2011-12.

"I was able to build some confidence over the course of last year and that was probably the first time since my first year in the NHL to be honest that I've played consistently," Falk said Wednesday in HarborCenter. "I've always been a depth guy and I've always supported that role, but it was nice to get a consistent amount of playing time and really be able to build your confidence and your game."

Falk was on the third pair Wednesday with Victor Antipin. Taylor Fedun, who was called up from Rochester on Tuesday, was the extra defenseman. The top two pairs remained the same, with Marco Scandella pairing with Rasmus Ristolainen and Matt Tennyson with Jake McCabe.

Falk said the injury was particularly frustrating because he felt like his preseason games had been going well.

"Timing wasn't great obviously. I was really getting into rhythm," he said. "I thought the preseason went well. I was moving well, being physical, bringing the elements I needed to bring and I'm looking forward to doing that here shortly."

Falk said the most difficult time was the week the Sabres were away on their West Coast trip and he was left to skate on his own.

"You're part of a brotherhood here and you want to help and contribute," he said. "Then you watch the team go on a long road trip and you're back at the rink here rehabbing by yourself. You miss the camaraderie of it all."

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Justin Bailey sat out practice Wednesday with a lower-body injury so the Sabres brought Nicholas Baptiste up from Rochester as a precaution and said he will travel on the trip, which continues Saturday in Dallas.

"We thought we'd bring an extra forward," said coach Phil Housley. "Bailey has a lower body injury and is day to day so we wanted to keep him off the ice with the possibility of him playing tomorrow. And we wanted to have somebody to come with us."

In eight games with Rochester, Baptiste is tied for the team lead with three goals and is third on the club with five points. He had a pair of goals in the final two minutes of the third period Friday as the Amerks came back to force overtime against Laval in a game they eventually won, 4-3.

Baptiste, 22, had three goals and an assist for the Sabres in 14 games last year, his first taste of the NHL. But he did not make much of an impact during training camp this year and was never really in the competition to make the roster as free-agent signee Seth Griffith earned the call.

The Sabres made no changes to their lines at practice Wednesday. Seth Griffith simply slipped into Bailey's spot with Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart, and Baptiste could slide into that spot Thursday.

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With the Baptiste move, the Amerks recalled Vaclav Karabacek from Cincinnati of the ECHL, where he had no points in four games. Karabacek, the Sabres' second-round choice in 2014, had three goals and five assists in 23 games for the Amerks last year.

The Amerks have also signed forward Colin Blackwell off his tryout contract for the rest of the season. He has two goals and one assist in eight games, with all three points coming in Rochester's 5-2 win Oct. 25 at Laval. Blackwell played 57 games last year for the San Jose Barracuda, totaling four goals and seven assists.

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With the Bills-Jets game in the Sabres' normal spot on the dial on WGR Radio, the Sabres-Coyotes game will move down to WWKB (1520 AM).

Cornel lifts Amerks to 4-3 win in 8th round of shootout

13 WHAM News

By: Staff Report

In a back-and-forth game that saw the Rochester Americans (5-4-0-0) and Utica Comets (4-3-0-1) combine for 81 shots, 34 penalty minutes and seven goals, Eric Cornel capped off Wednesday night's game at the Adirondack Bank Center in the eighth-round of a shootout to give the Amerks a 4-3 victory.

Amerks rookie C.J. Smith and Kyle Criscuolo each registered a pair of helpers to give Rochester its third win in the last four contests. By collecting points, Criscuolo extended his point streak to a career-long four games as he shows six points (1+5) over that span. Hudson Fasching opened the scoring with his first marker of the season just 14 seconds after the opening face-off while Kevin Porter and Steve Moses each recorded their second tallies in the win. Rochester netminder Linus Ullmark had a season-high 45 saves on the way to upping his record to 4-3-0 on the campaign.

Darren Archibald paced the hometown Comets with a three-point night (1+2) while Alexis D'Aoust and Michael Chaput each scored their second goals of the campaign. Goaltender Thatcher Demko, who was named CCM/AHL Goaltender of the Month for October earlier today, saw his season-long four-game win streak come to an end after stopping 29 of 32. The second-year netminder now shows a record of 4-1-1 on the season.

Following a scoreless third period, the Amerks and Comets headed to an overtime period with the game tied at 3-3. Despite several odd-man rushes in the extra session, Ullmark and Demko each stood tall for their respective teams before a shootout was needed.

Utica elected to shoot first in the skills competition but Porter scored first for the Amerks in opening-round. Needing to score to extend the session for the Comets, Reid Boucher beat Ullmark in the third round, but it would be the only goal the Swedish netminder would allow as he stopped seven of the eight shots he faced.

In the eighth round of the shootout, Cornel was sent out in attempt to deliver the win for Rochester. The second-year forward raced in towards Demko and roofed a back-handed shot over the blocker to give the Amerks a 4-3 win.

Demko had entered the night stopping 73 of 74 shots he faced in the two previous meetings with Rochester, but Fasching opened the scoring on the night just 14 seconds into the contest. The marker from Smith and Criscuolo was the fastest goal to begin a game this season for Rochester.

Utica, however, responded 3:04 later to even the score at 1-1 nine seconds into its first power-play of the contest. The Amerks would be whistled for four straight infractions in the period but would just allow the one tally while shorthanded before the Comets took the lead at the 16:57 mark of the opening frame.

It appeared the Amerks would enter the break trailing 2-1, but a late Comets penalty gave Rochester a power-play with 27 seconds in the first period.

Picking up the puck atop the offensive zone from Brendan Guhle, Porter blasted a slap-shot from the left dot to knot the game at 2-2 with 14 seconds left in the period. With the power-play goal, it gives Rochester three straight games with a marker while on the man-advantage.

After the squads emerged from the dressing rooms, Utica retook its lead with D'Aoust's tally at the 7:42 mark of the second period. Rochester's power-play, though, would soon strike again.

The Amerks controlled the puck in the offensive zone for the first minute of the penalty to Utica's Brendan Woods before taking advantage of tired skaters as Smith sent it around the far boards. Gathering the puck near the trapezoid, Criscuolo centered a puck to Moses, who one-timed it into the net to even the score at 3-3 with 4:32 into the stanza.

A fast-paced overtime period saw the North Division rivals exchange several quality chances, but neither side could find the net, setting the stage for Cornel's winner in the eighth round of the shootout.

The oldest rivalry in the American Hockey League will be renewed on Friday, Nov. 3 in Rochester when the Amerks return home to host the Hershey Bears at The Blue Cross Arena for the only time this season. The puck drops on the 455th all-time meeting between the league's two oldest teams at 7:05 p.m. with all the action being carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester.

Sabres Recall Baptiste from Rochester

ESPN Rochester

By: Staff Report

The Buffalo Sabres have made another call up on Wednesday morning, bringing up Nick Baptiste from the Rochester Americans.

This is Baptiste's first call up of the 2017-18 season.

The 22-year old got off to a slower start in Rochester this season, but has picked things up lately with three goals and two assists in the last three games.

Baptiste led the Amerks last season in goal scoring with 25 goals in 59 games. In 14 games with the Sabres last season, Baptiste netted three goals and added an assist to the scoresheet.

Baptiste was not on the ice for the Sabres on Wednesday for practice, but it is believed that he was called up for Justin Bailey. Bailey was also not on the ice for the morning's practice.

The Sabres will head out to Arizona later in the day, before taking on the Coyotes on Thursday at 10 p.m. You can hear the game on ESPN 1520 with the Buffalo Bills playing on WGR Sports Radio 550. Pre-game coverage with Brian Koziol starts at 9 p.m.

Sabres recall Nick Baptiste for injured Justin Bailey

Olean Times Herald

By: Bill Hoppe

With winger Justin Bailey day-to-day with a lower-body injury, the Sabres recalled Nick Baptiste this morning so they have an extra forward.

Bailey, who missed today's practice inside HarborCenter, could play Thursday in Arizona, Sabres coach Phil Housley said.

"We want to keep him off the ice," Housley said before the Sabres departed for their two-game road trip.

Baptiste, 22, has three goals and five points in eight games with the Rochester Americans this season. He started his third pro season slowly after failing to earn an NHL spot in training camp. He finally got going last week, compiling three goals and five points in a two-game stretch.

The former third-round pick scored three goals and four points in his first 14 NHL games last season. He didn't practice today.

In other news, defenseman Justin Falk, sidelined all season with a lower-body injury, should make his season debut Thursday. Falk practiced beside Victor Antipin today.

Amerks top Utica in shootout

C&C Worldwide

By: Staff Report

Eric Cornel's goal in the eighth round of the shootout propelled the Rochester Americans to a 4-3 victory over the Utica Comets on Wednesday night.

Hudson Fasching opened the scoring just 14 seconds into the action off assists from C.J. Smith and Kyle Criscuolo.

The Comets grabbed a 2-1 lead, but Amerks captain Kevin Porter knotted the count 2-2 on a power play with 14 seconds to play in the period. Brendan Guhle assisted on the tally.

Utica regained the lead in the second stanza, but Steve Moses evened the score 3-3 with another power play marker off assists from Criscuolo and Smith.

The teams played a scoreless third period and 5-minute overtime.

Rochester goalie Linus Ullmark made 45 saves in earning the victory.

Amerks recall Karabacek from Cincinnati

Rochester Americans General Manager Randy Sexton announced today that the team has recalled forward Vaclav Karabacek from the Cincinnati Cyclones of the ECHL.

Karabacek, 21, has appeared in four games this season with the Cyclones, recording 10 shots, which includes a season-high five in this past Saturday's contest with the Kalamazoo Wings.

A native of Prague, Czech Republic, the second-year pro split the 2016-17 campaign between the Amerks and Elmira Jackals of the ECHL. In 32 games between the two clubs, Karabacek accounted for eight goals and 11 assists and was named an alternate for the 2017 ECHL All-Star Game.

Prior turning pro, the 6-foot-0, 195-pound forward played four years in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, totaling 117 points (56+61) in 171 career games with the Gatineau Olympiques, Baie-Comeau Drakkar and the Moncton Wildcats.

Karabacek was originally drafted by the Buffalo Sabres in the second-round (49th overall) of the 2014 NHL Entry Draft.

***NOTES** — The Buffalo Sabres on Wednesday announced the team recalled forward Nicholas Baptiste from the Rochester Americans. Baptiste (22, 6-foot-1, 205 lbs.) joins the Sabres for his first recall of the season after recording 4 points (3+1) in 14 games for the Sabres in his first NHL

season in 2016-17. Through 8 games with the Americans, Baptiste is tied for the team lead with 3 goals and tied for third among all Amerks with 5 points. A native of Ottawa, Ontario, Baptiste has totaled 74 points (41+33) in 129 AHL games since the beginning of the 2015-16 season...Rochester Americans General Manager Randy Sexton announced on Wednesday that the team has agreed to terms with forward Colin Blackwell on an American Hockey League contract for the remainder of the 2017-18 season. Blackwell, 24, has appeared in eight games this season with the Amerks while on a Professional Tryout, recording three points (2+1), all of which came in a 5-2 win at Laval on Oct. 25. A native of Lawrence, Mass., the second-year pro spent the 2016-17 campaign with the San Jose Barracuda, notching 11 points (4+7) in 57 contests before adding three goals in 15 Calder Cup Playoff contests. Blackwell was originally drafted by the San Jose Sharks in the seventh-round (194th overall) of the 2011 NHL Entry Draft...The Amerks (4-4) return to the Blue Cross Arena on Friday to face the Hershey Bears at 7:05 pm.

Amerks will have five home games broadcast on MSG

Buffalo News

By: Amy Moritz

The Rochester Americans are coming to a television set near you.

The Amerks announced they will have five regular-season home games televised on the MSG Network with the first broadcast scheduled for Nov. 15 when Rochester hosts the Binghamton Devils at 7:05 p.m. in Blue Cross Arena.

The games will be simulcast with the Amerks radio broadcasts led by play-by-play broadcaster Don Stevens, in his 32nd year with the club. Former Buffalo Sabre Ric Seiling will be the color analyst while Mike Catalana, 13 WHAM-TV's sports director, will be the on-air host.

The games on the MSG Network will be available in the Rochester and Buffalo markets. The schedule includes:

Nov. 15 vs. Binghamton Devils, 7 p.m.

Jan. 12 vs. Binghamton Devils, 7 p.m.

Jan. 15 vs. Utica Comets, 1 p.m.

March 11 vs. Syracuse Crunch 3 p.m.

March 28 vs. Utica Comets, 7 p.m.

Amerks outlast Comets in shootout

Observer-Dispatch

By: Ben Birnell

The Rochester Americans got the better of the Utica Comets on Wednesday.

They just needed some extra time to do it.

In the eighth round of a shootout, Eric Cornel backhanded shot found its way in as the Amerks spoiled the Comets' thrilling home opener with a 4-3 decision before 3,917 fans at Adirondack Bank Center at Utica Memorial Auditorium. The teams meet again Saturday in Utica.

Both teams had chances in an exciting overtime — Reid Boucher hit the post and Nikolay Goldobin was stopped on a solid breakaway opportunity — but Rochester' Linus Ullmark (45 saves on a season-most 48 shots) and Thatcher Demko (29 saves) were sharp.

“You want to create in overtime and we had the opportunities. Unfortunately we just couldn't get it done,” said Comets coach Trent Cull, whose team outscored Rochester 7-1 in two wins in October.

Each team scored in the first three rounds of the shootout — Boucher's attempt in the third was good – before Cornel ended it.

“There's room to improve for us,” Cull said. “It was OK to get a point, but we hate giving up any points. I think that's one of those that was an attainable win and we'd like to have both.”

Darren Archibald had his second multi-point game of the season with a goal and two assists and rookie linemate Alexis D'Aoust added a goal and assist while Michael Chaput had power-play goal for the Comets (4-3-0-1 overall; 9 points), who have points in five of their last six games.

With help from four consecutive victories in October, Demko was named the AHL's Goaltender of the Month for his efforts before Wednesday's game. He had

Three players scored for Rochester (5-4-0-0), which finished 2-for-6 on the power play. The Amerks have won three of their last four games.

“I think we had a couple lapses throughout the game. ... We did a lot of things really good,” Comets captain Carter Bancks said. “As a whole, we got a point and we have move on.”

After a tough start, the Comets controlled much of the first period – they had 17-11 shot advantage and four power-plays. However, the teams were knotted at 2.

It took 16 seconds for Rochester to get on the board when Hudson Fasching knocked in the puck on a weird bounce in front that dribbled past Demko.

The Comets got a quick goal minutes later with help from their top-ranked power play. Eight seconds into the advantage, Chaput knocked in a rebound from in front for his second of the season to draw even with 16:42 remaining.

Despite the Comets' pressure, the teams traded goals late. Archibald put the Comets head briefly when he scored his second, collecting Evan McEneny's point shot and firing past Ullmark with 3:03 left.

However, the Comets had to kill back-to-back penalties and Rochester cashed in with 13.6 seconds remaining on Kevin Porter's blast. It was the second power play goal the Comets allowed in the last 24 opportunities.

The teams were more even in the middle frame and were deadlocked at 3 after again trading goals.

D'Aoust put the Comets on top 3-2 with 12:18 remaining. On the play, Archibald sent a pass to a streaking Wacey Hamilton, whose shot from the slot bounced off Ullmark and D'Aoust swatted it in from the left side of the crease.

"I thought (the Archibald-Hamilton-D'Aoust) line was going tonight," said Cull, whose team had a season-best 48 shots on goal. "They weren't trying to be too fancy. They were just doing their jobs."

Rochester tied with their second power-play goal with 4:30 left when Steve Moses scored on the doorstep after a quick feed from behind net from Kyle Criscuolo.

The Comets had their chances in the third – Goldobin and Evan McEneny each hit the post within a few seconds of each other — and the Comets couldn't get convert. Demko also had some good stops to help force overtime.

The Comets continue a season-best five-game homestand against Binghamton at 7 p.m. Friday.

Notes: Before the game, there was a moment of silence for those victims of the terrorist attack Tuesday in New York City. ... Comets General Manager Ryan Johnson was at the game. ... Yan-Pavel Laplante, Cam Darcy (injury), Griffen Molino, Guillaume Brisebois and Michael Carcone were all scratches Wednesday.

Sabres Prospects: Malone ready to roll, finally, in his first pro season

Buffalo News

By: Amy Moritz

For better or worse, Sean Malone is used to playing catch-up.

He spent two summers undergoing hip surgery and the ensuing rehabilitation process, hampering the starts to his junior and senior collegiate seasons at Harvard.

Malone thought all that was behind him after participating in the Buffalo Sabres development camp in July. But injury got the best of him again, and Malone sat out the Prospects Challenge, training camp, and the start of the season.

While he's behind on the learning curve, he's back in the lineup. Malone has now played five games with the Rochester Americans and is working his way into the lineup in his first full season as a pro hockey player.

"You can see improvement," Rochester coach Chris Taylor said about Malone. "He's by far behind the eight ball, behind everybody else with missing prospect camp and training camp and the start of the season. ... It's definitely tough. Everybody's got a head start on you. They've got games, they've worked hard all summer for it. He battled back hard and these last few games has played really well. I'm happy with his development."

Saturday night in Rochester, Malone played his fifth game of the season on the fourth line with Dalton Smith and Adam Krause. Through those five games, he has one shot on goal and two minutes worth of penalties as he searches for his first professional point.

"I'm just really getting back in the swing of things," Malone said. "I had a lot of time off with injury. It's always hard coming back from being out for a while. I'm in a new environment with new people. I think it's going pretty well. I've been getting better and better each game."

That's Malone's approach, one step at a time. The West Seneca native was drafted by the Sabres in the sixth round (159th overall) in the 2013 NHL Entry Draft. The 22-year-old went on to play four seasons at Harvard where he dealt with his nagging hip injury.

His senior season was a breakout year. Malone set career highs in goals (18), assists (24) and points (42) while helping the Crimson to the ECAC Championship, the Ivy League Championship, the Beanpot title, and a run to the semifinals at the Frozen Four.

When that was done, he signed his two-year, entry-level contract with the Sabres and made his NHL debut on April 8, tallying one shot over 12 minutes of ice time in a 3-0 Sabres loss at the Florida Panthers.

Malone had a solid summer of training for the first time in two years. But injury struck again. Under the care of the medical and training staff in the Sabres organization, Malone was able to return to the ice faster than planned and so far feels good.

"Fortunately for me I have a good staff here working with me and I was able to get back a lot sooner than expected so I'm happy with the way things turned out," Malone said, adding that the challenges along the way only strengthen his resolve to play.

"Physically and mentally it's always tough taking a lot of time off," Malone said. "You want to be out there, you want to be competing for a spot at training camp and unfortunately I wasn't able to do that. But I'm just happy to be playing right now. I put a lot of work in to get here. I've dealt with it in the past so I've learned from my past experiences and try to stay positive."

Rochester Americans: The Amerks took four out of a possible six points this past week. Rookie C.J. Smith enters the week tied for the team lead in scoring while ranking 11th among all AHL rookies with six points (two goals, four assists) in his first eight games.

In other Amerks injury news, Alexander Nylander still has yet to play a game this season, but coach Chris Taylor said the forward has been skating.

"Just a lower body (injury) and he's getting there," Taylor said. "He's skating. He's on target where we expect him to be back hopefully soon."

Rochester plays four of its next five games on the road, starting Wednesday at Utica. The team returns to Blue Cross Arena to host the Hershey Bears on Nov. 3 then returns to Utica Nov. 4 with two games at Belleville Nov. 10-11.

WHL

Vojtech Budik (defense, Prince Albert Raiders): Has one goal and three assists through 13 games.

Brandon Hagel (forward, Red Deer Rebels): On a seven-game point streak with two goals and eight assists over that span. Through 14 games he has 18 points with one power play goal.

OHL

Cliff Pu (forward, London Knights): Had a three-point night Oct. 27 in London's 8-2 win over the Flint Firebirds. Pu had a power-play goal, which proved to be the game-winner, and two assists. In 14 games he has 10 points (three goals, seven assists).

Austin Osmanski (defense, Peterborough Petes): The East Aurora native has three assists in his last four games. Through 15 games he has eight points, already tying his mark from last season.

QMJHL

Vasily Glotov (forward, Shawinigan Cataractes): Finished October with eight goals and three assists during the month. That includes a three-goal performance on Oct. 22 in a 7-4 win over the Moncton Wildcats.

NCAA

William Borgen (defense, St. Cloud State): The junior has four assists to start the season as the Huskies are off to a 5-0-0 start.

Christopher Brown (forward, Boston College): Scored a power play goal, the only BC tally of the game, in a 6-1 loss to Denver on Oct. 28. Brown has two goals and one assist as the Eagles are off to a 1-5-1 start.

Jacob Bryson (defense, Providence): The sophomore had an assist and six shots on goal in the Friars 3-0 win over Boston University. He has five assists for Providence (5-2-0).

Ivan Chukarov (defense, UMass): Will be out for four to six weeks with an upper body injury. He enters his junior year at UMass with five career goals and 11 points over 72 games.

Casey Fitzgerald (defense, Boston College): Assisted on Christopher Brown's power play goal in a 6-1 loss to Denver on Oct. 28. Leads the Eagles in points with five (two goals, three assists) as BC is on a four-game losing streak.

Connor Hurley (forward, Minnesota): After three seasons at Notre Dame, Hurley transferred to the University of Minnesota. He will sit out this season per NCAA transfer rules and have one year of college eligibility left for the 2018-19 season. In 98 career games for the Fighting Irish, Hurley had 48 points (14 goals, 34 assists).

Casey Mittelstadt (forward, Minnesota): Had a three-assist weekend for the Gophers as they swept Clarkson Oct. 27-28. Mittelstadt is second on Minnesota in scoring with seven points (two goals, five assists) in seven games.

Brett Murray (forward, Penn State): The sophomore has one assist in seven games for the Nittany Lions, who are 4-4-0.

Philip Nyberg (defense, UConn): Was injured in the season opener against Maine and has missed the last seven games with a lower body injury.

Judd Peterson (forward, St. Cloud State): The senior has five assists in five games as the Huskies are off to a 5-0-0 start.

Linus Weissbach (forward, Wisconsin): A native of Sweden, the 19-year-old freshman has three goals and two assist through seven games. He missed this past weekend's series with St. Lawrence with an upper body injury.

Maxwell Willman (forward, Brown): Began his senior season by picking up two assists as Brown split its opening weekend with Yale.

Europe

Rasmus Asplund (forward, Farjestad BK): Has three goals and six assists in 15 games.

Marcus Davidsson (forward, Djurgardens): Has one goal and three assists in 12 games in the Swedish Hockey League. He has three goals and an assist in three games played with the Djurgardens Under-20 team in the SuperElit League.

Oskari Laaksonen (defense, Ilves): Has seven assists and one goal in 20 games in the Under-20 league (Jr. A SM-Liiga).

Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (goalie, LeKi): In 10 games he has a 2.90 goals against average and a .911 save percentage.

Victor Olofsson (forward, Frolounda HC): Has six goals and three assists in 14 games in the Swedish Hockey League.