



# ROCHESTER AMERICANS

## DAILY PRESS CLIPS

*Friday, November 17, 2017*

*TONIGHT'S GAME: Hartford @ Rochester*

## **Sabres Notebook: Taylor Fedun latest to hit the injured reserve**

*Buffalo News*

By: Amy Moritz

The injuries continue to pile up on the blue line for the Buffalo Sabres.

Add Taylor Fedun to the list. The defenseman played only one shift in the third period of Tuesday's overtime loss at Pittsburgh. After the off day, the team officially placed him on injured reserve and recalled defenseman Casey Nelson from Rochester.

"Taylor Fedun has a lower body injury. Probably out six to eight weeks," Sabres head coach Phil Housley said Thursday morning after the team practiced in KeyBank Center. They left for Detroit after practice for Friday's game with the Red Wings.

Housley confirmed that Fedun sustained the injury in the Pittsburgh game. "He was trying to work through it," Housley said. "He wanted to be a part of the team and it's good to see him try to gut it out for a little bit but it just didn't happen for him."

Justin Falk was also missing from practice, but Housley said it was a maintenance day.

Defenseman Matt Tennyson was also added to the injured reserve list. He has missed four games with a foot injury.

Nelson, in his second full pro season, has four points (one goal, three assists) with the Amerks this season. In 18 career NHL games with the Sabres he has four assists.

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Marco Scandella said he needs to keep his emotions in check.

The defenseman was hit with a \$5,000 fine Wednesday by the NHL Player Safety Department for a two-hand slash on Pittsburgh's Patric Hornqvist.

"I just need to keep my emotions a little better in check," Scandella said. "One thing I will say, the back swing looked a lot worse than actually what I did. I went up and changed my mind a little bit, but I still got him and you know what, it's on me. I just need to keep my emotions better checked.

"It is an emotional game. That's hockey. Obviously I'm not out there trying to hurt anybody. It just didn't look good and it's out of my character. I don't want to do that."

Scandella took a baseball swing at the lower body of Hornqvist midway through the second period of Buffalo's 5-4 overtime loss. Scandella earned a two-minute slashing penalty, and Hornqvist went ballistic on the officials after picking up two minutes for interference.

"Well, you know in the heat of the moment your emotions get high and we took a penalty when we were down one, which we've got to be smarter in those areas as well," Housley said. "But he gets picked there and I think there could have been a call earlier than that with another pick which wasn't called. But that doesn't give him the right to take matters in his own hands. He's just got to

be smarter because he's such a competitor and he loves to compete, that sort of caught him off guard. But we'll learn from it."

The \$5,000 fine is the maximum allowed under the collective bargaining agreement. The money goes to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

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The Sabres will get their first look at Detroit's new Little Caesars Arena Friday night when they visit the Red Wings for a 7:30 p.m. game.

The Red Wings are coming off a raucous affair in their 8-2 win over the Calgary Flames at home Wednesday night.

Detroit was up 6-2 when the game turned into an all-out brawl. It started when the Red Wings Luke Witkowski fought Brett Kulak, then challenged Travis Hamonic.

When officials gave Witkowski a 10-minute misconduct, he left the penalty box and went to the Wings bench to leave the game. Matthew Tkachuk slashed Witkowski in the back of the leg, prompting Witkowski to come back out on the ice. Hamonic got involved, and Anthony Mantha responded.

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The Sabres assigned forward Nick Baptiste to the Rochester Americans Thursday afternoon. He has no points in four games with the Sabres this season.

## **Sabres recall Criscuolo and Nelson**

*Buffalo News*

By: Amy Moritz

The Sabres made some roster moves Thursday morning, recalling forward Kyle Criscuolo and defenseman Casey Nelson from the Rochester Americans. They placed defensemen Taylor Fedun and Matt Tennyson on injured reserve.

Criscuolo gets his first recall after signing a two-year contract with the Sabres in July. In 14 games with the Amerks he is tied for the team lead with 11 points (five goals, six assists). Nelson has four points (one goal, 13 assists) in 14 games with the Amerks. Nelson has played 18 career NHL games with the Sabres with four assists.

## **Criscuolo on the cusp of his NHL debut with the Sabres**

*Buffalo News*

By: Amy Moritz

He was undrafted and undersized.

Still, Kyle Criscuolo carved out an impressive collegiate career at Harvard. A captain his final two seasons, Criscuolo finished with 53 goals and 60 assists, leading the Crimson back to the NCAA tournament for the first time in nine years.

During his time at Harvard, he played with and against NHL draft picks, including facing off against Jack Eichel in his only season at Boston University. In practice and in games, Criscuolo, who clocks in at 5-foot-9 and 172 pounds, saw he could hold his own against the predestined NHL players. He started to really believe a pro hockey career was possible, that the NHL wasn't just a dream.

The perseverance has paid off as the 25-year-old is on the cusp of his first game in the National Hockey League.

Criscuolo was recalled by the Buffalo Sabres on Thursday — his first NHL call-up. He practiced on a line with Zemgus Girgensons and Jordan Nolan in KeyBank Center. While Sabres coach Phil Housley said the lineup will be a "game-time decision," it's likely to be the NHL debut for Criscuolo when the Sabres play the Detroit Red Wings in Little Caesars Arena Friday night.

"Super excited," Criscuolo said as the media scrummed around his locker in KeyBank Center Thursday morning. "Very excited to be here. Good first practice."

"I think it's obviously a long road to get here. I'm excited to be here. I'm going to think about it maybe in a couple weeks. But right now, I've got to focus on the game."

The professional part of his journey began after his senior season at Harvard when he signed with the Detroit Red Wings and played four games with their AHL affiliate in Grand Rapids.

"The caliber of players I was playing with in college and knowing they were going to be making the next step to pro hockey, NHL, I sort of felt like I could play with these guys and I could keep up," Criscuolo said. "Certain guys I was playing against I felt like I can do it. I didn't know what was going to come of it, but I was definitely motivated and wanted to keep going."

He returned to Grand Rapids last season, his first full year of pro hockey, and was a key component of the Griffins run to winning a Calder Cup Championship. In 76 regular season games, Criscuolo had 17 goals and 24 assists. In 19 playoff games he had five goals and four assists.

But over the summer he moved on from the Red Wings organization, choosing to sign with the Sabres. It was a difficult decision, but one he felt made the most sense for his hockey style.

The Sabres "understood how I play and how I want to play," Criscuolo said. "I think they did a good job of knowing what kind of player and person I am and what I want to bring to the team. I think what they said to me was pretty convincing that they want to put me in spots they think I can be effective.

"They said you can come in here and you're going to have to earn everything you get. I think everyone was pretty honest with me. They didn't promise me anything. They said you can try to earn your spot and work your way up from Rochester and be one of the top nine guys in Rochester and then try to make it to the next level and earn your way up."

And earn his way up, he did.

Criscuolo, who signed a two-year contract in July, is tied for the team lead with the Rochester Americans in scoring with 11 points (five goals, six assists) through 14 games. He leads the team with a plus-4 and with 40 shots on goal.

But it's not just the stats that earned him a shot at his first NHL game. It's also the way he plays the game, something Housley noticed through the two preseason games Criscuolo played for the Sabres.

"It's just his competitive nature," Housley said. "His willingness to get in the tough areas, go down low and win puck battles against bigger guys and using his speed and the energy he brought. I thought it really rubbed off well on our bench and our coaching staff."

## **Sabres look to Kyle Criscuolo for spark**

### ***Buffalo Hockey Beat***

By: Bill Hoppe

Center Kyle Criscuolo left a pretty good gig to join the Sabres.

The undrafted Harvard product enjoyed a terrific rookie season in 2016-17, scoring 17 goals in the AHL and winning a Calder Cup with the Grand Rapids Griffins.

Leaving the Detroit Red Wings organization to sign a two-year, two-way contract with the Sabres on July 1 “was really tough,” he said.

“The people were great to me, the organization was great to me, they gave me a chance out of school,” Criscuolo said Thursday after earning his first NHL recall. “I mean, it was definitely a tough decision, and ultimately I had to go with my gut.”

Criscuolo’s gut told him the Sabres offered a special opportunity.

“They understood how I play and how I want to play,” he said after the Sabres prepared for Friday’s road tilt against the Red Wings. “I think they did a good job of knowing what kind of player and person I am and what I want to bring to the team. I think what they said to me was pretty convincing that they want to put me in spots they think I can be effective.”

The 5-foot-9, 172-pound Criscuolo, 25, thrived early on with the Rochester Americans, compiling five goals and a team-high 11 points in 14 games.

“I just try to use my speed and get in on the forecheck and create havoc and cause some turnovers,” Criscuolo said inside KeyBank Center. “I try to keep it simple and get to the net as much as I can.”

After Wednesday’s 3-0 home win against the Binghamton Devils, Amerks coach Chris Taylor informed Criscuolo and defenseman Casey Nelson the Sabres needed them.

“It’s obviously a long road to get here,” Criscuolo said.

Clearly, the reeling, last-place Sabres, who have lost three straight games (0-1-2), are examining all their options to jumpstart a dismal season.

While Criscuolo wasn’t a notable pro prospect, he played four years at Harvard, where he captained the Crimson his last two seasons.

“The caliber of players I was playing with in college and knowing they were going to be making the next step to pro hockey, NHL, I sort of felt like I could play with these guys and I could keep up,” he said.

So Criscuolo, who graduated with a degree in psychology and a minor in economics, pursued a pro hockey career.

“I didn’t know what was going to come of it, but I was definitely motivated and wanted to keep going,” he said.

Despite posting strong numbers – the undersized Criscuolo compiled 53 goals and 113 points in 124 games with Harvard – some teams hesitated “to sort of go all in on me,” he said.

“I don’t know if I’d necessarily say I was overlooked,” he said.

So what has helped Criscuolo reach the NHL?

“Just persistence,” he said.

Sabres coach Phil Housley said Thursday that Criscuolo’s status for Friday’s contest will be decided later. But the New Jersey native will almost certainly make his NHL debut.

Housley put Criscuolo between Jordan Nolan and Zemgus Girgensons during Thursday’s practice. The Sabres still have one extra forward, Matt Moulson.

Right away in training camp, Housley said he noticed Criscuolo’s “competitive nature.”

“His willingness to get in the tough areas, go down low and win puck battles against bigger guys and using his speed and the energy he brought,” Housley said. “I thought it really rubbed off well on our bench and our coaching staff.”

Sabres goalie Robin Lehner said: “He had a real good camp, was one of the guys that stood out to me.”

Lehner’s glad the Sabres rewarded Criscuolo.

“Prospects are great, but there’s tremendous skill in the AHL,” he said. “There’s a lot of good players fighting and working hard to get their opportunities.”

## **Sabres notes: Casey Nelson recalled with Taylor Fedun injured**

### ***Buffalo Hockey Beat***

By: Bill Hoppe

After suffering a lower-body injury, Sabres defenseman Taylor Fedun stayed on the bench for the rest of Tuesday's 5-4 overtime loss in Pittsburgh.

"He was trying to work through it," Sabres coach Phil Housley said Thursday. "He wanted to be a part of the team. It's good to see him try to gut it out for a little bit."

Fedun's injury is so bad it will sideline him six to eight weeks, Housley said. To replace him, the Sabres recalled defenseman Casey Nelson from the Rochester Americans.

The Sabres created roster space for Nelson and center Kyle Criscuolo, who was also summoned, by placing Fedun and defenseman Matt Tennyson on injured reserve.

Nelson, a college free agent the Sabres signed in 2016, has one goal and four points in 14 AHL games this season. The Wisconsin native played 18 NHL contests over the last two seasons, compiling four assists.

If Nelson plays in Friday's road tilt against the Detroit Red Wings, he will become the 11th defenseman to appear in a game for the Sabres just 19 games into the season.

"It's great that we brought a lot of new, fresh faces in which helps, especially since our defense has been hit with the injury bug here," Housley said of the Sabres' AHL depth. "So it's great to have options because of the injuries we've had and the depth that has been taken away from us."

Nelson practiced with defenseman Marco Scandella on Thursday inside KeyBank Center.

The Amerks are 8-4-1-1, off to their best start in years. To Nelson, that's no coincidence.

In addition to having a new coach, Chris Taylor, and general manager, Randy Sexton, they have about 15 new players.

"It's a world of a change," Nelson said. "Everything, from everybody's attitude, it's been a great change. I think we're heading in the right direction."

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Scandella's major whack to Penguins winger Patric Hornqvist leg about halfway through Tuesday's game – it looked like he was chopping down a tree – earned him a \$5,000 fine, the largest allowable under the collective bargaining agreement.

“I just need to keep my emotions a little better in check,” Scandella said. “One thing I will say, the back swing looked a lot worse than actually what I did. I went up and changed my mind a little bit, but I still got him. ... I just need to keep my emotions better checked. ...

“It is an emotional game. That’s hockey. Obviously, I’m not out there trying to hurt anybody. It just didn’t look good and it’s out my character. I don’t want to do that.”

Housley said Scandella was frustrated because of a pick that wasn’t penalized.

“But that doesn’t give him the right to take matters in his own hands. He’s got to be smarter because he’s such a competitor and he loves to compete, that sort of caught him off guard.

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The Sabres sent winger Nick Baptiste back to the Amerks on Thursday. Baptiste, 22, had zero goals in four games.

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Speaking Wednesday in Rochester, Taylor said he hopes forward Alexander Nylander, out since suffering a lower-body injury in rookie camp more than two months ago, can play this weekend.

Nylander, 19, skated in the pregame warm-up Wednesday. The Sabres selected the Swede eighth overall in 2016.

Meanwhile, Taylor said Amerks winger Justin Bailey, out since suffering a lower-body injury Oct. 27 with the Sabres, “felt that he wasn’t ready to go.” The Sabres sent the Williamsville native to Rochester earlier this week.

Forward Evan Rodrigues, out since hurting his hand during the NHL preseason, is also back with the Amerks. Taylor didn’t offer a timeline for his return.

## **Amerks skating by lately, but help is on the way**

*Democrat & Chronicle*

By: Andy Lipari

The Rochester Americans are having one of their best seasons in a decade through 14 games this season. They find themselves in fourth place in the Eastern Conference, a spot they haven't finished in since the 2006-07 season.

Rochester went through a three-game skid earlier in the schedule, where they were outscored 12-3. Since then, they have gone 6-1-1-1 in their past nine games, gaining points in eight of those. During that stretch, six of those games were decided by one goal.

They've had success without a lot of their offensive firepower from last year, but help is soon on the way.

Justin Bailey had 23 goals a season ago for the Amerks. He has only played three games in Rochester, scoring twice, having spent most of the season with the parent Buffalo Sabres. He was sent down earlier in the week and could play as early as Friday.

Justin Bailey returns to Rochester having spent most of the season with the Buffalo Sabres.

Nick Baptiste led the team with 25 goals last season, but has played eight games in an Amerks sweater — recording three goals and two assists. Baptiste was just sent back to Rochester on Thursday.

Alexander Nylander hasn't played a game yet this season, and he was coming off a 39-point season (10 goals, 29 assists). He skated in warm-ups Wednesday and may come back this weekend.

Amerks head coach Chris Taylor made it clear the players will stick with what's been working lately.

“For sure they're going to help, but we're not going to change our game or our style,” Taylor said. “They might think we're going to change a little, but we're not. We're going to play the same way because that's how we're getting results. We're sticking with it as a team and our leaders are sticking with it, so when they come back that's the way they're going to play, too.”

Before last night's 3-0 win over Binghamton, the Amerks (8-4-1-1, 18 points) had allowed more goals than they had scored, now it's only a plus-2 in goal differential. Their 44 goals ranks ninth in the Eastern Conference and their 42 goals allowed is sixth in the East.

More: Amerks find extra offense, bolstered by news of players about to return to ice

Without production from a few usual suspects, how have the Amerks been winning games?

Kyle Criscuolo was an answer in that category before his call-up to Buffalo on Thursday. Criscuolo is tied for the team lead with 11 points, same as C.J. Smith, but neither rank in the top 40 in AHL in points.

Sahir Gill leads the team with six goals, tied for 21st in the league, and the 25-year-old had already tied his career-high for goals in a season.

“You get to know certain tendencies of certain players and how to play with them and it’s starting to click a little bit more for me out there,” said Gill, who recorded an assist Wednesday against Binghamton. “I’m trying to go out and have fun. I know my ability as a player and I’m trying to enjoy it when I get out there.”

What Taylor can enjoy, and even fans for that matter, is the fact that it’s been someone different nearly every night leading the way for the Amerks. On Wednesday, defensemen Stuart Percy and Eric Cornel did the scoring, both power-play opportunities. Rochester has converted 25.5 percent of the time with a man-advantage in the past eight games.

“Our depth carried us through another game and we need depth,” Taylor said. “Injuries are going to happen and call-ups are going to happen. We can’t complain and feel sorry for ourselves. We have to let these guys grow and let them get their games in.”

One person getting his games in is goalie Linus Ullmark, who has been in net for 11 of the Amerks' 14 games, posting a 7-3-0-1 record as well as a 2.71 goals against average and a .921 save percentage.

However, his efforts are to the point where the lack of scoring by the Amerks is covered up all the time, and he said after Wednesday’s win that he’s had a few lucky bounces lately.

With a few more lucky bounces and the addition of players who can create some lucky bounces on offense, the Amerks might be ready for a significant run.

## **Day of roster moves for Sabres, Amerks, Cyclones**

*Democrat & Chronicle*

By: Leo Roth

It was a busy day of comings and goings for the Rochester Americans on Thursday.

Going: Forward Kyle Criscuolo and defenseman Casey Nelson to the parent Buffalo Sabres; forward Vaclav Karabacek and defenseman Brycen Martin to the Cincinnati Cyclones of the ECHL.

Coming: Forward Nick Baptiste, from the Sabres; Defensemen Arvin Atwal and Eric Knodel from Cincinnati on professional tryout contracts.

The Amerks (8-4-1-1) are enjoying a strong November with four wins, a loss in overtime and a loss in a shootout. They are just four points behind Toronto (11-4-0-0) for first place in the AHL's North Division heading into Friday's home game against Hartford at Blue Cross Arena at the Community War Memorial.

Criscuolo is tied for the Amerks scoring lead with five goals, six assists and 11 points and also leads in plus-minus (plus-4) and shots (40). That hot start earned the Southampton, New Jersey native and second-year AHL pro his first NHL recall.

Nelson, who played 18 games for the Sabres last year, has 1-3 - 4 in 14 games with Rochester this season. In Buffalo, defensemen Taylor Fedun (lower body) and Matt Tennyson (foot) were placed on injured reserve.

Buffalo's blue line has been hit hard with injuries and the trickle down is being felt.

A native of Delta, British Columbia, Atwal has appeared in 11 games for the Cyclones, going 1-3 - 4. He had 39 points last season as a rookie.

Knodel, 27, has 12 points (5-7) in 11 games for Cincinnati, tied for second among ECHL defensemen. He was a league all-star last season and has amassed 81 points (25 - 56) over 163 career ECHL appearances between Cincinnati, Utah and Orlando.

The Amerks are coming off a 3-0 victory over Binghamton. Linus Ullmark earned his second AHL shutout in his 200th career start.

Friday is Military Appreciation Night. Players will wear military-themed jerseys that will be auctioned off with proceeds given to the Veterans Outreach Center. The team is offering all United States military veterans, retired, active duty, reserve and National Guard service members one complimentary ticket to the game with additional tickets available for as low as \$12.

## **The Sabres have more injuries on defense**

***ESPN Rochester***

By: Staff Report

The Sabres have called up two players from Rochester. Casey Nelson and Kyle Criscuolo are up.

Defenseman Taylor Fedun only played one quick shift in the beginning of the third period in Pittsburgh. He's been placed on injured reserve along with Matt Tennyson.

Criscuolo is 25-years-old and has never played a NHL game. This season with Rochester he has five goals and six assists for 11 points in 14 games. That's tied with C.J. Smith for the team scoring lead.

Nelson has a goal and three assists. He was a college free agent signing at the end of the 2016 season. Nelson has 18 NHL games picking up four assists.

Buffalo plays in Detroit on Friday before returning home on Saturday night.

## **Amerks honor veterans and military personnel**

***Fox Rochester***

By: Staff Report

The Rochester Amerks are honoring veterans and military personnel at tomorrow night's game.

All active, reserve, National Guard and retired military members will receive one free ticket to tomorrow night's home game against the Hartford Wolf Pack. Faceoff is scheduled for 7:05.

A limited number of military-themed Amerks pucks signed by various players will be on sale for \$10. The first 5,000 fans will also receive Amerks dog tags.

The team will also wear military-themed jerseys and socks that will be auctioned off. Proceeds will benefit the Veterans Outreach Center.

There is also a T-shirt and ticket package that includes a game ticket and a military appreciation T-shirt for \$30.

Amerks team reporter Erica Whyte joined us on Good Day Rochester, along with Laura Stradley, executive director of the Veterans Outreach Center, to talk more about what's happening tomorrow night.

## **Nylander ready to play in Rochester**

*AP News*

By: John Wawrow

Buffalo Sabres prospect Alexander Nylander is set to make his minor-league season debut after missing two months with a lower body injury.

Rochester Americans coach Chris Taylor told The Associated Press the Sabres' 2016 first-round pick is scheduled to play on Friday when the American Hockey League team hosts Hartford. The forward has spent the past 10 days practicing with the Americans since being hurt during a pre-training camp prospects tournament in Buffalo in early September.

Nylander enters his second season in Rochester after scoring 10 goals and 18 assists in 65 games last year. He also had an assist in four games with the Sabres.

The 19-year-old is the younger brother of Toronto Maple Leafs forward William Nylander.

The Sabres on Thursday recalled forward Kyle Criscuolo and defenseman Casey Nelson from Rochester, and placed defensemen Taylor Fedun and Matt Tennyson (foot) on injured reserve.

Buffalo plays at Detroit on Friday.

## **Nylander nearing the end of the long road back from injury**

*Buffalo News*

By: Amy Moritz

No one thought it would be this long.

Even in the super-secret world of hockey injuries where specifics are heavily guarded and information is carefully worded, this caught pretty much everyone off guard.

It was during the first game of the Prospects Challenge when Alexander Nylander suffered a lower body injury. The official word was that the Buffalo Sabres No. 1 draft pick in 2016 was being held out for precautionary reasons. Day-to-day was the status given.

That was on Sept. 9.

It took more than two months for Nylander to return to practice, joining the Rochester Americans on Monday.

Certainly fans and the media didn't think Nylander would miss the first two months of the season with an injury that was labeled "day to day."

"Oh, me, too. We're all in the same boat," said Amerks coach Chris Taylor, who coached Nylander at Sabres Development Camp and for that one game at the Prospects Challenge. "At Prospect Camp it was only supposed to be a couple-of-days thing and it just lingered on. He's been seen by a couple people and this is what they've told him – to stay off it a little bit longer. That's what he's been doing. And we just want him for the long term, not a short term and then back hurt. We want to make sure he's healthy and ready to go for the whole season."

Nylander has been skating on his own for some time but just joined the Amerks during practice this week. While there is a possibility the left winger will be in the lineup this weekend, either at home Friday when Rochester hosts Hartford or Saturday when the team travels to Binghamton, both coach and player are cautious with their word choice.

"It's close," Taylor said. "We'll wait and see for the final word, when he's ready and everybody's ready. It takes time. It's not just an easy process of getting back in the lineup as everyone thinks it is. It's tough."

Nylander was one of the last three players off the ice in Blue Cross Arena Wednesday morning before the Amerks hosted Binghamton. The 19-year-old wasn't going to be in that lineup, but his return would be soon, right?

"We'll see," Nylander said. "We're taking it day by day. I feel good. See how I feel. Hopefully very soon."

In his second professional season, Nylander definitely has the hockey-speak down.

Now to play a meaningful game to showcase all the work he put in during the offseason.

Nylander was poised to fight for a position with the Sabres in training camp after an up-and-down first year of pro hockey. He was a star for Sweden at the World Juniors with five goals and seven assists in seven games, but that didn't carry over into his Amerks play. At least not consistently. Still, he finished the season with four NHL games, a high note and motivation for the summer.

He showed up to Sabres development camp physically bigger. He says he's stronger, and summer practices with the Sabres showed that, along with a bit of added intensity to his game.

Then came the injury. And everything was put on hold.

"It's tough, especially for a younger guy who wants to be out there," Taylor said. "He wanted to get back and (there are) new people in this organization he wanted to impress. That's important to him and he wanted to be out there badly, but this is the hand that he's been dealt. He's maturing each and every day about it and trying to get back. He's in great shape."

Without actual hockey to focus on, Nylander put all his effort into rehab while maintaining as much strength training as his injury allowed.

"I didn't really think it was that bad at first, but the injury just needed to take its time to heal and everything," Nylander said. "Just took a little longer. We're just taking it to be better be safe than sorry."

The patience, Nylander said, has paid off.

"Feeling really good out there and just really happy with the way everything's been going out there," Nylander said. "Just very excited to get things going."

"I worked really hard in the summer and got really prepared for the season to start. Of course it (stinks) that I got injured but it's not something I can really do anything about. I'm just focused on coming back stronger and I feel great on the ice. I don't feel any difference from the summer. I'm really happy about that."

## **Which Amerks could help the Sabres? Here's the list**

*The Buffalo Star*

By: Kevin Oklobzija

While the Buffalo Sabres continue to stumble along at the bottom of the NHL's Eastern Conference, the Rochester Americans are piling up the points.

A 31-save shutout by Linus Ullmark in Wednesday's 3-0 victory over the Binghamton Devils gave the Amerks an 8-4-1-1 record. More impressively, they're 6-1-1-1 in their past eight games.

So if they're winning, there must be talent, right?

Well, obviously the answer is yes. But how much of that talent can help the Sabres? Right now, not nearly enough. And in the long run, not nearly enough.

Truth be told, the prospect cupboard isn't exactly stuffed with sure-fire NHLers. Even though the stockpiling of draft picks through previous trades theoretically should have provided help for the future, that's not quite what happened.

One reason: The 2014 draft wasn't deep at all, so those second- and third-rounders like Brycen Martin, Vaclav Karabacek and Eric Cornel are more long shot than sure shot.

Here's who is closest to helping the Sabres:

Potential to make an impact:

### **Brendan Guhle (D)**

This is a no-brainer. But despite the pleas, the cries and the begging from fans, don't expect to see him in the near future. He's still adjusting, still learning, still perfecting his game.

And let's be real. His presence isn't going to be the difference between winning and losing each night in Buffalo. That's why general manager Jason Botterill refuses to rush him.

Guhle's talent is undeniable, especially his skating. And he's tougher than he looks when it comes to taking a hit or dishing one out.

He's not on the Thruway yet, though, because he makes mistakes, like all young players. In the American Hockey League, those miscues don't always come back to haunt his team. But the good thing is he doesn't make mistakes as frequently.

"He's learning by some mistakes," Amerks coach Chris Taylor said, "and he's also learning by his success."

One thing they're not doing is stifling his natural tendency to jump into the play. "We want him to be in the offensive zone," Taylor said, "because he can recover."

They also want him to be NHL-ready when he does join the Sabres.

“Does he want to be a player who goes up for one or two games,” Taylor asked, “or when he goes up he’s there forever? We don’t want to ruin his confidence (by rushing him).”

### **Alexander Nylander (RW)**

He hasn’t even played but, assuming he returns this weekend or next, then he’s going to be on the fast track to Buffalo.

His rookie season with the Amerks was mediocre at best (10 goals, 18 assists and 28 points in 65 AHL games). He also had an assist in four NHL games, when he clearly wasn’t ready.

But he’s stronger now, and lower-body strength is something he lacked last season. Unlike Guhle on defense, teams can move forwards up the development ladder more quickly because the responsibilities are reduced on the wing.

His brother, William, was much better in Year 2 with the Toronto Marlies, although he also had a pretty solid rookie season.

Considering the Sabres glaring lack of speed in a league where speed rules, he’ll get the benefit of the doubt when they need a forward.

He is finally skating in practice and even was on the ice for warmups on Wednesday.

Not ready but getting closer:

### **Linus Ullmark (G)**

Becoming more consistent is still No. 1 on his to-do list, and the third-year veteran is making progress.

He’s 7-3 with a 2.71 goals-against average and .921 save percentage (12th-best in the AHL).

“He’s really done a good job,” Taylor said. “His practice habits are really good, and how you practice carries over to games.”

They’ll help in a pinch:

### **C.J. Smith (LW)**

The rookie out of UMass-Lowell, a free-agent signee last spring, really has exceptional vision and can make passes that most players in Rochester, and elsewhere, can’t even consider.

He's quick enough to be effective, has plenty of tenacity on the wall, and is pretty slick with the puck. He has produced 2-9-11 in 14 games.

He's no where near ready for full-time NHL duty, but he'll eventually deserve a look when there is an injury. Because he can't give the Sabres less than what Matt Moulson is contributing right now.

### **Kyle Criscuolo (C)**

Again, he's not playing a regular shift in Buffalo for 20 games. But he's shifty, smart, crafty and can skate, so when a forward is needed, he'll deserve a chance.

He has 5-6-11 in 14 games.

The knock: he's small, just 5-9, 175. The second to last thing the Sabres need is more small forwards.

There's still reason to believe:

### **Hudson Fasching (RW)**

Now in his second season, he's starting to figure out what he needs to do to be effective every night.

The flashes of bull-in-the-china-shop play aren't happening only for a shift or three in a row, they're starting to happen for entire periods. He has a future when he plays game after game like that.

He has been on the right side with Criscuolo and Smith, and has been a perfect complement. He's a big body, and he will go to the net. That's where he was, engaged with a Devils defenseman, when Cornel scored the Amerks' second of two power-play goals in the first 3:31.

## **Amerks post first shutout with win over Binghamton**

*C&C WorldWide*

By: Craig Potter

Rochester Americans goalie Linus Ullmark recorded his first shutout of the season as he made 31 saves in notching a 3-0 victory over the Binghamton Devils before 3,289 fans at the Blue Cross Arena on Wednesday night.

“Obviously with a shutout, that’s what you’re aiming for every night,” Ullmark said. “Able to get that so quick(ly) in the season and not have to wait two years for it, it’s a huge confidence booster.

“The players are sticking to the system, blocking shots, boxing out and you can see clearly that I have a very good team out there in front of me every night.”

Veteran defenseman Stuart Percy tallied his first 2 goals as an Amerk as he opened the scoring on a power play 2:12 into the opening period. Steve Moses and Casey Nelson were credited with the assists on the goal.

“You always want to get power play scoring opportunities, and tonight they went in for us,” Percy said. “It got the team going a bit and we just tried to build off that.”

Percy closed out the scoring with an empty net goal.

“It’s always nice to get your first goal but it’s also good to get the win,” said Percy.

Eric Cornel netted his second regular season goal, also on a power play, less than two minutes later for a 2-0 advantage. Sahir Gill and Percy assisted on the play.

“It was good to get the early lead tonight,” Amerks head coach Chris Taylor said. “We have not had the lead early in home games this season. Obviously with our two goals coming from the power-play, it was clicking, but I attribute the good start to our first shift. We began the game with a good fore-check and kept Binghamton in their own zone and drew a penalty.”

The teams battled scoreless the rest of the way until Percy’s empty net marker.

\*NOTES – Alex Nylander skated in the team warm-up but did not play. Coach Chris Taylor said he is day-to-day as to when he would play his first game this season...On Thursday Taylor confirmed that Nylander would play Friday against Hartford...Justin Bailey, who was just sent down following sustaining an injury with the Buffalo Sabres, also did not play but could on Friday night against Hartford.

## **Percy, Ullmark lead Amerks to 3-0 win**

*13Wham*

By: Staff Report

The Rochester Americans (8-4-1-1) took an early two-goal lead Wednesday night at The Blue Cross Arena as they hosted the Binghamton Devils (5-7-0-1) to begin a stretch of three games in four nights. After grabbing the lead, the Amerks never looked back as goaltender Linus Ullmark, who appeared in his 200th professional game, stopped all 31 shots he faced to record his second-career AHL shutout and helped the Amerks to a 3-0 victory.

With the win, the Amerks improve to 4-0-1-1 in the first six games in month of the November and show a record of 6-2-1-1 in their last 10 games overall while collecting 14 of 18 points dating back to October. 25.

Defenseman Stuart Percy factored in on all three Rochester goals, scoring twice while also adding an assist for a career-high three points to lead the Amerks. The blueliner pushed his point streak to three games as he shows six points (2+4) over that span. Eric Cornel notched his second tally of season in the opening period while Ullmark won his fourth straight start and sixth of his last seven to improve his record to 7-3-0 on the season. The Swedish netminder is now one win shy of Anders Lindback of the Milwaukee Admirals for the league-lead in wins.

Binghamton's Nick Lappin tied Percy for a game-high five shots while goaltender Mackenzie Blackwood made 33 saves but dropped his second consecutive game.

The Amerks drew the game's first two penalties 1:59 in and had a five-on-three man-advantage for 45 seconds.

Just 13 seconds into the two-man advantage, Percy blasted his first goal of the night from the left point to give the Amerks an early 1-0 lead 2:12 into the contest. In a continuation of the second power-play, Cornel banged home a rebound from the right of the netminder to cushion Rochester's lead to a pair.

Steve Moses and Casey Nelson were credited with the assists on the first power-play tally while Sahir Gill, who notched his 150th professional point, and Percy recorded the helpers on the second goal.

"It was good to get the early lead tonight," Amerks head coach Chris Taylor said. "We have not had the lead early in home games this season.

Obviously with our two goals coming from the power-play, it was clicking, but I attribute the good start to our first shift. We began the game with a good fore-check and kept Binghamton in their own zone and drew a penalty."

With Rochester's two goals while on the man-advantage, the Amerks now show a success rate of 25.5% in their last eight games, going 11-for-43 during that span.

The Amerks took a two-goal lead into the third period for the third straight game before Percy capped off Ullmark's shutout as he would score an empty-net goal with 1:34 left in regulation.

"After getting the shutout late last season, it is something I am aiming for every night," said Ullmark. "To get another one this early in the year, it is a huge confidence booster going forward. The guys in front me have done a good job all year. They are boxing out, blocking shots and sticking to the system and it is evident we have a good team."

The Amerks are back in action on Friday, Nov. 17 when they take on the Hartford Wolf Pack on Military Appreciation Night at The Blue Cross Arena. Game time is slated for a 7:05 p.m. start and can be heard live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester.

**Amerks find extra offense, bolstered by news of players about to return to ice**  
*Democrat & Chronicle*

By: Andy Lipari

The Rochester Amerks had a workman-like 3-0 win over the Binghamton Devils on Wednesday but the real excitement came before puck drop.

Alexander Nylander skated with the team during warm-ups at the Blue Cross Arena at the Community War Memorial. He had been skating on his own and started practicing with the team at the beginning of the week.

Nylander has yet to debut his new No. 92 jersey since being out with a lower body injury he suffered Sept. 9 in rookie camp.

Amerks head coach Chris Taylor wouldn't give away whether the 19-year-old Swedish winger could suit up as soon as Friday's home game against Hartford.

"Did he look good in warm-up?" Taylor asked the media during his postgame press conference. "We're still in the process with him, seeing how he feels and getting him back with the team, get him comfortable, get him in preparation to get ready for a game. Hopefully he's ready this weekend. We'll see."

Justin Bailey was with the team for morning skate, but he didn't end up playing Wednesday either after he was sent down from Buffalo earlier in the week.

Bailey, nursing a lower body injury, played seven games with the Sabres but hasn't played a game since Oct. 28.

Taylor said Bailey made the call because he didn't feel 100 percent.

As for the players who took the ice Wednesday, power-play goals by Stuart Percy and Eric Cornel in the first 3:31 were all the Amerks would need.

Rochester (8-4-1, 18 points) has won six of its past nine games, gaining points in eight of those games with only one loss in regulation.

Linus Ullmark stopped all 31 shots he faced to record his second career shutout. His other one came on March 26 last season against Springfield.

"To have that so early in the season and not have to wait two years to get that is a huge confidence boost," said Ullmark, who went on to praise the defense in front of him. "Every night they make it a lot easier for me than the last few years. They're sticking to the system, they're blocking shots and boxing out and you can see there's a good team out in front of me every night."

Percy added an empty-netter with 1:34 left.

A three-goal margin of victory for the Amerks has been rare lately, with six of their past eight games decided by one goal.

## **Early Amerks advantage sinks floundering B-Devils**

*Press Connects*

By: Staff Report

The Binghamton Devils suffered their fifth straight loss after falling to the Rochester Americans, 3-0, at Blue Cross Arena Wednesday.

Rochester converted two power-play goals to take a 2-0 lead in the opening 2 minutes, 12 seconds of play. A roughing call against Nathan Bastian and a tripping call against Bracken Kearns gave the Americans a two-man advantage. Stuart Percy sent a shot past the glove hand of Binghamton goalkeeper Mackenzie Blackwood for the first goal of the game.

Eric Cornel scored the second 1:19 later. With Rochester still at a man advantage, Cornel grabbed his own rebound and fired the puck past Blackwood's blocker. Sahir Gill and Percy were given assists.

Percy capped the scoring with an empty-net goal in the final 1:34 of the third period to secure the win. Rochester's Linus Ullmark made 31 saves in the shutout.

Binghamton's only opportunities were two shots that banked off the post in the second period. Blackwood finished with 33 saves for the Devils (5-7).

## **Devils drop fifth straight in loss to Amerks**

***WICZ-TV Binghamton***

By: Jeremy Donovan

The Binghamton Devils were unable to solve goaltender Linus Ullmark on Wednesday night in a 3-0 loss to the Rochester Americans in front of 3,289 fans at Blue Cross Arena.

Binghamton surrendered two power-play goals in a 1:19 span early in the game to trail the Americans by a pair. Nathan Bastian took a roughing minor 0:44 into the game and Bracken Kearns went off for tripping 1:59 into the game to put Rochester on a two-man advantage. Stuart Percy fired a shot that beat Mackenzie Blackwood on the glove side for a 1-0 lead at 2:12. Assists on Percy's first of the year were given to Steve Moses and Casey Nelson.

With Bastian out of the box and Kearns still serving his minor penalty, Eric Cornel put the Americans up two goals. Blackwood denied the original shot but Cornel immediately released a follow-up shot that beat Blackwood on the blocker side as he tried to dive back to his right. Cornel's goal was his second of the season with assists from Sahir Gill and Percy 3:31 into the game. After one period, Binghamton trailed Rochester 2-0 while being outshot 16-9.

The Devils put two shots off iron in the second period and continues to trail 2-0 after forty minutes of play. Rochester led in shots as well, 24-19,

In the third period, Percy added an empty-net goal with 1:34 left in the game to secure a 3-0 win for the Americans. Blackwood stopped 33 of 35 in the loss while Linus Ullmark denied all 31 shots he faced in the victory.

The Binghamton Devils are back home this Friday against Wilkes-Barre/Scranton and Saturday against Rochester. Less than 500 tickets remain for Friday's game against the Penguins at 7:05 p.m. Fans can cash in on the Friday 2-Pack and get two tickets, two hotdogs, and two sodas for \$32. Saturday is Military Appreciation presented by Lockheed Martin! All military, their families, and friends receive a \$14 ticket! Call the Devils' front office at 607-733-7367 for more information.

## **Frustrations Mounting In B-Devils Latest Loss**

*SB Nation*

By: Jeff Ulmer

Another game, another loss. This is not fun. But, it's still early.

In what was once a promising looking beginning of a season a few short weeks ago, it has now turned the corner for the worse as the Binghamton Devils lost their fifth straight and seventh of their last nine, this time at the hands of the Rochester Americans by a score of 3-0 on Wednesday at Blue Cross Arena with goaltender Linus Ullmark's earning his second shutout in three years.

It's the same results during this losing streak as either its A.) the lack of a 60 minute effort, or B.) costly penalties combined with C.) not enough urgency with the same group of players that have taken the ice. Frustration has been overly abundant not only from the players and coaches, but the fans themselves with such little results as the team sinks further down the pack in the North Division.

It's still early.

Binghamton (5-7-1-0) quickly got in trouble as they started off shorthanded 00:44 into the first when rookie forward Nathan Bastian was whistled for roughing, followed by a tripping call to Bracken Kearns 75 seconds later for a five on three man advantage by the Amerks. Rochester (8-4-1-1) cashed in and got off to an early 1-0 lead with a goal by defenseman Stuart Percy's one-timer from the point past a screened Mackenzie Blackwood, as Dalton Smith set-up shop in front.

That killed off one penalty however, there was still another the Devils had to contend with.

With the Amerks buzzing, they made it a two goal lead off a rebound shot served up to Rochester forward Eric Cornel from the circle and buried it into a partial empty net with Blackwood caught in the crosshairs from Sahir Gill's initial blast across ice, opposite circle.

The Devils then faced an uphill battle that wasn't problematic a few short weeks ago, but now has turned into a mountain to climb with very little confidence shown on the ice with misguided passes and no offensive rhythm.

It's still early.

Luck hasn't been too kind either during this streak with two shots hitting the crossbar in the middle frame and an apparent goal called back midway in the third by Blake Pietila's laser from high in the slot that cleanly beat Ullmark top shelf. After a short video review conference, the net was off it's moorings with no whistle blown beforehand from any of the four officials, so no goal.

Binghamton played their best hockey of the night halfway through the third period with crisp passing and hustle that led up to several scoring opportunities before Percy finished out with an empty netter, his second of the night, to cap off Rochester's victory.

But let's not sugarcoat this. With the lack of offense, some poor defense and very little effort except when it comes down to the final period and a switch is turned on midway through, the Devils need to find a way out of it's funk as losing streaks are all too familiar for hockey fans in Bingo over the course of the last several seasons. They are never any fun.

The BDevils face the red-hot Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins on Friday, who are 9-0-0-1 in their last ten games and boasts the second best record in the league.

I gotta remind myself one again. It's still early.

## **Amerks prepare to honor military**

***RochesterFirst***

By: Mark Gruba

The Rochester Americans hockey team will partner once again with the Veterans Outreach Center to recognize members of the military this Friday, November 17 at the Blue Cross Arena in Rochester.

The Amerks will host Hartford in a 7:05 p.m. game on Military Appreciation Night.

Laura Stradley, the Executive Director of the Veterans Outreach Center, and Erica Whyte, the Communications Coordinator and in game Host for the Amerks, discussed the event Tuesday during News 8 at Noon.

"This is just an opportunity for us to say thank you to the men and women that do so much to keep our country safe," said Whyte. "The first 5,000 people that get there are going to be getting special military Amerks dog tag necklaces and as always, our Amerks will be wearing these amazing military themed jerseys!"

The jerseys will be auctioned off with a portion of the proceeds going to the VOC. Members of the military, both active and retired, can obtain a complimentary ticket to the game. Everyone else can receive an Amerks military t-shirt and ticket for \$30. Individual game tickets will also be sold.

"We're so glad to be able to partner with the Amerks as we have for many years now," said Stradley. "We are the oldest Outreach Center in the country. We've been around for more than 44 years and we provide services to veterans and their families for a whole host of things along the lines of wellness therapy, peer support programs, employment and training, housing for veterans who are experiencing homelessness, housing support for those who are at risk for homelessness and many other things."

Military members can get their free tickets, [click here](#).

To submit a military photo for the Amerks video board, [click here](#).

There will be military themed Amerks pucks for purchase. The Blue Star Mothers will also be on hand in the main concourse of the arena to collect donation items to care packages which will be sent to local U.S. military service members currently deployed overseas. Suggested items to donate include Q-tips, lip balm, toothpaste/brushes, dental floss, beef jerky, sugarless gum/candy, granola bars, shampoo/body wash (travel size), sunscreen, peanuts and popcorn.

Veterans in our community looking for services or assistance are encouraged to reach out to the Veterans Outreach Center, [click here](#).

## **Sabres hope Bailey rediscovers urgency in latest trip to Rochester**

*Buffalo News*

By: John Vogl

The Sabres are once again hoping Justin Bailey finds consistency in his return to Rochester.

With Bailey healed after missing five games with a lower-body injury, Buffalo has sent the right winger back to the Amerks.

"He's been off for a while, get his timing back, get some confidence back," Sabres coach Phil Housley said Tuesday.

In the continuation of a trend, Bailey played well after arriving in Buffalo. He had two goals, three points and eight shots in his opening four games.

In the next three, he had no points and two shots.

"I thought he started out really well the first couple games," Housley said. "I thought his played dipped a little from that, that urgency he had on the forecheck, using his speed and even in providing a physical element.

"He's going to go down, work on that, get his timing back."

## **Sabres' Marco Scandella sick; Alexander Nylander practicing with Amerks again**

*Olean Times Herald*

By: Bill Hoppe

Sabres defenseman Marco Scandella is “under the weather” but should play Tuesday in Pittsburgh, coach Phil Housley said.

Scandella, 27, missed today’s practice. With top defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen injured, Scandella has become the Sabres’ top minute-muncher, skating 25 minutes some nights.

The newcomer has zero goals and three assists while averaging 23 minutes, 38 seconds of ice time in 17 outings this season.

In other injury news, Housley said slick forward prospect Alexander Nylander, out since suffering a lower-body injury in rookie camp more than two months ago, has started practicing again with the Rochester Americans.

“It’s good to see that he’s skating with the team right now,” Housley said this morning inside KeyBank Center. “That shows he’s making really good progress. He’s going to have to continue to find his timing in practice, but that was intriguing.”

Housley said Nylander, 19, didn’t undergo surgery. The Sabres selected the Swede eighth overall in 2016. He played his first four NHL games late last season.

Check back later for more, including a full story on the Sabres’ offensive struggles and center Jack Eichel’s goal drought.

“He’s trying to do the right things, he means well,” Housley said. “He’s just got to continue to work through it.”

Update: The Sabres sent winger Justin Bailey, out the last five games with a lower-body injury, back to the Amerks this afternoon. 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.