



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

DAILY PRESS CLIPS

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TONIGHT'S GAME: Bridgeport @ Rochester

Smith, Ullmark named to AHL All-Star Game

Buffalo News

By: Mike Harrington

Rochester Amerks forward C.J. Smith and goalie Linus Ullmark have been named to the North Division roster for the AHL All-Star Classic to be held Jan. 28-29 in Utica.

Smith, a college free agent signed last March out of Mass-Lowell, is tied for second in scoring among AHL rookies with 30 points. He leads the Amerks in scoring, assists (20) and multi-point outings (7).

Ullmark will play in the game for the second straight year after earning Top Goaltender honors last year following a 15-save performance. He has a 15-5-3 record ranks third and fifth, respectively, among AHL goalies with a .926 save percentage and 2.33 goals-against average.

A sixth-round pick in 2012, Ullmark is 8-11-2/.264/.913 in 21 career NHL games

The two-day event begins Jan. 28 at 8 p.m. with the skills competition. The round-robin 3-on-3 tournament, run much like the NHL has done the last two years, is Jan. 29 at 7 p.m. Former Sabres named to the game include Lehigh Valley defenseman T.J. Brennan, Milwaukee goalie Anders Lindback. Ontario goalie Cal Petersen, an AHL rookie who signed with Los Angeles as a free agent after not signing with the Sabres after leaving Notre Dame, was also named.

The Sabres' representative to the NHL All-Star Game Jan. 28 in Tampa, likely Jack Eichel or Evander Kane, is expected to be named on Wednesday.

World Juniors helping Sabres prospect Alexander Nylander's development

Buffalo Hockey Beat

By: Bill Hoppe

In the AHL, where Alexander Nylander has spent most of the last season and a half, the slick forward is still a youngster adjusting to pro hockey.

But at the World Junior Championship, Nylander, 19, is a veteran. In his third and final tournament, Team Sweden, which will compete for a gold medal tonight, has leaned heavily on the Sabres prospect.

The Sabres recently assigned Nylander to Team Sweden in the midst of what he called a "little bit frustrating" season. After suffering a lower-body injury in rookie camp, he missed two and a half months.

Following his Nov. 17 season debut, Nylander, the eighth overall pick in 2016, struggled with the Rochester Americans, compiling only two goals, six points and an ugly minus-9 rating in 15 games.

But Nylander quickly found a groove at the tournament, showcasing his offensive talents and, even more importantly, growth in other facets.

"It's tons of experience," coach Tomas Montén said Thursday of Nylander's presence following Team Sweden's 4-2 semifinal win against Team USA. "It's been great for our younger players. Playing (in) his third World Juniors, he doesn't need to get tense or anything. I think it developed his defensive game.

"He plays on our PK, he plays on our power play, he can play last-minute shifts ... he can play in all situations. I think that's the biggest difference."

Defensive development, of course, is vital for Nylander's future. In the modern NHL, strong defense – a 200-foot game, as they often say – generates offense.

In Thursday's win before an announced crowd of 7,524 inside KeyBank Center, Nylander assisted on the first goal, his seventh helper and eighth point for 6-0 Sweden.

But Nylander, who has been pegged as a one-dimensional player, displayed more notable play away from the puck.

"He was really good, especially in all situations," Montén said. "He played some real good PK shifts, won some important draws and he really battled for us. That's the player he's grown into. I think you can trust him."

Nylander said the tournament is a "huge help" for his confidence.

“It really helps my development,” said Nylander, who has scored 10 goals and 28 points in 20 career World Junior outings.

The Sabres’ old regime also sent Nylander to the World Juniors a year ago. A strong tournament, however, couldn’t boost his rookie AHL season, and he struggled before the Sabres gifted him a four-game recall.

This season, Nylander will likely have earned a promotion from Sabres general manager Jason Botterill, who knew the tournament could help him.

“We just told Buffalo if we can help and play him and you can feel it’s a good thing for him, a good experience, then we’re really happy to have him,” said Monten, whose team will face Team Canada tonight.

Team Sweden knocked off the defending gold medalists Thursday and will play for its first World Junior title since earning a silver in 2014. The country last won gold in 2012.

Holding Sabres forward prospect Casey Mittelstadt, the tournament’s leading scorer with four goals and 10 points in five contests for Team USA entering Thursday, was critical.

Team Sweden led 4-0 before two late goals made it interesting. Still, the game was scoreless until more than 13 minutes into the second period.

Shortly before Elias Petterson opened the scoring, Mittelstadt, the eighth overall pick last year, missed a three-on-zero breakaway.

Despite Thursday’s disappointing outcome, playing the tournament in Buffalo has been special for Mittelstadt, 19, a freshman at the University of Minnesota.

“I’ve loved it, obviously,” he said. “The fans have been great, everyone’s been great, everyone’s treated all of us really well and it’s been an absolute blast. It’s been one of the most fun times I’ve had.”

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Amerks goalie Linus Ullmark and rookie forward C.J. Smith have been named to the AHL All-Star Game on Jan. 29 in Utica, the league announced Thursday.

Ullmark, an All-Star last season, is tied for the AHL lead with 15 wins and two shutouts and has played a league-high 24 games.

Smith, meanwhile, has a team-high 20 assists and 30 points in 34 contests.

2 Amerks named to AHL All-Star roster

C&C WorldWide

By: Staff Report

The American Hockey League announced on Thursday that Rochester Americans forward C.J. Smith and goaltender Linus Ullmark have been named to the North Division All-Star roster for the 2018 AHL All-Star Classic presented by Turning Stone Resort Casino. The annual event will take place Jan. 28-29 at the Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium in Utica, N.Y., home of the Utica Comets.

Currently in his first pro season, Smith paces the Amerks with 20 assists and 30 points and ranks second on the team with 10 goals while being one of just three skaters to appear in all 34 games this season. His 87 shots and plus-12 on-ice rating are also tops on the team. Coming into the New Year, the Des Moines, Iowa, native is tied for second among all AHL rookies in scoring and 10th overall among the league's top point-getters while his 20 assists lead all first-year skaters.

Smith, who also leads the Amerks with seven multi-point outings, made his NHL debut for the Buffalo Sabres at the end of last season, notching one assist in two games following the completion of his junior year at UMass-Lowell.

Ullmark secures his second straight AHL All-Star selection after a 15-save performance in last year's Skills Competition that earned him CCM Top Goaltender honors. A mainstay between the pipes again for the Amerks this season, no other goaltender has played more games than Ullmark, who boasts a 15-5-3 record and has won 14 of his last 20 starts dating back to Oct. 25, including a career-best five straight to open the month of November. Even more impressively, Ullmark is 7-0-3 on the road this season and is 12-2-3 over his last 17 appearances. Named the CCM/AHL Player of the Week for period ending Dec. 24, 2017, he currently ranks second in the AHL in saves (668) and minutes played (1,362) while being tied for first in wins (15) and shutouts (2). The former Swedish Goaltender of the Year and reigning team MVP also ranks third and fifth amongst all AHL goaltenders with a .926 save percentage and 2.33 goals-against average, respectively.

In his third season in Rochester, the 6-foot-4, 212-pound netminder owns a career AHL record of 51-48-5 with a 2.89 goals-against average, a .911 save percentage and three shutouts. A sixth-round pick of the Buffalo Sabres in 2012, Ullmark also boasts an 8-11-2 record with a 2.64 goals-against average and a .913 save percentage in 21 career NHL contests with Buffalo.

The two-day event begins on Sunday, Jan. 28 with the 2018 AHL All-Star Skills Competition at 8 pm. In keeping with its traditional format, the All-Stars from the two Eastern Conference divisions will be squaring off against the All-Stars from the two Western Conference divisions in seven skills events, including hardest shot, fastest skater and accuracy shooting.

Ullmark, Smith headed to AHL All-Star Classic

Pickin' Splinters

By: Kevin Oklobzija

Goalie Linus Ullmark and rookie left winger C.J. Smith will represent the Rochester Americans in the AHL All-Star Classic Jan. 28-29 in Utica.

Ullmark ranks third in the American Hockey League in save percentage (.926), fifth in goals-against average (2.33) and second in minutes played (1,361:56).

The third-year goaltender also participated in the 2017 All-Star event and earned the top goalie award during the skills competition.

Smith is tied for 10th in AHL scoring with 10 goals, 20 assists and 30 points in 34 games. He is tied for second in rookie scoring, one point behind Mason Appleton of Manitoba. An Amerk hasn't led AHL rookies in scoring since Todd Simon in 1993-94.

The skills competition begins at 8 p.m. on Jan. 28. The All-Star challenge, a round-robin tournament of 3-on-3 games between the all-stars from the four divisions, starts at 7 p.m. on Jan. 29.

Linus Ullmark, CJ Smith named to AHL all-star roster

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By: Staff Report

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The 2018 AHL All-Star Challenge will then take place on the evening of Monday, Jan. 29 at 7:00 p.m. For the third straight year, instead of a traditional 60-minute game, the league's all-stars will be divided into four teams, one representing each of the league's divisions (Atlantic, North, Central, Pacific). The teams will then play a round-robin tournament featuring six games of 10 minutes each played entirely at 3-on-3. The two teams with the best records at the end of the round-

robin tournament will face off for the championship, a six-minute game also played using the 3-on-3 format. Rosters for each team will be composed of 11 skaters and two goaltenders.

Tickets for the two-day 2018 AHL All-Star Classic presented by Turning Stone Resort Casino are priced at \$39, \$49, \$69 and \$89, and include admission to both the Skills Competition on Jan. 28 and the All-Star Challenge on Jan. 29. Tickets can be purchased either in person at the Adirondack Bank Center at the Utica Memorial Auditorium Box Office located at 400 Oriskany St. W in Utica, N.Y., online by visiting www.uticacomets.com or www.empirestatetix.com or by calling 1-315-790-9070.