



Rochester Americans @ Syracuse Crunch

Friday, April 20, 2018 @ The War Memorial Arena | North Division Semifinals | Game 1

TONIGHT'S GAME

• After meeting 10 times during the regular season, it's only fitting that the Rochester Americans and Syracuse Crunch extend their rivalry into the postseason as the longtime rivals open the 2018 Calder Cup Playoffs tonight in Game 1 of their best-of-five North Division Semifinals at War Memorial in Syracuse. Game time is slated for a 7:00 p.m. start and can be heard live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester.

AMERKS PUNCH PLAYOFF TICKET

• The Amerks have punched their ticket into the 2018 Calder Cup Playoffs, marking the 45th time in the 62-year history of the franchise that the Amerks have advanced to the postseason. It's also the fifth time in nine years Rochester has qualified for the playoffs after going 7-2-1-0 in the final 10 games of the regular season to lock up a postseason berth, clinching on home ice by way of a 4-2 win over the Springfield Thunderbirds on March 24. After dropping a season-long four straight games in March, the Amerks went on to claim 15 out of a possible 20 points over the final month and ended the campaign with a 37-22-11-6 record and 91 points, representing the first time since 2012-13 the team finished 90 or more points in a season.

OPENING UP ON THE ROAD

• Coming off their third-place finish in the American Hockey League's North Division standings, the Amerks will open the postseason on the road for the third time in seven years, when Rochester hosted Games 1 and 2 of its first-round series against the Toronto Marlies. The Amerks hold a 10-23 all-time record in playoff series in which they begin away from home and boast a 7-27 record in Game 1 of a playoff series that start on the road. Rochester is also 19-25 all-time in playoff openers dating back to its 1-0 win over the Providence Reds in Game 1 of the 1957 American Hockey League Playoffs.

PLAYOFFS OVER THE YEARS

• Rochester has been a part of 82 playoff series over the years, in which it has compiled a 212-199 record in 411 games during that time. The Amerks are looking for their first playoff series win since the 2005 postseason when they swept the Hamilton Bulldogs in four games before

2018 CALDER CUP PLAYOFFS



0-0 (0 points)

TOTAL GOALS
0-0



0-0 (0 points)

AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER GP G A PTS PIM +/-

GOALTENDER GP REC MIN SVS SV% GAA

CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER GP G A PTS PIM +/-

GOALTENDER GP REC MIN SVS SV% GAA

SERIES SCHEDULE

North Division Semifinals – Series “D” (best-of-five):
2-Rochester Americans vs. 3-Syracuse Crunch

Date Result Series

Game 1 – Apr. 20 @ Syracuse

Game 2 – Apr. 21 @ Syracuse

Game 3 – Apr. 25 vs. Syracuse

*Game 4 – Apr. 27 vs. Syracuse

*Game 5 – Apr. 28 @ Syracuse

*If necessary



dropping a five-game series to Manitoba in the second round. Since then, the Amerks have only made five playoff appearances, losing first-round matchups to Hamilton in 2007, Abbotsford in 2010, Toronto in 2012 and 2013, and most recently, Chicago in 2014. The playoff series is also Rochester's first against Syracuse since defeating the Crunch four games to three in the opening round of the 2004 Calder Cup Playoffs.

HOW THE SERIES SHAPES UP

- The first-round series brings an all-too familiar foe in the Crunch, who are certainly no stranger to postseason play. Syracuse has advanced to the Calder Cup Finals twice in the last five years and have locked up a playoff berth 14 times overall since their inaugural campaign in 1994-95, including three times in the previous four years. The cross-town foes nearly split this season's 10-game series with the Amerks going 4-5-1-0 against the Crunch and claiming nine out of a possible 20 points. Syracuse, on the other hand, outscored Rochester by a narrow 29-25 margin, but did claim points in eight straight meetings with the Amerks from Oct. 7 to Apr. 11, going 6-0-1-1 over that span. Additionally, nine of the last 14 games between Rochester and Syracuse have been one-goal games dating back to last season, including six of the last nine overall.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

- With tonight's playoff opener marking the third meeting in nine days and the 11th overall between the two teams, the Amerks and Crunch have been well acquainted all season long. Defenseman **Zach Redmond** led the Amerks with six points (2+4) in eight games against the Crunch this season and rookie forward **C.J. Smith** paced all Rochester skaters with a team-high five assists in the season series against Syracuse. **Linus Ullmark** manned the pipes for seven of the 10 games opposite Syracuse, posting a 2-4-1 record with a 3.06 goals-against average and a .903 save percentage. **Adam Wilcox**, meanwhile, went 2-1-0 with a 2.36 goals-against and a .906 save percentage in four games against his former squad. Syracuse forwards Matthew Peca, who was recalled by the parent Tampa Bay Lightning earlier this week, and Mitchell Stephens were the top-points getter for the Crunch against the Amerks this season, with each scoring three times and adding five assists in nine games. A total of six different Crunch goaltenders played at least one game against Rochester, including former Amerk Michael Leighton. Connor Ingram saw the most action, boasting a 2-0-1 record with a 1.34 goals-against average and a .947 save percentage, including a 38-save shutout in Syracuse's 1-0 win on April 11.



PLAYOFFS BY THE NUMBERS

ALL-TIME PLAYOFF NOTES

82 Series:	44 wins	38 losses
411 Games Played:	212 wins	199 losses
205 Home Games:	126 wins	79 losses
206 Away Games:	88 wins	118 losses
69 Overtime Games:	29 wins	40 losses
32 Home Overtime Games:	18 wins	14 losses
37 Away Overtime Games:	11 wins	26 losses

Goal-Scoring

1,370 goals for	1,291 goals-against
Home: 757 goals for	619 goals-against
Away: 613 goals for	672 goals-against

AMERKS CALDER CUP CHAMPIONSHIPS

1995-96 vs. Portland
 1986-87 vs. Sherbrooke
 1982-83 vs. Maine
 1967-68 vs. Quebec
 1965-66 vs. Cleveland
 1964-65 vs. Hershey



AMERKS ALL-TIME PLAYOFF SCORING LEADERS

POINTS

1	JODY GAGE	79
2	DOMENIC PITTIS	70
3	DAN FRAWLEY	46

GOALS

1	JODY GAGE	36
2	JIM PAPPIN	21
3	RAY SHEPPARD	20

ASSISTS

1	DOMENIC PITTIS	54
2	JODY GAGE	43
3	JIM WIEMER	34

GAMES PLAYED

1	JODY GAGE	81
2	DAN FRAWLEY	80
3	RANDY CUNNEYWORTH	67

GOALIE WINS

1	BOBBY PERREAULT	25
2	DARCY WAKALUK	21
	JACQUES CLOUTIER	21
4	STEVE SHIELDS	15

AMERKS SEASON RECAP

- Rochester will see several of its team members officially make their American Hockey League playoff debuts tonight, while head coach **Chris Taylor** enters the postseason coming off his first full season as Amerks bench boss. Taylor, who returned to Rochester following one year as an assistant coach with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, became the first Amerks head coach to lead his team to the postseason in his first year behind the bench since **Ron Rolston**, who also had Taylor on his staff for parts of two seasons.
- Zach Redmond** became the first Amerks defenseman in seven years to lead the team in scoring since **Mike Kostka** posted a team-high 55 points during the 2010-11 campaign. Redmond closed out the regular season with points in nine of his last 13 games and was one of just three AHL defensemen to lead his respective team in scoring. Redmond also finished just three goals shy of tying the single-season franchise record for the most goals by a defenseman of 18, set by Amerks Hall of Famer **Rick Pagnutti** during the 1972-73 campaign. In 66 games this season, the veteran blueliner easily established career-highs in all offensive categories with 15 goals, 32 assists and 47 points, placing him fourth in scoring among all AHL defensemen, earning him a selection to the 2017-18 AHL Second All-Star Team. He also ranked third in goals by a defenseman with 15, including a team-best eight power-play tallies, and fifth among all defensemen in assists. Additionally, Redmond had the third-most shots among any other defenseman this season with 180.
- Red-hot **Colin Blackwell** was Rochester's top point-getter for the final month, finishing with 22 points (11+11) and a plus-14 on-ice rating over his last 15 games for the Amerks. The second-year pro also totaled 15 points (9+6) during his career-long seven-game point streak and recorded seven multi-point outings dating back to March 11 to finish second on the team in scoring. Since Jan. 1, Blackwell had been held scoreless only nine times.
- Forward **C.J. Smith** ranked third on the team with 44 points (17+27) through 57 games, good enough for 10th among all AHL rookies. Smith, who was named MVP of the 2018 AHL All-Star Challenge, also finished his first pro season tied for 11th in assists among all first-year players.
- Two-time AHL All-Star **Linus Ullmark** shouldered most of the workload for the second straight year, boasting a 21-12-10 record with two shutouts in 44 games this season. He finished the regular season third in the AHL in saves (1,242) and seventh in minutes played (2,579) while tying for ninth with 21 wins, his second straight season with 20 or more victories. The former Swedish Goaltender of the Year also ranked seventh and 14th among AHL goaltenders with a .922 save percentage and a 2.44 goals-

2017-18 REGULAR SEASON



TOTAL GOALS
234-234



46-22-3-5 (100 points)

37-22-11-6 (91 points)

AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Zach Redmond	66	15	32	47	38	7
Colin Blackwell	61	17	28	45	23	15
C.J. Smith	57	17	27	44	16	4

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	MIN	SVS	SV%	GAA	
Linus Ullmark	44	21-12-10	2,579	1,242	.922	2.44
Adam Wilcox	29	12-7-7	1,655	796	.903	2.79
Jonas Johansson	7	4-3-0	355:06	143	.861	3.89

CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Mathieu Joseph	70	15	38	53	41	10
Carter Verhaeghe	58	17	31	48	30	18
Matthew Peca	63	13	33	46	18	-1

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	MIN	SVS	SV%	GAA	
Louis Domingue	18	13-5-0	1,077	441	.919	2.17
Eddie Pasquale	31	16-6-7	1,782	777	.923	2.19
Connor Ingram	35	20-11-2	1,983	814	.914	2.33

AMERKS-CRUNCH 2017-18 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Zach Redmond	8	2	4	6	6	-1
C.J. Smith	7	1	5	6	0	-2
Colin Blackwell	8	1	4	5	2	-1

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	MIN	GA	SV%	GAA	
Adam Wilcox	4	2-1-0	228:57	9	.906	2.36
Linus Ullmark	7	2-4-1	373:02	19	.903	3.06

SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Matthew Peca	9	3	5	8	0	4
Mitchell Stephens	9	3	5	8	2	7
Mathieu Joseph	8	4	2	6	6	6

GOALTENDER

GP	REC	MIN	GA	SV%	GAA	
Connor Ingram	3	2-0-1	179:37	4	.947	1.34
Eddie Pasquale	1	1-0-0	60:00	2	.913	2.00
Louis Domingue	2	2-0-0	121:39	5	.919	2.47

against average, respectively. He was named the team MVP and Most Popular Player for the second straight year, becoming just the second netminder in franchise history to earn both honors in back-to-back year.

CRUNCH REGULAR SEASON RECAP

- Syracuse, which finished among the top two teams in its respective Division for the third time in four years, returns to the postseason coming off a disappointing run in last year's playoffs that saw the Crunch advance all the way to the Calder Cup Finals only to fall in six games to the Grand Rapids Griffins.
- Led by former Amerks coach Benoit Groulx, the Crunch were arguably the top team in the AHL during the second half of the year, winning 28 of their final 43 games to close the books on an impressive 46-22-3-5 season, reaching both the 46-win and 100-point mark for just the third time in franchise history. Their .658 points percentage is the best mark in team history. Syracuse also went 42-13-2-3 over its final 60 games en route to its second-best regular-season finish since joining the American Hockey League in 1994. The stretch also featured two separate 10-game point streaks, including a season-best 10-game win streak from Nov. 22 to Dec. 15, which was the longest in the AHL this season. The Crunch also completed the campaign tied with the Amerks for the 12th-best offense in the league, scoring 234 goals and averaging 3.08 goals per game. Conversely, Syracuse also owned the third-best defense in the AHL, having allowed just 189 goals-against, 19 more than Toronto's league-low mark of 170. Syracuse was the AHL's fourth-best team at home this season, finishing with a 24-11-2-1 record and outscoring the opposition 119-92 on home ice. Despite all of their success, however, the Crunch also completed the year with one of the league's worst power-play units that converted just 53 times on 338 man-advantage situations.
- The high-powered Crunch were led offensively by rookie forward Mathieu Joseph, who paced Syracuse with a team-high 38 assists and 53 points in 70 games this season. A fourth-round pick of the Tampa Bay Lightning in the 2015 NHL Entry Draft, Joseph ranked second among all AHL rookies in assists, third in shots (186) and tied for fourth in points among all first-year players. Joseph is just the second Crunch rookie to lead the team in scoring during the regular season and the first to do since Boris Protsenko paced the 1998-99 team. His 15 goals, three of which were scored on the power-play, were also fourth-most on the team.
- Fellow rookie Alexander Volkov scored a team-best 23 goals on the season, good enough fifth among all first-year skaters, and added 22 assists to finish fourth on the team in scoring with 45 points while appearing in a team-high 75 games. Volkov scored each of the Crunch goals in

2017-18 SEASON SERIES GAME—BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Oct. 6	W	3-1	20-29	1-5	6-6
Oct. 7	OTW	3-2	18-26	1-6	4-4
Oct. 28	L	3-2	27-19	1-4	4-5
Nov. 22	OTL	6-5	35-49	2-6	2-2
Jan. 13	L	4-0	27-32	0-6	2-3
Feb. 21	L	2-1	20-31	0-5	4-4
Mar. 10	L	4-2	23-31	2-4	2-2
Mar. 11	SOW	5-4	36-32	0-1	3-3
Apr. 11	L	1-0	38-18	0-6	4-4
Apr. 14	W	4-2	43-26	1-7	4-5

AMERKS ALL-TIME RECORD VS. CRUNCH: 130-111-17

CROSS-TOWN CONNECTIONS

- Syracuse Crunch head coach Benoit Groulx spent two seasons behind the bench in Rochester from 2008-10, compiling a 73-73-9 record while also leading the team to a berth in the 2010 Calder Cup Playoffs.
- Amerks head coach **Chris Taylor** played for Groulx during the 2009-10 season when he led the team with 44 assists and finished second with 61 points while appearing in all 80 games.
- Amerks forward **Dalton Smith** spent two seasons (2013-14, 2014-15) with the Crunch, totaling 20 points (13+7), including a career-best 11 goals during the 2014-15 campaign. Smith was a 2010 second-round pick of the Columbus Blue Jackets, who previously served as the NHL affiliate of the Crunch from 2000-10, the longest of Syracuse's five parent clubs to date.
- Defenseman **Nathan Paetsch** had a brief stint with the Crunch in 2010-11 when he recorded 17 points on nine goals and eight assists in 34 games for Syracuse. The veteran defenseman began the year by appearing in nine games for the Amerks prior to being reassigned to the Crunch.
- Amerks goaltender **Adam Wilcox** began his pro career with the Crunch, posting a 27-23-1 record with one shutout in 63 games. He also appeared in one playoff game for Syracuse during which he made 14 saves to go along with a 1.86 goals-against average and a .933 save percentage. A native of South St. Paul, Minn., the third-year netminder was a sixth-round pick (178th overall) of the Tampa Bay Lightning in the 2011 NHL Entry Draft.



Syracuse's 4-2 loss to the Amerks on April 14, his sixth multi-goal game of the season. His 23 goals were the most by a Crunch rookie since Cedric Paquette's 20 in 2013-14, finishing tied with Peter Holland for the sixth-most by a Crunch newbie in a single season.

- Third-year forward Carter Verhaeghe closed out the regular season with a point in all three games in Week 28, pushing his scoring streak to four games with one goal and four assists. He had at least one point in 11 of the final 15 regular-season games, totaling 14 points (6+8) to lead the Crunch in that span.
- The storyline of the season for Syracuse, however, belonged to the goaltending duo of veteran netminder Eddie Pasquale and rookie Connor Ingram, who together formed one of the elite goaltending tandems in the AHL. After beginning the season in Bakersfield, Pasquale arrived in Syracuse midseason and went 10-1-1 with one shutout in 12 appearances with the Crunch to close out the regular season. He finished the year with a combined 16-6-7 record and two shutouts, ranking fourth and fifth among netminders with a 2.19 goals-against average and a .923 save percentage, respectively. Ingram, meanwhile, had a productive first year between the pipes for Syracuse, posting a 20-11-1 record with four shutouts, a 2.33 goals-against average and a .914 save percentage in 35 games. Ingram closed out the campaign winning eight of his last 10 starts, including a career-high 38-save shutout against the Amerks in his final appearance of the season on April 11 in Rochester. Ingram, a third-round pick of the Lightning in 2016, had the best goals-against average among all AHL rookie netminders this season and ranked third in wins. His four shutouts tied for seventh-most in the AHL.



AMERKS 2017-18 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

Danforth Named ECHL's Top Rookie

- Forward **Justin Danforth** was named the *CCM ECHL Rookie of the Year*. The selection marked the third postseason award for Danforth, who was also named to the ECHL All-Rookie Team as well as the All-ECHL Second Team. Despite closing out the regular season in Rochester and not skating in an ECHL game in nearly two months, Danforth ranked third amongst all ECHL rookies with 28 goals and 31 assists, along with a team-leading plus-24 on-ice rating, through 44 games with the Cyclones this season. Before his recall on Feb. 13, Danforth was riding a seven-game point streak, totaling seven goals and 10 assists in that time, and he also enjoyed a season-long 11-game point streak from Nov. 18 to Dec. 15, accounting for seven goals and 10 assists in that span. He was also the Cyclones' representative in this season's CCM/ECHL All-Star Classic, recording a goal and emerging victorious in the Fastest Skater Competition, setting a new ECHL record with a lap of 12.75 seconds. Danforth joined current New York Rangers forward David Desharnais (2007-08) as the only other Cyclone to earn ECHL Rookie of the Year honors. Additionally, he appeared in 15 games with the Amerks this season, accounting for a pair of goals and three assists.

Working Overtime

- Rochester's 6-5 overtime win over the first-place Toronto Marlies on April 7 was the 29th game this season – and 16th since Jan. 1 – that went beyond regulation for the Amerks, tying the AHL record for most by an AHL team since the Milwaukee Admirals did so in 2006-07. The Amerks finished the year with an AHL-most 29 overtime games, showing a 9-11 mark in overtime while going 3-6 in shootouts.

Road Warriors

- Much of Rochester's success this season has come away from the friendly confines of The Blue Cross Arena. At 19-8-8-3 (49 points), the Amerks, who had a season-long 12-game road point streak from Nov. 22 and Jan. 10 (8-0-3-1, second-longest to only Manitoba), finished with the sixth-best road record in the AHL this season while outscoring their opponents 116-112. Four of Rochester's 16 road wins came with the team trailing entering the third period. Their eight regulation losses were also the third-fewest in the American Hockey League.