



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

DAILY PRESS CLIPS

Wednesday, March 13, 2019

TONIGHT'S GAME: Utica vs Rochester

Weisbeck's Remarkable Journey To 2,500 Pro Games

Amerks.com

By: *Ryan Harr*

March 11, 2019

A pioneer in athletic training. A hard-working and genuine guy. The glue that holds what goes on behind the scenes.

All words used to describe Rochester Americans assistant athletic trainer, Kent "Snacky" Weisbeck.

On Sunday, March 10, Weisbeck, in his remarkable 34th season with the Amerks, worked his 2,500 regular-season game as a member of Rochester's storied franchise. As reported by Kevin Oklobzija of Pickin' Splinters, the milestone is believed to be an AHL record for a certified athletic trainer. Only one athletic trainer in the NHL, Pete Demers, has worked more games. Demers was on the Los Angeles Kings bench for 2,632 games.

Following the game, a 6-1 win over the Binghamton Devils, Weisbeck was awarded the game puck and was deemed the "player of the game." Earlier in the week, he was presented with a watch by the team and coaching staff in recognition of his achievement.

"I never thought when I first started in 1985, I would be here so many games and so many years later," Weisbeck said. "I had a few shots to potentially move on to the National Hockey League, but things just didn't work out. I think it turned out to be a blessing in disguise, though."

There couldn't be more truth to that.

The Buffalo native got his start with the Amerks as a 28-year-old after working eight years as an assistant athletic trainer from 1977-1985 at the University of Buffalo. Weisbeck graduated UB in 1977 with a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education and a minor in athletic training.

"In college, I went to get a physical education degree, but I did not want to get into teaching, so I got a minor in athletic training instead," explained Weisbeck, the first-ever athletic trainer in the 63-year history of the franchise to be inducted into the Amerks Hall of Fame in 2010. "I really enjoyed earning a minor, as I had an interest in sports and working around athletes."

Over his incredible career, Weisbeck, who soon adopted the affable nickname 'Snacky' because he used to be summoned to the snack bar at Lake Shore rink for important phone calls regarding player movement and transactions prior to the cell phone era, has earned two Calder Cup rings (1987 and 1996), worked in the Calder Cup Finals on five other occasions and was the head trainer in two AHL All-Star Classics.

"It's remarkable to be in any place for as long as he has," Amerks defenseman Nathan Paetsch, who also has a pair of Calder Cup championship rings, said. "He has been around for so long and literally done everything, especially when being an athletic trainer was a one-man show. He would unpack the bags, take care of the players and help with equipment."

In recent seasons, Weisbeck, who now works every home game and is a permanent fixture at practices, no longer travels so he can oversee the rehabilitation and health for the injured players while the team is on the road.

"He cares a lot about us players," said Jack Dougherty, who missed 11 games due to an injury earlier this season. "I don't think you could find a more incredible human being than Snacky. He is professional about getting us back on the ice as soon as possible but he makes it fun to come to the arena every day."

Weisbeck has worked for 11 head coaches, applied thousands of ice packs and ridden countless miles on bus rides. More incredibly, he has missed only seven games over the course over his 34 seasons with the Amerks.

"As a former player, he was unbelievable," recalls Amerks head coach Chris Taylor, who also had Weisbeck during his playing career. "The advice that he provided me when he saved my leg, his medical knowledge and his professionalism are just some of his traits that make him so special."

"Snacky is usually one of the first guys to arrive at the rink and last to leave it," said Amerks team captain Kevin Porter, who is now in his fourth season with the Amerks. "He does all the little things that most people don't see or appreciate. He takes care of the guys and is truly great at his job. To be in one organization for such a long time, it truly is amazing."

"Now in the coaching stage of my career, he taught me all the little things, such as protecting the player, but I love how he always wants what is best for the players and help them through the adversity of being injured," added Taylor.

While the players, coaches, management and staff have all changed over the last 34 seasons, Weisbeck has remained the constant and hopes the future stays the same.

"I'm looking forward to working the next 500 games and wouldn't mind if there are a few more Calder Cups championships along the way," joked Weisbeck.

Nylander on recall: 'I know I'm ready for this'

Sabres.com

By: *Jourdon LaBarber*

March 11, 2019

Alexander Nylander had forced his way into the conversation to make the Sabres' roster out of training camp in September, opening eyes with his work ethic and attention to detail. It was a far cry from a year prior, when he missed the entirety of the preseason due to an injury.

The third-year forward was among the final roster cuts on Oct. 1, yielding the last forward spot to Tage Thompson. He went back to Rochester with his eyes set on earning another chance.

"I wanted to be here, but I just tried to take it and learn as much as I could down there, being more experienced ... to be as ready as possible when I get called back up," Nylander said.

Nylander earned his opportunity on Sunday, when he was recalled for the first time this season after scoring goals in four straight games with the Amerks. He joined the team for practice on Monday, skating on the right side of a line with Conor Sheary and Evan Rodrigues.

Sabres coach Phil Housley said he felt Nylander had a "terrific" camp, which he continued to build on throughout the regular season for the first-place Amerks. Through 49 games, he's set career-high totals in goals (12) and points (31).

Nylander credited his four-game goal streak - which began on his 21st birthday - to an increased willingness to shoot the puck. He took three or more shots in three of his last four games with Rochester.

"I'm getting more into scoring areas, shooting more pucks," he said. "I know I have a good shot, so I've just got to keep shooting, making plays out there and playing my game."

All four of Nylander's recent goals were worthy of his "snipe show" Twitter handle, coming from the high slot or above the right circle.

"I'd like to see the exact same things that got him an opportunity to come up and play for us," Housley said. "Just talking to [general manager] Jason [Botterill] and [Amerks coach] Chris Taylor, he's playing very well right now.

"He's scoring, he's shooting the puck a lot more and we want him to attack the game with that same focus that he's had when he's been in Rochester."

The Sabres have 14 games remaining, and it appears Nylander will have every opportunity to show he belongs. In addition to skating on a line with Rodrigues, he practiced on a power-play unit with Jeff Skinner, Casey Mittelstadt, Kyle Okposo and Brandon Montour.

"I just want to show that I can be here," he said. "I know I'm ready for this. Like I said, I'm going to take this opportunity that I get and do the best I can."

Following a telephone hearing on Sunday, the NHL Department of Player Safety suspended Jack Eichel two games for an illegal check to the head of Colorado Avalanche Carl Soderberg on Saturday.

The Sabres captain disagreed with the call when addressing the media after practice.

"It's a league decision. Obviously we have to stand by it, but I don't agree with it," Eichel said. "Obviously, if you look at the hit and you look at their rule book, I just didn't think it matched up. That's not an illegal hit. I don't move myself to lower it into him.

"If you watch the hit, he actually is at fault for dropping his head down there. I mean, it's a 50-50 puck that I'm trying to make a hockey play on. You see me, I have my eyes on the puck the whole time and then I had to make a play on the puck after. It's kind of frustrating.

"If they're going to have a rule about headshots, it has to be pretty black and white. I mean, if all headshots are suspendable, then suspend all headshots. It's tough to see them picking and choosing what they feel is suspendable. It's a decision you have to live with."

Housley said he disagreed with the league's ruling as well.

"I don't agree with the decision, but we have to live with it," he said.

Eichel will miss Buffalo's home games against Dallas on Tuesday and Pittsburgh on Thursday. It's the first suspension of his career.

Sabres' Alex Nylander hopes to stay in NHL beyond Jack Eichel's suspension

Buffalo News

By: Jason Wolf

March 11, 2019

Alex Nylander doesn't know whether he'll remain with the Sabres beyond Jack Eichel's two-game suspension, but the former first-round draft pick intends to make the most of the opportunity.

The forward, drafted eighth overall in 2016, has played just seven NHL games over the last two seasons, recording one goal and one assist.

"I'm just going to play my best and obviously I hope to be here for longer," Nylander said after joining the Sabres for practice Monday at KeyBank Center. "I'm just trying to play my best and work hard every single day I'm here."

Nylander, 21, skated on the second line with center Evan Rodrigues and forward Conor Sheary.

Casey Mittelstadt centered the top line alongside Jeff Skinner and Jason Pominville. Vladimir Sobotka centered the third line featuring Tage Thompson and Sam Reinhart.

Nylander also skated on the second power play unit with Mittelstadt, Skinner, Kyle Okposo and Brandon Montour.

In 49 games this season in Rochester, Nylander has career highs of 12 goals and 31 points, and his 19 assists equal a career high. He scored in each of his last four contests.

"I'd like to see the exact same things that got him an opportunity to come up and play for us," Sabres coach Phil Housley said. "I was just talking with (general manager) Jason (Botterill) and (Amerks coach) Chris Taylor. He's playing very well right now.

Obviously, he's scoring, he's shooting the puck a lot more, and we want him to attack the game with that same focus that he's had when he's been in Rochester."

Nylander was promoted from the Amerks for the first time this season in the wake of Eichel's suspension for hitting Colorado Avalanche center Carl Soderberg with an illegal check to the head late in the second period of Saturday's 3-0 loss at Colorado.

Eichel will miss the next two home games, against Dallas on Tuesday and Pittsburgh on Thursday, giving Nylander at least a brief opportunity to show he belongs in the NHL.

"It's obviously an unfortunate situation," Sheary said. "Jack's kind of the heartbeat of this team. He makes our team go. To see him get suspended is tough. But these are the opportunities that young guys need to kind of crack this league and solidify a spot in the NHL, so hopefully he can take advantage of his time."

The Sabres have 14 games remaining in the regular season and have faded from playoff contention, going 2-8-2 in their last 12 games.

Nylander is only one of two players drafted in the top 10 in 2016 – the other being Vancouver defenseman Olli Juolevi, who has yet to make his NHL debut – to appear in fewer than 128 NHL regular-season games. He missed the first three months of last season, his second with the Amerks, with a severe groin strain.

“I just want to show that I can be here,” Nylander said. “I know I’m ready for this. I’m going to take this opportunity that I get and do the best I can with it.”

The Sabres announced that Jeffrey Cutler has been named the recipient of the 2019 J. Michael Duffett Memorial Award, presented each year to the coach or administrator whose contributions to amateur hockey in Western New York “best exemplify the knowledge, teaching, love of the game and gentle humanity of Mike.”

Cutler is the 34th recipient of the award, which will be presented Tuesday at the Sabres’ game against the Dallas Stars.

A native of Amherst, Cutler has coached youth hockey for 38 years. In 1993, he became one of the first sled hockey coaches in Western New York in hopes he could share his passion for hockey with his son, John, who was born with spina bifida. That same year, Cutler became a board member for WNY Physically Challenged Youth, a position he still holds.

Cutler has coached Brad Emmerson, Chris Manns, Al Salamone and Adam Page, who went on to play with Team USA at the national level and the Winter Paralympics. Cutler has won 22 championships, including the 2015 IPC Sled World Championship.

Sabres prospect Alexander Nylander ready to seize chance in NHL
Buffalo Hockey Beat
By: *Bill Hoppe*
March 11, 2019

On Feb. 27, Sabres prospect Alexander Nylander played his 13th straight game without scoring a goal. At that point, nearly five months into his third AHL campaign, the chances of the slick winger earning a recall looked slim.

Nylander, 21, enjoyed a strong training camp this season, nearly forcing the Sabres to keep him. The Swede parlayed that into a terrific start with the Rochester Americans, scoring six goals and 17 points in his first 19 games.

But Nylander, the eighth overall pick in 2016, started slumping around December. Over a 26-game stretch, he mustered only two goals and eight points.

Then on March 2, Nylander finally ended his marathon drought, scoring his first goal since Jan. 4. He scored again in his next outing and again and again.

On Sunday, a day after he scored in his fourth straight game, the Sabres recalled Nylander for the first time since late last season. "I'm getting more into scoring areas, shooting more pucks," Nylander said of what has changed for him. "I know I have a good shot so I've just got to keep shooting, making plays out there."

Did someone suggest Nylander start utilizing his shot more often? He pumped 12 shots on goal during his torrid four-game run. In the previous 13 contests, he registered one shot or zero six times.

No, Nylander said, he simply decided he needed to do it.

"I just started shooting the puck a little bit more than usual," Nylander said following Monday's practice inside KeyBank Center. It certainly paid off. Nylander will play Tuesday against the Dallas Stars, his first NHL appearance since April 7, last season's finale.

With captain and leading scorer Jack Eichel suspended two games for an illegal check to the head, the reeling Sabres, who have lost four straight games, need more offensive punch. Perhaps Nylander can provide some.

Nylander skated at right wing Monday beside center Evan Rodrigues and Conor Sheary. He also had a spot on the power play.

"I'd like to see the exact same things that got him an opportunity to come up and play for us," Sabres coach Phil Housley said. "Just talking to (general manager Jason Botterill) and (Amerks coach) Chris Taylor, he's playing very well right now. He's scoring, he's shooting the puck a lot more and we want him to attack the game with that same focus that he's had when he's been in Rochester."

Nylander could be running out of opportunities with the Sabres. The team's old regime drafted him. Botterill has been putting his stamp on the organization, dealing many of ex-GM Tim Murray's acquisitions.

Most recently, Botterill traded defenseman Brendan Guhle, one of the Sabres' prized prospects not long ago, on Feb. 24.

Nylander's skill is undeniable. Some scouts pegged him as perhaps the most talented player in his draft class.

Still, he has often struggled as a pro, failing to showcase the tenacity to match his skill.

The Sabres assigned him to the Amerks two years ago, making him the AHL's youngest player at just 18. As a rookie, he compiled 10 goals, 28 points and a team-worst minus-24 rating in 65 games.

Last season, he hurt his groin, missed all of training camp and didn't play make his season debut with the Amerks until November. This year, he has compiled 12 goals, 31 points and a plus-11 rating in 49 games.

Many of Nylander's improvements can be traced to last offseason, when the Sabres challenged him. Amerks GM Randy Sexton called his summer "critical."

Nylander arrived back in Buffalo a different, more mature player.

"Early, before camp, skating with him, it just seemed like he was a lot more confident in his skin," Sabres winger Kyle Okposo said. "He seemed to just have a better head about him."

After getting sent down – he was among the final players sent to Rochester – Nylander tried to seize his chance with the Amerks.

"I wanted to be here (in the NHL), but I just tried to take it and learn as much as I could down there, being more experienced – it's my third year – to be as ready as possible when I get called back up," said Nylander, who has scored one goal and two points in seven career NHL games.

Alex Nylander returns to Buffalo looking to make the offensive impact that few recalls have
The Athletic
By: *John Vogl*
March 11, 2019

From the moment Alex Nylander walked to the draft stage in the Sabres' arena, his goal was to make the building his home. He's getting his best chance yet.

"I just want to show that I can be here," the winger said Monday. "I know I'm ready for this."

Nylander has never been shy about expressing his NHL desires. The No. 8 overall pick from 2016 is certain he'll follow in the footsteps of his father, Michael, and his brother, William. After returning from injury last month in Rochester, he talked about playing well enough to earn a call-up and "not coming back down here."

The reeling Sabres recalled the prospect over the weekend, and he'll make his season debut Tuesday against Dallas. There are 14 games remaining and it wouldn't be a surprise to see Nylander in all of them.

Buffalo is merely playing out the string — and based on Saturday's no-show in Colorado, "playing" is a relative term — so it makes sense to give the 21-year-old a longer look than his first two seasons. He played in the final three games last year and the last four in 2016-17. A full month in Buffalo would give the organization a better gauge of Nylander's growth.

"I'm just going to play my best and obviously I hope to be here for longer," he said.

Nylander has earned this look. He scored in four straight games for the Amerks, giving him four goals and seven points in the last six outings.

"We want him to attack the game with that same focus that he's had in Rochester," said Sabres coach Phil Housley, who placed Nylander alongside center Evan Rodrigues and left wing Conor Sheary. "He's shooting the puck a lot more. He's creating a lot more. Obviously, he's scored four goals recently, which is the result of shooting the puck more."

During Nylander's four-game scoring run, he took 12 shots for an average of three per game. During his opening 45 games, he took just 77 shots, an average of 1.7 per game.

"I'm getting more to the scoring areas," Nylander said. "I know I have a good shot, so I've just got to keep shooting and making plays out there."

The winger's season in the American Hockey League can be broken down into three segments: a fine start, a midseason slump and a hot stretch.

"Obviously, I wanted to be here," he said. "But I just tried to take it and learn as much as I could down there, be more experienced in my third year to obviously be as ready as possible when I got called back up."

Few players in AHL history have gained as much as experience as Nylander at his age. He just turned 21 on March 2, and here is EliteProspects.com's all-time list of AHL games played by skaters under age 21.

The only forward to carve out a long NHL career was Prospal, who played in 1,108 games for Philadelphia, Ottawa, Florida, Tampa Bay, Anaheim, the Rangers and Columbus. He spent three full seasons in the minors before blossoming in his fourth year at age 21. He became a regular NHL player at age 24 and a 20-goal scorer at age 25.

Nylander hopes it doesn't take that long. The winger has already set career highs in goals (12) and points (31) in the minors, putting him a tie for 15th this season among AHL players under 21.

While Nylander wants to show he's ready for the big leagues, the Sabres need him to show it. During the past eight seasons, they've had only two forwards (Marcus Foligno and Brian Flynn) arrive from Rochester and make an offensive impact. It's been ugly.

In 666 games, the recalls have totaled 71 goals and 65 assists. That's an average of 0.2 points per game. Even excluding Matt Ellis, who was called upon to be a fourth-line role player, the recalls have averaged just 0.22 points per game (66 goals and 128 points in 577 outings).

This season, C.J. Smith, Scott Wilson and Danny O'Regan have combined for two goals and two assists in 20 games.

In 2017-18, Nick Baptiste, Justin Bailey, Kyle Crisculo, Hudson Fasching, Nylander and O'Regan totaled eight goals and three assists in 64 games.

In 2016-17, William Carrier, Bailey, Rodrigues, Baptiste, Cal O'Reilly, Cole Schneider and Nylander combined for 14 goals and 11 assists in 136 games.

In 2015-16, O'Reilly, Tim Schaller, Dan Catenacci, Bailey, Phil Varone, Schneider and Rodrigues totaled six goals and eight assists in 65 games.

In 2014-15, Ellis, Varone, Mikhail Grigorenko, Zac Dalpe, Schaller, Jerry D'Amigo and Joel Armia combined for nine goals and nine assists in 141 games.

In 2013-14, Ellis, Nicolas Deslauriers, Luke Adam and Varone had seven goals and three assists in 88 games.

In 2012-13, Kevin Porter, Flynn and Adam totaled 11 goals and 10 assists in 61 games. Flynn led the way with a respectable showing.

In 2011-12, Corey Tropp, Zack Kassian, Foligno, Paul Szczechura, Travis Turnbull, Colin Stuart and Derek Whitmore combined for 14 goals and 19 assists in 91 games. Foligno caught fire alongside Tyler Ennis and Drew Stafford, cementing a spot in Buffalo for the next five seasons.

Nylander can make his case to be a full-time NHLer during the next four weeks. He's been waiting for the shot, and it will be his best chance to date.

"I've been up now every single year since I came here," Nylander said. "I've just been waiting for my opportunity. I'm ready to take it now."

Rochester Amerks alumni hit the rink with veterans

13 Wham

By: *Staff Report*

March 10, 2019

Alumni of the Rochester Amerks skated with veterans and their families on Sunday at Paul Louis Arena in Rochester. The Learn to Skate Program is hosted by Rochester American Warrior Hockey.

Organizers say the event helps local veterans learn something new, connect with each other and have a day of fun with their families.

"It's awesome. It's people like us you're hanging out with, veterans as well, so it's a great program", said veteran Joe Lusardi.

Mark Hansen, a veteran, says, "any type of service your family is involved with you regardless. It's nice to have your family involved with you when you're doing things outside the service."

All the hockey equipment is donated by the Amerks alumni for the veterans to use at these events.

The next event is next Sunday.

Confident Amerks complete weekend sweep
Pickin' Splinters
By: *Kevin Oklobzija*
March 10, 2019

Take a team with a solid amount of talent, and then infuse said team with a colossal dose of confidence and what happens?

If that team is the Rochester Americans, they win three weekend games by a combined score of 16-4.

"Any time you can go six points of six points in a three-in-three, that's great for our team," center Taylor Leier said after Sunday's 6-1 home-ice victory over the Binghamton Devils. "It's a nice little building block."

Here's your Sunday Big Ditch Amerks Six Pack:

1. Gimme the puck, Part I

Leier's play epitomizes a belief in his game, and his production reflects it. He scored the first goal on Sunday and set up the second, by linemate and penalty killing partner Remi Elie.

In his past 10 games, Leier has produced 6 goals, 5 assists and 11 points. He has 8-6-14 in the 20 games since a Jan. 17 trade brought him to the Buffalo Sabres organization. In the exchange, Justin Bailey was sent to the Philadelphia Flyers.

So how confident is Leier, who scored 10-9-19 in 34 games for Lehigh Valley?

"Really confident; this is the best I've felt all year," he said. "You want that feeling of wanting the puck all the time and I have it right now. You're not afraid to shoot, you're not afraid to attack. It's a really good feeling and I think a lot of guys are playing like that."

2. Gimme the puck, Part II

Rasmus Asplund has joined the feeling-good-about-my-game club.

The first-year centerman scored again on Sunday and also assisted on goals by Lawrence Pilut and C.J. Smith. Asplund has 3-8-11 in his past eight games, which is nearly triple his production for his first 21 games (1-3-4).

"I think it's a mix that I'm getting rewarded and I have confidence right now," Asplund said.

Continuing to build confidence in his season-long linemates, Danny O'Regan and fellow Swede Victor Olofsson, certainly plays into the equation.

"We want to be better, we want to talk to each other, we want to make each other better," Asplund said.

His confidence is also evident on every shift.

"I think he really takes control of his game and he plays with so much poise out there," Pilut said. "You watch him now, he takes the ice, he takes one, two guys on him, and he still comes out with the puck. It's just amazing to see. He's been growing a lot lately."

3. Back in 1st place

In improving to 38-18-3-2, the Amerks moved back ahead of the idle Syracuse Crunch by a point in the AHL's North Division, 81-80. The Amerks also are just four points behind Charlotte for first overall in the Eastern Conference.

"We're a team that can win this division and that's what we want to do," Asplund said. "We're going to take every game and try to get two points and try to get the No. 1 spot."

4. Getting back that goal-scoring feeling

When he left on Nov. 30 for what became a three month stay with the Sabres, Pilut has scored 3-19-22 in 16 games.

But since returning to the Amerks lineup on Feb. 23, Pilut had just two assists and was showing some natural signs of wanting to do more after his NHL stint.

That's a natural tendency, coach Chris Taylor said, for players coming back after a long stay up top.

"He wants to be the guy," Taylor said. "He's playing well but I think he can play better. There's another level for him."

Teammates were happy when Pilut found the net on a second-period power play to extend the lead to 4-1.

"It was good for him to get the goal, good for his confidence, too, so I gave him an extra hug there," Asplund said.

5 A weekend sweep, but ...

Here's a true sign this Amerks team expects to play well into the spring. Their coach was finding the faults with the weekend.

There wasn't much to criticize in Friday's 5-0 blitzing of the Bridgeport Sound Tigers. But Taylor thought the Amerks could have better in Saturday's 5-3 win at Binghamton, and again on Sunday against the Devils, despite the score.

"I always love winning but I thought we were sloppy at times and turned the puck over too many times," Taylor said. "It's three-in-three, I know, and they're tough games, but we still have to play the right way."

6 A possible league review ?

Amerks captain Kevin Porter was assessed an interference major for his blind-sided check behind the net on Devils defenseman Josh Jacobs in the second period.

The Devils scored their goal during the five-minute power play.

The league may review the hit, because of the category of penalty, but Taylor said he doesn't believe there will be a suspension. "It wasn't as if he wanted to finish the guy (with a big check)," Taylor said.

Hockey loses a giant

Hockey Hall of Fame defenseman Harry Howell died on Saturday. He was 86.

Howell played 24 professional seasons, including the first 17 with the New York Rangers. He's one of 10 players to have his number (3) retired by the Rangers.

Howell, a native of Hamilton, Ontario, later coached and then was a scout for the better part of three decades. He made frequent trips to Rochester over the years, and saw the Amerks play countless times when Hamilton was a member of the AHL.

Just three weeks ago, Marilyn, his wife of 64 years, passed away.

Amerks honor Weisbeck for working 2,500th game as athletic trainer
Pickin' Splinters
By: *Kevin Oklobzija*
March 10, 2019

Being in the right place at the right time landed Kent Weisbeck his first full-time job as an athletic trainer in professional sports. That was 34 years ago, and it remains the only job he's had in pro sports.

While working in a Buffalo gym, Weisbeck overheard a conversation then-Rochester Americans coach John Van Boxmeer was having. The Amerks, Van Boxmeer was telling a friend, needed a medical trainer because Jim Pizzutelli had been promoted to the Buffalo Sabres.

Weisbeck inquired, was given an interview, and not long after was hired for the 1985-86 American Hockey League season. Right place, right time, indeed.

Some 34 years later, Weisbeck remains on the athletic training staff of the Amerks. He was honored on Sunday afternoon when he worked his 2,500th regular-season game.

The milestone is believed to be an AHL record for a certified athletic trainer. Only one athletic trainer in the NHL, Pete Demers, worked more games. Demers was on the Los Angeles Kings bench for 2,632 games.

The organization gave Weisbeck a watch to commemorate the feat. During Sunday's pre-game ceremony he was presented with a plaque and Amerks No. 2,500 sweater with his name.

"Truly the best," Amerks coach Chris Taylor said in one of the video tributes played during the game. Taylor played all or parts of nine seasons with the Amerks between 1999-2000 and 2010-11.

In a video board tribute, former player and coach Randy Cunneynworth told Weisbeck, "Nobody's done more than you have over the years."

Weisbeck has worked for 11 head coaches, tended to tens of thousands of ice packs and ridden endless miles on team buses. Most importantly, he helped hasten the recovery of injured players every season.

"The Calder Cup championship runs (in 1987 and 1996), you remember those, but the friendships with some of the players are the big thing," Weisbeck, 62, said. "There's lots of good memories."

Weisbeck's role changed when the Buffalo Sabres returned as the parent team in 2011. Rob Frost was the head athletic trainer from 2011-12 to 2014-15, and Bob Mowry has served in that role since 2015-16.

With the title of assistant athletic trainer, Weisbeck is active at practice and for home games. When the team is on the road, he's responsible for the health and rehabilitation of injured players.

"As long as my health stays good and they want me, I'll be here," said Weisbeck, who was inducted into the Amerks Hall of Fame in 2010.

Amerks finish weekend sweep with rout of Devils

Buffalo News

By: *Staff Report*

March 10, 2019

The Rochester Americans completed a sweep of their three weekend games and reclaimed first place in the North Division of the American Hockey League with a 6-1 triumph over the Binghamton Devils on Sunday afternoon at Blue Cross Arena in Rochester.

The Amerks (38-18-5) moved one point ahead of the idle Syracuse Crunch (37-17-6) in the standings.

Rasmus Asplund, a 21-year-old left wing from Sweden, had his third multi-point game in the last three with a goal and two assists for Rochester. Asplund had six goals and 23 assists in 61 games for Rochester this season.

After a slow start, the Amerks scored three first-period goals. The first was an even-strength goal by Taylor Leier, his 18th of the season and seventh for Rochester. Then Remi Eli scored short-handed with an assist from Leier. Defenseman Matt Tennyson scored the third goal when the teams were skating four aside.

Binghamton's Nikita Popugaev scored his team's lone goal on the power play at 2:31 of the second with Buffalo native Ryan Schmelzer, a former Canisius College star, getting the primary assist.

Rochester countered that with a power-play goal by defenseman Lawrence Pilut with 1:37 left in the second.

C.J. Smith scored with a man advantage for his 21st goal at 3:01 of the third period with Asplund getting an assist. Asplund closed the scoring at 12:55 with Victor Olofsson assisting for his third point in the last two games.

Scott Wedgewood had 18 saves in goal for Rochester and improved his record to 24-10-2.

Evan Cormier had 26 saves for the Devils.

Rochester has collected 35 out of a possible 48 points in its last 24 games and points in 13 of the last 17 games against the Devils since the start of the 2017-18 season.

The Amerks have a home game Wednesday night against Utica then a two-game series at Charlotte on Friday and Saturday.

Sabres recall Alexander Nylander from Rochester

Buffalo News

By: *Staff Report*

March 10, 2019

The Buffalo Sabres recalled Alexander Nylander from the Rochester Americans on Sunday, with captain Jack Eichel facing an NHL disciplinary hearing.

Nylander, the eighth overall pick in 2016, is riding a four-game goal streak and has seven points in the last six games with the Amerks. He has already set career highs in goals (12) and points (31) in 49 games. He has tied his career high with 19 assists.

The Rochester Americans host Binghamton on Sunday at 3:05 p.m. and the Sabres are not practicing, but the recall happened Sunday morning to avoid the potential for injury.

Nylander has played in seven games with the Sabres – four in 2016-17 and three last season. He has a goal and an assist.

With NHL sitting Jack Eichel for two games, Alexander Nylander gets the call
Buffalo News
By: *Mike Harrington*
March 10, 2019

As yet another meaningless March moves on, one of the best reasons to watch the Buffalo Sabres these days won't be on the ice the next two games.

Captain Jack Eichel received a two-game suspension Sunday night from the NHL's Department of Player Safety for his hit on Colorado's Carl Soderberg during the second period of Saturday's 3-0 loss to the Avalanche in Denver.

Eichel will miss KeyBank Center visits by the Dallas Stars on Tuesday and the Pittsburgh Penguins on Thursday before returning to the lineup Saturday in Carolina. Eichel has 25 goals and 72 points in 65 games and the suspension will temporarily derail his bid for his first 30-goal season.

To replace Eichel, the Sabres have called up former first-round draft pick Alexander Nylander from Rochester. It's the first callup of the year for Nylander, who has 12 goals and 19 assists in 49 games for the Amerks.

Eichel was given an "illegal check to the head" penalty at 14:48 of the second period after appearing to pick Soderberg's head as the pair was engaged in a puck battle in the neutral zone. Soderberg went down briefly on his stomach but got up and headed to the bench. He played the rest of the game and appeared to be uninjured.

According to the NHL's Department of Player Safety video released Sunday night, Eichel's suspension was largely a result of the fact that Soderberg's head was the principal point of contact on the play.

"With Soderberg reaching for the puck, Eichel cut sharply in front of him with his upper body, hitting Soderberg's head and making it the main point of contact on a hit where such head contact was avoidable," the league said in its video explanation of the play.

The league ruled that Eichel could have taken a different angle on the hit and driven through Soderberg's shoulder and core rather than picking the head. The league also absolved Soderberg of contributing to the nature of the hit.

"His head and core move in a consistent manner," the DoPS said of Soderberg, "and do not suddenly and materially change position in a way that changes the nature of this hit from a full body check to one that picks the head."

The Sabres have made no comment on the suspension. They were off Sunday and will return to practice Monday.

It will be interesting to see if Nylander is getting a two-game look simply to replace Eichel or if he has a chance to stick in the NHL for a few games before returning to Rochester for the Calder Cup playoffs.

Nylander, 21, has had another mostly quiet year in Rochester but has raised eyebrows with a goal in four straight games, culminating in his tally during Saturday's 5-3 win in Binghamton.

Nylander, taken eighth overall in 2016, has played just seven NHL games the last two years with one goal and one assist.

The Sabres have 14 games left and will endure their seventh straight March when a playoff berth has not been on the line.

It's a bitter disappointment for a franchise that hasn't made the postseason since 2011 or even competed for a spot since going 1-3-1 in the final five games of 2012 to blow its most recent chance.

The Sabres are 2-8-2 in their last 12 games and are now only one point ahead of the New York Rangers in the Eastern Conference, leaving 13th place in the East a realistic possibility.

Nine of the remaining 14 games are against teams in the playoff hunt, with the exceptions being two games apiece against Detroit and Ottawa and a trip to New Jersey.

The highlights include Ryan O'Reilly's return with the St. Louis Blues on Sunday, the March 20 visit by Toronto (which has beaten the Sabres four straight times for the first time since 1972) and the March 30 game against the New York Islanders that will see the Sabres return to the Nassau Coliseum for the first time since 2015.

Tuesday's game will be a huge one for Dallas. The Stars enter Monday holding the West's first wild card but are just one point ahead of Minnesota, two up on Arizona and three ahead of Colorado.

While the Sabres have been abysmal on the road — losing nine in a row and winning just three of their last 22 — they have been much better at home.

The Sabres are 19-10-4 this year in KeyBank Center compared to 11-19-5 on the road. Last year, they were an NHL-worst 11-25-5 at home so they've already improved by 15 points eight home games left.

Sabres recall prospect Alexander Nylander from Amerks
Buffalo Hockey Beat
By: *Bill Hoppe*
March 10, 2019

A four-game goal streak has helped Buffalo Sabres prospect Alexander Nylander earn his first trip to the NHL this season.

The Sabres recalled the Swede, the eighth overall pick in 2016, from the Rochester Americans today.

They need an extra forward because the NHL suspended captain Jack Eichel two games today for an illegal check to the head. Nylander, 21, has scorching his month. Following a 15-game stretch in which he produced just one goal and five points, he compiled four goals and six points in his last four AHL outings.

The slick winger has set career highs with 12 goals and 31 points in 49 contests with the Amerks this season.

The 6-foot-1, 192-pound Nylander has compiled one goal and two points in seven career NHL appearances. He hasn't played with the Sabres since late last season.

Amerks complete a perfect weekend sweep
C&C Worldwide
By: Staff Report/Amerks.com
March 10, 2019

With his third multi-point effort in the last three games, Rasmus Asplund led the Rochester Americans (38-18-3-2) to a 6-1 thrashing over the Binghamton Devils (24-34-5-0) Sunday afternoon at the Blue Cross Arena, putting the finishing touches on a perfect 3-win weekend for the Amerks.

Along with the win, the Amerks regained the top spot in the AHL's North Division standings over the Syracuse Crunch, despite the Crunch having a game in hand. Rochester has now collected 35 out of a possible 48 points in its last 24 games. The victory also gave Rochester points in 13 of the last 17 games against the Devils dating back to the start of the 2017-18 season. The Amerks show a 10-4-2-1 record during that span.

While Asplund added three points (1+2), Taylor Leier and Remi Elie each recorded a goal and an assist. Matt Tennyson, Lawrence Pilut, and C.J. Smith all completed the scoring while goaltender Scott Wedgewood improved to 24-10-2-3 on the season as he stopped 18 of 19 shots. The sixth-year pro boasts 15-4-1 record in his last 20 appearances dating back to Dec. 26.

Nikita Popugaev extended his point streak to three games for Binghamton, which dropped 11 of its last 12 games, including six straight. Netminder Evan Cormier made his third appearance in the last six games but suffered the loss while making 26 saves.

With three goals in a span of 6:05, the Amerks jumped out to a commanding 3-0 lead before carrying it into the first intermission.

As Elie entered the offensive zone along the near boards, he dished a centering pass to Leier. The forward, who has seven points (5+2) over his last five games, fired a shot from the right face-off dot and it snuck between the arm and body of Cormier to give the Amerks a 1-0 lead at the 11:02 mark.

Later in the opening period, Rochester took a four-minute elbowing penalty but Leier and Elie teamed up yet again as Leier forced a turnover at the Amerks blueline. The puck caromed into the Devils zone and Elie tracked down the loose puck before picking the upper corner for his sixth of the campaign.

The Amerks added their third of the opening frame just 2:20 after their 11th shorthanded tally of the season, which is fifth-most in the AHL, when Tennyson buried his fourth of the slate.

"We did a good job in securing an early lead," said Leier after the Amerks outscored their opponents 7-0 in the first period over the 3 games this weekend. "It was good to establish that home-ice dominance we have wanted lately."

"It was a good building block for us and hopefully we can continue to keep it going down the stretch," Leier added.

Binghamton got on the board early in the second period, but Rochester responded with its own power-play goal to reclaim its three-goal cushion at the 18:23 mark. Parked atop the point in the Devils zone, Pilut blasted a one-time feed from Danny O'Regan for his fourth goal of the season and first since Nov. 18.

"Myself, Asplund and O'Regan have some good chemistry lately, and 'Reegs' gave me a good pass and I saw an open lane," Pilut said when describing his power-play marker. "When I got the puck, I just tried to shoot it through the lane."

Rochester tacked on two more tallies during the final frame as Smith netted his 21st of the season and Asplund booked his third goal of the weekend and sixth of the slate.

"I am feeling pretty good," said Asplund after posting seven points (4+3) this weekend. "The confidence is there and the whole team is playing well. My linemates (O'Regan and Victor Olofsson) and the team are playing well, and it's easy to ride the wave of momentum."

The Amerks closed out the weekend with a perfect 3-0-0-0 record and a 16-4 goal differential, which included outscoring the opposition 11-1 at home.

"We had good goal-scoring from a lot of different guys," Amerks head coach Chris Taylor said. "We are feeding off one another and we are getting some timely goals. I don't think that we played well today, but we had some big goals and it solidified the win."

"We have a good group of guys, who enjoy playing alongside with one another," said Pilut. "It's a lot of fun and we are playing with a lot of chemistry. It's definitely a good feeling lately."

The Amerks return to action on Wednesday, March 13 as they conclude their season-series against the Utica Comets with a 7:05 pm North Division showdown at the BCA.

**NOTES* — The Buffalo Sabres on Sunday announced the team has recalled forward Alexander Nylander from the Rochester Americans. Nylander (21, 6-foot-1, 192 lbs.) already has set career-high totals in goals (12) and points (31) in 49 games with Rochester this season. He has also tied his career high with 19 assists and posted a plus-11 rating. The recall comes on the heels of a four-game goal streak with the Amerks. In his last six games, Nylander has totaled seven points (4+3). The Calgary, AL. native joins the Sabres for the first time this season after tallying two points (1+1) in seven career NHL games played during the last two seasons. A first-round pick (eighth overall) in the 2016 NHL Draft, Nylander has totaled 86 points (30+56) in 165 career AHL games.

Sabres call up Nylander from Rochester

WGR 550

By: *Brayton Wilson*

March 10, 2019

After a recent hot stretch of games with the Rochester Americans in the American Hockey League, the Buffalo Sabres have called up forward Alexander Nylander.

The 21-year-old winger has played some solid hockey for most of the season, but has recently put up some good numbers with seven points (4+3) in his last six games. That also includes a four-game goal scoring streak with a goal in each of those games.

In 49 games this season, Nylander has already scored a career-high in goals (12) and points (31), while matching his career-high in assists (19). His 31 points currently ranks him seventh in team scoring.

Although Nylander's point totals have been nothing to rave about this season, his recent play away from the puck has allowed him to open his offensive play even more. The former eighth overall pick of the Sabres in the 2016 NHL Draft has always been able to show off his offensive skills when the puck is on his stick, but he has been more engaged in the play this season in all three zones of the ice, and has been more willing to go into the dirty areas to make a play. Nylander has quietly put together a nice, consistent season with the Amerks in his third season in the organization.

The Sabres call up Nylander as captain Jack Eichel will sit out for two games after being suspended for an illegal check to the head of Colorado Avalanche forward Carl Soderberg on Saturday.

Slumping Sabres call up Alexander Nylander from minors

Associated Press

By: Staff Report

March 10, 2019

The slumping Buffalo Sabres have recalled forward Alexander Nylander from the minors.

Nylander is Buffalo's first-round pick in the 2016 draft and has a career-high 12 goals and 31 points in 49 games with AHL Rochester this season.

The move on Sunday marks the first time Nylander has been called up this season. He previously had a goal and an assist in seven career NHL games.

Nylander's promotion comes at a time when Buffalo is 0-4-1 in its past five and 2-8-2 in its past 10 following a 3-0 loss at Colorado on Saturday.

The call-up also comes with Sabres captain Jack Eichel facing possible NHL discipline for an illegal check to the head of Colorado's Carl Soderberg. The league's player safety department announced Eichel will have a hearing Sunday for the hit, which occurred during the second period.

The Sabres host Dallas on Tuesday.

Nylander heads to Buffalo, but Amerks still finish perfect weekend with 6-1 win
13 Wham

By: *Staff Report/Amerks.com*

March 10, 2019

Alex Nylander has been enjoying the best stretch of hockey in his young pro career with four goals in four games since turning 21 last week and was rewarded with a trip to Buffalo.

The nice thing for the Amerks is that they have so many scoring options, they didn't miss a beat without him.

Rochester got six goals from six different players on Sunday, dominating Binghamton to the tune of a 6-1 win, and finishing a three game in three day stretch with an unblemished record.

The Amerks dominated the entire weekend, outscoring opponents by a combined 16-4.

Most importantly, the win vaulted Rochester back into first place in the North Division, one point ahead of Syracuse, who was idle.

It'll be a busy, challenging week ahead for Rochester, who will be home to take on division rival Utica on Wednesday before hitting the road for two games in Charlotte against the league's best team.

Amerks win 5th straight road game

C&C Worldwide

By: *Staff Report/Amerks.com*

March 9, 2019

On the strength of a pair of goals from forwards Taylor Leier and Victor Olofsson, as well as a two-point (1+1) night from Alexander Nylander, the Rochester Americans (37-18-3-2) won their fifth straight road contest by a 5-3 score over the Binghamton Devils (24-33-5-0) Saturday at Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena. It was the seventh meeting between the intrastate rivals this season and the first of two on the weekend as the Amerks look to complete the sweep on Sunday afternoon when the home-and-home series shifts up to Rochester.

Along with the win, which keeps the Amerks within a point of the Syracuse Crunch for the first place in the AHL's North Division standings, the team has collected 33 out of a possible 46 points in its last 23 games. The victory also gave Rochester points in 12 of the last 16 games against the Devils dating back to the start of the 2017-18 slate. The Amerks show a 9-4-2-1 record during that span.

While Leier and Olofsson each tallied a pair of goals in the win, Rasmus Asplund, who had his first multi-goal of the season last night, added two assist tonight as did Danny O'Regan. Nylander extended his goal-scoring streak to four games as he scored his fourth during that span and 12th of the campaign to go with an assist while goaltender Adam Wilcox improved to 10-7-3 on the slate as he made 30 saves.

Despite a two-assist night from Ryan Murphy, and goals from Sam Kurker, Marian Studenic and Nikita Popugaev, Binghamton dropped its fifth straight game and 10th in its last 11 games. Netminder Cam Johnson made his fourth appearance in the last five games but suffered the loss while stopping 25 of the 29 shots he faced.

On the ensuing shift after Binghamton tied the game at two during the latter portion of the middle period, the line trio of Asplund, O'Regan and Olofsson were quick to reclaim the Amerks' lead as Asplund and O'Regan set-up Olofsson at the 15:55 mark.

Before the end of the second period and with a 3-2 cushion, O'Regan handed Olofsson a centering pass in-between the face-off dots in the Devils zone and Olofsson doubled the lead going into the intermission. The marker, which eventually held up as the game-winner, was his team-leading 23rd of the season 50th point overall. He became the first Amerk to reach the 50-point mark since Cole Schneider during the 2016-17 campaign.

It was also his eighth game-winner of the season, putting him one off the AHL lead behind only teammate Zach Redmond.

Despite facing a 4-2 deficit, Binghamton, which had 12 players on recalls to New Jersey coming into the matchup, made things interesting during the final 20 minutes of play as Kurker made it one-goal game at the 6:44 mark.

The scored remained the same until Leier, who appeared in his 300th professional game, sealed the 5-3 win as he scored into a vacant net with 36 seconds left in regulation from Kevin Porter. The assist was Porter's 200th of his AHL career.

Rochester, which has the second-best road record (19-6-3-1) in the AHL this season, has won 13 of its last 19 games away from the Blue Cross Arena dating back to Dec. 8.

The game appeared to remain scoreless heading into the first intermission, but Rochester struck twice late in the final minute of the opening period to go up 2-0 after the first 20 minutes of play. It marked the fifth time this season the Amerks had scored in the final minute of play of any period.

Binghamton responded with a pair of goals of its own to begin the second stanza, but Rochester countered back with another pair from Olofsson to take a 4-2 lead before adding an empty-netter in the third period.

After a quick turnaround, the Amerks and Devils close out the weekend on Sunday at 3:05 pm in Rochester as the home-and-home series shifts to the Blue Cross Arena.

Nylander extends goal streak in Amerks' win at Binghamton

Buffalo News

By: *Staff Report*

March 10, 2019

Alexander Nylander scored a goal for the fourth straight game and Victor Olofsson and Taylor Leier each scored a pair for the Rochester Americans Saturday night in a 5-3 victory over the Binghamton Devils before 4,318 at the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena in Binghamton.

Leier scored his first of the game and Nylander, the 21-year-old winger tallied on the power play to get the Amerks off in front in the opening period.

Binghamton tied it in the second on goals by Nikita Popugaev and Marian Studenic but Olofsson scored his 22nd and 23rd of the season to put the Amerks in front to stay before the middle period was over.

Sam Kurker made it 4-3 with a goal for the Devils at 6:44 of the third, but that was it for Binghamton.

Leier, who has scored seven goals for Rochester after coming from the Philadelphia Flyers organization in a trade last month for Justin Bailey, got an empty-net score with 36 seconds left.

The Amerks will be home against Binghamton at 3:05 p.m. Sunday to complete their three-games-in-three-days weekend.

Rochester (37-18-5, 79 points) remains in second place in the North Division of the American Hockey League one point behind Syracuse (37-17-6). The Crunch lost to the Wilkes-Barre Scranton, 4-3, in overtime on Saturday night to maintain their edge over the Amerks.

The Amerks are 1-5 against Binghamton on the season with three more games remaining between the teams in the AHL regular season. Rochester will be home to Utica on Wednesday night before a two-game road series on Friday and Saturday at Charlotte.

Olofsson, Leier power Amerks to fifth straight road win
13 WHAM
By: *Staff Report/Amerks*
March 10, 2019

On the strength of a pair of goals from forwards Taylor Leier and Victor Olofsson, as well as a two-point (1+1) night from Alexander Nylander, the Rochester Americans (37-18-3-2) won their fifth straight road contest by a 5-3 score over the Binghamton Devils (24-33-5-0) Saturday at Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena. It was the seventh meeting between the intrastate rivals this season and the first of two on the weekend as the Amerks look to complete the sweep on Sunday afternoon when the home-and-home series shifts up to Rochester.

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While Leier and Olofsson each tallied a pair of goals in the win, Rasmus Asplund, who had his first multi-goal of the season last night, added two assist tonight as did Danny O'Regan. Nylander extended his goal-scoring streak to four games as he scored his fourth during that span and 12th of the campaign to go with an assist while goaltender Adam Wilcox improved to 10-7-3 on the slate as he made 30 saves.

Despite a two-assist night from Ryan Murphy, and goals from Sam Kurker, Marian Studenic and Nikita Popugaev, Binghamton dropped its fifth straight game and 10th in its last 11 games. Netminder Cam Johnson made his fourth appearance in the last five games but suffered the loss while stopping 25 of the 29 shots he faced.

On the ensuing shift after Binghamton tied the game at two during the latter portion of the middle period, the line trio of Asplund, O'Regan and Olofsson were quick to reclaim the Amerks' lead as Asplund and O'Regan set-up Olofsson at the 15:55 mark.

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It was also his eighth game-winner of the season, putting him one off the AHL lead behind only teammate Zach Redmond.

Despite facing a 4-2 deficit, Binghamton, which had 12 players on recalls to New Jersey coming into the matchup, made things interesting during the final 20 minutes of play as Kurker made it one-goal game at the 6:44 mark.

The scored remained the same until Leier, who appeared in his 300th professional game, sealed the 5-3 win as he scored into a vacant net with 36 seconds left in regulation from Kevin Porter. The assist was Porter's 200th of his AHL career.

Rochester, which has the second-best road record (19-6-3-1) in the AHL this season, has won 13 of its last 19 games away from The Blue Cross Arena dating back to Dec. 8.

The game appeared to remain scoreless heading into the first intermission, but Rochester struck twice late in the final minute of the opening period to go up 2-0 after the first 20 minutes of play. It marked the fifth time this season the Amerks had scored in the final minute of play of any period.

Binghamton responded with a pair of goals of its own to begin the second stanza, but Rochester countered back with another pair from Olofsson to take a 4-2 lead before adding an empty-netter in the third period.

After a quick turnaround, the Amerks and Devils close out the weekend on Sunday afternoon in Rochester as the home-and-home series shifts to The Blue Cross Arena. The 3:05 p.m. matinee will be carried live on The Sports Leader AM 950/95.7 FM ESPN Rochester as well as AHLTV. The matchup will also be televised locally on MSG.

Rochester Too Much To Handle For BDeviils

All About The Jersey

By: *Jeff Ulmer*

March 10, 2019

Binghamton Devils, with another strong effort similar to Friday night vs Springfield, couldn't quite pull it off against the third best team in the league as the Rochester Americans skated away with a 5-3 win on Saturday at The Floyd. The loss was the team's season-high fifth in a row.

The Amerks benefited with two late goals in the opening period 52 seconds apart as Taylor Leier scored on a shot, short side of the net past Cam Johnson. After a faceoff win by Rasmus Asplund that sent the puck to Alexander Nylander, he then skated towards the slot with a wristed shot that sailed past Johnson on the power play with 2.0 seconds left in the period. That would be a big deal as both teams headed to the locker room with motivation leaning towards the Americans.

In the second Binghamton had tied it at two, as Nikita Popugaev scored after receiving a short pass off the stick of Brett Seney and with a wristed shot past Adam Wilcox for his first AHL goal. Soon after, hard work by Brian Ward paid off in dividends as he was able to battle his way through several players in the corner for a loose puck that finally bounced out to Brandon Baddock.

His short pass found Marian Studenic for a one-timer to send the big crowd into a frenzy.

However, before the goal replays were completed Rochester was able to regain the lead 15 seconds later. Victor Olofsson delayed his opportunity at the right time before unloading a snapshot with Tariq Hammond and Rasmus Asplund tangled up through the crease that created too much havoc for Johnson in front that created a partial screen.

In his second game since signed to a PTO, Sam Kurker scored his first for the Devils with a one-timer from the blueline that made it a 4-3 contest with 13:16 remaining in the third period. Hope was there as the players fought hard to at least send it to overtime but an empty net goal in the final minutes by Taylor Leier would result as the final blow for Binghamton.

BDeviils with all sorts of pressure, fell short despite out-shooting the Amerks 33-30.

- Eric Tangradi and Brandon Gignac called up to NJ while another PTO was handed out to Nick Sorkin at forward. Gignac made his NHL debut on Saturday for the Devils.
- With 12 regulars out of the line-up either called up by New Jersey or out injured, the team has performed well with what they have.
- Seney with a 4-game point streak (1g, 3a) since being sent down and has played big minutes while centering the second line between Edwardh and Kurker.
- Pops has 2 points (1g, 1a) in his last 2 games and his adjustments to NA soil is beginning to show, as he looks more comfortable with better puck management. His goal celebration was a thing of beauty as he popped the water bottle set on the cage.
- We chug along in what has been a mind-blowing experience with all the injuries hit hard up top in NJ. At this point, it's a shot of looking who can be a player that is offered a contract for next season across the organization.

NHL Farm Report: March 9 Binghamton falls to Rochester
Times Herald-Record
By: *Staff Report*
March 10, 2019

The Devils were unable to come back from a two-goal third period deficit, falling 5-3 to the visiting Rochester Americans in an American Hockey League contest inside the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena on Saturday night.

Despite carrying the play throughout the first period against Rochester, the Amerks showed the Devils just how dangerous they can be – scoring two goals in the final minute of the opening period. With 54 seconds remaining, Alexander Nylander threaded a cross-ice pass to Taylor Leier at the circle. Leier collected the pass and whipped a wrist shot over the shoulder of Cam Johnson.

The Amerks added their second goal of the period with only two seconds left. After a Brett Seney penalty, Nylander took a faceoff win and beat Johnson for his 12th of the year with the lone assist to Rasmus Asplund.

Binghamton cut into the 2-0 deficit 4:50 into the second period on the power play. Nikita Popugaev scored his first AHL goal, one night after recording his first point. Seney hit Popugaev with a pass through the slot, and the Russian winger put a puck under the cross bar – blowing up Rochester goalie Adam Wilcox's water bottle in the process. Ryan Murphy earned an assist as well.

The Devils tied the game at two with 4:20 remaining in the second period, courtesy of Marian Studenic. Brandon Baddock won a battle along the wall, fed a pass to Studenic in the high slot, who wired a one timer to the back of the net.

The tie was short lived. Victor Olofsson beat a screened Johnson on the rush 15 seconds after the Devils had evened the game.

Rochester then extended their lead to 4-2, scoring yet another goal in the final minute of the period. Olofsson recorded his second goal of the night, beating Johnson from the slot.

Once again, Binghamton cut another two-goal lead in half, scoring at 13:16 in the third. Sam Kurker blasted home a one-time shot on a pass from Desmond Bergin, making it a one goal game. Ryan Murphy earned his second assist of the night on Kurker's goal.

However, the Devils wouldn't be able to come back from the two-goal deficit this time. Taylor Leier iced the game with the empty-net goal with 36 seconds remaining – his second of the night.

The Devils will face the Amerks again Sunday, this time on the road in Rochester at 3:05 p.m.

Luck o' the Swedes? For the Amerks on Irish Night, yes
Pickin' Splinters
By: *Kevin Oklobzija*
March 9, 2019

The Rochester Americans billed Friday as Irish night, with a rendition of the Irish National Anthem, bagpipes and green uniforms providing a little Celtic flair.

Rasmus Asplund and Alex Nylander apparently didn't get the memo. They turned it into Swedish Night.

Asplund scored twice and Nylander once as the Amerks steamrolled the Bridgeport Sound Tigers 5-0 at Blue Cross Arena at the War Memorial.

In playing one of their most complete games of the season, the Amerks halted Bridgeport's seven-game winning streak and improved to 36-18-3-2. The Sound Tigers had earned 19 of a possible 20 points in their past 10 games and gained a solid hold of second place in the AHL's Atlantic Division.

"That's a good team, they play really hard, and we wanted to make sure they turned pucks over and we didn't," said Amerks captain Kevin Porter, who converted a great give-and-go pass by C.J. Smith in to the game's first goal just 7:08 into the first period.

Here's your Friday Amerks Six Pack:

1. Asplund heating up

The first-year centerman from Sweden had little to show for solid play before Christmas. In his first 32 AHL games, he produced just 1 goal and 8 assists.

But over the past 26 games, he has scored 2-11-13.

"That's the way I want to play, that's the way I want to produce," he said.

His linemates almost all season have been Danny O'Regan and Victor Olofsson. They've played extremely well together, which is why Amerks coach Chris Taylor hasn't tinkered.

"Their chemistry all year has been remarkable," Taylor said.

2. Feel free to shoot ... please

Taylor said one reason for Asplund's increased productivity is a willingness to shoot the puck more often.

He became a little ineffective for a stretch because opponents knew he was usually looking to pass. They took away passing lanes and it often negated a scoring chance.

"He's got a great shot and we tell him all the time we wish he'd shoot more," Taylor said. "When he does, it opens up more for the whole line."

3. Shutout No. 4 for Wedgewood

Goalie Scott Wedgewood posted his fourth shutout of the season, making 29 saves while displaying an air of you're-not-beating-me-tonight confidence.

He said he's not all that infatuated with shutouts.

"It's a win," he said, emphasizing that wins are most important. "It's nice to see and it helps the numbers but I'm comfortable and happy with how I'm playing. The team knows what I'm going to give them."

Just once in the past 14 seasons has an Amerks goalie posted four shutouts: David Leggio in 2012-13. Before that, it was Ryan Miller, with eight in 2004-05.

Oh, and that 2004-05 season was also the last time the franchise won a playoff series.

4. Dominant from start to finish

The Amerks led 2-0 after the first period and 4-0 only 68 seconds into the second period. With nine minutes left in the second period, they were outshooting the Sound Tigers 25-9 and Bridgeport starting goalie Jeremy Smith was watching from the bench.

"We played a full 60 minutes at home and we didn't let up at all, which is great," Porter said.

5. A little D-pair experimentation

The coaching staff broke up the pairing of Zach Redmond and Lawrence Pilut, instead putting Pilut with Will Borgen while Redmond skated alongside Matt Tennyson. The third pairing had Andrew MacWilliam with Jack Dougherty.

Taylor said it's not necessarily permanent, and it might not even how they use the defensemen the rest of the weekend.

But he said they were experimenting a little, allowing Dougherty to play on the right side, for which they believe he is better suited, and also having Tennyson on the left.

And because Borgen, another of the Amerks dynamic rookies, is thinking defense first, Pilut can be more creative.

"It gives him a chance to get up in the play a little bit more," Taylor said.

6. A pair with Binghamton closes the weekend

The Amerks play at Binghamton Saturday and the teams come to Rochester for 3 p.m. Sunday rematch.

The Devils are an AHL-worst 24-32-5-0. Taylor said it's not easy to play a team out of contention, that Binghamton players are playing for next year's contract.

But when you're 24 points better in the standings, and the Syracuse Crunch have taken over first place in the North Division, there can be no excuses. Which the players know.

"We're chasing to clinch a playoff spot and we need four points," Asplund said.

Amerks blank the Bridgeport Sound Tigers

C&C Worldwide

By: *Staff Report/Amerks.com*

March 9, 2019

With a pair of goals in each of the first and second periods, the Rochester Americans (36-18-3-2) grabbed a 4-0 lead 1:08 into the middle frame and never looked back on their way to a dominating a 5-0 win over the visiting Bridgeport Sound Tigers (35-19-5-2) Friday night at The Blue Cross Arena. The flawless performance was the fourth this season by Amerks goaltender Scott Wedgewood, who tied a career-high by stopping all 27 shots he faced to keep the Amerks within two points of the Syracuse Crunch for first place in the AHL's North Division standings.

Along with the victory, the Amerks have collected 31 out of a possible 44 points in their last 22 games and have notched 39 points in their last 29 dating back to the day after Christmas. The win also gave Rochester the season-sweep over Bridgeport as they went a perfect 4-0-0-0 this season against the Sound Tigers.

Forward Kevin Porter, who returned to the Amerks lineup after missing the last three games, collected his fourth multi-point effort of the season as he opened the scoring to go with a helper, while Rasmus Asplund headlined a night of firsts with his first multi-goal outing of the season. Will Borgen also chipped in his first pro multi-point game with a two-assist night and Andrew Oglevie also posted a pair of points (1+1), bringing his recent offensive outburst to eight points (4+4) over his last eight games. Alexander Nylander completed the scoring as he recorded his career-best 11th goal of the season.

Wedgewood drew the nod in the Rochester crease for the third straight game and seventh time in the last eight tilts. The sixth-year goaltender improved to 23-10-2 on the season and boasts a 14-4-1 record in his last 19 appearances dating back to Dec. 26. His four shutouts, which are third-most in the league, are the most for him since the 2013-14 season.

The Sound Tigers, who entered the matchup riding a season-long seven-game win streak and had points in 10 straight, were held off the scoreboard for just the second time this season while Mitchell Vande Sompel and Kieffer Bellows each had a team-high three shots. Goaltender Jeremy Smith made 17 saves in 21 minutes but was given the loss before being replaced by Mitch Gillam, who made his American Hockey League debut early in the middle period. Gillam stopped 17 shots in 39 minutes of relief action.

Less than nine minutes into the opening frame, C.J. Smith, who has 30 points (14+16) over his last 25 games dating back to Dec. 5, intercepted an outlet pass in the neutral zone. The Amerks reigning Rookie of the Year entered the Bridgeport end of the ice and exchanged passes with Porter before Rochester's team captain tucked a shot inside the right leg of netminder to give the home club a 1-0 lead.

Just 1:32 after Porter's eighth marker of the year, Nylander ripped a shot under the crossbar to double Rochester's lead at the 8:40 mark. The tally, the Swedish forward's 11th of the season and third in the last three games, established a new career-high in both points (29) and goals. Oglevie and Borgen were given the assists on the goal that gave Rochester a 2-0 cushion going into the first intermission.

"It was a good start, obviously," said Amerks head coach Chris Taylor. "We had a good chance right off the opening face-off and when you get off to a good start, it just keeps building from there."

The Amerks, who carried a 16-6 shot-advantage in the second period, drew their first penalty of the night with 1:02 left to play in the opening frame. Rochester was unable to capitalize with the extra skater in the first half of the man-advantage but scored 19 seconds into the middle frame as a result of the carryover.

"It was a great start for us," Porter said. "We got pucks deep and they were turning over pucks. We got pucks to the net and got a couple of early goals. To have a great start, especially at home where we haven't had the greatest starts, it was really good for us."

After collecting a pass in the middle of the ice to enter the Sound Tigers zone, Asplund quickly snapped a shot from atop the left face-off dot and beat Smith overtop the glove hand to push the Amerks' cushion to 3-0. Wayne Simpson, who also returned to the lineup after missing the previous three games, and Lawrence Pilut recorded the assists on Oglevie's fourth goal of the season.

Rochester used its quick-strike offense for the second time of the night as Oglevie split the Bridgeport defensive pair and flipped shot overtop a sprawling Smith 1:08 into the frame. The marker, which put an early end to the Sound Tigers goaltender, was Oglevie's fourth of the campaign. Porter and Andrew MacWilliam picked up the helpers.

The Amerks took the four-goal advantage into the final period of regulation and finished off the scoring as Asplund was awarded his second tally of the night at the 11:54 mark from Danny O'Regan and Borgen.

"It was a huge win for us," Asplund said after his first-career two-goal game. "Bridgeport is one of the best teams in the league and we knew we had to play our best game. We really did play a good game."

Bridgeport posted a game-high 11 shots on Wedgewood over the final 20 minutes of play but the netminder turned aside all the rubber he faced to record the 5-0 shutout victory.

"Bridgeport is a great team," Wedgewood explained. "To get the lead early and then play a full 60-minute game, it was a good win. We wanted to do that and make this a difficult place for opponents to play."

Rochester's weekend continues on Saturday, Mar. 9 with the first of back-to-back meetings against the intrastate rival Binghamton Devils at the Floyd L. Maines Veterans Memorial Arena. Following the 7:05 p.m. matchup, the same two teams are slated to meet again in Rochester as the home-and-home series shifts to The Blue Cross Arena for a 3:05 p.m. matinee.

**NOTES* — Bridgeport's lineup featured Chris and Ryan Bourque, both sons of Stanley Cup champion and Hockey Hall of Famer Ray Bourque, as well as Greece native Stephen Gionta. . . Tonight's contest was just the 16th all-time meeting between the two clubs. With 3 wins earlier this season, the Amerks have improved to 6-1-1-0 in their last 8 meetings against the Sound Tigers, after going just 1-3-0-0 in the 4 meetings during the 2016-17 season. . . The Syracuse Crunch (77 points) maintained a 2-point lead over the Amerks (75 points) for first place in the North Division with a 4-0 win over the Utica Comets Friday night. Both teams have played 58 games.

Wedgewood, Amerks shutout Sound Tigers 5-0 to sweep season series

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By: Staff Report/Amerks.com

March 9, 2019

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Sound Tigers win streak snapped by Americans

CT Post

By: *Staff Report*

March 9, 2019

The Bridgeport Sound Tigers saw their seven-game win streak come to an end on Friday in a 5-0 loss to the Rochester Americans at Blue Cross Arena.

Americans goaltender Scott Wedgewood made 27 saves for his fourth shutout this season (third in the AHL), while the Sound Tigers were blanked for just the second time all year. It was Bridgeport's (35-19-5-2) first regulation loss since Feb. 8 against Providence and ended its season series with Rochester winless (0-2-1-1).

The Amerks (36-18-3-2) took command early and carried a 2-0 lead into the first intermission. Kevin Porter struck first with the eventual game-winner at the 7:08 mark when he received a centering pass from C.J. Smith and rifled home a one-timer for his eighth goal of the season. Smith set it up by charging down the right wing and guiding a pass out front from the extended goal line.

Less than two minutes later, Alexander Nylander made it 2-0 with another one-time goal for his third tally in as many games. Andrew Oglevie forced a pass from the right wing to the slot, where Nylander zipped it past Jeremy Smith's blocker for his 11th of the season.

Rochester continued to pour it on in the middle frame with two goals 49 seconds apart to make it 4-0. Rasmus Asplund scored his first of two on the night with the game's only power-play goal just 19 seconds in, following a tripping penalty to John Stevens that carried over from the first. Wayne Simpson advanced a pass in the neutral zone and Asplund skated onto it before banking a shot off the far post and in.

Shortly thereafter, Oglevie swooped in behind Bridgeport's defense and elevated a shot over Smith from the doorstep following a pass from Porter. It ended Smith's night, as he was pulled from the crease and replaced by Mitch Gillam, who made his AHL debut after he was recalled from the Worcester Railers (ECHL) on Thursday.

Asplund capped the scoring at 11:54 of the third period when he forced home his fifth goal of the season following Danny O'Regan's end-to-end rush. It was the only tally Gillam allowed, finishing his debut with 17 saves on 18 shots in 38:52 of a no-decision.

Smith (16-10-4) made 17 saves on 21 shots in 21:08.

The Sound Tigers finished the game 0-fo-4 on the power play and 3-for-4 on the penalty kill, while Rochester led in shots, 39-27. It was a season-high in shots against for Bridgeport. Josh Ho-Sang did not play on Friday after he was returned on loan by the New York Islanders earlier in the afternoon.

The Sound Tigers continue their five-game road trip on Sunday with a 4 p.m. matchup against the Toronto Marlies at Coca-Cola Coliseum.

Will Borgen's physical style of play gives him puncher's chance with Amerks
Buffalo News
By: *Bill Hoppe*
March 7, 2019

C.J. Smith said he kept telling Rochester defenseman Will Borgen he should get into a fight.

After nearly a year in the AHL, Borgen had not yet been in a scrap. Smith knew his 6-foot-2, 187-pound teammate would hold his own.

"I kind of pushed him to get in one," joked Smith, Borgen's friend and roommate.

On Feb. 20 against the Cleveland Monsters, Borgen finally fought, dropping 6-3, 185 Ryan MacInnis by unleashing several wicked right swings as the crowd in Blue Cross Arena roared.

The frenzy of punches didn't disappoint Smith.

"I was pumped up watching that fight," said Smith, who was with the Sabres when Borgen fought MacInnis.

Smith added: "He was throwing some bombs."

Borgen looked like a seasoned fighting pro.

"It was wild, I guess," said Borgen, a fourth-round pick by Buffalo in 2015, 92nd overall. "I mean, I've never fought before, so I didn't know what to expect.

"It's not like you're going out there trying to fight someone. It was just the heat of the moment, it just happened."

While Borgen, 23, rarely fights, the prospect "loves the physical style of play," according to Amerks coach Chris Taylor.

"(He's) hard to play against and makes people pay a price," said one scout who has watched Borgen regularly this season.

Considering Borgen's penchant for contact, it's surprising it took him 58 AHL games to come to blows.

"He's definitely grown a lot of respect around the room in what he's been doing," Taylor said. "He's getting better every game."

Borgen left St. Cloud State following his junior year and was coached by Taylor for eight games last year. Still, Taylor said Borgen's physicality and conditioning during training camp surprised him.

"Ever since then, he's really defined himself as a good defenseman but also a person we can rely on in the offensive (zone)," Taylor said. "He's brought some offensive upside to him. He joins the rush, he makes really good plays at the blue line. His offensive side of the puck is really good as well."

Borgen possesses above-average speed, but so far, his offensive numbers — two goals and eight points in 57 contests — aren't eye-popping.

But Taylor said Borgen, who represented Team USA at the Pyeongchang Olympic Games last year, has continued to develop his offense. Taylor occasionally utilizes Borgen on the power play and he likes the way the rookie can get shots on net from the point during five-on-five action.

"You kind of don't think of that at the start," Taylor said of Borgen's offensive abilities. "Then over time, it's like, 'Wow, where did this come from?' It's like he keeps getting better and better right before your eyes."

Borgen showcased some of his offensive prowess Feb. 16 in Syracuse, moving into the slot and burying Yannick Veilleux's pass under the crossbar.

Ultimately, however, Borgen's grittiness and defensive abilities could help him reach the NHL.

"He'll finish hits," Smith said. "He just plays a hard game, really simple. He's just kind of a reliable D."

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Syracuse pushed past the Amerks and into first place with 75 points in the North Division on Wednesday when the Crunch beat Utica, 5-2.

The Amerks had been in sole possession of first place or tied since October. Both teams have played 58 games. They meet three more times this season.

Notes: The AHL suspended Amerks winger Remi Elie one game for an illegal check to the head of a Crunch player in Sunday's 4-1 home loss. Elie will sit out Friday's home game against the Bridgeport Sound Tigers. . . . Smith, a winger, has compiled 14 goals and 28 points in his last 24 outings going back to Dec. 5. Overall, Smith has scored 20 goals and 46 points in 45 games. . . . Amerks goalie Scott Wedgewood's 22nd win Saturday set a new career high. In his last 10 starts, Wedgewood is 5-3-2 with a 1.99 goals-against average and a .928 save percentage.