



ROCHESTER AMERICANS

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TODAY'S GAME: Utica vs. Rochester

Casey Mittelstadt scores shootout winner for Amerks
Buffalo News
By: Staff Report
Feb. 15, 2020

Casey Mittelstadt scored Rochester's second goal in the shootout and the Amerks gained a 4-3 victory over the Syracuse Crunch on Saturday night at the Upstate Medical University Arena in Syracuse.

The Amerks came from behind to tie the game at 3-3 on a power-play goal by C.J. Smith at 5:28 of the third period. Rochester had led, 2-1, on goals by Brett Murray and Andrew MacWilliam in the second period. Syracuse had scored first on Otto Sompfi's goal at 2:44 of the second.

Boris Katchouk tied the game at 2-2 for the Crunch 38 seconds into the third period and Syracuse took the lead on Alexander Volkov's seventh of the season.

Andrew Oglevie scored first for Syracuse in the shootout. Volkov and Alex Barre-Boulet failed to score for Syracuse against Rochester's Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen. Both Rochester shootout scorers, Oglevie and Mittelstadt, had assists on Rochester goals.

The win came after four straight losses by the Amerks, who will be home for a 3:05 game on Sunday in Blue Cross Arena against the Utica Comets. With Saturday's win the Amerks (27-17-2-4 60 points) moved within a point of the second-place Comets (28-19-3-2) in the North Division standings of the American Hockey League.

Luukkonen stopped 15 of the 18 shots he faced in regulation and overtime. Spencer Martin had 35 saves for Syracuse.

Sabres recall John Gilmour, Andrew Hammond from Rochester
Buffalo News
By: Lance Lysowski
Feb. 15, 2020

The Buffalo Sabres' roster shakeup continued Saturday with defenseman John Gilmour and goalie Andrew Hammond recalled from Rochester.

Gilmour, 26, will likely replace defenseman Zach Bogosian, who was placed on waivers Friday. If another team does not claim Bogosian before noon Saturday, the Sabres could assign him to Rochester or loan him to another American Hockey League team. Bogosian could also remain on the Sabres' roster, though that is unlikely after Gilmour joined the team.

Hammond, meanwhile, joined the team because Carter Hutton missed practice Saturday for "maintenance." Michael Frolik (illness) did not participate in the on-ice session, while Marcus Johansson (upper body) rejoined the team after not playing Thursday against Columbus.

Coach Ralph Krueger will address the media following practice Saturday morning.

Gilmour has six goals with seven assists and a minus-14 rating in 32 games with Rochester. He made the Sabres out of training camp and appeared in four games before being assigned to the Amerks in November.

Hammond, 32, has a .905 save percentage in 28 games with Rochester. He has not played in an NHL game since April 22, 2018.

Sabres' Zach Bogosian assigned to Rochester after clearing waivers
Buffalo News
By: Lance Lysowski
Feb. 15, 2020

After dealing with various injuries and experiencing some of the darkest days in Sabres history during his five-plus seasons with the team, Zach Bogosian's time in Buffalo likely came to an end Saturday.

The 29-year-old defenseman was assigned to the Rochester Americans after clearing waivers, potentially providing him with an opportunity to showcase his skill in a contract year and giving the Sabres an additional \$1.075 million in cap space ahead of the Feb. 24 trade deadline.

The next move is Bogosian's, though. His agent, Darren Ferris, told The Buffalo News in a text message that the two plan to meet in the coming days to determine the "next steps." Bogosian has yet to decide if he will report to Rochester.

Sabres coach Ralph Krueger declined to comment on the Sabres' decision to place Bogosian on waivers after he was a healthy scratch in 17 of the previous 26 games.

"It's a management, organizational conversation," coach Ralph Krueger said. "I always work with the players that are here. I have no other information for you."

Bogosian is in the final year of a \$36 million contract he signed with Winnipeg in July 2013. He had one goal with four assists in 19 games this season after undergoing hip surgery last April and suffering a setback during his rehab over the summer.

Bogosian played 10 consecutive games for the Sabres after making his season debut Nov. 24, and he reportedly requested a trade when he was a healthy scratch against Nashville on Dec. 12. General Manager Jason Botterill was unable to find a team interested in taking on Bogosian's \$5.142 million cap hit. His last game as a Sabre was Feb. 4, a 6-1 loss to Colorado in which he had a minus-3 rating in 17:09.

Bogosian was part of former General Manager Tim Murray's plan to expedite the Sabres' rebuild amid the tank season in 2014-15. Bogosian, a former third overall draft pick, was acquired in February 2015 along with Evander Kane and goalie Jason Kasdorf from Winnipeg in exchange for Tyler Myers, Drew Stafford, Joel Armia, Brendan Lemieux and a first-round draft pick.

Bogosian had 114 points in six seasons between Atlanta and Winnipeg, while Kane was a former 30-goal scorer. The trade, and others like it, depleted the Sabres' depth.

Kane scored 68 goals in parts of three seasons in Buffalo before he was traded to San Jose in February 2018. Bogosian, meanwhile, did not play more than 65 games in any of his six seasons in Buffalo, missing 170 games due to injury during that span.

Bogosian underwent two hip surgeries, the first of which limited him to 18 games in 2017-18. He has not played more than 70 games in any season since 2010-11 with the Atlanta Thrashers.

"He's had a tough road here dealing with the rehabs and trying to get himself back to what he feels is his best," Sabres captain Jack Eichel said. "When you have surgeries like the ones he's had, it doesn't happen overnight. It's something that takes a while. He's been in here early every single day working out, trying to get himself back. Trying to make himself feel like he did before. I think all the guys on the team recognized that and he's somebody you honestly enjoy coming to the rink and seeing every day."

Bogosian made a significant impact off the ice in Buffalo. He served as an alternate captain under former coach Phil Housley and was as a mentor to Eichel and defenseman Rasmus Dahlin, who was drafted first overall in 2018.

Since its inception in 2015, Bogosian's nonprofit foundation, the Bogo Bunch, donated \$155,000 to Roswell Park, including a \$75,000 gift last March. He also worked with the Sabres on a tickets for troops program in which he provided a pair of 100-level seats to a member of the military during every home game.

Though Eichel gave a short response when asked for his reaction to the Sabres' decision, he became emotional when discussing how he was impacted by his friendship with Bogosian.

"Honestly, I do have the organization and the team to thank for the relationship that I was able to create by being here with him," Eichel said. "I think my biggest message to him through this whole thing has been the best part about all of it – obviously to play the game and everything – but at the end of this, whenever the two of us are done playing, he'll be a lifelong friend of mine. He's somebody that – there's not a lot of people in the world that I'm closer with. We have a really special relationship. I don't want to get emotional here talking about him, but that's all I've got."

Bogosian was unable to surpass the six other defensemen on the Sabres' roster: Dahlin, Rasmus Ristolainen, Brandon Montour, Henri Jokiharju, Jake McCabe and Colin Miller. In addition to opening a roster spot, Botterill also provided himself with salary-cap relief ahead of the trade deadline.

According to CapFriendly.com, Botterill currently has \$3.673 million of cap space. In addition to Bogosian, the Sabres have five pending unrestricted free agents who could be traded before the deadline: Zemgus Girgensons, Johan Larsson, Conor Sheary, Jimmy Vesey and Michael Frolik.

From Sabres to Amerks to healthy scratch, John Gilmour hopes to rebound
Buffalo News
By: Bill Hoppe
Feb. 14, 2020

John Gilmour knows he deserved to be a healthy scratch. The high-scoring defenseman's erratic play made him the Americans' biggest liability.

Gilmour said he wasn't showcasing much poise, trusting his instincts or moving his feet enough.

So last Saturday, hours after a rough outing in the Amerks' 5-2 home loss to the Syracuse Crunch, coach Chris Taylor benched Gilmour, who began the season as the Buffalo Sabres' eighth defenseman.

"I wasn't playing to my standard the last few games, and especially the Friday game, I didn't like my game at all," Gilmour said. "I probably deserved to be sitting in the stands. We have such a deep blue line. I learned that anybody on any night can be in the stands."

Gilmour, 26, is one of the Amerks' highest-paid players. After scoring 20 goals and 54 points in 70 games with the Hartford Wolf Pack last season, he signed a one-way contract with the Sabres worth \$700,000.

In October, Gilmour earned a spot on the Sabres' opening night roster. But he played just four games before they waived him in late November.

After the Sabres assigned him to Rochester, Taylor said Gilmour "wanted to prove that he was a player still available to play in the NHL."

"So he wanted to come to Rochester and show that he could score a lot of points," he said. "I think his defensive habits got away from him there. That's the biggest thing, as a team we count on defense first and then bring the offense."

"I think from other teams he was with he was more offensive and didn't really have to worry. So I think we're in just a learning process getting to know him and making sure he understands what we want as well."

Gilmour said he creates trouble for himself by overthinking and trying to do too much.

"Then next thing you know, it ends up hurting you and the team in a way," said Gilmour, who has compiled six goals, 13 points and a team-worst minus-14 rating in 32 games. "So (I'm) definitely trying to find a good balance between trying to make great plays and just a simple play."

When the Sabres sent Lawrence Pilut to the Amerks for last Saturday afternoon's road game against the Toronto Marlies, Taylor scratched Gilmour.

"We felt with the D we had John was the guy that needed to sit out," he said. "He's had good games but he's also had some ones he'd like to have back. I just felt it was time to take a step back for a game and let him watch."

Taylor said Gilmour handled sitting out “very well and very professionally.”

“He knew he wasn’t playing up to his standards and what we want, so we had a good talk,” he said. “His last couple games I thought he played a lot better.”

Gilmour said watching the Amerks’ 4-0 loss from the stands helped him “take a deep breath” and “kind of revamped” him.

Taylor inserted Gilmour for the Amerks’ back-to-back road set against the Charlotte Checkers on Tuesday and Wednesday. He scored in Tuesday’s 4-2 loss.

“I was eager for my next shot to get back in and show why I can be a really good player in this league,” he said. “Sometimes there’s going to be setbacks and some adversity. At 26 years old, it’s not just going to be smooth sailing from here on out, and that just reaffirmed it, that I got to be sharp every day. I could be out just like everyone else.”

Sabres place Zach Bogosian on waivers
Buffalo Hockey Beat
By: Bill Hoppe
Feb. 14, 2020

The Sabres placed defenseman Zach Bogosian, a healthy scratch eight of the last nine games, on waivers today.

Bogosian, 29, has become a spare part this season, sitting out 17 of the last 26 games. When the Sabres benched him for the first time Dec. 12, a report quickly surfaced he had requested a trade.

He hasn't played since struggling in the Sabres' 6-1 loss to the Colorado Avalanche on Feb. 4.

Injuries have ravaged Bogosian over his five-year tenure with the Sabres, costing him a whopping 153 games. He missed the first 22 contests this season after undergoing hip surgery in April and later suffering some setbacks.

Bogosian had season-ending surgery on his other hip in 2017-18.

The Massena native is in the final season of a seven-year, \$36 million contract that carries a \$5,142,857 salary cap hit. He will be an unrestricted free agent following the season.

It's unclear what the Sabres will do with Bogosian. If he clears Saturday – given his massive salary and recent play, he likely will – they could assign him to the Rochester Americans. He could also just stay put.

Bogosian briefly played in the AHL – a five-game conditioning stint with the Chicago Wolves – as a rookie in 2008-09. He has spent the rest of his 12-year career in the NHL.

The Sabres likely don't want a veteran taking ice time from their prospects in Rochester. They could, however, possibly loan Bogosian to another AHL team.

Two years ago, they sent graying winger Matt Moulson to the Ontario Reign, the Los Angeles Kings' affiliate, until his contract expired.

Former Sabres general manager Tim Murray acquired Bogosian and winger Evander Kane in a blockbuster trade with the Winnipeg Jets on Feb. 11, 2015.

But the deal paid virtually no dividends, and the Sabres fired Murray in 2017.

Bogosian has compiled one goal and five points in 19 games this season. He has scored 53 goals and 194 points in 636 career outings.

The former third overall pick hasn't cracked the 70-game mark in a season since 2010-11 and never made more than 65 appearances with the Sabres.

He has never played an NHL playoff game.

In other news, the Sabres sent defenseman Lawrence Pilut to the Amerks today. Pilut, 24, has been sitting as a healthy scratch with Bogosian.

The Amerks play a road game Saturday against the Syracuse Crunch. The Sabres, who had today off, could recall Pilut again before Sunday's home game against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

If Bogosian leaves, Pilut would likely be the Sabres' extra defenseman.

Amerks looking ahead to rebound with 2 weekend games after 4 losses in a row
Rochester First
By: Staff Report
Feb. 14, 2020

The Rochester Amerks (27-27-2-4) are looking to rebound after suffering four losses in a row.

The Amerks have an away game against the Syracuse Crunch Saturday, and a home game against the Utica Comets on Sunday.

It's been a tough stretch recently for the Amerks. Wednesday's 5-2 road loss to the Charlotte Checkers was the team's fourth loss in a row.

The Amerks are currently in third place in the AHL's North Division with 60 points, eight points behind the division leading Belleville Senators.

Syracuse Crunch extends points streak but loses shootout to Rochester

Syracuse.com

By: Staff Report

Feb. 15, 2020

The Syracuse Crunch was edged by the Rochester Americans, 4-3, tonight in a shootout at the Upstate Medical University Arena.

The Crunch pick up one point and extend its points streak to six games as it moves to 24-21-3-5 on the season and 2-3-2-1 in the 12-game season series against the Amerks.

Goaltender Spencer Martin stopped 35-of-38 shots and 1-of-3 shootout attempts between the pipes for the Crunch. Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen made 15 saves and turned aside both shootout attempts in net for the Amerks. Syracuse was unable to convert on two power play opportunities, while Rochester went 1-for-5.

The Crunch opened scoring 2:44 into the second period. Daniel Walcott chased the puck down and dug it out from a battle along the end boards. His centering feed found Otto Somppi for a quick wrister all alone out front.

Two minutes later, the Amerks evened the score when Brett Murray tipped Andrew Oglevie's right-point shot.

Rochester then took the lead with 7:08 remaining in the middle frame. Casey Mittelstadt cut towards the net and dropped a pass back for Andrew MacWilliam to send home from the left circle.

Syracuse opened the third period with two quick goals 35 seconds apart to go back on top. Just 1:13 into the frame, Danick Martel set up Boris Katchouk for a breakaway that he buried with a backhand. Devante Stephens earned the secondary helper.

Seconds later, Alex Volkov fired through traffic from the left circle off assists from Ben Thomas and Ross Colton.

The Amerks knotted the score again at the 5:28 mark when C.J. Smith scored from the right circle.

The teams remained tied through regulation and the overtime frame leading to a shootout. Oglevie scored in the first round before Mittelstadt potted one in the third round to secure the win. Syracuse is 0-5 in shootouts this season.

The Crunch travels to face the Belleville Senators at 2 p.m on Monday.

Syracuse Crunch maintain points streak, fall in shootout to Rochester Americans
CNY Central
By: Matt Hauswirth
Feb. 15, 2020

After a hard fought, back-and-forth game, the Syracuse Crunch came up just short to the Rochester Americans in a shootout Saturday night.

In a game the Crunch trailed entering the third period, Syracuse scored twice to take back the lead, ultimately surrendering the game-tying goal and forcing overtime.

From there, the overtime would lead to a shootout, where Rochester took control thanks to goals from Andrew Oglevie and Casey Mittelstadt.

The loss drops Syracuse to 24-21-3-5 overall, but managed to still gain a point out of it.

However, the Toronto Marlies took down the first place Belleville Senators, in overtime, 7-6.

With the win, Toronto (57 points) gained a full two points while Syracuse (56 points) only gained one, lending the edge to the Marlies at the moment.

Only the top four teams in each division earn playoff spots.

Amerks thumped by Charlotte for 4th straight loss
Rochester First
By: Staff Report
Feb. 12, 2020

The Charlotte Checkers (29-17-3-0) scored five times in the second period on their way to a 5-2 win over the Rochester Americans (27-17-2-4) in the final meeting of the season between the two teams Wednesday at Bojangles' Coliseum.

Both of Rochester's goals came on special teams with Taylor Leier scoring his sixth of the season on the power-play before Sean Malone added his 10th on a shorthanded tally just 27 seconds into the third period.

Casey Mittelstadt notched an assist for the second straight game, giving the former first-round pick five points (1+4) through his first six games in the month of February. The second-year forward hasn't gone more than two games without a point since opening the 2020 calendar year on a season-long four-game point streak (3+1).

Zach Redmond, Eric Cornel and Andrew MacWilliam all recorded an assist while rookie goaltender Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (1-3-1) made his fifth start of the season, making 27 saves on 32 shots he faced.

All five of Charlotte's goals came within the second period, including two in a span of nine seconds, with Max McCormick (1+1) and leading goal-getter Julien Gauthier (1+1) each recording a goal and an assist each to lead the Checkers to their fifth straight win. Jake Bean also finished with three assists while Anton Forsberg (14-8-2) made 42 saves.

After a silent first period on both ends, Charlotte would score four consecutive goals before the Amerks were able to find the offensive spark late in the second period thanks to a power-play strike by Leier at the 14:04 mark. Leier connected on a cross-ice feed from Redmond atop the right circle and wired a shot past Forsberg to make it a 4-1 game. The tally marked his first since returning from injury back on Feb. 5.

Leier's sixth of the season would only halt Charlotte's momentum temporarily as David Gust quickly answered for the defending Calder Cup champs less than three minutes later to restore the four-goal advantage.

Despite having to begin the period a man-down as a result of a carryover penalty from the final minutes of the second, Rochester would come out hot in the final frame with Malone finding the back of the net just 27 seconds after the opening face-off, beating Forsberg with a backhand that trickled in. Malone's early marker in the third period brings him within two goals of tying his career-high from his rookie campaign in 2017-18.

The Amerks attempted to close the gap, and despite holding a 15-8 shot advantage during the final frame, Malone's 10th of the season in the opening minute would be as close as they would come.

Rochester closes out its four-game road swing on Saturday, Feb. 15 at Upstate Medical University Arena against the Syracuse Crunch before returning home on Sunday, Feb. 16 to open a season-long six-game homestand against the Utica Comets.

Amerks offering early bird season tickets

WHEC

By: Staff Report

Feb. 12, 2020

The Rochester Americans are offering fans "early bird" prices for the 2020-21 American Hockey League season.

The deadline to buy the cheaper tickets is Friday, April 10.

Full-season ticket packages start as low as \$14 per game, and half-season packages start at \$16 per game.

Fans who buy early bird tickets will also receive up to eight free home games for the current season.

For more information, [click here](#), or call 1-855-GO-AMERKS.

Pilut is working his way to earning more ice time

WGR 550

By: Brayton Wilson

Feb. 12, 2020

The road to the National Hockey League for Buffalo Sabres defenseman Lawrence Pilut this season has been a long one.

It started when he was forced to miss training camp and the preseason following offseason shoulder surgery from an injury suffered in the final game of the 2019 Calder Cup Playoffs for the Rochester Americans.

Once he was healthy enough, he made his season debut with the Amerks on Oct. 18 but got off to a slower start than compared to last year when he stormed the American Hockey League with his offensive capabilities from the blue line.

The 24-year-old was called up for the Sabres' trip to Sweden as part of the NHL Global Series in Stockholm, but he did not dress for either of the two games with the Tampa Bay Lightning.

After being sent back down to Rochester, Pilut picked up his game again and found his offensive touch with four goals and 11 assists for 15 points in 21 games. That, on top of his five points (1+4) in eight games prior, earned him his second All-Star appearance of his short career in the AHL.

His next call up came back on Jan. 7, where he made his season debut with the Sabres on Jan. 9 against the St. Louis Blues. From there, he appeared in six games before the NHL All-Star break, and then was re-assigned to the Amerks to play in one game before being recalled again to Buffalo. After three more games in Buffalo, Pilut was sent back to the AHL for one game before, once again, getting called back up to the Sabres on Feb. 9.

Overall this season, Pilut has played in 11 games for the Sabres, but has been held pointless with five shots on goal, a penalty taken and a minus-4 rating.

However, a problem the Sabres have run into quite a bit this season is the number of NHL caliber defensemen on the roster versus the number of defensemen that can play in a game. Buffalo has played with 11 forwards and seven defensemen on numerous occasions this season, but as of late the team has found itself playing the usual 12 forwards and just six defensemen.

Pilut currently finds himself as one of two defensemen on the outside of the top-six defensemen on the roster looking in. He was a healthy scratch for the Sabres on Tuesday night in a 3-2 win over the Detroit Red Wings, and is likely to be a healthy scratch again on Thursday night against the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Even though Pilut finds himself in a tough spot on the roster, the young blue liner is staying patient and waiting for his chance.

"I'm just staying ready. I'm staying ready mentally and keeping my body in shape," Pilut said following practice on Wednesday. "Working on the small details such as handling guys and [defensive] zone work. I think if I just keep working on that every day, keep working hard and just waiting for the chance to come, I'll be ready for it." "I'm just staying ready. I'm staying ready mentally and keeping my body in shape. Working on the small details such as handling guys and [defensive] zone work. I think if I just keep working on that every day, keep working hard and just waiting for the chance to come, I'll be ready for it."

Sabres head coach Ralph Krueger has had the tough task of trying to deviate which defensemen he will dress for each game because each defensemen in Buffalo has their own skill set that they can bring to the table.

Pilot is certainly more of an offensive and instinctual defender with good ability to move the puck. However, there is more to his game that Krueger has liked for his defensive group.

"His smarts, his ability to read the game, and his compete. His compete is very high when he goes in for any challenges 1-on-1. The way he can escape under pressure and solve that pressure. Those are assets for sure, and his offense will grow eventually," Krueger said on Wednesday following practice. "It's his defensive game we're quite impressed with at the moment."

With the Amerks, Pilot has seen plenty of ice time as a top defenseman at even strength, is a quarterback on the power play, and has been relied upon to play key minutes on the penalty kill and in last-game situations. In Buffalo, his ice-time is more limited and his power play time is occupied by other defensemen, but he has been given some quality time on the penalty kill.

The young Swedish defenseman feels like his defensive game has grown even more at the NHL level since he came to North America last season.

"I think more and more my [defensive] zone work has been good," Pilot said. "It feels like I'm on the right side of guys, angling off guys real well, and obviously with the breakouts and everything. I think I have a little more to give out of the offensive game up here. I think I've created a couple of chances. The points haven't really come my way, but I just try to focus on playing good and it's been solid up here for me so far. I just keep developing that game all the time and I've been feeling more and more comfortable all the time."

While Pilot has played well and has not been much of a liability on the ice, getting the young blue liner ice-time is difficult, especially with how Krueger utilizes the defensemen he already has playing every night. However, the head coach is working with Buffalo's management team of general manager Jason Botterill and assistant general manager Randy Sexton to make sure that he is not sitting too long while he's waiting for his next opportunity to play.

"We look at every day and what's best for him at the moment," Krueger said on Wednesday morning on the Howard and Jeremy Show on WGR. "We feel this experience of being in the group, practicing with the group, being in our meetings, feeling what it takes to compete in the National Hockey League in February, in March, in April. This is a different level that's coming at us now, and it's learning to play good hockey at this time. He's part of us, he's here, he's important for us and we feel comfortable with him jumping in at any time. But we do have to keep an eye on that. You don't want him to go too long without playing any games, but also it's kind of a day-to-day basis. If we don't need him in the next few games, he might play some games down in Rochester and then come back again."

"Lawrence has just been fantastic with us. He's got a really professional attitude, he works hard on and off the ice, he brings a good spirit. He's just adding to our depth on defense."

As for the message for Pilot from management and the coaching staff, he's been told to just be ready to jump into the lineup at any time.

"It's just keep working hard and be ready for it," Pilot said. "Just keep being fresh, keep working on all the small details, and I take pride in that. I do a lot of work on and off the ice and try to just stay fresh all the time."

Last season, Pilot got his first crack at the NHL with Phil Housley as the head coach in Buffalo. In 33 games with the Sabres last year, he managed to score a goal and also register five assists for six points.

So far under Krueger's leadership in Buffalo, he has some positive reviews with the first-year head coach.

"He's a great coach so far," Pilot said. "Great guidelines, and I think it's a good game we're playing out there. It's been good so far."

Pilot was skating on the fourth defensive unit at Wednesday's practice with Zach Bogosian.

Both Kyle Okposo and Victor Olofsson were on the ice for their first full practice on Wednesday. It was their first full skate with their teammates since their return to the ice from their injuries. Krueger said following Wednesday's skate that both players appear to be options to play in Thursday night's matchup with the Blue Jackets at KeyBank Center. He also said that both would be evaluated after Wednesday's session, and that a decision about their game status would be determined at some point before puck drop.

As for Marcus Johansson, he did not practice with what the team called a maintenance day. However, Krueger said after practice that Johansson is very much day-to-day with an upper-body injury.

Amerks lose at Charlotte
Buffalo News
By: Staff Report
Feb. 11, 2020

The hot-and-cold Rochester Americans are cold again.

The Amerks, who lost seven in a row last month, then won six straight, have not dropped three in succession.

Morgan Geekie scored his 18th of the season in the third period, providing the winner for the Charlotte Checkers in a 4-2 American Hockey League triumph over Rochester at Bojangles Coliseum in Charlotte, N.C., on Tuesday night.

The teams will complete their two-game series Wednesday night at Bojangles.

The Amerks have dropped a home game to Syracuse and road games to Toronto and now Charlotte.

Rasmus Asplund got the Amerks in front with his second goal of the season just 41 seconds into the opening period. Roland McKeown and Julien Gauthier put the defending AHL champion Checkers in front, 2-1, before the first period was over.

Remi Elie and C.J. Smith assisted on Asplund's goal. He now has two goals and 10 points in 20 games with Rochester in between two stints with the Buffalo Sabres.

John Gilmour scored his sixth of the season for Rochester to tie it at 2-2 at 11:39 of the second period. Casey Mittelstadt and Jean-Sebastien Dea assisted on the goal.

Geekie got the tie-breaker at 8:19 of the third and Gauthier added an empty-net goal with 1:14 to play in regulation.

Andrew Hammond, back from an emergency recall by the Buffalo Sabres, made 32 saves for Rochester. Alex Nedeljkovic made 26 saves for Charlotte. The loss ended a three-game win streak in the crease for Hammond.

Amerks defenseman Andrew MacWilliam played in his 401st career games in the AHL. He hit the 400 mark in Sunday's 4-0 loss at Toronto.

Rochester is now 14-11-1-0 away from Blue Cross Arena and 13-5-1-4 at home.

Wednesday's game will be the fourth and last of the regular season between the teams. The Checkers have a 2-1 lead.

The teams split two games in Rochester in early December, with Rochester winning, 4-0, then losing, 3-1.

The Amerks will stay on the road for a Saturday night game against the Crunch in Syracuse before a Sunday afternoon (3:05 p.m.) home game with Utica.

Simple style helping Sabres' Scott Wilson thrive following recall
Buffalo Hockey Beat
By: Bill Hoppe
Feb. 11, 2020

Earlier in his career, Sabres winger Scott Wilson said he would often run around on the ice, a style that sapped his energy and took him out of plays.

Wilson, 27, realized he needed to embrace a simpler way.

"Being physical when I can but not running around like an idiot," Wilson said after the turnover he helped create led to center Johan Larsson's goal in Sunday afternoon's 3-2 loss to the Anaheim Ducks.

Wilson's straightforward game has helped him mesh well with his linemates, Larsson and Zemgus Girgensons, since the Sabres recalled him again last week.

Larsson, Girgensons and Kyle Okposo, who's close to returning from an upper-body injury, have formed perhaps the Sabres' most consistent trio all season.

"Just simple stuff," Wilson said of why the line works. "I think with Gussy and Larry, it makes it easy on me. You know what they're doing almost. We talk about a lot of stuff on the bench."

Wilson has assumed Okposo's role at right wing almost perfectly. Sabres coach Ralph Krueger said Wilson has done "what Okie does on a daily basis."

"Scott's just completely embraced what we want to see here," he said.

The coaching staff's clear message has helped buoy Wilson.

"Sometimes when you get called up, you're not sure of the message from the coaches, but they've done a really good job, made it easy on me letting me know what they need," he said. "I've just tried to show that simplicity and work hard for them."

When the Sabres summoned Wilson in for the first time this season in early January, he played two games and sat out five as a healthy scratch. After returning to the Rochester Americans, he scored three goals and four points in five outings.

"Get a couple goals down there, boost the confidence a little bit with the shot," Wilson said. "I think just getting down, playing some more games, playing lots, too . . . makes a difference."

Wilson scored in his first game back, Thursday's 4-3 overtime loss to the Detroit Red Wings, his first NHL goal since March 8, 2018.

The Sabres play the Red Wings again tonight at KeyBank Center.