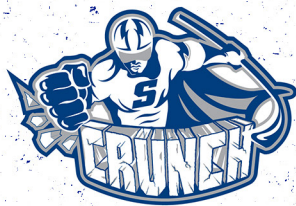


# ROCHESTER AMERICANS HOCKEY CLUB

Friday | **March 26, 2021** | 7:05 PM ET | The Blue Cross Arena | Broadcast: ESPN Rochester, AHLTV, CW Rochester



SYRACUSE CRUNCH

## GAME NOTES

ROCHESTER AMERICANS



### TONIGHT'S GAME OVERVIEW

Following a 16-day pause due to COVID-19 protocols, the Rochester Americans (6-3-0-1) finally return to action tonight when they face-off against the Syracuse Crunch (6-5-1-0) at The Blue Cross Arena.

The 7:05 p.m. contest will be the fifth of 12 scheduled meetings between the two teams this season with the Amerks holding a 3-1-0-0 record.

The game will be carried live on The Sports Leader 95.7 FM/950 AM ESPN Rochester and AHLTV. The North Division matchup will also be televised locally on tape delay beginning at 10 p.m. on CW Rochester channel 16.

### LAST TIME OUT

Despite coming back from a two-goal deficit, the Amerks fell 3-2 in their second shootout effort of the season to the Utica Comets back on Mar. 10 at the Adirondack Bank Center.

Rochester has collected at least one point in 22 of the last 31 games against Utica dating back to the start of the 2017-18 campaign, going 16-9-2-4 over that span.

Forward **Jack Quinn** scored his first professional goal late in the second period to ignite the comeback and defenseman **Griffin Luce** recorded his first point as an Amerk – and first in the American Hockey League – with an assist on Rochester's game-tying goal. **Michael Mersch** scored his second of the season early in the third period to send the game to the shootout. **Arttu Ruotsalainen** extended his point streak to four games with an assist and **Brett Murray** found himself on the scoresheet for the sixth game this year with a helper as well.

Rookie goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen** (5-2-1), who made his fifth straight and seventh in the last eight games for Rochester, finished with 35 saves in the loss. Luukkonen is tied for sixth in the AHL in wins and has made 30 or more saves in five of his last seven appearances dating back to a career-best 43-save performance at Cleveland on Feb. 12.

### POWER UP

Now 10 games into the campaign, Rochester's power-play has gone 13-for-42 with a 31.0% conversion rate that is currently tops in the AHL. The Amerks' 13 goals on the man-advantage are currently three off the AHL behind the Stockton Heat.

The Amerks have scored at least one power-play goal in eight of their first 10 games this season and have registered multiple power-play tallies in five of their last nine outings overall.

### THE BEST OFFENSE IS A GOOD DEFENSE

Rochester owns three of the AHL's top 20 scoring rookie defensemen in **Oskari Laaksonen**, **Mattias Samuelsson** and **Ryan Jones**, all of whom have combined for 17 points (2+15) while appearing in all 10 games so far this season.

Laaksonen is currently tied for third in the league in assists among all first-year defensemen and tied for 15th in points. He has points in five of his first 10 games, including a season-high three assists in the 4-3 overtime win over Syracuse back on Feb. 10.

Samuelsson has recorded three assists in his last three appearances.

### 2020-21 AMERKS OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
J-S Dea	9	4	8	12	2	6
Steven Fogarty	10	5	3	8	10	-1
Arttu Ruotsalainen	10	3	5	8	2	-2
Brett Murray	10	3	4	7	2	0

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	2	1-1-0	68	.932	2.51
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	8	5-2-1	244	.904	3.19

### 2020-21 CRUNCH OVERALL SCORING & GOALTENDING LEADERS

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Otto Somppi	12	4	5	9	8	3
Alex Barre-Boulet	5	3	4	7	0	6
Boris Katchouk	11	3	4	7	8	6
Gabriel Fortier	11	4	2	6	0	2

GOALTENDER	GP	REC	SVS	SV%	GAA
Christopher Gibson	2	2-0-0	62	.925	2.51
Spencer Martin	4	2-2-0	113	.911	2.72
Samuel Montembeault	6	2-3-1	156	.902	2.85

### HEAD-TO-HEAD BREAKDOWN

Syracuse Crunch	Rochester Americans
6-5-1-0	<b>Record</b> ..... 6-3-0-1
3-4-0-0	<b>Home Record</b> ..... 3-1-0-0
3-1-1-0	<b>Road Record</b> ..... 3-2-0-1
5-5-0-0	<b>Last 10 Games</b> ..... 6-3-0-1
4-0-0-0	<b>Record When Scoring First</b> ..... 3-1-0-0
3.42 (8th)	<b>Goals-For Per Game</b> ..... 3.50 (7th)
2.92 (9th)	<b>Goals-Against Per Game</b> ..... 3.20 (T-13th)
16.3% (15th)	<b>Power-Play</b> ..... 31.0% (2nd)
79.3% (20th)	<b>Penalty Kill</b> ..... 78.3% (23rd)
5-2 W @ WBS	<b>Last Game</b> ..... 3-2 SOL @ UTI
Mar. 27 vs. UTI	<b>Next Game</b> ..... Mar. 28 vs. UTI



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### YOUTH MOVEMENT

Rochester's roster features 13 incoming rookies ready to make a splash in their first season in the American Hockey League, most of whom are products of the NCAA in forwards **Brandon Biro** (Penn State), **Dawson DiPietro** (Western Michigan), **Dominic Franco** (Army West Point) and **Patrick Polino** (R.P.I.); defensemen **Ryan Jones** (Nebraska-Omaha), **Nick Welsh** (St. Mary's) **Griffin Luce** (Michigan) and **Mattias Samuelsson** (Western Michigan) and goaltender **Stefanos Lekkas** (U. of Vermont).

**Jack Quinn**, Buffalo's eighth overall pick in the 2020 NHL Draft, rounds out Rochester's rookie class this season. The highly touted 19-year-old is coming off an explosive 52-goal season for the Ottawa 67's in 2019-20, during which he became just the eighth player since 2000-01 to reach the 50-goal mark in his NHL Draft Year. He finished the season second in the Ontario Hockey League in goals and tied for fifth with 15 power-play tallies while also adding 37 assists.

Quinn made his professional debut with Rochester back on Feb. 18 against Utica, recording an assist on the game-tying third-period goal before scoring the shootout-clinching goal on a dazzling effort in the second round. During the most recent matchup with the Comets on Mar. 10, Quinn scored his first pro goal, a power-play marker, to open the scoring for Rochester. Quinn is the third eighth overall pick of the Sabres in the last five years to spend time in Rochester, joining **Alexander Nylander** (2016) and **Casey Mittelstadt** (2017), and the second to make his pro debut with the Amerks following Nylander, who spent parts of three seasons in Rochester.

### STAND AND DEAF-LIVER

After leading the Amerks in points (39) and holding a share of the team-lead in goals (15) during the 2019-20 season, his first in Rochester, forward **Jean-Sebastien Dea** is again the team's top point-getter this season. By posting a season-high three points on a goal and two assists on Mar. 6 against Syracuse, the Laval, Quebec, native became the first Amerks skater this season to reach double digits in points with 12 (4+8) through nine games.

Currently on recall with the Buffalo Sabres, Dea, who has notched at least one point in seven of his first nine games this season, has already recorded four multi-point games after posting six in 57 contests last season. He also paces all Rochester skaters with an on-ice rating of plus-six.

### FINN-ISHING TOUCH

In his first season in North America, forward **Arttu Ruotsalainen** has posted eight points through his first 10 games on three goals and five assists. The Oulu, Finland, native began the slate by recording a point in each of his first four games and comes into the weekend riding a four-game point streak, including goals in back-to-back games for the first time this season.

Also on recall with the Sabres, goaltender **Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen**, who's started eight of Rochester's first 10 games this season, is currently tied for eighth among all goaltenders with five wins and 10th in minutes played.

### SCOUTING THE CRUNCH

With a 4-3 victory to snap a five-game skid to begin the month, the Crunch come into tonight's contest having won four of their last five games. Syracuse, which is also riding a three-game win streak and have outscored its opponents 14-5, suffered its lone loss of the month in a 4-2 setback against Rochester on March 6.

### AMERKS-CRUNCH 2020-21 SEASON SERIES BREAKDOWN

#### ROCHESTER

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
J-S Dea	4	1	6	7	0	4
Brett Murray	4	2	2	6	0	0
Oskari Laaksonen	4	0	4	4	2	2

#### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Dustin Tokarski	1	1-0-0	2	.949	2.00
Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen	3	2-1-0	9	.883	3.01

#### SYRACUSE

SKATER	GP	G	A	PTS	PIM	+/-
Boris Katchouk	4	1	3	4	4	5
Taylor Raddysh	4	2	1	3	2	1
Otto Somppi	4	1	2	3	2	1

#### GOALTENDER

	GP	REC	GA	SV%	GAA
Spencer Martin	3	1-2-0	10	.892	3.38
Samuel Montembeault	1	0-0-1	4	.846	3.89

### 2020-21 SEASON SERIES GAME-BY-GAME BREAKDOWN

Date	Result	Score	SF-SA	PP	PK
Feb. 10	OTW	4-3	26-23	2-3	1-1
Feb. 20	W	3-2	32-39	0-3	3-4
Mar. 1	L	4-3	34-25	2-6	2-2
Mar. 6	W	4-2	27-29	2-5	6-8
Mar. 26					
Apr. 2					
Apr. 3					
Apr. 7					
Apr. 21					
Apr. 24					
May 1					
May 15					

### SERIES NOTABLES

The Amerks have scored a power-play goal in eight of their last 12 games against Syracuse dating back to last season, going 13-for-48 (27.0%) with the man-advantage over that span.

Amerks defenseman **Dylan Blujus** spent time with the Crunch after being drafted by the Tampa Bay Lightning in 2012. He played his first three seasons with the Syracuse from 2014-2017.

The Amerks are 15-8-1-1 in their last 25 contests against Syracuse.

Syracuse head coach Benoit Groulx spent two seasons behind the Amerks bench from 2008-10, leading the team to a postseason berth in 2010.



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