



HOUSTON AEROS (41-14-1-2) vs. HAMILTON BULLDOGS (27-32-0-3)

THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 2006

TOYOTA CENTER • HOUSTON, TEXAS • 7:05 p.m.

HOUSTON AEROS MEDIA INFORMATION

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2003 CALDER CUP CHAMPS

Aeros Quick Stats

Game #59	HH#31
Home	23-4-1-2
Road	18-10-0-0
Streak	6-0-0-0
Home Streak	6-0-0-1
Last 5	5-0-0-0
Last 10	7-2-0-1
This Month	0-0-0-0
Scoring 3 or >	39-4-0-1
Scoring 2 or <	2-10-1-1
One-goal games	17-5-1-2
Two-goal games	7-3-0-0
Scoring first	27-6-1-2
Opponent scores first	14-8-0-0
Outshooting opponent	18-4-0-1
Opponent outshoots	22-10-1-1
Shots tied	1-0-0-0
Leading after 1st	24-5-1-1
Trailing after 1st	7-6-0-0
Tied after 1st	10-3-0-1
Leading after 2nd	31-3-0-0
Trailing after 2nd	5-10-0-2
Tied after 2nd	5-1-1-0
Overtime	2-1
Shootout	4-2
Scoring PPG	37-7-0-2
Not scoring PPG	4-7-1-0
Allowing PPG	19-11-1-0
Not allowing PPG	22-3-0-2
More PIM	17-6-1-1
Fewer PIM	20-6-0-1
Same PIM	4-2-0-0
First of two/three	12-4-0-0
Second of two/three	10-5-0-1
Third of three	4-2-1-0

Seven things you need to know

- Hamilton makes its first-ever trip to Toyota Center, but it's no stranger to Houston, having played the Aeros in the 2003 Calder Cup Finals. The Aeros rode a 2-1 mark at Compaq Center to a seven-game victory, including the clincher in Ontario. Tonight's game also features the two AHL teams with the longest active winning streaks - Houston has six straight wins and Hamilton five. The Bulldogs have also won five straight road games - tied for the third longest streak in the AHL this season.
- Houston enters tonight's game with 85 points, and a magic number for clinching a playoff spot of 16 points. That's a combination of points won by the Aeros, and points lost by Iowa. The Stars can reach 100 points by winning their remaining 22 games.
- Houston's 41 victories are one better than last season's total (40-28-6-6), with 22 games remaining. The Aeros are on pace for 116 points - five behind the 1998-99 franchise-record, which was set in an 82-game season. Houston has more victories after 58 games than any other season in franchise history. Houston is a league-best 23-4-1-2 at home - tied with last season's total (23-13-1-3) with 10 games left. The Aeros' franchise record for most wins at home is 32 (32-6-3), set in 1998-99. Houston's 23 home wins are already the tied for the fifth most in team history. The Aeros are unbeaten in regulation in their last seven home games (6-0-0-1), tied for the season-high.
- The Aeros have won six straight overall - two off their season-high. A victory tonight would give Houston seven straight wins for the eighth time in team history. Houston's longest winning streak ever is 11 games, from 11/27-12/20/96. The second-longest run is eight games, set four times, including 12/11-1/5 of this season.
- Aeros RW **Kirby Law** (34-49=83) leads C **Erik Westrum** (27-54=81) for the top spot in the AHL's points race. They and are trying to become the first duo from the same team to finish 1-2 in the league's scoring race since **Paul Gardner** (112 points) and **Jody Gage** (99) turned the trick for Rochester exactly 20 seasons ago - in 1985-86. No two teammates have reached the 100-point plateau since a trio of Carolina Monarchs did it in 1995-96. Law has more goals in a single season than any Aero in the AHL years, as does C/LW **Patrick O'Sullivan**, who is first in rookie scoring and tied for sixth overall with 66 points (34-32=66). O'Sullivan has team rookie records in goals and points, and is tied with **Cory Larose's** team record assist total for a first-year player. Yesterday, O'Sullivan became the first player ever to earn the Rbk Hockey/AHL Rookie of the Month award in consecutive months. LW **Roman Voloshenko** (26-16=42) is second among first-year players in goals.
- Reports of the demise of the Aeros power play were extremely premature. After going without a PPG for two straight games 2/10-2/11, the first time all season that's happened, Houston has roared back with 13 PPG on 45 chances (28.9 percent) in the last seven games. The Aeros are second in the AHL with the man advantage at 21.1 percent and tonight face a Hamilton PK that is ranked 26th - next to last - in the AHL at 79.5 percent. Houston has also faced the 25th and 27th ranked penalty kills (Iowa and Cleveland)

Aeros Record after 58/59 Games

1994-95	26-27-5/27-27-5
1995-96	21-32-5/21-33-5
1996-97	30-22-6/31-22-6
1997-98	36-16-6/37-16-6
1998-99	39-10-9/39-11-9
1999-00	31-20-7/32-20-7
2000-01	27-25-6/27-26-6
2001-02	28-20-7-3/28-20-8-3
2002-03	37-14-6-1/37-14-7-1
2003-04	19-26-10-3/19-27-10-3
2004-05	28-21-6-3/29-21-6-3s
2005-06	41-14-1-2/NA

Most points, Aeros history

3.	Brian Wiseman	260
4.	Curtis Murphy	150
5.	Greg Hawgood	145
6.	Kirby Law	132
7.	Rob Valicevic	129

Most goals, Aeros history

4.	Brian Wiseman	62
5.	Graeme Townshend	61
6.	Kirby Law	59
7.	Kyle Wanvig	57

Single-season goals, Aeros history

1.	Jeff Christian	45
2t.	Mark Freer	38
2t.	David Oliver	38
4.	Scott Arniel	37
5.	Cam Stewart	36
6t.	Kirby Law	34
6t.	Patrick O'Sullivan	34

Single-season points, Aeros history

1.	Brian Wiseman	109
2.	Brian Wiseman	98
3.	Jeff Christian	86
4.	Jean-Guy Trudel	85
5.	Kirby Law	83
6.	Erik Westrum	81

and has gone 19-for-75 (25.3 percent) against those teams. Houston is also among the league leaders on the penalty kill (85.7 percent). The Aeros have scored 30 more PPG than they have allowed, a league-best. Houston's 85 PPG are just nine off the 1998-99 team record.

● Two of Houston's three opponents this week have records below the .500 mark, including Hamilton. The Aeros are an impressive 21-5-0-0 (.808 points percentage) against teams below the break even point, including wins in each of the last six games.

Bulldogs at Aeros (Aeros are 0-1-0-0 overall, First meeting at Houston)

- Game 2 of the 2003 Calder Cup Finals was the longest game in AHL history when **Michael Ryder** ended it at 14:56 of the fourth overtime.
- Members of the Aeros' championship team still with the organization are D **Curtis Murphy**, D **Erik Reitz**, assistant coach **Matt Shaw**, special assistant to hockey **Cam Stewart**, athletic trainer **Jerry Meins** and equipment manager **Rick Bronwell**. No Bulldogs remain from 2003.
- While with OHL Ottawa in 2002-03, Hamilton C **Corey Locke** and Aeros RW **Matt Foy** were 1-2 in the OHL in scoring while playing on the same line. Locke led the team with 151 points (63-88=151), while Foy totaled 132 points (61-71=132).
- Hamilton handed Houston its worst loss of the season, 7-1, at Copps Coliseum 12/10, as six different Bulldogs recorded two points apiece.

Scouting the Aeros

The Aeros (41-14-1-2) have the AHL's best winning percentage (.733) and joins Grand Rapids as the lone AHL teams with 40 or more wins...Houston has won six consecutive games overall - two off their season-high...RW **Kirby Law** has 83 points, (34-49=83), two up on C **Erik Westrum** (27-54=81) for the top spot in the AHL...C/LW **Patrick O'Sullivan** is first in rookie scoring and tied for sixth overall with 66 points (34-32=66)...O'Sullivan is riding a season-high seven-game point streak (6-6=12), his fifth run of at least five games this season...LW **Roman Voloshenko** (26-16=42) is second in goals among rookies...D **Curtis Murphy** is third among AHL defensemen with 49 points (9-40=49)...G **Josh Harding** is 25-7-0 with a 2.55 gaa to rank second in wins, first in save pct. (.927) and seventh in gaa...G **Seamus Kotyk** is 12-6-2 with a 2.89 gaa - 21st-best in the AHL.

Scouting the Bulldogs

Hamilton (27-32-0-3), AHL affiliate of the Montreal Canadiens and Edmonton Oilers, has won five in a row and eight of nine after a 19-31-0-3 start, to move to 57 points, within nine points of a playoff spot but with only 18 games remaining...The Bulldogs blanked San Antonio 1-0 in OT on Tuesday on a goal by D **James Sanford**...C **Marc-Andre Pouliot** paces Hamilton with 43 points (15-28=43)...D **Andre Benoit** leads the blueliners with 21 points (6-15=21)...With regular G **Yann Danis** likely in the NHL for the remainder of the regular season, G **Olivier Michaud** is 6-5-1 with a 3.29 gaa, while G **Jaroslav Halak** is 2-0-0 with a 0.94 gaa and Tuesday's shutout of the Rampage.

2005-06 meetings (2nd of 2 meetings, Aeros are 0-1-0-0 overall, First meeting at Houston)

December 10 Houston 1 at Hamilton 7 Tonight Hamilton at Houston

A look back...and ahead

Last 5

- 2/26 5-2 W @ MIL
- 2/25 3-0 W @ MIL
- 2/23 4-3 W vs. IOW
- 2/18 4-3 W @ IOW
- 2/17 4-1 W @ IOW

Next 5

- 3/4 vs. HAR
- 3/5 @ SAN
- 3/7 vs. CHI
- 3/9 vs. CHI
- 3/12 @ OMA



HOUSTON AEROS (41-14-1-2) vs. HAMILTON BULLDOGS (27-32-0-3)

The Goalies

Harding vs. Bulldogs

2005-06: 0-1-0, 6.14 gaa, .800 pct.
Totals: 0-1-0, 6.14 gaa, .800 pct.

Kotyk vs. Bulldogs

2005-06: 0-0-0, 10.91 gaa, .778 pct.
Totals: 0-5-0, 5.04 gaa, .854 pct.

Josh Harding (25-7-0, 2.55, .927, 1SHO)

- Is 31-7-1 in his last 39 regular-season decisions
- Aeros' all-time leader in AHL victories (46)
- Posted 40-save shutout over MIL, 3-0 on 2/25
- Stopped franchise-record 56 shots in 4-2 win over TOR 1/10
- Stopped 33 shots for fifth career shutout, 3-0 over MIL 11/25
- Made then career-best 47 saves in 3-1 win at PEO 10/14

Halak vs. Aeros

2005-06: First appearance
Totals: First appearance

Michaud vs. Aeros

2005-06: First appearance
Totals: First appearance

Seamus Kotyk (12-6-2, 2.89, .908, 0SHO)

- Is 9-4-1 over last 14 appearances but 3-3-1 in last seven
- Made season-high 45 saves in 4-3 win at IOW 2/18
- Stopped 30 shots for fifth career shutout, 4-0 in CHI 1/22
- With MIL, became eighth goalie in AHL history to score goal when he capped off 4-1 win over SAN with empty-netter in season-finale 4/17

Quick Hits

- Houston is third in the AHL in scoring at 3.76 gpg, trailing only Grand Rapids' 4.00 gpg and Portland's 3.78 gpg. Since getting shut out 3-0 by Milwaukee 11/27, the Aeros have scored 142 goals in 34 games for a 4.18 gpg average. Houston is trying to score 300 goals for just the second time in team history. The Aeros scored a franchise-record 307 goals in 1998-99, but that came in an 82-game season. This season Houston is on pace for exactly 301 goals.
- In their last 10 victories, the Aeros have outscored their opponents 22-8 in the first period. In the last 23 games overall, Houston has a 35-17 goal margin in the opening 20 minutes, and overall on the season the Aeros are an AHL-best plus-29 (70-41). Houston has trailed after one period just twice in its last 18 games. Hamilton, on the other hand, has been outscored 60-42 in the opening 20 minutes this season - sixth-worst in the league.
- Aeros D **Curtis Murphy**, an All-Star for the seventh time in as many North American seasons, became the team's all-time point and goal scorer from the blueline last week. Murphy now has 150 points (45-105=150) in 218 games with the Aeros. Murphy trails only **Greg Hawgood** in assists among blueliners (109). Murphy, a two-time Eddie Shore Winner as AHL Defenseman of the Year, is third among all AHL blueliners in points this season (10-39=49). Murphy's 39 assists are already a new AHL-high for him - his career-best was 43 with IHL Orlando in 1999-2000.
- Houston has trailed at some point in 17 of its 41 victories, with six of the wins coming when trailing by two goals. The Aeros had 16 come-from-behind victories in 2004-05. They are an impressive 14-8-0-0 when allowing the game's first goal, including wins in each of the last four occurrences.

Aeros vs. Bulldogs

3 Stokes	1gp, 0-0=0
5 Reitz	1gp, 0-0=0
7 Westrum	2gp, 0-1=1
8 Peters	0gp, 0-0=0
10 Law	14gp, 4-2=6
11 Murray	1gp, 0-0=0
14 Murphy	5gp, 4-1=5
15 Lundbohm	9gp, 2-2=4
16 Olvecky	1gp, 0-0=0
17 Kinkel	1gp, 0-0=0
18 Voloshenko	1gp, 1-0=1
20 Stoner	1gp, 0-0=0
22 Olson	1gp, 0-0=0
23 Ferguson	13gp, 1-5=6
27 Taticcek	0gp, 0-0=0
28 Ward	1gp, 0-0=0
29 O'Sullivan	1gp, 0-1=1
32 Wood	1gp, 0-0=0
34 Foy	1gp, 0-0=0
36 Tetarenko	5gp, 2-0=2
44 Nazarov	0gp, 0-0=0

Bulldogs vs. Aeros

3 Dagenais	0gp, 0-0=0
4 Aitken	11gp, 0-3=3
5 Archer	0gp, 0-0=0
6 Smith	5gp, 1-2=3
7 Paul	11gp, 0-0=0
12 Cote	1gp, 0-0=0
16 Pouliot	1gp, 1-1=2
17 Vandermeer	12gp, 0-4=4
18 Roy	4gp, 0-1=1
19 Milroy	1gp, 1-0=1
20 Benoit	1gp, 0-0=0
21 Ferland	0gp, 0-0=0
22 Hunter	2gp, 0-0=0
23 Kostitsyn	1gp, 0-1=1
24 Lemieux	1gp, 1-1=2
26 Lapierre	1gp, 1-1=2
28 Sanford	1gp, 1-0=1
36 Ivanans	7gp, 0-0=0
44 Jacques	1gp, 0-1=1
45 Syvret	1gp, 0-2=2
84 Locke	1gp, 1-1=2

- The Aeros are 39-4-0-1 when scoring three goals or more, but they are 2-10-1-1 when scoring two or fewer. Three is also the magic number defensively, as Houston is 36-4-1-1 when allowing three or fewer goals and 5-10-0-1 when yielding four or more.
- Houston is 13-1-0-0 when allowing 29 or fewer shots this season, but also an impressive 10-1-1-0 when yielding 40 or more.
- The Aeros are 17-5-1-2 in one-goal games, and an impressive 24-8-1-2 in games decided by two goals or less. Houston has seen nine of its last 11 games be decided by one or two goals, going 6-2-0-1.
- G **Josh Harding** improved to 25-7-0 with a 2.55 gaa - seventh best in the AHL - with his second shutout of the season and sixth of his career on Saturday in Milwaukee. Harding is the first Aeros' goalie with 25 wins since **Jamie McLennan** in 2001-02. No other Houston netminder has won 25 games since **Frederic Chabot** went 36-19-7 in 1999-2000. Harding has faced 35 or more shots in each of his last seven complete games.
- Veteran C **Rem Murray** has six points (2-4=6) in the last four games, including a three-point performance (1-2=3) Sunday in Milwaukee.
- The Aeros' blueline tandem of veteran **Curtis Murphy** and rookie **Clayton Stoner** ranks tied for fifth in the AHL in plus-minus (plus-18).
- After Saturday's game against Hartford, each of Houston's final 20 games will come against the West Division. The Aeros are 29-8-0-1 against the West this season, and 41-12-0-2 versus the Western Conference. Houston is 0-2-1-0 against the Eastern Conference, going 0-1-0-0 against Hartford and 0-1-1-0 versus Manchester.

Power play update

- Houston is second in the league on the power play at 21.1 percent.
- The Aeros are 52-for-216 (24.1 percent) with the man advantage in the last 34 games.
- Houston is 13-for-45 (28.9 percent) on the power play in its last seven games after going without a PPG in two straight games for the first time this season.
- The Aeros are 23-4-0-1 when scoring at least two PPG. Houston has scored two or more PPG in 18 of its last 33 games.
- Houston has been outscored on the power play just five times in its last 36 games.
- Hamilton is 26th in the AHL on the penalty kill at 79.5 percent.
- The Bulldogs are, however, an improved 29-of-34 (85.3 percent) on the PK in the last five games.
- Houston went 1-for-5 on the power play against Hamilton 12/10.

Penalty kill update

- Houston is third in the AHL on the penalty kill at 85.7 percent.
- In the last 20 games, Houston is 110-of-123 (89.4 percent) on the PK.
- Houston is 21-3-0-2 when not allowing a power play goal and 32-7-1-1 when allowing one power play goal or fewer.
- Hamilton ranks 19th in the AHL on the power play at 16.2 percent.
- The Bulldogs are 8-for-39 (20.5 percent) with the man advantage in the last five games.
- Hamilton went 1-for-5 on the power play against Houston 12/10.

Aeros/Bulldogs connections

- Hamilton D **Andre Benoit** played two seasons with Houston LW **Bill Kinkel** at OHL Kitchener.
- Bulldogs LW **Raitis Ivanans** was on Milwaukee's roster in 2003-04 when the Ads won the Calder Cup, along with Aeros D **Curtis Murphy** and C **Bryan Lundbohm**.
- Aeros G **Josh Harding** and Hamilton C **Garth Murray** each hail from Regina, Sask.
- Hamilton D **Jeff Paul** and Houston C **Petr Taticcek** were teammates in 2003-04 in San Antonio.
- Houston captain and RW **Kirby Law** spent three seasons with Hamilton RW **Peter Vandermeer** at AHL Philadelphia from 2001-04.

PPG/PPGA ratio

1. Houston	+30
2. Hershey	+29
3. Wilkes-Barre/Scranton	+22

Single-season PPG, Aeros history

1. Jeff Christian	20
2. David Olier	18
3. Mark Freer	17
4. Roman Voloshenko	15
5. Erik Westrum	14

