



HOUSTON AEROS (24-8-1-1) AT SAN ANTONIO RAMPAGE (11-22-0-1)

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2005

SBC CENTER • SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS • 7 p.m.

HOUSTON AEROS MEDIA INFORMATION

PH: 713.361.7930

2003 CALDER CUP CHAMPS

Aeros Quick Stats

Game #35	R#16
Home	15-2-1-1
Road	9-6-0-0
Streak	6-0-0-0
Road Streak	1-0-0-0
Last 5	5-0-0-0
Last 10	9-1-0-0
This Month	8-1-0-0
Scoring 3 or >	23-1-0-0
Scoring 2 or <	1-6-1-1
One-goal games	11-2-1-1
Two-goal games	4-1-0-0
Scoring first	15-4-1-1
Opponent scores first	9-4-0-0
Outshooting opponent	13-1-0-0
Opponent outshoots	10-7-1-1
Shots tied	1-0-0-0
Leading after 1st	14-3-1-0
Trailing after 1st	5-4-0-0
Tied after 1st	5-1-0-1
Leading after 2nd	17-2-0-0
Trailing after 2nd	4-6-0-1
Tied after 2nd	3-0-1-0
Overtime	1-1
Shootout	4-1
Scoring PPG	23-4-0-1
Not scoring PPG	1-4-1-0
Allowing PPG	15-7-1-0
Not allowing PPG	9-1-0-1
More PIM	9-5-1-1
Fewer PIM	13-3-0-0
Same PIM	2-0-0-0
First of two/three	7-2-0-0
Second of two/three	6-2-0-1
Third of three	2-2-1-0

Five things you need to know

● Houston has won six straight games by a 30-12 margin since getting blown out 7-1 in Hamilton 12/10. The Aeros last won six in a row 12/5-12/17/03. A victory tonight would give Houston its first seven-game winning streak since 12/21/02-1/3/03, during a franchise-record-tying 11-0-2-0 run during its Calder Cup championship season. The Aeros also won eight in a row to begin that campaign, 10/11-10/26/02. The longest winning run in team history is 11, set 11/27-12/20/96. In order to continue the streak, the Aeros have to break a string of win/loss on the road. Houston has rotated wins and losses in each of its last 11 road games since a four-game road winning streak 10/14-10/20.

● Aeros C **Erik Westrum** (14-34=48) and RW **Kirby Law** (21-24=45) rank first and third overall in the AHL in scoring. They are trying to become the first duo from the same team to finish 1-2 in the league's scoring race **Paul Gardner** (112 points) and **Jody Gage** (99) turned the trick for Rochester exactly 20 seasons ago – in 1985-86. Westrum carries a career-best 10-game point streak (3-11=14) into tonight's game. The last Aero with a 10-game point streak was **Brett Harkins**, from 2/27-3/18/01, and the last with more than Westrum's 10 was **Brian Wiseman's** franchise-best 15-game run 12/27/98-1/30/99. Law has notched at least two points in eight of his last 12 games, and he has 20 points (11-9=20) in his last 10 contests alone. Law leads all AHL players with 21 goals. Rookie C **Patrick O'Sullivan** has 25 points (13-12=25) in his last 18 games to move into a tie for second place among AHL rookies with 32 points (16-16=32). Rookie LW **Roman Voloshenko**, who is currently playing for Team Russia in the World Junior Championships, has 30 points (19-11=30), fifth among AHL rookies.

● If their power play was supposed to slow down when D **Kurtis Foster** and his 101 mph slapshot was summoned by NHL Minnesota 11/16, no one told the Aeros. Houston is fourth in the league on the power play at 21.0 percent. Houston has at least two PPG in four of its last five games, going 10-for-33 (30.3 percent) in that span. The Aeros are 19-for-62 (30.6 percent) with the man advantage in the last 10 games, having scored at least one PPG in each of the games to establish a season-high. Houston's 52 PPG are more than halfway to the team record of 94, set in 1998-99.

● Since missing five games due to injury in late October and early November, Aeros second-year G **Josh Harding** is 14-3-0 with a 2.20 gaa to move to 19-6-0 with a 2.49 gaa on the season. Harding, who leads the AHL with 19 victories, has 40 wins with the Aeros, the most of any goalie since the team joined the AHL in 2001-02. Harding, a native of Regina, Sask., is an amazing 34-1-1 in his last 36 decisions when the Aeros score three goals or more in support of him. Harding's 19 victories through the Aeros' first 34 games puts him on pace for 45 wins this season. In 2004-05, current Buffalo Sabre **Ryan Miller** became the first AHL goalie to reach 40 wins since **Gerry Cheevers** set a league-record with 48 in 1964-65. Miller had 41 "W"'s last season.

● Aeros RW and captain **Kirby Law** joined some prestigious company Wednesday when he played in his 500th American Hockey League game. "The Sheriff" become just the 11th player currently in the AHL with 500 games played in the league. Law could reach another milestone tonight if he continues his torrid stretch. Law has 198 goals in his career, combining all 577 NHL, AHL and IHL games. Law leads the AHL with 21 goals, just 11 shy of his career-best total of 32, set in 2003-04, when he ranked fifth in the league. The durable winger has played in 135 consecutive AHL games – 114 with Houston. Law is four goals shy of becoming the 12th player in team history with 50 goals, and six points from being the 23rd to reach 100.

Aeros at Rampage (Aeros are 28-6-5-2 overall, Aeros are 10-4-4-2 at San Antonio)

- Tonight is the 42nd all-time meeting between the teams - 21st in San Antonio. The Aeros sport a .768 winning percentage in the series.
- The Aeros are 13-1-1-0 in the last 15 overall meetings, with the regulation loss coming by one goal. Each of San Antonio's last four victories in the series has come by one goal.
- Since a three-game winless slide in the series 12/27/03-1/17/04, the Aeros have unleashed an 18-2-2-1 mark (.848 winning percentage).
- At San Antonio, Houston is 5-1-1-0 in the last seven meetings. Since starting off 2-2-1-0 at SBC Center, the Aeros have points in 13 of the last 15 meetings (8-2-3-2).
- Five of the last eight SBC meetings have been decided by one goal.
- The Aeros have lost just once in regulation to the Rampage in each of the last two seasons. Houston was 9-1-2-0 in 2004-05 after a 7-1-2-2 mark in 2003-04.
- In the last meeting, 12/26 at Houston, RW **Kirby Law** scored two goals and former Rampage C **Petr Taticek** chipped in a goal and two helpers in a 6-1 win.
- San Antonio has been shut out or scored one goal in seven of the last 10 meetings, and two or fewer in 20 of the last 23 contests between the teams.

Scouting the Aeros

The Aeros (24-8-1-1) have won six straight to establish a new season-high...Their last seven-game run was during their 2002-03 Calder Cup season...Houston's 50 points trail only Wilkes-Barre/Scranton (26-3-2-1=55) for the league lead...The Aeros' West Division lead is five points over Milwaukee, which has caught up to them in games played...A victory tonight would give the Aeros more wins (25) than any other season in franchise history through 35 games...C **Erik Westrum** has 48 points (14-34=48) to lead the AHL in points and assists...RW **Kirby Law** is third in the league with 45 points (21-24=45) and is first in goals...Rookie C **Patrick O'Sullivan** is tied for second among first-year players in points with 32 (16-16=32)...Rookie LW **Roman Voloshenko** is tied for third in the AHL with 19 goals, and he ranks fifth among league rookies in points (30)...Voloshenko is currently playing in the World Junior Championships...D **Curtis Murphy** is fourth among AHL defensemen with 26 points (3-23=26)...G **Josh Harding** is 19-6-0 with a 2.49 gaa to rank first in the league in wins, tied for third in save pct. (.924) and 10th in gaa...Harding is 24-6-1 in his last 31 regular-season games, and one of the losses was in OT...G **Seamus Kotyk** is 4-2-1 with a 3.23 gaa...Harding has played five straight games, 11 of 12, 14 of 16 and 17 of 20.

Scouting the Rampage

San Antonio (11-21-0-1), AHL affiliate of the Phoenix Coyotes, has dropped four games in the last five days by a combined 16-2 score, including last night's 4-1 home loss to Iowa...The Rampage had won five of seven prior to this week...C **Steve Gainey** was returned from Phoenix this week and leads San Antonio in scoring with 20 points (7-13=20)...G **David LeNeveu**, who spent the first two months of the season in the NHL with Phoenix, is 2-4-0 with a 2.90 gaa in his return to the AHL...G **Karl Goehring** is 2-3-0 with a 2.68 gaa, while G **Scott Stirling** is 1-5-1 with a 2.85 gaa.

Aeros Record after 34/35 Games

1994-95	17-13-4/17-14-4
1995-96	11-21-2/12-21-2
1996-97	19-13-2/19-14-2
1997-98	20-10-3/21-10-3
1998-99	23-5-6/24-5-6
1999-00	20-10-4/20-10-5
2000-01	16-14-5/16-15-5
2001-02	18-13-2-1/18-13-3-1
2002-03	22-10-2/23-10-2
2003-04	14-14-6-2/14-15-5-2
2004-05	17-14-2-1/17-15-2-1
2005-06	24-8-1-1/NA

AHL's longest point streaks 2005-06

1.	Corey Perry (POR)	16*
2.	Jiri Hudler (GR)	14
3.	Trent Whitfield (PEO)	13*
4.	Michel Ouellet (WBS)	12
5.	Nathan Robinson (POR)	11*
6.	Erik Westrum (HOU)	10*
6t.	Two others	10

Most points, Aeros history

5.	Rob Valicevic	129
6.	Jeff Tory	128
7t.	Curtis Murphy	127
7t.	Mike Yeo	127
7t.	David Oliver	127

Highest gaa vs. Aeros, active goalies*

1.	Seamus Kotyk	4.23
2.	Patrick DesRochers	4.22
3.	David LeNeveu	4.11
4.	J-M Pelletier	4.00

* - Minimum five decisions

A look back...and ahead

Last 5

12/28 3-2 W vs. IOW
12/26 7-1 W vs. SAN
12/23 4-3 W (OT) vs. OMA
12/17 7-2 W vs. PEO
12/16 5-3 W vs. PEO

Next 5

1/5 @ SAN
1/6 vs. GR
1/10 vs. TOR
1/12 vs. IOW
1/13 vs. IOW



HOUSTON AEROS (24-8-1-1) AT SAN ANTONIO RAMPAGE (11-22-0-1)

The Goalies

Harding vs. Rampage

2004-05: 6-1-0, 1.13 gaa, .959 pct.
 2005-06: 3-1-0, 2.51 gaa, .922 pct.
Totals: 9-2-0, 1.71 gaa, .944 pct.

Kotyk vs. Rampage

2004-05: 1-2-0, 2.98 gaa, .877 pct.
 2005-06: 1-0-0, 2.77 gaa, .893 pct.
Totals: 3-4-0, 2.92 gaa, .890 pct.

Josh Harding (19-6-0, 2.49, .924, 1SHO)

- Is 25-6-1 in his last 31 regular-season decisions
- 14-3-0 with a 2.20 gaa since missing two weeks with injury
- Aeros' all-time leader in AHL victories (30)
- Made 40 saves for 7-2 win vs. PEO 12/17
- Stopped 33 shots for fifth career shutout, 3-0 over MIL 11/25
- Suffered lower body injury 10/25 vs. CHI
- Made career-best 47 saves in 3-1 win at PEO 10/14

Goehring vs. Aeros

2004-05: 0-0-0, 0.00 gaa, .000 pct.
 2005-06: 0-0-0, 3.72 gaa, .882 pct.
Totals: 1-0-0, 1.87 gaa, .936 pct.

LeNeveu vs. Aeros

2004-05: 2-3-0, 3.54 gaa, .893 pct.
 2005-06: 0-1-0, 10.76 gaa, .800 pct.
Totals: 2-4-0, 4.11 gaa, .881 pct.

Seamus Kotyk (4-2-1, 3.23, .893, 0SHO)

- Beat former team with 25 saves in 4-1 win at CLE 12/11
- Made 28 saves in first start, a 6-5 win over GR 10/29
- 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

2005-06 meetings (6th of 12 meetings, Aeros are 4-1-0-0 overall, Aeros are 1-1-0-0 at San Antonio)

October 7	San Antonio 5 at Houston 6	Thursday	Houston at San Antonio
October 8	Houston 2 at San Antonio 3	January 15	San Antonio at Houston
November 12	San Antonio 3 at Houston 4 (SO)	March 5	Houston at San Antonio
November 13	Houston 3 at San Antonio 1	March 18	Houston at San Antonio
Monday	San Antonio 1 at Houston 6	March 19	San Antonio at Houston
Tonight	Houston at San Antonio	April 9	San Antonio at Houston

Quick Hits

- Tonight, Aeros D **Erik Reitz** will become the 13th player in team history to appear in 200 games. D **Curtis Murphy** is just six games shy of that mark. Reitz ranks fourth in games played among blueliners. **Jeff Tory** is third at 223.
- This marks just Houston's eighth road game against the West Division. It has already played eight against the North.
- Tonight is the first of Houston's two ventures away from Toyota Center in a 37-day stretch. Beginning with their 12/16 game vs. Peoria, the Aeros won't travel out of the state of Texas - away from Toyota Center or SBC Center - for a span of 37 days, until they go to Chicago 1/22.

Aeros vs. Rampage

3 Stokes	5gp, 0-1=1
5 Reitz	28gp, 2-16=18
7 Westrum	15gp, 1-8=9
8 Peters	1gp, 0-0=0
10 Law	17gp, 7-11=18
11 Murray	3gp, 1-0=1
12 Courchaine	2gp, 0-0=0
14 Murphy	27gp, 7-13=20
15 Lundbohm	25gp, 3-9=12
16 Olvecky	4gp, 2-0=2
17 Kinkel	9gp, 0-0=0
18 Voloshenko	4gp, 4-1=5
19 Rooneem	3gp, 1-0=1
20 Stoner	5gp, 0-0=0
22 Olson	5gp, 1-2=3
23 Ferguson	1gp, 0-1=1
27 Taticek	3gp, 1-2=3
28 Ward	3gp, 1-1=2
29 O'Sullivan	3gp, 1-2=3
32 Wood	15gp, 1-1=2
34 Foy	21gp, 6-5=11
36 Tetarenko	5gp, 0-1=1
44 Nazarov	0gp, 0-0=0

Rampage vs. Aeros

6 Spiller	15gp, 1-2=3
7 Chouinard	0gp, 0-0=0
10 McLeod	14gp, 3-2=5
11 Cullaton	18gp, 3-4=7
13 Kouba	1gp, 0-0=0
15 Ulmer	13gp, 3-3=6
17 Monych	4gp, 0-0=0
22 Gelech	14gp, 4-3=7
23 Rheäume	1gp, 0-0=0
24 McAllister	4gp, 2-1=3
25 Sonnenberg	14gp, 4-4=8
26 Podlesak	4gp, 0-3=3
27 Callahan	14gp, 0-3=3
28 Brendl	1gp, 0-0=0
33 Schultz	22gp, 1-2=3
36 Cornacchia	13gp, 1-1=2
38 Bishai	5gp, 0-1=1
44 Doull	11gp, 0-1=1

- Houston and former Rampage LW **Josh Olson** has 11 points (5-6=11) over his last 13 games. His career-best five-game point streak was snapped Wednesday.
- Aeros D **Curtis Murphy** has nine assists in his last 10 games. Murphy has 127 points with Houston, tied with **Mike Yeo** and **David Oliver** for seventh place on the team's all-time list. Murphy ranks fourth among all AHL defensemen in points this season (3-23=26), and his 23 assists put him third among blueliners.
- Houston RW **Matt Foy** has 10 points (2-8=10) in a five-game point streak which ties his career-high. Foy had six points (5-1=6) in a five-game run last season 2/23-3/2/05.
- Houston has outscored its opponents 11-3 in the third period of its six-game winning streak.
- The Aeros are 23-1-0-0 when scoring three goals or more, but 1-7-1-1 when scoring two or fewer. Three is also the magic number defensively, as Houston is 21-2-1-1 when allowing three or fewer goals and 3-6-0-0 when yielding four or more.
- Houston is 13-1-0-0 when outshooting an opponent. The Aeros are 9-0-0-0 when allowing 29 shots or fewer.
- The Aeros are 11-2-1-1 in one-goal games, and an impressive 15-3-1-1 in games decided by two goals or less. Thirteen of the Aeros' first 21 games were decided by one goal. Since then, however, just two of the last 13 games has been of the one-goal variety.
- Houston has trailed at some point in 11 of its 24 victories. The Aeros had 16 come-from-behind victories in 2004-05. They are an impressive 9-4-0-0 when allowing the game's first goal.
- The Aeros are 14-2-0-0 when having less PIM's than their opponent, including a 10-1-0-0 home mark.
- San Antonio has scored three or fewer goals in regulation in 32 of the last 33 games after a 6-5 loss to the Aeros on Opening Night. The Rampage rank 27th and last in the league in scoring at 1.71 gpg.
- Nine of San Antonio's 11 wins have come via one goal. The Rampage is 9-5-0-1 in one-goal games, but 2-17-0-0 in games decided by two goals or more.

Power play update

- Houston is fourth in the league on the power play at 21.0 percent.
- The Aeros are 19-for-62 (30.6 percent) with the man advantage in the last 10 games, having scored at least one PPG in each of the games. That's Houston's longest stretch of the season with a PPG.
- The Aeros are 15-1-0-0 when scoring at least two PPG, with the lone loss coming 11/18 in Manitoba.
- San Antonio is tied for 19th in the AHL on the penalty kill at 82.4 percent.
- The Rampage has allowed five goals in 25 shorthanded chances in the last four games for an 80.0 percent kill rate.
- Houston is 10-for-43 (23.3 percent) on the power play against the Rampage this season, including 2-for-8 in each of the last three games.

Penalty kill update

- Houston is tied for seventh in the AHL on the penalty kill at 84.6 percent.
- The Aeros have killed off 17-of-20 (85.0 percent) of their shorthanded chances in the last four games.
- Houston is 9-1-0-1 when not allowing a power play goal and 19-3-1-1 when allowing one power play goal or fewer.
- San Antonio 25th in the AHL on the power play at 12.8 percent.
- The Rampage is 2-for-24 (8.3 percent) on the power play in the last six games.
- San Antonio is 6-for-33 (18.2 percent) with the man advantage versus the Aeros this season.

Last Game (Wednesday)

Kirby Law scored his league-best 21st goal in his 500th AHL game and leading scorer **Erik Westrum** tallied a goal and an assist to extend his point streak to 10 games, as the Houston Aeros knocked off the Iowa Stars 3-2 in front of a season-high 7,271 fans at Toyota Center for their sixth straight victory and seventh in a row at home. **Josh Harding** made 26 saves, **Patrick O'Sullivan** added a goal and an assist and **Matt Foy** chipped in two helpers for Houston, which snapped Iowa's league-best six-game winning streak.

