

GAME REPORT

Home: CV Firebirds vs. Away: TUC Roadrunners

Date: Feb 19, 2025 7:00PM PST

Pre-Game

The Roadrunners find themselves tied in points with Bakersfield for the final playoff spot in the Pacific. The Roadrunners play more veterans in their lineup as their younger players have had little impact in the AHL this season. The Utah Hockey Club is playing their first season in Utah since moving from Phoenix, and they are fighting for a wild card spot. The trade deadline is coming up and how this will affect the NHL and AHL clubs is anyone's guess. There veterans have cycled up and down between Utah and Tucson this season. Kailer Yamamoto is their main scoring threat, and it just outside the top 20 in the AHL. The Roadrunners' last 10 games have only produced 6 points. Like all teams in the Pacific, the Roadrunners are coming to play each night. Tonight's game is the last of their 7-game road trip.

No.	PLAYER	POS	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PPG	PPMG
56	Kailer Yamamoto	F	38	14	25	39	9	1.026	1.263
13	Egor Sokolov	RW	47	16	18	34	-9	0.723	0.532
39	Cameron Hebig	C	42	17	14	31	10	0.738	0.976
91	Josh Doan	F	28	11	15	26	2	0.929	1.000
27	Austin Poganski	RW	46	11	14	25	13	0.543	0.826
29	Andrew Agozzino	C	31	10	15	25	-1	0.806	0.774
5	Robbie Russo	D	47	3	19	22	-3	0.468	0.404
38	Aku Rätty	RW	45	4	14	18	-10	0.400	0.178
25	Sammy Walker (total)	F	36	5	12	17	4	0.472	0.583
78	* Artem Duda	D	45	2	15	17	8	0.378	0.556
22	Ben McCartney	F	39	7	9	16	-6	0.410	0.256
36	Hunter Drew	RW	35	9	6	15	-7	0.429	0.229
55	Max Szuber	D	40	5	10	15	-5	0.375	0.250
28	Curtis Douglas	C	40	3	11	14	-2	0.350	0.300
71	* Sam Lipkin	F	40	9	3	12	-6	0.300	0.150
26	Travis Barron	LW	42	6	6	12	-5	0.286	0.167
44	Kevin Connauton	D	32	5	7	12	-1	0.375	0.344
10	* Maveric Lamoureux	D	17	2	6	8	-2	0.471	0.353
42	* Lleyton Moore	D	29	2	6	8	2	0.276	0.345
16	Ryan McGregor	C	22	2	5	7	-5	0.318	0.091
21	x Milos Kelemen	F	11	1	5	6	-3	0.545	0.273
43	* Julian Lutz	F	22	1	5	6	-8	0.273	-0.091

79	Montana Onyebuchi	D	43	1	4	5	3	0.116	0.186
3	Peter DiLiberatore	D	18	2	0	2	-2	0.111	0.000
64	x Patrik Koch	D	10	0	2	2	4	0.200	0.600
49	*x Miko Matikka	F	28	0	2	2	-4	0.071	-0.071
35	x Connor Ingram	G	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
2	*x Hudson Wilson	D	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
45	*x Noel Nordh	F	2	0	0	0	-1	0.000	-0.500
32	x Dylan Wells	G	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
30	Jaxson Stauber	G	14	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
31	Matthew Villalta	G	30	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000

Totals by forwards and defense:

	G	A	PTS	+/-
Forwards	131	191	322	-25
Defense	22	69	91	4

*Note: The scoring data comes from The AHL Daily and team websites. PPG = Points / games played. PMPPG = (Points + (+/-))/games played. PMPPG is intended to include the defensive number to a player's full contribution per game. * Rookie. X – Player Not on roster, injured, or called up.*

The Firebirds got an important win on Sunday as they have struggled out of the All-Star break. Tonight's game will be the 3rd in the 5-game homestand. Special-teams has come up big the last two months. The biggest issue is getting out maneuvered in the blue paint of their own goal. Opponents have been pushing them around a bit and it has created problems. A little more aggressiveness and matching the intensity are common themes heard in the aftergame interviews. The most important theme is that if they play the right way, they will get a positive result. The Firebirds are 5 points out of first place as Calgary has slipped in the standings. The bunch up of all the Pacific teams has been a theme this season. Playing the right way will be import as the final months of the season approaches.

No.	PLAYER	POS	GP	G	A	PTS	+/-	PPG	PPMG
39	Ben Meyers	C	41	17	19	36	-6	0.878	0.732
33	* Jani Nyman	F	48	20	14	34	-1	0.708	0.688
96	Logan Morrison	F	49	10	18	28	5	0.571	0.673
27	Ryan Winterton	F	38	12	15	27	8	0.711	0.921
58	Max Lajoie	D	48	3	23	26	1	0.542	0.563
57	* Jagger Firkus	F	48	10	15	25	4	0.521	0.604
29	* Lleyton Roed	F	48	11	13	24	8	0.500	0.667
11	Brandon Biro	C	35	5	19	24	-4	0.686	0.571
16	Nikolas Brouillard	D	46	5	19	24	-1	0.522	0.500
15	John Hayden	F	36	7	15	22	0	0.611	0.611

24	* Ty Nelson	D	49	4	16	20	8	0.408	0.571
8	Cale Fleury	D	31	6	12	18	10	0.581	0.903
91	Daniel Sprong	F	14	7	10	17	-1	1.214	1.143
12	* Eduard Šalé	F	34	5	11	16	6	0.471	0.647
10	Luke Henman	F	40	5	9	14	0	0.350	0.350
17	Max McCormick	F	19	7	6	13	-4	0.684	0.474
23	Gustav Olofsson	D	38	2	11	13	-6	0.342	0.184
36	Ville Ottavainen	D	45	2	8	10	10	0.222	0.444
63	Jacob Melanson	F	21	6	2	8	3	0.381	0.524
67	x Mitchell Stephens	F	18	4	4	8	-1	0.444	0.389
21	Ian McKinnon	F	40	4	4	8	-1	0.200	0.175
62	Tucker Robertson	F	26	3	2	5	-6	0.192	-0.038
88	* David Goyette	F	32	1	4	5	-5	0.156	0.000
20	Ryan Jones	D	27	0	5	5	0	0.185	0.185
28	x Cade Borchart	F	1	0	0	0	-2	0.000	-2.000
2	x Jake McLaughlin	D	1	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
45	x Jack LaFontaine	G	2	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
31	Philipp Grubauer	G	3	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
50	x Charlie Wright	D	9	0	0	0	-3	0.000	-0.333
35	* Nikke Kokko	G	20	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000
30	Aleš Stezka	G	25	0	0	0	0	0.000	0.000

Totals by forwards and defense:

	G	A	PTS	+/-
Forwards	134	180	314	3
Defense	22	94	116	19

*Note: The scoring data comes from The AHL Daily and team websites. PPG = Points / games played. PMPPG = (Points + (+/-))/games played. PMPPG is intended to include the defensive number to a player's full contribution per game. * Rookie. X – Player Not on roster, injured, or called up.*

Head-to-Head: Tonight's game is the last game between these teams this season. In the first three games, Roadrunners are 2-1-0-0 and the Firebirds are 1-1-1-0. The Roadrunners won the last meeting 4-1. They frustrated the Firebirds by blocking passes and intercepting pucks. Once again it will be the Firebirds Youth versus the Roadrunners Veterans. Considering that it is Teachers Appreciation Night at Acrisure Arena, the question is, did the Firebirds learn anything from the last game?

1st Period

It looks like the Firebirds went to school on the last game. Better puck control and didn't let the Roadrunners get sticks to intercept pucks. 3:33 into the game, the Firebirds scored a goal. After

Roadrunner icing, Logan Morrison won the faceoff, Max Lajoie tip the puck over to Ty Nelson who hit slap shot from the blueline past Matthew Villalta. The Firebirds had some momentum and O-Zone pressure. The Firebirds won the faceoff circle, which allowed them to dictate the pace of play. The Roadrunners started to even out the shots on goal, but only had a couple of good scoring opportunities.

2nd Period

Firebirds continued the intensive play. 1:29 into the period, the Firebirds got their second goal on the rush. Ben Meyers picked off the puck in the neutral zone and scatted in for an attack. He passed to Daniel Sprong who found Jani Nyman streak down the other side. The Finisher didn't miss the back of the net. 2 minutes later, Luke Henman picked up the loose change on a shot by Edward Sale to sneak it past Villalta. The Roadrunners were not going to stop, and they started to take back the flow of the game. After the 13-minute mark, the Roadrunners had extended O-zone time. They kept making attempts to take shots on Grubauer stick side, and Hunter Drew made a change to shoot past on the glove side to get the first goal for the Roadrunners. The key was that the Roadrunners filliped the script in the faceoff circle.

3rd Period

Roadrunners came out looking to get the next goal. The Firebirds bent in the first few minutes of the period but didn't break. With less than 5 minutes to play, the Roadrunners finally got their second goal. Hunter Drew scored his 2nd of the game. The crowd in Acrisure got restless know the next goal was going to either go home or go to overtime. Another minute later, the Roadrunners pulled Villalta. It was a made scramble for a couple minutes. Logan Morrison broke his stick and block a shot in the middle of the D-zone with his hands. Gutsy play showing some Firebirds spirit. The Roadrunners couldn't get anything going. The puck found its way to Jani Nyman who put the puck into the empty net. The crowd went wild, but it didn't stop. After a faceoff and Roadrunner puck control, Villalta was pulled again. The Firebirds got control. Max Lajoie spotted Brandon Biro in the neutral zone. As a defender was coming at him, Brandon pass to Lleyton Roed on the other side of the ice to get a second empty net goal.

Post-Game

We go to school to get an education and learn-how-to-learn. On Teach Appreciation Night, the Firebirds applied what they learned from the last few games and played a dominate 60 minutes. Most important they brought more speed to their game, and took the game to their opponent. Credit the Roadrunners for hanging in and make the game close at the end. Their 2-3 forecheck system forced the Firebirds to slow down and be smart with the puck. The Roadrunners won the faceoff battle, but the Firebirds constant shots on goal and getting the puck out of the D-zone was key to success. One statistic going into the game was that the Roadrunners forwards combine for a -25 in the +/-, which says their forwards are not defensive minded and it showed tonight.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		Total
Roadrunners	0	1	1		2
Firebirds	1	2	2		5

Full game statistic can be found on the AHL site: <https://theahl.com/stats/game-center/1027232>

Video highlights can be seen on the Firebirds' YouTube channel: [Firebirds - YouTube](#)

Team Game Stats:

	Roadrunners	Firebirds
Shots	24	37
PP	0 / 1	0 / 3
PIM	8	2
SH	0	0

Unofficial stats:

The following are unofficial statistics. The AHL doesn't show faceoff wins, icing, or offsides on the score sheet. I am tracking this on my own so there is a margin of error.

Icing	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		Total
Roadrunners	3	3	1		7
Firebirds	3	1	3		7

Offsides	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		Total
Roadrunners	0	0	0		0
Firebirds	2	1	0		3

Faceoff Wins	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		Total
Roadrunners	8	13	13		34
Firebirds	12	9	9		30

The following is a breakdown of faceoff wins based on zone and player count.

	Roadrunners			Firebirds		
Zone	ES	PP	PK	ES	PP	PK
Attack	8	0	1	12	4	0
Neutral	8	0	0	7	1	0
Defense	14	0	3	4	0	2

ES – Even Strength

PP – Power Play

PK – Penalty Kill