

# Rockets @ Cougars

## Friday October 6th, 2017

### Game Time – 7:05 pm



**Tonight's Preview:** The Kelowna Rockets are in their 27<sup>th</sup> year of existence since coming into the Western Hockey League as an expansion franchise in 1991. After four seasons in Tacoma, the team relocated to Kelowna in 1995-96, where the team has spent the last 22 years in the Okanagan. The team has four WHL championships (2003, 2005, 2009, 2015) and have missed the playoffs only once in their existence. The hockey club has made four straight appearances in the Western Conference final and has registered 40 or more wins in five consecutive seasons.

**Twarynski's Return:** Twenty year-old forward Carsen Twarynski returned to the team Sunday after being a late cut of the American Hockey League's Lehigh Valley Phantoms. The Phantoms are the farm team of the NHL's Philadelphia Flyers who picked Twarynski in the third round of the 2016 draft. The Calgary resident still has until June 1<sup>st</sup> to sign with the Flyers, or he becomes a free agent. Last season, Twarynski picked up 7 goals and collected 22 points in 28 games with the Rockets after being obtained from the Calgary Hitmen at the trade deadline in a one-for-one deal involving Jake Kryski.

**Broadcasters Notebook:** The Rockets have opened the scoring in every game this season. The Rockets have also held the lead after one period. The team has also out-shot the opponent in every game this season. Kole Lind is riding a four game point streak. Lind has 4+6=10 over that stretch... The Rockets boast one first round NHL draft pick and two second rounders. Cal Foote was chosen 14<sup>th</sup> overall by the Tampa Bay Lightning in June while Kole Lind (2<sup>nd</sup> round (33<sup>RD</sup>) Canucks - 2017) and Dillon Dube (2<sup>nd</sup> round (56<sup>th</sup>) Flames - 2016) were picked in the second round.... Nolan Foote, last season's rookie of the year, is not eligible to be drafted until June 2019.

**Milestones:** Kole Lind is 9 assists shy of 100 for his career... Lind is played in his 150<sup>th</sup> career game Wednesday night.... Cal Foote is 4 games shy of 150 for his career... James Hilsendager has played a team high 185 WHL regular season games.

**Rockets Review:** The Rockets were 45-22-0-5 last season which was good for second place in the BC Division with 95 points, one fewer than division leading Prince George. The team had the 6<sup>th</sup> best winning percentage in the WHL while scoring the third most goals and allowing the fourth fewest goals against. The Rockets won 22 road games, the second most in the Western Conference behind only the Cougars (23). Kole Lind was the teams scoring champion (30+57=87) with Lind leading the team in assists (57) and MVP Calvin Thurkauf leading the charge with 33 goals. The hockey club made it all the way to the third round of the playoffs before eventually losing in 6 games to WHL champion Seattle.

**Who's Gone?** The team lost seven significant players following the 2016-2017 season. Calvin Thurkauf (33 goals and 70 points) is playing pro hockey with the Columbus Blue Jackets. Nick Merkley (63 points in 63 games) is playing pro with the Arizona Coyotes. Captain Rodney Southam graduated and is playing with the Acadia Axemen. Lucas Johansen is with the Washington Capitals organization while Reid Gardiner, acquired at last year's trade deadline for a first round bantam pick, signed an American Hockey League deal with the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins. Overage goaltender Michael Herringer is playing with the Regina Cougars (U Sports) this season.

#### Roster Stats:

**Player total:** 25

#### **Year by Year Breakdown:**

**20's (1997) – 3** Ballhorn, Twarynski, Hilsendager

**19's (1998) - 4** Salmond, Lind, Dube, Cal Foote, Chizen

**18's (1999) - 7** Topping, Mattson, Gardiner, Bruggen-Cate, Cowell, Porter, Skvrne

**17's (2000) - 9** Nolan Foote, Belcourt, Zabransky, Kindree, Brennan, McGauley, Kushniryk, Pow, Hair

**16's (2001) - 1** Korczak

**NHL Drafted Players:** Cal Foote (Tampa Bay 2017), Kole Lind (Vancouver 2017), Dillon Dube (Calgary 2016), Carsen Twarynski (Philadelphia 2016), Brayden Chizen (Minnesota 2016).

