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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

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**Great Falls wins fourth straight matchup over Missoula**

**By Kevin Scott**

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GREAT FALLS, Mont., November 30, 2019 — The #2 Great Falls Americans (18-2-3) were looking to for their fourth victory over the #6 Missoula Junior Bruins (7-16-0) on Saturday night.

After having their ten-game win streak snapped last week at the hands of the Sheridan (WY) Hawks, a first-year squad in the North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL) in two overtime losses, Great Falls was hoping for second straight win in as many nights against the Missoula Junior Bruins. In all three previous wins against the Bruins at the Great Falls Ice Plex, they scored five goals in each of the three games while allowing just two total goals in their first two games.

In Friday's game, Great Falls scored three goals in the opening period and two the following period to earn the team's fifth shutout win of the season. Dylan Olson (2 goals, 1 assist) and Kellen Harris (3 assists) each scored three points for one of the premier teams in the NA3HL. Goaltender Viktor Wennberg was unstoppable in the net as he redirected all 20 shots he faced.

The Great Falls Americans cruised to their 18<sup>th</sup> win in 23 games by dropping the visiting Missoula Junior Bruins, 5-1 during Saturday's NA3HL junior hockey action at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The cold and snowy weekend in Great Falls brought in 495 spectators. Returning players from last year's playoff bound squad led the charge for Great Falls. Levi Mese had two second period goals and one assist and Jack Olson and Brody Boyce each scored a goal and dished out one assist. All four home matchups against the Bruins had Great Falls scoring five goals and allowing just three goals for Missoula.

Each team was able to get in the scoring column to open the final game of the two-game series between these two competitive rivals. Dylan Olson and Henry Chavez found Jack Olson for his seventh goal 4:42 into the stanza to put the Americans in front, 1-0. Missoula, who failed to get any goals in Friday's performance, scored the final goal of the period to tie the game, 1-1. Arizona native Tyler Katen got the puck through Americans netminder Trevor Mellen with help from Austin Franck and Connor Frye. Frye,

who ranks second on the team with 15 assists, set up the lone goal with 9:31 remaining before the first intermission. The Americans doubled up on the shots (21-10) against the visiting team from western side of Montana.

After a sluggish first half by the Americans, the second-place team in the Frontier Division took advantage of a few offensive opportunities that turned into goals in the second. The first of two goals by forward Levi Mese came early in the period. Jack Olson and Brody Boyce found the driving Mese to break the tie (2-1). Jack Olson provided his 28<sup>th</sup> assist and Boyce added his 18<sup>th</sup> at the 15:36 mark. It took Levi Mese seven minutes to chip in his second goal. The unassisted tally gave Great Falls a small cushion. The fourth scoring drive came quickly (11 seconds later) when Ivan Royo and Levi Mese provided the assists as Blake Nerney scored his fifth goal. The teams finished the rest of the period scoreless despite many thrilling attempts. The first two periods saw 57 combined shots taken between these two teams.

Great Falls wrapped up their 18<sup>th</sup> victory of the 2019-20 season with one goal in the third period. Brody Boyce secured his tenth goal with assistance from Blake Nerney and newcomer Rhodes Buffalo, acquired along with his twin brother, Remington a week ago, secured his first assist as a Great Falls American. The Bruins and Americans came away with 14 shots in the period.

There were eight stoppages of play due to penalties in a game that last just over two hours. Great Falls had three minor penalties all coming after the first period. Missoula committed five infractions with 18 minutes spent off the ice. Five power play chances went unanswered.

There were a few upsets in the other Frontier Division games tonight. #3 Sheridan Hawks (18-5-1) defeated the top-ranked Bozeman Ice Dogs (21-2-0-0), 7-2 in Bozeman, Montana while the #6 Helena Bighorns (5-19-0-0) bested the #4 Gillette (WY) Wild (14-9-0-0), 6-2 in Helena, Montana and the last-place Butte Cobras (3-21-0-0) picked up their third win of the season by getting by the #5 Yellowstone Quake (8-14-2-0) 4-2 in Cody, Wyoming.

Game-winning goalie Trever Mellen is now 6-1-2 on the season and is ranked eighth in the NA3HL with a Goals-Against-Average (GAA) of 2.13, allowed one first period goal by the Bruins collected 32 saves. Dylan Swanson, who lists Denver, Colorado as his hometown, dropped his fourth game in seven appearances as the first-year Missoula goaltender gathered 47 saves.

**NOTE:** Missoula head coach Cliff Cook was ejected for arguing with the NA3HL officials in the second period.

**NEXT CONTEST:** The Americans finish up their eight-game homestand with the final back-to-back home contests of the 2019-20 season next weekend. The #5 Yellowstone Quake will come to the Electric City for the last time on Friday (December 6<sup>th</sup>) and Saturday (December 7<sup>th</sup>) with both games set to start at 7:30PM from the Great Falls Ice Plex. Catch all of the Americans action on [HockeyTV](#).

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