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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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NA3HL Showcase: Mese scores game-winning goal to get Americans by the L/A Nordiques

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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BLAINE, Minn., December 16, 2019 — The Great Falls Americans wrapped up the 2019 North American 3 Hockey League's Showcase Tournament in Blaine, Minnesota on Tuesday morning at the [National Sports Center \(NSC\) Super Rink](#).

The Great Falls Americans (22-3-4) faced three teams from two other divisions that provided them with some exciting competition. The end results weren't what they had hoped for but should make them a better team for the remainder of the 2019-20 campaign.

The opening day of the prestigious tournament took place on Sunday and Great Falls began the day with the second-place team in the West Division, the Granite City Lumberjacks (20-5-0). Granite City, out of Sauk Rapids, MN, are one of five teams from the Minnesota that make up the six-team division. A disappointing first period made the difference in the game as the Americans let the Lumberjacks score four unanswered goals. After a scoreless middle period, Jake Hayes scored the lone goal for the Americans as they came up short with a 4-1 setback.

In the second day of the three-day tournament, Great Falls was matched up with the fourth-place team from the West Division, the Alexandria (MN) Blizzard, who are now 12-9-2-1 on the season. Levi Mese, Jake Hayes and Jack Olson registered goals throughout the game and took a 3-1 lead in the final period of regulation. Alexandria never gave up and score two goals in a seven-minute span to tie the contest and send it into a five-minute overtime period. Ike Taraszewski needed three minutes to get the puck by Great Falls goalie Trever Mellen to win the sudden death matchup for the Blizzard.

Great Falls served as the home team on Tuesday after serving as the away team against the two Minnesota junior hockey franchises on Sunday and Monday. Great Falls had a tough contest against the Lewiston-Auburn (L/A) Nordiques (Maine) on Tuesday morning. The Nordiques, who play in the Coastal Division, finished in second place behind the Texas Brahmas in last season's 2019 NA3HL Fraser Cup National Championship Game in Woodridge, Illinois. L/A Nordiques went 1-1 before Tuesday's contest where they defeated the Louisiana Drillers, 8-4 to open the tournament on Sunday before suffering a 7-1 deficit to the New Ulm Steel from Minnesota on Monday.

A trio of Great Falls Americans helped lead their team to a 3-2 hard-fought victory over the Lewiston-Auburn (L/A) Nordiques to conclude the 2019 NA3HL Showcase Tournament in Blaine, Minnesota on Tuesday morning. Levi Mese scored two goals including the game-winning score with under five minutes left in the final stanza while Jack Olson dished out two assists and Jake Hayes chipped in one goal and one assist for coach Greg Sears' squad.

The Americans finished the tournament with a 1-1-1 record and are now currently tied for first place with the Bozeman Ice Dogs in the Frontier Division (48 points) thanks to three straight losses by Bozeman at the Minnesota tournament.

Great Falls accounted for half of the 24 total shots in the first period despite no successful scoring drives.



Jake Hayes scored the first goal of the game to put the Americans ahead 1-0 after 26 minutes of scoreless action. The first of two goals via a power play was assisted by Jack Olson, who set up his 31st scoring drive of the season. Each team traded a goal in the last two minutes before the second intermission. Peyton Hughes got the biscuit in the basket on the short-handed goal that was assisted by Japan's Daisuke Egusa with 1:47 on the clock. The tie game lasted 23 seconds when Levi Mese scored the first of his two goals off the stick of Logan Rachow. The Americans headed into their second break with a 2-1 advantage.

Joe Clark tied the game for the Nordiques again when the puck sailed by Great Falls goaltender Viktor Wennberg midway through the third frame. Sam Frechette and Hans Watson collected the assists on the power play tally. Six minutes later, Levi Mese accrued his 17th goal of the season in what turned out to be the game-winning score with assistance by Jack Olson and Jake Hayes.

The Nordiques edged the Americans (27-26) in the shots-on-goal category. After the first twenty minutes, the teams never attempted more than nine shots each over the second and third periods.

All ten infractions occurred after the first period. Great Falls and Lewiston-Auburn each were whistled for five penalties. The visiting Nordiques acquired 31 minutes of penalty time as one of their players had a major penalty called on them. The Americans received five two-minute minor penalties.

The squads combined to score on three of their seven power play opportunities. The Americans went 2-for-3.

Great Falls' Viktor Wennberg and L/A's Brogan MacDonald started and finished the sixty-minute game as netminders for their respective teams. Wennberg received another win on his resume and improved to 15-2-1 on the season. The Sweden native allowed one goal in each of the final two periods. Brogan MacDonald ended his night with 23 saves in his first loss in four appearances with the team from Maine.

Three of the seven other Frontier teams needed an extra period to claim victory. Butte (Cobras), Gillette (WY) Wild and Sheridan (WY) Hawks all won in overtime against their opponents. The Bozeman Ice Dogs and Missoula Junior Bruins all fell short in regulation while the Yellowstone (WY) Quake lost in a shootout. The box scores from Tuesday's contests can be found by [clicking here](#).

The first day of the Showcase tournament box scores on Sunday can be accessed by [clicking here](#) and Monday's box scores can be found [here](#).

[Click here](#) for more information about the three-day tournament attended by many college scouts.

NEXT CONTEST: With two months remaining in the 2019-20 NA3HL regular season, the Great Falls Americans have 22 wins and seven losses as they head into the holiday break. Great Falls will now spend 15 of their final 18 games of the season on the road. The Americans will face the Helena Bighorns for one final game in 2019 when they head to the Helena Ice Arena for a 7:05PM start on Tuesday, December 31st. Great Falls will have two home games in January 2020 when the Helena Bighorns come to town on Saturday, January 11th and Saturday, January 25th when the Bozeman Ice Dogs invade the Great Falls ice Plex for the first time this season.

[Click here](#) to view the results of the previous games and a full schedule of the regular season contests remaining for the 2019-20 Great Falls Americans.

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