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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Jack Olson's hat trick propels Americans to their 20th victory

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., December 7, 2019 — Not too long ago, the Great Falls Americans (20-2-3) and the Yellowstone Quake (8-16-2) were quite the rivals on the ice.

The rivalry dates to 2016 when Great Falls defeated Yellowstone in two games to win the 2016 Frontier Divisional Finals. That year both teams advanced to the 2016 NA3HL Silver Cup National Championship (Round-Robin format) in Romeoville, Illinois. The Americans went 2-2 and Yellowstone fell in all three contests. Great Falls made it to the national semifinals before falling to the Metro (Michigan) Jets.

The following season in 2017, Yellowstone got redemption and won the best-of-three NA3HL Frontier Divisional Finals in three games. Yellowstone was the lone recipient in the Frontier Division to qualify for the 2017 Silver Cup National Tournament where they went 2-2 and advanced to the national semifinals where they fell to the Metro (MI) Jets.

In 2018, both teams made it into the Frontier Division playoffs but only the Quake made it back to championship and defeated the Helena Bighorns. Yellowstone appeared in three round-robin games at nationals before bowing out. Last season (2019), Great Falls appeared in the playoffs, but Yellowstone failed to qualify in the four-team playoff Frontier Division round. The Americans played for the Frontier Division crown but couldn't find a way to get by the Helena Bighorns, who made it to the Fraser Cup National Tournament.

These days, the rivalry has simmered a little as Great Falls has had a better overall record, but the intensity remains.

In late October, Great Falls earned two shutout victories (5-0 and 4-0) over the Wyoming-based NA3HL hockey team from Cody, Wyoming. Great Falls went 3-0 on Friday night (December 6th) when they held on to a 3-1 win thanks to Logan Rachow, who received two goals and Viktor Wennberg's 15 saves.

Could Great Falls go 4-0 against Yellowstone on Saturday in the final home game of 2019?

The #2 Great Falls Americans blanked the #5 Yellowstone (WY) Quake for the third time in four meetings by the score of 10-0 during Saturday's junior hockey contest at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Jack Olson had a hat trick (4 goals, 1 assist) and Bryson Fletcher scored two goals and dished out an assist for the winning team. The 20th overall victory for the Americans was also their fifth shutout of the season after 25 games.

After having a scoreless first period in Friday's contest against the Quake, Great Falls rattled off three goals before the halfway point of the opening stanza. Brody Boyce (11th goal), Jack Olson (8th goal), and Levi Mese (14th goal) all lit up the lamp. The six players receiving assists included Bryson Fletcher, Harley Nyhuis, Ivan Royo, Jake Hayes, Henry Chavez, and Blake Nerney. Nick Torres capped off the period with the fourth goal. Jake Hayes obtained his second assist of the period and Jack Olson also assisted. Torres first goal of the season came with 57 seconds remaining. The offensive attack by the home team put up 28 shots while the Quake took five.

Great Falls kept the momentum going after the first intermission. Jack Olson scored a pair of goals in the first 4:26 to pick up the hat trick. Olson's first score of the stanza came just 40 seconds into the middle period with assistance from Jake Hayes and Dylan Olson. Great Falls' sixth goal arrived a few minutes later. Dylan Olson and Luke Richesin provided the assists on the hat trick by the Minnesota native. The Americans accounted for 24 of the 33 shots.

The Americans added four more goals in the third and final period to close the weekend series with the Yellowstone Quake out. Bryson Fletcher scored twice, Jack Olson netted his fourth and Tommy Janes had one goal apiece. Assisting on the third period scores were Logan Rachow (2 assists), Tommy Janes (2 assists), Henry Chavez, Blake Nerney, Cody Benjamin and Dylan Olson.

Jack Olson led coach Greg Sears' squad with five points (4 goals, 1 assist) followed by three points by Bryson Fletcher (2 goals, 1 assist), Tommy Janes (1 goal, 2 assists) and Jake Hayes with three assists. The Americans had 52 shot attempts before the second intermission and finished with 70. Yellowstone had a high of nine in the middle period to end their scoreless night with 20.

Forty minutes of penalty time between these two clubs resulted in 16 penalties. Two third period scoring opportunities by Tommy Janes and Jack Olson came while the Quake were in the sin bin. Great Falls went 2-for-5 while Yellowstone's four chances came up empty.

Trever Mellen is having a fantastic first year with the Americans as their goaltender. The Minnesota goalie swatted away all 20 shots as he ran his record to 7-1-2. He now has a GAA (Goals-Against-Average) of 1.93 and 337 saves in 11 appearances. Michael Allman of Yellowstone had 60 saves but gave up ten goals. The Norwegian is now 5-11-1 in 18 contests.

NEXT CONTEST: The Great Falls Americans have a huge week coming up. They will play four games in six days before they enter the two-week Christmas break. Great Falls plays in just their seventh road game after having 19 home dates in three months when they head to the Mining City (Butte, Montana) to face the Cobras on Thursday, December 12th for a 7:30PM showdown at the Butte Community Ice Center.

The Americans will then travel to Blaine, Minnesota for the [2019 NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#) where all 34 NA3HL teams will be in attendance playing other teams (not in their division) in a three-game, three-day tournament at the [National Sports Center \(NSC\) Super Rink](#) that will count in the official standings and features many NCAA and North American Hockey League (NAHL) scouts. Great Falls opens up with Minnesota-based Granite City Lumberjacks at 3:15PM (MST) on Sunday, December 15th

followed on Monday (December 16th) with the Alexandria (MN) Blizzard at 5:35PM (MST) and then will conclude with the team that made it all the way to the 2019 NA3HL Fraser Cup National Championship game, the Lewiston/Auburn (L/A) Nordiques out of Maine at 10:45AM (MST) on Tuesday, December 17th. All games can be seen on [HockeyTV](#).

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