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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

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**Great Falls comes up short in shootout loss to Sheridan**

**By Kevin Scott**

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SHERIDAN, Wyo., February 8, 2020 — The #3 Great Falls Americans (27-9-4-1) haven't been able to put many victories in the win column when they challenge the #2 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (33-7-1-0) this season.

Great Falls has had one only victory in six head-to-head contests this season (1-2-2-1). The lone victory came on October 5<sup>th</sup> when Great Falls blanked Sheridan, 4-0 behind a 43 save effort by goaltender Trever Mellen.

Great Falls trailed the Hawks 4-1 after two periods during Friday's game (February 7<sup>th</sup>) contest in Wyoming before falling 4-2.

Great Falls was trying to come out of a four-game losing skid before tonight's game.

The Sheridan (WY) Hawks and the Great Falls Americans needed a shootout to declare a winner during their final regular season meeting on Saturday evening at the Whitney Rink in the M&M Center. The Americans held a 2-1 advantage in the third frame before Sheridan came back to tie the game (2-2) to send it to a scoreless overtime. The Americans lost in the shootout (2-1) and 3-2 for the game. Mike Kocsis and Alex Kesler scored for the Hawks in the shootout while Great Falls had one successful score by Brody Boyce.

The two Frontier squad traded goals during the first seven minutes of action to open the first period. Kolten Wright, with help from McCaffrey Billings and Gavin Miller, scored first for the host team. Wright's 25<sup>th</sup> goal came with 17:16 remaining. Dylan Olson scored a few minutes later to even the game. Jack Olson accrued his 37<sup>th</sup> assists while Jake Hayes added his 23<sup>rd</sup> of the season.

Levi Mese racked up the one and only goal for either team to help the Americans pull ahead of the Hawks, 2-1. The power play was created by Braydon Rachow and Jack Olson. Great Falls held a slim 23-22 advantage on the shots-on-goal category after the second stanza.

In the third period, Iowa native Anthony Fortin buried the puck in the goal 4:42 into the period that proved to be the scoring drive that would force an extra five-minute period. Alex Kesler received the credit for the assist. The Hawks offense accumulated 25 shots while Great Falls took eight.

After a goal-free overtime period, Sheridan's Alex Kesler and Mike Kocsis successfully went one-on-one with Americans netminder Trever Mellen for goals in the shootout. Brody Boyce was the only player on coach Greg Sears' team to put the biscuit in the basket. Henry Chavez, Bryson Fletcher, and Brandon Peterson failed on their shootout attempts for Great Falls. Sandis Cook and Gavin Miller couldn't answer the call for the Hawks.

Sheridan's 25 shots during a third period offensive attack helped them out-shoot Great Falls 52-35 and helped them seal their 33<sup>rd</sup> win in 41 contests.

The 788 fans at the M&M Center saw seven power plays (with one successful opportunity by Great Falls) and 15 stoppages of play due to penalties with 30 total minutes spent in the sin bin.

Winning netminder James Downie prevented 33 of the 35 shots by Great Falls' offense from getting by him. Americans goaltender, Trever Mellen failed to pick up his tenth victory despite registering 49 saves.

**NEXT CONTEST:** Great Falls will be the guests again as they make the trip to Cody, Wyoming for a twin-bill against the #5 Yellowstone Quake, who the Americans defeated in four home contests this season by a combined score of 22-1. The two games on Friday and Saturday (February 14-15<sup>th</sup>) begin at 7:30PM each night from Riley Arena. **HockeyTV** is the place for fans who can't attend to tune in and watch.

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