



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

**Contact: Kevin Scott, GF Americans Public Relations Coordinator**

**Phone: (406) 403-8146**

**Levi Mese's hat trick helps Great Falls win season finale against Butte**

**By Kevin Scott**

<a href="#">Box Score</a>	<a href="#">Game Sheet</a>	<a href="#">League Scoreboard</a>	<a href="#">Americans Team Statistics</a>
---------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------------	---



BUTTE, Mont., February 29, 2020 — The 2019-20 North American 3 Hockey League's (NA3HL) eight Frontier Division teams concluded their regular season tonight as each team played their final game before the postseason begins.

The other five divisions in the NA3HL will have one more week of regular season action before they start their postseason run. Since the Frontier Division has the most teams (8) in a division, they will begin the playoffs next week in a Play-In Series (#3 vs. #6 and #4 vs. #5) with the top two teams receiving byes into the next round of playoffs (Divisional Semi-Finals) in two weeks.

The Great Falls Americans, #3 seed, have a 33-9-4-1 record, 71 pts.) after 47 regular season matchups will head to the 2020 NA3HL Frontier Division Play-In Series against the #6 team (Helena Bighorns, 17-26-2-2 record 38 pts.) starting their best-of-three series on Friday evening for Game 1 at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The other two teams squaring off in the Play-In series will be #4 Yellowstone (Cody, WY) Quake (19-25-2-1, 41 pts.) against their Wyoming rivals, the #5 Gillette Wild (20-27-0-0, 40 pts.). The winners of these two series will face the #1 Bozeman Ice Dogs (39-7-0-1, 79 pts.) and the #2 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (35-10-1-1, 72 pts.) the following week in the Frontier Divisional Semi-Finals.

The Butte Community Ice Center was the venue for Saturday's season finale between the #8 Butte Cobras (6-40-1, 13 pts.), who are mathematically eliminated from playoff contention, and the #3 Great Falls Americans. The Cobras are seeking their seventh win in 47 games in their second season in the North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL).

Coach Greg Sears' Great Falls Americans have taken a victory in the five previous meetings with the closest margin of victory was a 3-2 November home game win for Great Falls and their largest victory was a September contest won by the Americans, 9-2.

The Great Falls Americans won their season finale on the road by downing the last place Butte Cobras 7-3 behind the efforts of Levi Mese, who scored a hat trick (3 goals) and netminder Viktor Wennberg added 27 saves in the goal during Saturday's NA3HL season finale at the Butte Community Ice Center.

The first period featured no scoring, three minor penalties, and 24 total shots between the Americans and the Cobras.

After the first intermission, each team scored a goal during the first 1:52 of the middle stanza. Henry Chavez and Nick Silance found a way to find Logan Rachow who slipped the puck by Butte goaltender Danny Fielding to light up the lamp with 19:17 on the clock. Butte's Philip Winter racked up his fourth goal as Nick Bradshaw and Joe Erickson assisted on the Cobras first scoring drive to even the score. Great Falls then jumped out to a 3-1 advantage later in the period thanks to goals by Jack Olson and Levi Mese. Kellen Harris and Ivan Royo accrued the assists on Olson's score while Blake Nerney and Brandon Peterson helped Levi Mese gather the Americans third tally. The home team cut into the lead (3-2) before the second period expired. Canadian Ty Stovin made his 40<sup>th</sup> goal while Sidney, Montana native Kyler Garsjo added his 41<sup>st</sup> assist and Russell Park gathered his fifth. Great Falls outshout Butte 20-11 in the period and held onto a 34-21 lead after two periods.

Great Falls showed why they are a playoff bound team as they rattled off four consecutive scoring drives in the third period to take a commanding 7-2 lead during an eight-minute span. The Americans of head coach Greg Sears, was led by two goals by Levi Mese and one goal apiece by Brody Boyce and Henry Fusco, who waited until the last game to get his first goal of the season for the first year player out of White Bear Lake, Minnesota. Blake Nerney and Nick Silance earned their second assists of the game while Tommy Janes and Dylan Olson each earned their first assist of the night. The Cobras waited to score their third and final goal of their season with 13 seconds remaining. Kyler Garsjo finished his first season in Butte with 35 goals while Ty Stovin (47<sup>th</sup> assist) and Butte native Robin Bagley set up the final scoring drive for the Cobras 2019-20 season. Bagley ended the season with 39 assists.

During the final twenty minutes, the Americans created four goals on 27 shots. The Cobras offense gathered nine shots with one goal made. Great Falls offense sent 47 shots (of their 61) towards Butte netminder Danny Fielding after the first intermission. The Cobras concluded their 47<sup>th</sup> game with 30 shots.

The 2-hour and 40-minute contest saw the NA3HL officials call seven minor penalties with 14 minutes spent in the sin bin and no power play chances.

Viktor Wennberg, one of the premiere goaltenders in the NA3HL, amassed 27 saves and allowed three goals. Wennberg of Stockholm, Sweden, who finished the regular season with a 21-5-1-0 allowed 48 goals in 27 appearances and finished with a 0.936 save percentage and a GAA (Goals-Against-Average) of 1.93. Ohio goaltender Danny Fielding had 54 saves (and his record dropped to 5-15-1) with the loss in Butte's final contest.

During Saturday's action in the NA3HL regular season for the Frontier Division, the #1 Bozeman Ice Dogs (39-7-0-1) earned their 39<sup>th</sup> win of the 2019-20 season by preventing many scoring opportunities for the #2 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (35-9-1-1), cruising to a 5-2 win. The fifth-ranked Gillette Wild (19-27-0) edged the home team (#4 Yellowstone Quake, 19-24-2-1) 3-2 at the Riley Arena as Sheridan native Keedin Denny scored a last second goal to prevent an overtime period. Both squads will enter the postseason next week.

Next week, the Frontier Division Play-In (First Round) series begins as the No. 3 seed (Great Falls Americans) will entertain the #6 seed, Helena Bighorns and the #4 Yellowstone (WY) Quake will host the #5 Gillette (WY) Wild. It was announced earlier this week that the Great Falls Americans will host Game 1 on Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup> and if necessary, Game 3 at the Great Falls Ice Plex on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.

**NOTES:** The Great Falls had the best attendance of all eight Frontier Division teams as they averages 785 fans per game in their 23 games (22 games at the Great Falls Ice Plex and one home game at the NA3HL Showcase in Minnesota in December against the L/A Nordiques counted as a home date for Great Falls). Overall, Great Falls was fourth in the league behind the North Iowa Bulls, Granite City

Lumberjacks and the Rochester Grizzlies, both teams from Minnesota. The Helena Bighorns (seventh) and the Frontier's inaugural team, the Sheridan Hawks from Wyoming (eighth) were the only other two teams in the Frontier Division in the top ten. [Click here](#) to view the full season attendance from around the NA3HL.

The 2020 Frontier Division Play-In Series are set to start this week on March 5-8th in a best-of-3 format. A to-be-announced third game needed if one team doesn't win the first two games.

The two Play-In Series winners advance to the Frontier Division Semi-Finals in two weeks with the winning team playing in the Frontier Division Finals later in March and the winner of the Finals receives a berth in the six-team (divisional winners) [Fraser Cup National Tournament](#) taking place at [The Edge Ice Arena](#) in Bensenville, Illinois (March 25-29). Bensenville is located 22 miles from Chicago.

Below is the schedule for the Play-In First Round NA3HL series.

<b>2020 NA3HL Frontier Division Play-In Series Schedule</b>			
<b>Thursday, March 5, 2020</b>			
<b>Game</b>	<b>Matchup</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Game 1	#4 Yellowstone (WY) Quake @ #5 Gillette (WY) Wild	7:05PM	Spirit Hall Ice Arena, Gillette, WY

<b>2020 NA3HL Frontier Division Play-In Series Schedule</b>			
<b>Friday, March 6, 2020</b>			
<b>Game</b>	<b>Matchup</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Game 1	#6 Helena Bighorns vs. #3 Great Falls Americans	7:30PM	Great Falls Ice Plex, Great Falls, MT
Game 2	#5 Gillette (WY) Wild @ #4 Yellowstone (WY) Quake	7:30PM	Riley Arena, Cody, WY

<b>2020 NA3HL Frontier Division Play-In Series Schedule</b>			
<b>Saturday, March 7, 2020</b>			
<b>Game</b>	<b>Matchup</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
Game 2	#3 Great Falls Americans vs. #6 Helena Bighorns	7:05PM	Helena Ice Arena, Helena, MT
*Game 3	#5 Gillette (WY) Wild @ #4 Yellowstone (WY) Quake	7:30PM	Riley Arena, Cody, WY

<b>2020 NA3HL Frontier Division Play-In Series Schedule</b>			
<b>Sunday, March 8, 2020</b>			
<b>Game</b>	<b>Matchup</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Location</b>
*Game 3	#6 Helena Bighorns vs. #3 Great Falls Americans	5:30PM	Great Falls Ice Plex, Great Falls, MT
*= If Necessary			

**NEXT CONTEST:** The third-seed Great Falls Americans will host Game 1 and (if necessary) Game 3 in the best-of-three Frontier Division Play-In Series against the #6 Helena Bighorns. The first game will be at Great Falls Americans Hockey 417 Central Avenue, Suite #303, Great Falls, MT 59401

the Great Falls Ice Plex on Friday, March 6 with a 7:30PM start. Great Falls will travel to Helena, Montana for Game 2 with the puck set to drop at 7:05PM from the Helena Ice Arena. A third and decisive if-necessary game will be back in Great Falls on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup> with a start time of 5:30PM. All of the playoff action can be seen on the NA3HL's streaming service, [HockeyTV](#). To view the 2020 Playoff format and the schedule for the 2020 Fraser Cup Championship tournament, please [click here](#).

**CONTACT:**

**Greg Sears**  
Great Falls Americans Head Coach/General Manager  
Cell Phone: 715-566-2811  
Email: [gsears@greatfallsamericans.com](mailto:gsears@greatfallsamericans.com)

Visit our website: <http://www.gfamericans.com>  
Join Us on Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/greatfalls.americanshockey>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/gfamericans>

North American 3 Hockey League: <http://www.na3hl.com/>

