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Great Falls Americans Press Release
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Doyle scores game-winning shootout goal in 5-4 win over Gillette; GF remains unbeaten

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., October 17, 2020 — In three weeks of action on the ice, the Great Falls Americans (6-0-0-0) have played four of the seven other squads (Butte Cobras, Helena Bighorns, Bozeman Ice Dogs and the Gillette Wild) in the Frontier Division of the North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL). In the coming months, they will also play against the Missoula Junior Bruins, Sheridan (WY) Hawks and the Yellowstone (Cody, WY) Quake.

During Friday's performance, the #1 Great Falls Americans faced the #4 Gillette (WY) Wild (3-2-0-1) in their first head-to-head encounter of the 2020-21 season. The Americans scored once in each of the three regulation periods to blank the visiting Wyoming team, 3-0 behind goals by Micah Serino, Cole Komarek, and Alex Jackson and dominating play in the net from Trever Mellen, who stopped all 35 shots.

Great Falls was trying for their sixth consecutive victory in as many games on Saturday evening in a rematch with the Wild.

The Gillette Wild nearly pulled off an upset but the Great Falls Americans rallied for a 5-4 win in a shootout in a NA3HL junior hockey contest that was much different in scoring than Friday's showdown. The high-scoring affair saw four lead changes before the teams forced an overtime that was ultimately decided by a shootout. Great Falls defenseman Connor Doyle was the only player to accrue a goal in the shootout to ensure Great Falls remained unbeaten.

Great Falls started right where they left off from the night before. Brody Savoie's pass to Cole Komarek put the home team ahead 1-0. Komarek's fourth goal came 68 seconds into the opening stanza. Gillette was able to find the back of the net for their first score in two nights. Wyoming native Austin Newson shot went by Americans netminder Trever Mellen to even the score with help from Declan Young. The Americans found themselves trailing for the first time two minutes later as Declan Young, a returning forward from the 2019-20 season, lit up the lamp. Will Blake earned the assist on the go-ahead scoring drive. Blake Nerney's registered his first goal off the stick of Henry Chavez to put in the equalizer with just

under six minutes left in the first. Jeremiah Serino, one of three brothers on the roster, netted his first goal with help from Micah Serino before the first intermission to give the Americans the lead back. Each squad was whistled for two penalties apiece during the first twenty minutes.

Declan Young was the lone scorer of the middle period for either team. Young's tenth overall goal came with 5:18 remaining in the game to tie the contest at 3-3 before the second intermission. Nathan Fanning and Auston Newson garnered the assists on Gillette's third scoring drive while Great Falls was down a man. The host team created 24 of the 44 total shots after two periods.

The Americans and Wild traded goals during the first 16 minutes of the third period. Great Falls struck first when Tyler Loring and Tommy Janes found Nick Jensen for his first goal in a Great Falls uniform midway through the frame. The 4-3 advantage was short-lived as Gillette's Carter Merritt secured the game-tying goal with assistance from Zackary Bender minutes after the home team scored. Both squads skated the final seven minutes to force a five-minute overtime.

After the five-minute extra period went scoreless, the game was decided by a shootout that featured six players. Connor Doyle provided the only goal in the one-on-one shootout for Great Falls. Doyle's teammates Alex Jackson and Henry Chavez came up empty as did Gillette's Declan Young, Tristan Baker and Mitchell Vekich.

Despite the setback, the Wild attempted three more shots (35-32) than the Americans after the game ended.

The fans in attendance witnessed 11 infractions (six for Great Falls) in regulation. Gillette's only score by Declan Young in the second period was the only power play opportunity that was effective. Gillette went 1-for-8 while Great Falls squandered their seven chances while the Wild were in the penalty box.

Trever Mellen, ranked 15th in the 31-team league with a 1.92 GAA (Goals Against Average) and a 0.937 save percentage, added 17 more saves for a total of 164 on the season. He has started and picked up the win during each of the first six games of the season. Luc Haggitt (1-0-0-1), who calls Alabama home, accumulated 21 saves, and suffered his first shootout loss (SOL) after picking up one win earlier in October in a 3-1 decision over the Helena Bighorns.

NEXT CONTEST: The Missoula Junior Bruins will be the opponent next weekend. Great Falls will play host to the Bruins on Sunday, October 25th for a 5:00PM meeting and the same two teams will battle it out on Monday afternoon (October 26th) for a 12:00PM matchup at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The games will be streamed live on [HockeyTV](#).

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