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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Americans win high-scoring affair against Badlands, 7-6

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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RAPID CITY, SD., December 4, 2021 — One thing you can say about the #4 Great Falls Americans and the newest member of the NA3HL's Frontier Division, the #6 Badlands (SD) Sabres is that the outcome has been close for most of their matchups.

In their four meetings, Great Falls has won three out of four (including Saturday's) games. Except for last week's 7-3 win by Great Falls, the rest of the outcomes have been by one or two goals. Last Saturday's (Nov. 27th) 7-3 win was tight until the third period when the Americans exploded for five third periods goals ([see game story](#)). On November 26th in Great Falls, the Americans and Badlands each traded goals before the Sabres scored twice and won 4-2 ([see game story](#)). In the December 3rd meeting in South Dakota, Great Falls started with a three-goal lead and won 4-2 in their first game in Rapid City, South Dakota ([see game story](#)).

Forwards Tyler Sunagel and Micah Serino both scored two goals as the Great Falls Americans led 5-2 after two periods of play and withstood a comeback by the Badlands (SD) Sabres to win, 7-6 on Saturday night to cap their weekend series with the NA3HL's newest team.

After Carter Johnson struck first in the opening stanza to give the Sabres the early advantage, Tyler Sunagel, Tae Evans, and Silas Hughes all capped the first twenty minutes with scores of their own for the Montana team. Zach Vockler and Kael Delzer assisted on the Badlands score while six different Great Falls players helped guide the three-goal first period including Silas Hughes, AJ Benit, Jackson Henningsgard, Noel Rahn, Micah Serino and Henry Fusco. The four goal first period saw a total of 30 shots-on-goal being taken between these young hockey squads.

Keagon Holloway needed 5:45 of the middle period to cut into the Sabres deficit (3-2) as Carter Merritt and Zach Vockler set up the second goal by the host team. Halfway through the period, Great Falls' Micah Serino and Thomas Gazich scored 15 seconds apart to give the Americans a comfortable 5-2 advantage as both teams skated away the remaining nine minutes without lighting up the lamp. Henningsgard earned his second of three total assists on the night during the middle frame and Garrett

Weisenburger and Daniel Crutcher provided their only assists of the game. Bryson Fletcher, who rejoined the team from the 2019-20 and 2020-21 teams on November 30, picked up right where he left off by gathering his first (of two) assist(s) of the 2021-22 season on the Gazich score in his third game back. A twenty-three-shot performance gave Great Falls a total of 41 shots before the second intermission. Badlands added another twelve to their total of 24.

The home team made tried to make a comeback attempt by scoring the first two third period goals during the first 97 seconds. Hunter Fischbach (7 goals on the season) and Kael Delzer (11 goals) helped decrease the Americans lead to 5-4. Derrick Brown and Levi Knight helped with Fischbach's score 62 seconds into the period while Hunter Fischbach and Denim Young set up the Sabres fourth scoring drive. Great Falls took 65 seconds after the scoring by South Dakota to give Micah Serino his second goal of the night (17th overall) as Jackson Henningsgard tallied his third assist and Noel Rahn added his second in Great Falls' fourth game in a week against the Sabres. Tyler Sunagel would end the scoring for the Americans 61 seconds after Serino buried the puck in the net with his slapshot that added another assist by Bryson Fletcher and Henry Fusco. Sunagel's tenth goal was made possible as the Sabres were in the penalty box. Badlands made the final ten minutes interesting as Carter Johnson and Derrick Brown tried to rally their team to victory (but fell short) with their sixth and seventh goals of the year, respectively. Keagon Holloway, Cole Sykes, Carter Merritt, and Seth Stock all received credit with the assists.

In the end, Great Falls took 16 more shots than Badlands (54-38) despite both teams combining for 13 goals. Great Falls accrued 23 in the second stanza alone.

Great Falls scored on two of their six power play chances that occurred with the Sabres minus a player on the ice. Micah Serino's first of two goals came via the power play as did Tyler Sunagel's final scoring drive in the third. Great Falls committed just three minor penalties while Badlands collected all six of their infractions during the first two frames including four minors, and a 25-minute game misconduct as the second period concluded. South Dakota's junior hockey team went 0-for-2 on the power play.

Two goals apiece were scored by Tyler Sunagel and Micah Serino and Jackson Henningsgard produced three assists for the winning side. Carter Johnson was one goal short of a hat trick (2 goals) while four players each scored two points (1 goal, 1 assist) including Keagon Holloway, Hunter Fischbach, Kael Delzer and Derrick Brown.

Great Falls' Wyatt Olsonawski put another win on his resume by stopping 32 of the 38 shots sent his way by the Sabres offense. His record improves to 3-1-0-0 after five appearances. After going 1-1 in his previous two games against the Americans, Maxim Currie is now 1-2-0-0 against the third place Americans. Currie, who is in his first season with Badlands after suiting up for the Missoula Junior Bruins last season, took his seventh loss (7-6-1-0) while also making 47 saves.

Great Falls and Badlands will tangle twice more in January as the Sabres will challenge the Americans at the Great Falls Ice Plex on January 21st and 22nd in their final two regular season games against each other.

NOTES: The Great Falls Americans (29 pts.) won their fourth straight game tonight and third in the month of December but remain in fourth place as the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs (30 pts.) took charge and easily defeated the #8 Sheridan Hawks, 7-3 on Saturday evening in Sheridan, Wyoming ([see box score](#)).

In this weekend's Battle of the NA3HL's Frontier Division Unbeatens, the top-ranked Helena Bighorns (23-0-0-0) came up with two home victories against the second place Gillette (WY) Wild (20-2-0-0) by

winning 4-2 on Friday ([see box score](#)) and Saturday's 2-1 nail-biting win ([see box score](#)). [Click here](#) for the updated NA3HL standings.

NEXT CONTEST: The Americans will continue their second of three weeks on the road with a pair of games in Gillette, Wyoming against the #2 Wild. The action from the Spirit Hall Ice Arena on Friday (December 10th) and Saturday (December 11) will begin at 7:05PM (MST). [HockeyTV](#) will provide the coverage for both nights. The Wild are coming off two losses to the Helena Bighorns as both squads were previously unbeaten.

Before the Christmas break, the Americans will play three games (that count in the NA3HL standings) at the 2021 NA3HL Showcase Tournament on December 20-22, 2021, at the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota. [Click here](#) to see the NA3HL's official press release and who the Americans will be matching up against in the prestigious tournament that will see many scouts in attendance.

Great Falls' next home appearance will be on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day where the Butte Cobras will make the 155-mile one-way trip to Great Falls to play the Americans. Both games (December 31-January 1) will begin at 7:30PM (MST) from the Great Falls Ice Plex.

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