



Great Falls American Matthew Donley (24) fights for control of the puck with Billings Bull Joey Ullmann (7), teammate Connor Barta (29) and Bull Christopher Timm (11) during Friday night's game at the Great Falls IcePlex. TRIBUNE PHOTO/JOSHUA KODIS

## Americans victorious

By Tribune Staff

"They earned every single bit of it."

The words of Great Falls Americans head coach Stirling Wright were never more appropriate for the moment, as the Americans captured their first win in the American West Hockey League with a 4-3 victory over the Billings Bulls Friday night in front of 847 fans at the Great Falls IcePlex.

It was the Americans' first win in 25 tries this season. The team started as the youngest team in the

league, with just one player over the age of 18 and none over 20, before Americans owner Jim Keough brought in Wright to redraft and recruit.

The difference between today's team and the opening day squad is like night and day.

"We have a new look and a new feel of things," Wright said. "We hope to keep doing what we're doing, and just keep bringing our game for 60 minutes each time."

Hagen Nemzek, Edgars Ozolins, Donovan Mattfeldt and Trent Carter tallied the goals that gave the Ameri-

cans their first two points in the AWWHL standings. Carter's power play goal off assists for Nemzek and Zach Winner came at 12:42 of the second, ending a string of four unanswered goals by Great Falls.

Dylan Anderson led the locals with two assists, aiding the cause on Nemzek's and Ozolins' scores.

Erik Powell stopped 57 of the 60 shots he faced in goal. The final Billings goal came with two minutes left after the Bulls pulled their goalie to get an extra skater on the ice.

The Americans play the Gillette Wild today and Sunday in Wyoming.



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