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Great Falls Americans Press Release
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Silas Hughes' overtime goal helps Great Falls edge Butte, 4-3

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., October 7, 2022 — One month of NA3HL junior hockey is in the books!

After four weeks of action on the ice, the young #4 Great Falls Americans (3-4-0-0) are trying to find their rhythm through a tough Frontier Division early in the season. One of Great Falls' victories came during the season opener on September 10th against tonight's opponent, the #3 Butte Cobras (4-3-1-0) ([game story](#)) while

Great Falls also took a 6-1 decision over one of their two contests against the #7 Yellowstone Quake (2-4-0-0).

The Americans, ranked #4 in the eight-team Frontier Division after seven games, played their first contest away from the Great Falls Ice Plex on Saturday (October 1st) after starting the season with five consecutive home dates. The visitors struggled on offense after trailing 6-2 after two periods at the Butte Community Ice Center and found themselves with a 9-3 setback after the third period concluded ([game story](#)). William Fallman, a new addition to the squad this season, scored two goals and dished out one assist in his second contest with the Americans, which led to the native of Sweden to be named as an Honorable Mention recipient for Frontier Division Stars of the Week that ended on October 2nd ([see press release](#)). The Butte duo of Nick Bradshaw and Luke Schleusner each recorded a hat trick (3 goals) in their fourth win in seven games.

Great Falls was trying to elevate their record against Butte to 2-1 on Friday night. Would they be able to deliver on their game plan?

Silas Hughes scored two goals including the game-winning tally 28 seconds into overtime to give the Great Falls Americans their fourth victory of the season during Friday's NA3HL junior hockey action at the Great Falls Ice Plex against the visiting Butte Cobras. The 4-3 win saw three ties.

Both teams came into the Great Falls Americans home arena ready to play. Great Falls opened the scoring drive first as Great Falls native Russ Rasmussen found the back of the net for the first time this season 1:50 into the frame. Newcomers Wes Weisenburger and Aidan McCormick helped the Americans take the early lead. Butte's Luke Schleusner answered with his seventh goal of the season and evened the score for the Cobras minutes later. Tyler Tosch and Nick Bradshaw made the assists on the Cobras first strike of the night. Each team failed to score off their one power play opportunity and they combined for 26 shots.

Cobras defenseman Luke Schleusner scored his first goal of the game and eighth overall while the Americans were in the sin bin midway through the middle stanza. Teammates Cade Wessman and Nick Bradshaw helped the visitors take their first lead of the contest 2-1 with their assistance. Butte's lead would last two minutes before the host team gathered their second goal. Tyler Sunagel provided the assist on Silas Hughes' second scoring drive of the season. Despite attempting 32 shots-on-goal, the Americans and Cobras successfully converted one goal apiece after the first intermission.

Butte took their second lead of the contest early in the final frame when Micah Williamson got the puck by Americans netminder Josh Koziol with 12:17 remaining. Tamer Billman accrued his sixth assist and former Great Falls American forward Patrick Crooks picked up his fifth helper with Great Falls on the penalty kill. Great Falls answered back with a goal by William Fallman off the stick of Alex Leaf for the third tie with six minutes left. Jace Thompson made the secondary assist. Fallman's scoring drive came ensured the game would be decided with an extra five-minute overtime as both squads skated out the final minutes. Butte allowed the game-tying score while they were down a man (penalty). Great Falls outshot Butte 16-12.

A total of 28 seconds ran off the five-minute extra period before Americans standout Silas Hughes ended the game with his game-winning shot set up by William Fallman. Hughes collected his third score of the season.

Butte provided more shots (45-42) than Great Falls throughout the penalty-filled contest.

Things got heated between both Frontier clubs culminating in the third period that saw each team with an ejection for fighting. Both teams combined for 16 penalties with 74 minutes spent off the ice. The Cobras capitalized on two of their four power play chances while the Americans went 1-for-3.

In addition to Silas Hughes' two goals, William Fallman also scored and dished out one assist in the victory. Luke Schleusner from Butte had two tallies before his ejection for fighting occurred in the third period.

The winning goaltender was Josh Koziol of Great Falls. The Minnesota netminder redirected 42 shots in 60 minutes of time on the ice as he improved his record to 2-3-0-0. Nikolai Wallery, a third-year member of the Butte Cobras, amassed 38 saves in his first live action in the net.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: In the upset of the night, the #5 Bozeman Ice Dogs (3-5-0-0) needed just one second period goal to claim the 1-0 victory over the top-seeded Helena Bighorns (8-1-0-0) inside Bozeman's Haynes Pavilion. Owen House lone scored helped the home team defeat the Bighorns ([box score](#)).

The eighth-ranked Sheridan (WY) Hawks (2-4-1-0) erupted for seven goals and downed the #5 Badlands Sabres (2-5-0-0) 7-2 in Rapid City, South Dakota on Saturday. The minor upset was led by Makhai

Sparks (2 goals, 3 assists), Parker Norling (1 goal, 4 assists) and Jack Wood's 27 saves in the net for the Hawks. Meanwhile Mason Martin and Hunter Walla provided the Sabres with their two goals ([box score](#)).

The #2 Gillette Wild ran their record to 5-1-0-1 with a convincing 8-3 road win over the #7 Yellowstone Quake (2-5-0-0) at the Riley Arena in Cody, Wyoming. Gillette's Anthony Foster led both team with one goal and two assists. Cole Wheaton won for the second time this year by swatting away 33 shots ([box score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: The Americans and Cobras will battle in the Mining City on Saturday evening when both teams head back to Butte, Montana for their fourth head-to-head matchup of the 2022-23 campaign. The action on October 8th begins with the puck dropping at 7:30PM (MST) live on [HockeyTV](#).

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