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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Three-goal deficit too much for the Americans to overcome in 5-3 loss to the Hawks

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., November 25, 2022 — The #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (12-8-1-0) came to town on Friday after they hosted the #5 Great Falls Americans (9-11-0-0) in Sheridan, Wyoming. How did the Americans fare against one of their three Wyoming opponents?

The Americans managed to score just two goals each night in a pair of setbacks. Sheridan forward Ryan McKenna totaled two goals in a 3-2 win on November 11th that saw all the scoring (five goals) occur after the first intermission. Tie Schumacher and Josh Humphreys earned two assists apiece for coach Chad Bailey's squad. Alex Leaf buried a goal in the second and third periods, but the Americans rally came up short ([game story](#)).

In the second game of their two-game series, Makhai Sparks had two goals and Ryan McKenna and McCaffrey Billings also scored to lead the Hawks to a 4-2 decision over Great Falls. Bo Buckley had 31 saves for the winning team. The Americans received scores from Jace Thompson, and Garrett Weisenburger and William Fallman gathered the assists before the second intermission. Josh Koziol finished with 41 saves a night after collecting 55 saves as he went 0-2 in the weekend series ([game story](#)).

Can the Americans turn the table with their home crowd cheering them on at the Great Falls Ice Plex and stop their 1-4 November losing streak?

Forward Ryan McKenna scored two goals and assisted on one scoring play and goaltender Patric Loeffler prevented 42 of the 45 shots from getting in the net as the Sheridan Hawks down the Great Falls Americans, 5-3 in front of 523 spectators taking in the post-Thanksgiving NA3HL junior hockey contest at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Tyler Sunagel scored two points (1 goal, 1 assist) despite the Americans eleventh defeat of the season.

Sheridan scored two goals during the first eleven minutes of the contest to put the Hawks ahead 2-0. Tie Schumacher and McCaffrey Billings netted goals for Wyoming. Schumacher's goal came six minutes into the stanza while the Americans were in the sin bin. Ryan McKenna, Caleb Murray, Teejay Torgrimson, and Bode Dunham provided the first period assists. Tyler Sunagel cut the deficit in half for the Americans with 3:30 remaining. Jace Thompson and Phil Harrell assisted on the power play score.

The Hawks found the back of the net for the first of two scoring drives of the second period. Ryan McKenna's 16th goal gave the visiting team a two-goal advantage with one period to go. Tie Schumacher and Joseph Epplin made the assists for the 3-1 lead. Teejay Torgrimson, who had one assist in the opening frame, scored his eighth goal with 23 seconds remaining off a pass from Makhai Sparks on the short-handed scoring drive. The Hawks created 13 shots in each of the first and two periods while Great Falls made 12 of the 22 shots-on-goal in the middle period.

Aaron Leaf, the brother of Americans defenseman Alex Leaf, successfully scored off a pass by Noah Osiowy and William Fallman early in the third period as the home team trailed 4-2. Osiowy's made his first assist of the season and William Fallman collected his 13th assist and now leads Great Falls with 20 points. A fifth goal by Ben Cremers pulled the Americans within one goal (4-3) with Tyler Sunagel and Alex Leaf creating the assists as 3:09 showed on the clock. Ryan McKenna ensured the Hawks would get a win at the Great Falls Ice Plex by burying his 17th scoring drive with under one minute left. Josh Humphreys chipped in his first assist of the night and twelfth overall in the empty net. Great Falls' offensive attack attempted twice as many shots (23-11) than Sheridan after the second intermission.

Despite the two-goal setback, Great Falls led in the shots-on-goal category with 45. Sheridan made 11 of the 37 shots after the second intermission.

All seven infractions occurred before the second intermission. Great Falls recorded three minors and went 1-for-2 on the power play. Tyler Sunagel's first goal of the first period came while the Hawks defenders were down a man. Sheridan's four infractions resulted in 16 minutes of penalty time, and they also went 1-for-2.

Patric Loeffler (5-2-0-0) of Rogers, Minnesota got the start and the win for the Hawks by adding 42 saves to his junior hockey career in his third season with the Wyoming NA3HL team. Josh Koziol, who swatted away 32 shots, saw his record in the net for Great Falls fall to 6-9-0-0 in 15 contests.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: #6 Yellowstone Quake's (7-11-2-1) Nick Cofer, who spent the previous two seasons with the Helena Bighorns, scored two goals including the game-winning goal for the Quake in the final 33 seconds of the game to prevent an overtime against the #8 Badlands (SD) Sabres (5-13-2-1) during Friday's junior hockey action at Riley Arena in Cody, Wyoming. Steven Kelley picked up his first win in his third game (1-1-1-0) for the Quake by accumulating 34 saves. Carter Johnson (1 goal, 1 assist) and Hunter Walla had one in the Sabres road loss. Zach Broxterman (1-11-1-1) could not find a way to break his loss in the net for Badlands as he finished with 43 saves ([box score](#)).

The Gillette (WY) Wild, who lead the Frontier Division standings with an 18-1-0-2 record, cruised to a seven-goal shutout road win over the #7 Bozeman Ice Dogs (6-14-0-1) on Saturday night inside Haynes Pavilion, home of the Ice Dogs. Saizha Norwegian led all scorers with three points (1 goal, 3 assists) while Adam Severson acquired one goal and dished out two assists. Anthony Foster had two first period goals in the easy victory for the Wild. Jake Turek (7-0-0-1) won the battle in the net by denying all 18

shots by Bozeman's offense. Bozeman's Sean Smer (1-3-0-1) fell for the fourth time this season and tallied 37 saves ([box score](#)).

The #2 Helena Bighorns (15-4-1-1) and the #4 Butte Cobras (10-9-1-0) had the night off but both teams will face each other on Saturday, November 26th in Butte, Montana for a 7:30PM (MST) start.

NEXT CONTEST: The Sheridan Hawks will stay in Great Falls and play the Great Falls Americans on Saturday, November 26th with the game set to begin at 7:30PM (MST) live at the Great Falls Ice Plex on [HockeyTV](#).

Great Falls will be on a four-week road trip in the month of December with games at the Badlands Sabres (Rapid City, South Dakota), the Sheridan Hawks (Sheridan, Wyoming) and will also participate in the 2022 NA3HL Showcase (December 19-21) at the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota with their opponents to be announced on December 1st. The Americans will return to home ice for a two-game series against their closest rivals, the Helena Bighorns on December 30 and 31st.

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