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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Great Falls escapes with 3-2 win; avoids back-to back losses against Sheridan

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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SHERIDAN, Wyo., December 10, 2022 — The #5 Great Falls Americans (11-13-1-0) have encountered a speed bump when it comes to finding a way to defeat the #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (15-10-1-0) this season.

Great Falls is 0-4-1 against Wyoming with the one overtime loss occurring during Friday's showdown with the Hawks. Sheridan scored three unanswered goals in the first period, but Great Falls found a way to even the score by scoring two in the second and one early in third. Both teams traded goals to end the regulation period before an overtime was necessary. Sheridan defenseman Wyatt Noble needed 38 seconds of the extra stanza to help the home team top the Americans, 5-4 ([game story](#)).

The Americans were looking to rebound and pick up their third road win (2-5-1-0) of the season on Saturday in the last regular season meeting between these two NA3HL junior hockey squads.

Silas Hughes, Jace Thompson and Baden Powell each scored once as the #5 Great Falls Americans avoided the weekend sweep by the #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks by escaping with a 3-2 victory on Saturday in Sheridan, Wyoming. Sheridan had defeated Great Falls 5-4 in overtime on Friday evening.

Sheridan's Caleb Murray and Great Falls' Silas Hughes produced the only tallies before the first intermission. Murray, hailing from San Diego, California, opened the scoring for both teams when he successfully put the puck in the net off a pass from Joseph Epplin with 11:13 on the clock. Later in the stanza, Dawson Bunch and Americans assist leader, Alex Leaf set up the scoring drive for Silas Hughes to tie the game before the break. Great Falls and Sheridan collected a total of 29 shots.

The Americans took their first lead of the game 8:31 into the middle period. Great Falls forward Jace Thompson garnered his ninth goal of the season with assists going to William Fallman and Alex Leaf that

proved to be the only score of the period for both clubs. Great Falls tacked on 15 more shots in the second and Sheridan added nine.

Danny Shelden scored his second goal of the weekend and eighth overall for the Hawks 2:37 into the final period to even the contest. The Americans broke the tie with two minutes left as Baden Powell recorded his fourth goal with helpers from Jace Thompson and Noah Wilk to deny a possible overtime for the second straight night.

The Americans took 25 of their 36 shots before the second intermission. Sheridan's offense accumulated half (27) of their 55 total shots after the second period.

Both Frontier Division teams compiled nine minor infractions that resulted in 18 minutes of penalty time. The outcome could have been different as seven power play chances went unanswered.

Josh Koziol won for the eighth time in 18 appearances for the visitors. The Elk River, Minnesota netminder played great allowing one goal in the first and third periods to finished with 53 saves. Third year goaltender Patric Loeffler, who took his fourth loss in ten games (5-4-0-0), completed his night with 33 saves.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: The Gillette (WY) Wild (22-2-0-2), sitting in the top spot in the Frontier Division, narrowly avoided an overtime against the seven-seeded Yellowstone (WY) Quake (8-14-3-1) when the Wild scored with 88 seconds left to pull out a 2-1 victory in a low scoring affair by both Wyoming clubs. Gillette's Ryan Hipsag scored in the first period, Zac Orwig evened the score in the middle stanza for Yellowstone and Jace Johnson of the Wild capitalized on a power play with under two minutes remaining to help his team to their 22nd victory of the season. Dominic Hite stopped 19 of the 20 shots that the Quake's offense provided to earn the victory. Hites counterpart, John Hughes, finished with 45 saves ([box score](#)).

The #4 Butte Cobras (13-11-1-0) got revenge on the #2 Helena Bighorns (18-6-1-1) at the Helena Ice Arena on Saturday when they scored three consecutive goals in the third period to hang on for a 5-4 win in front of 1,670 fans. Luke Schleusner, Caelin Chinery, Patrick Crooks, Nick Bradshaw, and Tyler Tosch all found the back of the net for the visiting Cobras. A 47-save performance gave Butte netminder Caleb Cross another victory. The four goals for the Bighorns came from Cade Holland, Derek Russell, Joe Feamster and Tyler Bloom. Despite the loss, Helena created 51 shots and limited the Cobras to 35 ([box score](#)).

The #8 Bozeman Ice Dogs (8-17-0-1) found themselves on the winning side on Saturday night after falling to the #7 Badlands (SD) Sabres (7-15-2-2), 4-3 the night before. Dominik Hauer, Owen House and Bode Shepardson scored for Bozeman as they earned a 3-0 shutout victory over South Dakota. The Sabres failed to get any of their 40 shots-on-goal from getting between the pipes. Bozeman's winning goaltender Cam Milewski had 40 saves and Zach Broxterman amassed 41 saves in loss ([box score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls and Sheridan and the rest of the 32 other NA3HL squads will be in Blaine, Minnesota for the [2022 NA3HL Showcase](#) taking place on December 18-20 (Sunday – Tuesday). The Americans will challenge the Wausau (WI) Cyclones (Central Division) at 5:45PM (MST) on December 18th, followed by a meeting with the West Division's New Ulm (MN) Steel at 2:15PM (MST) on December 19th and they will play the South Division's El Paso (TX) Rhinos at 11:00AM (MST) on December 20th to finish out the tournament that features many college and pro scouts in attendance.

The Hawks open with the Mason City (IA) Toros (6:15PM MST, December 18), followed by a meeting with the Long Beach (NY) Sharks (11:45AM MST, December 19) and rounding out the tournament with a date with the New Mexico Ice Wolves (11:00AM MST December 20).

[HockeyTV](#) will stream all the games live from the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota.

Following the Showcase Tournament, Great Falls will return to Frontier Division play after the Christmas break when they host the #2 Helena Bighorns for a pair of games on Friday and Saturday, December 30-31, 2022, from the Great Falls Ice Plex starting at 7:30PM (MST).

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