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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Great Falls defeats Wausau 3-2 in opening day at the 2022 NA3HL Showcase

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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BLAINE, Minn., December 18, 2022 — The 2022-23 Great Falls Americans, who are in their ninth season as members of the North American 3 Hockey League's (NA3HL) Frontier Division, have eleven wins in 25 games (11-13-1-0, 23 pts.) as they enter the [2022 NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#). Currently, Great Falls is sitting in fifth place in the Frontier behind the Gillette (WY) Wild (22-2-1-2, 47 pts.), Helena Bighorns (18-7-1-1, 38 pts.), Sheridan (WY) Hawks (16-10-1-0, 33 pts.) and the Butte Cobras (14-11-1-0, 29 pts.).

The Americans first opponent in the three-day NA3HL Showcase is the Wausau Cyclones (5-17-3-0), who are based out of Wausau, Wisconsin (98 miles from Green Bay, Wisconsin). The tournament began on Sunday, December 18th and continues through Tuesday, December 20th at the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota. Wausau, one of six members of the NA3HL's Central Division, is in fifth place. The Rochester (MN) Grizzlies are the top team in the Central (Division) with a 20-6-0-1 record. The Cyclones started out with four victories during the first 12 games of the season (4-5-3) and have since gone 1-11-0-0 in November and December. Great Falls and Wausau have never met on the ice before Sunday's game.

Fifth year Great Falls Americans Head Coach and General Manager, Greg Sears, returned ten players from the 2021-22 season and is led this year by newcomers William Fallman and Alex Leaf, who leads the team in points with 23 apiece. Leaf is the assist leader with 20 after 26 contests, and forward Jace Thompson has a team-high nine goals. Josh Koziol leads the Great Falls goaltenders with an 9-10-0-0 record in 19 appearances. The Elk River, Minnesota goalie has 817 saves and a 3.25 Goals-Against-Average (GAA).

Nathan Oystriick, who is in his first year as the Cyclones mentor and a former NHL player, has relied on forwards and Missouri native Zac Maupin, who is the assist leader with 14 and Gage Vierzba, who leads

the team in points (21) and goals (10). Ryan Burke (2-3-2-0) and Mitch Misceovich (3-11-1-0) lead the goaltender position for the Cyclones and have over 760 saves combined.

The NA3HL Showcase, a yearly staple held in December in Minnesota, highlights each of the 34 NA3HL teams across five divisions and multiple states. The three-day affair has every team playing three games (against teams not in their own division) that count in the overall standings and features many college and professional scouts in attendance. The Americans are designated as the visiting team in each of their three contests including Sunday's game (Wausau Cyclones), Monday's afternoon contest against the New Ulm (MN) Steel and Tuesday morning's battle with the El Paso (TX) Rhinos.



The Great Falls Americans (12-13-1-0) took a 2-1 lead entering the third period and eventually defeated the Wausau (WI) Cyclones (5-17-3-0), 3-2 to finish off the first day of the 2022 NA3HL Showcase Tournament in Blaine, Minnesota on Sunday evening. Ben Cremers scored the third goal to ensure the Americans victory in the final minute of the contest.

The scoreless first period saw just two minor penalties on Wausau and 21 shots taken between both NA3HL clubs. The Cyclones created 15 of the 21 shots after twenty minutes of action.

Great Falls' Aidan McCormick and Silas Hughes scored their second and eighth goals of the season, respectively during a 1:51 span midway through the second period to give the Americans the 2-0 advantage. Russ Rasmussen assisted on McCormick's score while Dawson Bunch set up Hughes' scoring drive. Before the period concluded, the Cyclones forward Kalob Paquin netted his second goal of the year off the stick of Evan Drus to cut the deficit for the Wisconsin team (2-1). Just 14 combined shots were attempted between the two clubs.

Great Falls maintained a one goal lead (2-1) until the final 37 seconds of the third when Americans forward Ben Cremers lit up the lamp thanks to a rare assist by goaltender Josh Koziol. The 3-1 lead would become 3-2 as the Cyclones defenseman Easton Plachetka's slapshot sailed over Josh Koziol for the second goal with five seconds remaining but the comeback was too little too late.

The final shots-on-goal was lopsided as the Americans attempted just six shots in each period to end the night with 18. Wausau combined for 35 in the first and third frames for a total of 43.

Great Falls, the visiting team on the scoreboard, had two minors (penalties) in the second and third periods that resulted in eight minutes of penalty time. The Cyclones concluded their first-ever meeting with Great Falls with seven minor penalties. No power play opportunities came in this victory for the Americans.

Josh Koziol, who has been in the net often this season for the Americans, made 41 saves and allowed two goals for his ninth win in 19 contests. His counterpart, Mitch Misceovich, swatted away 15 of the 18 shots produced by Great Falls' offense in the loss (3-11-1-0).

[Click here](#) for more information about the tournament that will feature many college and junior scouts in attendance or see the league press release and full results by [clicking here](#).

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE AT NA3HL SHOWCASE: Here are the following daily game recaps from the Frontier Division teams during Day 1 action (Sunday) at the 2022 NA3HL Showcase.

The Butte Cobras (14-11-1-0, 4th in Frontier) scored three goals in the second period to top the Louisiana Drillers (18-11-0-0, 2nd in South Division), 3-2 during the first day of the Showcase tournament in Blaine, Minnesota. Cade Wessman, Tyler Tosch, and Anthony Johnson all scored for Butte in the second period. Louisiana's Thomas Mouglin scored the first goal two minutes into the second period before a trio of Cobra players got in the scoring column. Micah Maldonado tacked on the lone third period score, but the Drillers comeback came up short. Butte's Joshua Horacek picked up his second win in four games as the netminder for the Montana team. John Moriarty suffered his seventh loss (15-7-0-0) ([box score](#)).

The Atlanta (GA) Capitals (15-12-2-0, 5th in South Division) defeated the Yellowstone (WY) Quake (8-15-3-1, 6th in Frontier) 4-3. The Quake and the Capitals were tied 3-3 after two periods of play before Atlanta had the final say with a single scoring drive in the third frame to deny Yellowstone their ninth victory. Anthony O'Neal scored half (two goals) of the Capital's goals in the second period. Austin Micale and Nick Jameus also made goals for the Georgia NA3HL team. Nick Cofer, P.J. Comose and Cole Fenske all added to their season scoring opportunities for the Quake. John Hughes accrued 31 saves in the loss for Wyoming ([box score](#)).

The Helena Bighorns (18-7-1-1, 2nd in Frontier) managed just one goal in the first stanza as the Oregon (WI) Tradesmen (17-2-3-1, 2nd in Central Division) acquired one goal in each period to down the Bighorns, 3-1. After Tyler Bloom made his 15th goal of the season for Helena, the Tradesmen received goals from Marcus Mack, Max Rotsaert, and Nathan Walker. Helena and Oregon were whistled for five penalties apiece. Marek Andres stopped 30 of 33 shots in the net for Helena in the setback ([box score](#)).

The Bozeman Ice Dogs (9-17-0-1, 7th in Frontier) made a shocking statement to the rest of the NA3HL teams when they crushed the Bay State (MA) Bobcats (3-23-0-0, 6th in East Division), 11-2. Four Ice Dog players made two goals each including Spencer Wilkinson, Cole Busher, Kole Morris, and Bodie Shepardson. Bozeman made six consecutive second period goals. In the loss, Bay State's Nate Mastrony and Landen Schoonover scored the two goals for the Massachusetts squad. A 14-save performance went to Bozeman's Cam Milewski. Jarret Perino took the Bobcat loss with 20 saves ([box score](#)).

The Gillette (WY) Wild (22-2-1-2, 1st in Frontier) and the Northeast (MA) Generals (23-4-1-1, 1st in East Division) each scored once before the second intermission and both teams were able to strike the net two more times in the third to send the contest into an overtime. Northeast's Michael Locke scored the game-winning tally with 50 seconds remaining in the extra frame to hand the Wild a rare loss. The 4-3 win by the Generals put a damper on Isaac Young's two goals for the Wild. Both teams went 1-for-5 on the power play. Logan Brown, Matthew Nuzzolilo, Tyler Ramm and Michael Locke's game winning overtime goal led Northeast in their 23rd win of the season. Jake Turek earned 33 saves for the Wild and Ian Kangas compiled 29 in the win for the Generals ([box score](#)).

Josh Humphrey's added one goal and dished out two assists and teammate Kiefer Dunham successfully put the puck in the net twice to help the Sheridan (WY) Hawks (16-10-1-0, 3rd in Frontier) down the Mason City (IA) Toros (13-12-1-0, 3rd in West Division), 6-4. Mason City scored all four goals in the first two periods. Hayden Siegel, Luke Robertson, Dylan Duckson, and David Loahr all put the biscuit in the basket for the Toros. Bo Buckley picked up another win for the Hawks with a 47-save performance. The Toros netminders Aaro Pesola and Ethan Peterson combined for 33 saves in the loss ([box score](#)).

In the nightcap for the Frontier teams, the St. Louis (MO) Jr. Blues (5-20-0-0, 6th in Central Division) had no problem offensively as they rolled to a 7-2 victory over the Badlands (SD) Sabres (7-16-2-2, 8th in Frontier). Matthew Mahoney and Jacob Heurman accounted for four of the six Blues scoring drives.

Peyton Wilson and Carter Johnson buried the two goals for Badlands. Surprisingly, Badlands had just one minor penalty all night coming in the final period of regulation. The winning goaltender was St. Louis' Jordan Behnen, who made 35 saves. The Sabres goaltenders Dawson Sellner and Hunter Oger contributed 51 saves between them ([box score](#)).

The Frontier Division went 4-3-1-0 during the first day of action.

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls will face the NA3HL's West Division's New Ulm (Minnesota) Steel at 3:15PM local time or 2:15PM (MST) at the [2022 NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#) from the [National Sports Center \(NSC\) Super Rink](#). The Steel (8-14-3-1) are in fifth place in the NA3HL's six-team West Division. In Sunday's action at the Showcase Tourney, the Steel overwhelmed the Mid Cities (TX) Jr. Stars, 10-0 including six goals in third period ([box score](#)).

Neither Great Falls nor New Ulm has played each other as members of the NA3HL.

The Americans will round out the tournament on Tuesday, December 20th with an 11:00AM (MST) game against the El Paso (TX) Rhinos of the NA3HL South Division. [HockeyTV](#) will broadcast every game live from the Showcase tournament.

[Click here](#) to see the NA3HL's official Showcase schedule press release.

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