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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**  
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### **Chinery and Crooks lead Butte past Great Falls 4-3 in overtime**

**By Kevin Scott**

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BUTTE, Mont., January 20, 2023 — The #5 Great Falls Americans (14-18-2-0) lead their season series against the #4 Butte Cobras (18-15-1-1), 3-2 heading into their final regular season matchup on Friday in Butte, Montana.

Two weeks ago, on January 6<sup>th</sup> at the Butte Community Ice Center, the Cobras struck twice during a four-minute span in the second period thanks to a pair of goals by Nick Bradshaw after a scoreless opening frame. Luke Schleusner assisted on both of those goals. Silas Hughes scored the lone lamplighter for Great Falls during the first 4:53 of the third period but the Americans could not add the equalizer during the final 15 minutes and found themselves on the losing end, 2-1 ([game story](#)). The Americans are 1-2-1 this season against Butte away from the Great Falls Ice Plex and they won both contests at home.

Last weekend (Jan. 13-14), Great Falls split their series against the #2 Helena Bighorns on the road ([5-1 loss](#)) and came back and put on a good showing in the front of the home fans winning 5-2 ([game story](#)) over the #6 Bozeman Ice Dogs (14-19-0-1).

Butte, coached by Marc Brodeur, went 1-1-0-1 since the January 6<sup>th</sup> contest with Great Falls with two games at Bozeman's Haynes Pavilion versus the Ice Dogs and a single contest at the home of the Helena Bighorns (Helena Ice Arena). On January 7<sup>th</sup>, Nick Bradshaw and former Great Falls American Patrick Crooks each had a hat trick (3 goals apiece) in a 7-1 dominating win over the Bozeman Ice Dogs ([box score](#)). A week later (January 13) the Ice Dogs earned redemption in a 3-2 win that included a shootout. Bodie Shepardson tallied the game-winning shootout goal for the Ice Dogs ([box score](#)). The following night (January 14), Helena's Braden Cunningham scored a hat trick (3 goals) and had an assist in helping the Bighorns defeat the Cobras, 5-1. Luke Schleusner scored the lone goal for Butte in the first stanza ([box score](#)).

The Americans were hoping to secure a fourth victory between these two clubs in their final regular season showdown on the road.

Butte Cobras forwards Caelin Chinery and Patrick Crooks combined to score all four goals as the fourth-ranked Butte Cobras needed overtime to dispatch the #5 Great Falls Americans, 4-3 at the Butte Community Ice Center during Friday's NA3HL Frontier Division hockey action in Butte, Montana. Baden Powell, Silas Hughes, and Alex Leaf scored for the visitors.

Butte and Great Falls each scored twice during the first twenty minutes of action. Cobras forward Caelin Chinery scored two goals while Patrick Crooks and Tamer Billman made the assists. Butte led 2-0 before the Americans evened it up with goals by Baden Powell and Silas Hughes. Jace Thompson's pass to Powell (with a secondary assist from Matt Ramstad) on a power play cut the Cobras lead in half (2-1) midway through the stanza. One minute later, Hughes' lamplighter was made possible with a helper from Wes Weisenburger. Baden Powell also got an assist. While the host team attempted 21 shots, Great Falls accumulated two goals on seven shots.

The Americans took their first lead of the night nine minutes into the middle period as Tyler Sunagel and Wes Weisenburger each assisted on the tally by Alex Leaf. The Americans took advantage of their second power play to add to the scoreboard. The 3-2 lead for the visitors lasted four minutes before Patrick Crooks, the Billings, Montana native, netted his 17<sup>th</sup> goal on a setup play by Cade Wessman and Carson Streich for Butte. Wessman leads the Cobras in assists with 31. Both scoring drives occurred while the opponent was in the sin bin. For the second straight period, both teams were even on the scoreboard after the period ended.

Despite 28 shots-on-goal, the Americans and Cobras failed to find a way to break the 3-3 tie so a five-minute overtime was needed.

Patrick Crooks, a forward that scored five goals and dished out six assists over two seasons for the Americans (2020-22), made the game-winning score 1:41 into the extra frame to give the Cobras the home victory. Crooks' 18<sup>th</sup> goal was assisted by Caelin Chinery and Cade Wessman.

Great Falls had a team-high of 12 shots-on-goal in the middle period to end their night on the road with 28. Butte had 30 of their 53 shots before the third period began.

The Cobras were led by Caelin Chinery and Patrick Crooks, who scored two goals and had one assist each in their victory. Baden Powell chipped in one score and one assist and Wes Weisenburger set up two scoring drives for the Americans in the loss.

A total of twelve minor infractions were called by the NA3HL league officials in Friday's contest. The Americans scored on two of their three scoring opportunities while Butte was in the penalty box. The Cobras lone successful power play came in the third period.

Braylon Rogers got the start for Butte and contributed 16 saves in two periods on the ice. Nikolai Wallery replaced him the rest of the way and stopped all nine Great Falls American shots in the third period for his first win (1-0-1-1) of the season for the Helena, Montana product. Wallery suffered a 4-3 overtime setback to the Great Falls Americans at the Great Falls Ice Plex on October 7<sup>th</sup> when Silas Hughes made the game-winning score in the extra frame.

Great Falls netminder Ryan Stowe (2-3-1-0) swatted away 49 shots in his eighth game of the season. Ryan had 68 saves in a January 6<sup>th</sup> showdown in Butte against the Cobras where the Americans came up short (2-1).

**NOTES:** The Butte Cobras were without the services of their top goaltender, Caleb Cross for Friday's contest against Great Falls as he received a call up to the North American Hockey League's (NAHL) Kenai River Brown Bears. Cross (13-9-0-0), in his second season with the Butte NA3HL junior hockey franchise, is currently sitting in third place among goaltenders in the NA3HL with a save percentage of 0.939 in 22 contests. This was the second call up to the NAHL for Caleb as last January (2022) he suited up with the Chippewa Steel ([read story](#)).

On Friday (January 20), the NA3HL announced their team rosters for the upcoming 2023 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament set for February 6-7, 2023, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Two Great Falls Americans will be playing for the Frontier Division squad. Americans forward Silas Hughes and defenseman Alex Leaf will join the 20-member team coached by Gillette Wild Head Coach Ethan Hayes and Helena Bighorns mentor Scott Cunningham next month. [Click here](#) to read the full article. Congrats to Silas and Alex as they represent the Americans in the February tournament.

**FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE:** Gillette's Ryan Hipsag recorded one goal in the second and added another score in the third to lead the Gillette (WY) Wild (28-5-1-2), the Frontier Division's standings leader, to a 4-1 home victory against the #8 Badlands (SD) Sabres (10-20-2-2) on Friday night. The win is the 28<sup>th</sup> victory in 36 games for the Wyoming club. Brady Ridnour scored the Sabres only goal three minutes into the third period. Jake Turek picked up another victory in the net by accruing 19 saves. Zach Broxterman finished with 49 saves in the road loss for Badlands ([box score](#)).

Inside Wyoming's Riley Arena on Friday, the #2 Helena Bighorns (26-7-1-1) lead the #7 Yellowstone (WY) Quake (11-18-4-2) 2-0 after two periods and won their 26<sup>th</sup> game of the season by downing the home team, 4-2. Helena received scores from Andrew Deskin, Tyler Bloom, Camden Cunningham and Ty Moore. Blake Mitchell and Nick Cofer, who was a member of the Bighorns roster from 2020=22, each scored once in the third frame for the Quake. Keaton Woolsey was the winning goaltender for Helena by accumulating 16 saves. Despite the loss, John Hughes made 45 saves for Yellowstone ([box score](#)).

The #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (19-14-2-0) and the #6 Bozeman Ice Dogs (14-19-0-1) sat idle on Friday night. Bozeman faces Great Falls on Saturday at the Great Falls Ice Plex and Sheridan returns to the ice next weekend (January 27-28) on the road in Rapid City, South Dakota when they face the Badlands (SD) Sabres.

**NEXT CONTEST:** The Bozeman Ice Dogs will be back in Great Falls for the second time in a week against the Americans. The puck drops at 7:30PM (MST) on Saturday, January 21<sup>st</sup> with Justin Latham on the play-by-play call for the Americans on [HockeyTV](#)

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