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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Thompson erupts for five goals as the Americans top the Sabres to snap losing streak

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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RAPID CITY, S.D., February 4, 2023 — The #6 Great Falls Americans (15-22-2-0) have won four out of their six hockey contests against the last place Badlands (SD) Sabres (11-23-3-2) after Saturday's 7-4 win in their final head-to-head matchup of the 2022-23 NA3HL regular season in Rapid City, South Dakota.

This weekend, Great Falls split with Badlands as the Americans found came up short in a 3-1 setback against the Sabres on Friday night in South Dakota. Dominic Powilatis, Carter Johnson and Payton Stauffacher acquired the goals for Badlands. Noah Osiowy and Americans assist leader, Alex Leaf, who will be the lone member from the Great Falls Americans suiting up for the Frontier Division team on Monday (February 6) and Tuesday (February 7) at the 2023 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament in Pennsylvania ([read story](#)), made the pass to Russell Rasmussen for the Americans only goal in the second period ([game story](#)).

Great Falls Americans forward Jace Thompson, who leads the team in goals scored (17) and points (31), scored five of the Americans seven goals to help the visiting team from Montana win their sixth road contest and 15th overall by downing the Badlands Sabres 7-4 on Saturday evening in South Dakota. The win helped Great Falls break their five-game losing skid.

Thompson, in his second season with Great Falls and a native of Valley City, North Dakota, scored both goals for Great Falls in the first period as the visitors went into the locker room after the first period leading 2-0. Ben Cremers earned two assists while Andrew Villareal and Wes Weisenburger each made one assist. Villareal, one of three Minnesota players on the roster, accrued his first assist with Great Falls after coming to the team on January 20th. Great Falls trailed Badlands, 15-12 in the shots-on-goal category during the penalty-free stanza.

The Americans and Sabres each scored two goals apiece in the middle period. Great Falls added a goal by Jack Metcalfe and another lamplighter by Jace Thompson 45 seconds apart to increase the lead to 4-0. Ben Cremers chipped in his third helper of the contest and Hunter Acker and Alex and Aaron Leaf also added to their season assist totals. A pair of goals by Aden Cobbs and Peyton Wilson 13 seconds apart cut the Sabres deficit in half (4-2). Mason Witt and Dominic Powilatis assisted on Badlands power play goal that was converted by Cobbs with eleven minutes remaining before the second intermission. The home team scored quickly (13 seconds later) as Payton Wilson buried the puck in the net against Great

Falls netminder Ryan Stowe that was set up by Carter Johnson and Brady Ridnour. The Americans tallied twice as many shots (18-9) in the middle frame against their South Dakota opponent.

Jace Thompson officially picked up his first hat trick of the season after having scored no more than one (per contest) during the previous 36 games within the first 58 seconds of the third period to pull Great Falls to a three-goal advantage (5-2). Wes Weisenburger gathered his second assist (11th overall) and Aidan McCormick racked up his fourth assist in his 36th game. Badlands offense would not give up as they had two more scoring drives during the next three minutes to pull within a goal (5-4). Keenan Howard and Brady Ridnour each were responsible for one goal apiece that resulted in Jack Walters, Gabriel Harrison, Ian Vanelli, and Aiden Cobbs acquiring assists. Ridnour connected on the Sabres second power play of the night while the Americans were in the sin bin with 16 minutes remaining. Jace Thompson registered his fifth goal (17th overall) and Matt Ramstad answered with his first (second overall) minutes later to ensure the Americans tasted their 15th win of the season and get them back on their winning ways. Hunter Acker and Aaron Leaf set up Thompson's strike while Noah Osiowy and Simon Lazsloffy had a hand in Ramstad's scoring drive.

The visitors outshot the host team 36-19 over the final two periods to end the game with 48. Badlands attempted 15 of their 34 in the first twenty minutes.

Both NA3HL squads combined for seven minor infractions and one major penalty that occurred in the third period by the Sabres. The Americans came up empty on their five power play opportunities. Badlands scored half of their goals while the Americans were down a man (penalty).

In addition to Jace Thompson five goals, coach Greg Sears' squad was led by Ben Cremers (three assists) and a trio of players amassed two assists each including Aaron Leaf, Hunter Ackers, and Wes Weisenburger. Meanwhile Aden Cobb and Brady Ridnour combined for two goals and two assists for Badlands coach Brendan Hodges' team.



Ryan Stowe (3-5-0-0) won his third game as a goaltender for Great Falls and his second against the Sabres this season by recording 30 saves in 12 appearances. Hunter Oger got the start but Brady Devries (5-6-1-0) suffered the loss for South Dakota. Oger, played 25 minutes before giving way to Devries, stopped 18 of 22 shots. Devries gave up three goals and ended his night with 23 saves.

NOTES: The Great Falls Americans took advantage of their trip to Rapid City, South Dakota to see Mount Rushmore in Keystone, South Dakota, 23 miles from Rapid City, South Dakota.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: The #1 Gillette (WY) Wild (31-6-1-2) stepped away from their Frontier Division schedule to play a team from the NA3HL West Division. The Granite City Lumberjacks (32-3-0-1), based out of Sauk Rapids, Minnesota was the opponent for the Wild on Saturday inside the Armadillo Deck Sports Arena with 1,224 spectators watching these two top clubs play in the NA3HL. Granite City lead 4-3 after two periods and outscored the Lumberjacks 2-1 in the third for a 6-4 win. Hayden Johnson had two goals for Granite City while Sky Solig scored twice and had two assists for Gillette. Ryan Lehet (12-2-0-0) made 23 saves for the winning team and Jake Turek (10-3-1-1) of Gillette redirected 34 of the 40 shots (**box score**).

The #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (22-15-2-0) scored two goals in each period to down the #4 Butte Cobras (19-18-1-1), 6-3 on the road in Butte, Montana on Saturday. Sheridan's Makhai Sparks and Teejay Torgrimson totaled four of the six goals in the win. Tyler Tosch led the Cobras with one goal and two assists. Patric Loeffler (10-7-0-0) was the winning netminder with 51 saves. Caleb Cross (14-10-0-0) took the loss for Butte with 46 saves in 45 minutes of action (**box score**). Sheridan's win gave them the split over Butte this weekend. Butte defeated Sheridan 8-6 on Friday.

In a low-scoring affair, the fifth-ranked Bozeman Ice Dogs (17-20-0-1) scored once in the second and third frames for a 2-0 road victory against the seventh-ranked Yellowstone (WY) Quake on Saturday at Wyoming's Riley Arena. Bodie Shepardson and Owen House collected the goals for the Ice Dogs. Axel

Rosenlund (4-4-0-0) was perfect in the net by swatting away all 33 shots for Bozeman. Steven Kelley (3-3-1-0) allowed two goals to get by him but still finished with 53 saves for the Quake ([box score](#)). Bozeman swept Yellowstone this weekend with their 6-3 win on Friday night.

NEXT CONTEST: The Americans have eight games left in the 2022-23 regular season with six away from the Great Falls Ice Plex. Great Falls will play four games (two away/two home) against the Bozeman Ice Dogs and four games in the state of Wyoming. A trip on February 10-11 is set up for Gillette, Wyoming to face the top-seeded Gillette Wild and the season finale on March 3-4 in Cody, Wyoming with the Yellowstone Quake. [Click here](#) to see the full schedule and results.

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