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Great Falls Americans Press Release

Contact: Kevin Scott, GF Americans Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: (406) 403-8146

Americans can't catch a break, fall to Gillette, 11-6

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GILLETTE, Wyo., February 11, 2023 — The #6 Great Falls Americans (15-24-2-0) and the #1 Gillette (WY) Wild (33-7-1-2) played one final regular season matchup on Saturday night as the Wild hosted the Americans at the Spirit Hall Ice Arena in Wyoming.

The Americans have struggled against one of the top teams in the North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL) this season winning once in five meetings. On Friday, Gillette cruised to a 5-1 lead before the second intermission and easily defeated the Americans, 8-2. Saizha Norwegian and Sky Solig accounted for half of the tallies for Wyoming. Ben Cremers and Jace Thompson made the goals in the first and third periods, respectively ([game story](#)).

Great Falls is sitting in sixth place and needs to be in the top six in the Frontier Division in the next three weeks to claim a spot in the 2023 NA3HL Fraser Cup Playoffs. Gillette and the Helena Bighorns (32-7-1-1) are the only two teams who are already in the playoff field.

The Gillette (WY) Wild showed their offensive strength as they ran out to a 9-4 lead after two periods and eventually topped the Great Falls Americans, 11-6 during Saturday's final regular season meeting between these clubs in Gillette, Wyoming. Great Falls went 1-5-0-0 against Gillette this season. Two former Great Falls Americans led the way for Gillette as Silas Hughes and Tyler Sunagel each made two goals and dished out two assists. Hunter Acker, one of the fresh faces for Great Falls, netted two goals and made one assist in the loss.

Isaac Young, Zack Slinger, Silas Hughes, and Jace Johnson each put the puck between the pipes for the four-goal advantage by the host team. The eight players that earned the assists were Anthony Foster, Tyler Sunagel, Jace Johnson, Remington Richardson, Wylee Gladen, Cade Voge, Leighton Weasler, and Zack Slinger. Gillette's defense allowed nine first period shots for the Americans. Gillette racked up four goals on 23 shots.

After the first intermission, Great Falls got on the scoreboard with four goals but Gillette answered back with five (goals). During the first eight minutes of the second stanza, Hunter Acker and Jace Thompson found a way to deliver a pair of goals for the Montana NA3HL squad with Gillette in the penalty box. Noah Osiowy and Phil Harrell assisted on Acker's score with 13:36 on the clock. Gillette got their four-goal lead

back when Silas Hughes off a pass from Ryan Hipsag and Tyler Sunagel, lit up the lamp over Amerians netminder Nik Romahs as the visitors were whistled for a penalty. The Americans responded 20 seconds later when Wes Weisenburger and Ben Cremers got the puck to Jace Thompson for Great Falls' second score. Over the next nine minutes, Gillette had goals from Tyler Sunagel (two goals), Wylee Gladen and Sky Solig. Ryan Hipsag added two more assists (three total in the period) while Anthony Foster picked up his second assist and Silas Hughes, Isaac Young, Alec Waller, and Adam Severson totaled their first assists of the game for Wyoming. The final 95 seconds saw Great Falls rack up two goals. Ben Cremers and Hunter Acker's second score rounded out the second frame. Acquiring the assists were Jace Thompson, Sam Duehlmeier, Alex Leaf, and Wes Weisenburger. Acker's score came with one second left. The Americans spent most of their time in the second on defense as they attempted 12 shots. Gillette made 35.

The Wild still maintained a four-goal lead even after Russ Rasmussen buried his sixth goal of the season during the first two minutes of the third period. Noah Osiowy and Garrett Weisenburger assisted for the seventh time this year. The home team outscored Great Falls, 2-1 throughout the rest of the contest. After having one assist in the first, Remington Richardson tallied his seventh goal and Zack Slinger was on the receiving end for his 13th (goal). Jace Johnson compiled two assists while Silas Hughes and Ryan Jordan added another to their resume for the 11-5 lead. The Americans gathered one more goal before the final horn when Alex Leaf and Hunter Acker assisted on Wes Weisenburger's fourth lamplighter.

The Wild outshot the Americans in two of the three periods to finish with 72. Great Falls accumulated 26 in the final period for 47 on the night.

When the sixty-minute game finished, there were eighteen infractions (107 minutes of penalty time) on the stat sheet. The Wild made four goals while Great Falls was down a man (penalty) and Great Falls capitalized on just one of their five power play opportunities.

Zack Slinger, Silas Hughes, and Tyler Sunagel led the Gillette offensive charge with two goals. Hunter Acker had a two-goal performance for the Americans.

Gillette's Cole Wheaton record improved to 13-4-0-0 on the season and picked up his first official win against the Americans. The Calgary standout had 41 saves and allowed six goals over the second and third periods. Great Falls utilized goaltenders Ryan Stowe (starter) and Nik Romahs. Stowe had 19 saves in the first period while Romahs amassed 42 over the last two periods. The loss went to Romahs (2-3-1-0) in six appearances.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: The #2 Helena Bighorns (32-7-1-1) scored ten goals with five of them coming in the second period to earn a 10-0 victory over the #7 Yellowstone (WY) Quake (12-25-4-2). The Bighorns took 25 shots in the first and second periods to finish with 53 while allowing 18 against the Quake. Derek Russell, in his first season with Helena, ended his night with a hat trick (three goals) and teammate Andrew Deskin (two goals, three assists) also had a solid performance for the playoff bound Bighorns. Keaton French got another win by stopping all 18 shots. John Hughes and Steven Kelley combined for 43 saves for the Quake ([box score](#)).

The #5 Bozeman Ice Dogs (20-20-0-1) also picked up a shutout win in the Frontier Division on Saturday night. The 4-0 road victory came against the #3 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (22-17-2-0), who could not get the puck in the net. Owen House had two goals and Braden Koliha assisted on two scoring plays to lead the Ice Dogs to their 20th victory and kept their playoff hopes alive. Axel Rosenlund won his fifth game (5-4-0-0) as the netminder for Bozeman by redirecting all 24 shots. Patric Loeffler had a 31 save performance but saw his record fall to 10-9-0-0 in his third season with the Hawks ([box score](#)).

The Butte Cobras, fourth in the Frontier Division with a record of 21-18-1-1, scored four goals that resulted in a 4-1 decision over the last place Badlands (SD) Sabres (11-25-2-3). Butte's Nick Bradshaw recorded his 29th goal this season to become the sixth player to reach 100 career goals. Tamer Billman, Quinn Nichols and Patrick Crooks also scored in the Cobras victory. The lone goal for the Sabres came from Dominic Powilatis with assistance from Mason Witt and Payton Stauffacher in the middle period. Caleb Cross added 19 saves to go to 3-0 against Badlands this season and is now 16-10-0-0 on the season. Zach Broxterman had 42 saves in the Sabres loss ([box score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: The Great Falls Americans have three weeks remaining in their 2022-23 NA3HL campaign with two opponents in the Bozeman Ice Dogs and the Yellowstone (WY) Quake. First up, the

Americans will play two games against the #5 Bozeman Ice Dogs on the weekend of February 17-18 in Bozeman, Montana. The Americans will finish up their home portion of the season when they entertain the Ice Dogs on February 24-25, 2023. The final week of the season on March 3-4th will be played in Cody, Wyoming for a two-game series against the #7 Yellowstone Quake. All games begin live on [HockeyTV](#) at 7:30PM (MST).

CONTACT:

Greg Sears
Great Falls Americans Head Coach/General Manager
Cell Phone: 715-566-2811
Email: gsears@greatfallsamericans.com



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