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Great Falls Americans Press Release
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Americans fall short in comeback attempt; Gillette earns the weekend sweep

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Score Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., September 23, 2023 — The #4 Great Falls Americans (2-2-0-0) were looking for redemption to end their weekend two-game series against the second-ranked Gillette (WY) Wild (4-0-0-0) on Saturday in Great Falls.

On Friday (Sept. 22), Gillette's defense kept the Americans from scoring while the offense racked up seven goals. Four players led the Wild to their third straight victory. Forwards Ryan Hipsag and Isaac Young combined for three goals and three assists and defenseman Todd Powassin created one goal and dished out two helpers. Dominic Hite made 21 saves for the Wyoming club. All four players were on last year's squad that made it to the Frontier Division Finals before falling to the Helena Bighorns. The Americans goaltenders, Kaden Ryhder (1-1-0-0) and Ryan Stowe combined for 53 saves in a losing effort ([game story](#)).

Could the Americans even the series against Gillette and deny them the weekend sweep on the road?

The Great Falls Americans trailed 3-0 after two periods to the Gillette Wild but came up short despite scoring two third period goals as the #2 Gillette Wild came away with a 4-2 decision at the Great Falls Ice Plex on Saturday night. Elliot Testa recorded one goal and had two assists for the winning side. Great Falls forwards Ty O'Beay and Dmitri Kuleshov scored the goals for the home team.

Both teams battled hard throughout the first period but neither squad could put the biscuit in the basket.

Gillette came out of the first intermission ready for battle. The visiting Wyoming team quickly added three goals during the first five minutes of the second stanza. Forwards Ryan Hipsag, Isaac Young, and Trey Erramouspe each found the back of the net. Elliot Testa chipped in two assists while Wylee Gladen, Jace Johnson, Todd Powassin and Isaac Young set up the trio of goals. The 3-0 advantage by Gillette carried over to the third period.

Great Falls scored their first goal of the game four minutes into the last period of regulation when Christian Crutcher's pass to Dmitri Kuleshov gave Crutcher his fifth assist of the season. Kuleshov, who joined the team this week, scored his first goal for Great Falls on a power play. The Americans pulled to within one goal one minute later as the Americans leading scorer after four games, Ty O'Bey sailed the puck into the net for the fifth time this season while their opponent was down a man (penalty). Aaron James and Phil Harrell set up the second score for the host team to cut the deficit to 3-2. The Wild ended any type of comeback for the Americans when Elliot Testa lit up the lamp while Matt Siems and Todd Powassin each collected their fourth assist after four games midway through the last period.

Both squads combined for 85 shots-on-goal in their second and final head-to-head regular season meeting in Great Falls.

Wisconsin netminder Weston Gerke (1-0-0-0) allowed two goals in the third period after a perfect performance during the first and second periods. Gillette's returning goalie accrued 35 saves in his first win of the season. Adler Hoagland (0-1-0-0) ended the night with 44 saves for the Americans.

NOTES: Tonight, all fans were allowed up to the Eagles Nest (enclosed room in balcony) at 6:00PM (MST) for a Hockey 101 session where fans were able to learn the sport of hockey including rules, terminology, and basic strategy. Team Owner Matt Leaf hosted the event with a "Question and Answer" session at the end. [Click here](#) to see the "Hockey 101" handout with rules and terminology about hockey that was covered at Saturday's pre-game session.

Also, the Great Falls Americans Booster Club is helping the team by raffling off a RTIC Cooler and Meat Package. Tickets are \$10.00 each and the package includes 20 lbs. of meat provided by [Central Avenue Meats](#) in Great Falls. The drawing will be held on Saturday, September 30th when the Americans challenge the Badlands (South Dakota) Sabres. To purchase tickets, please see any of the Booster Club members at any of the home games or contact Adam Stanczak (406-564-6771, email: adam@johnsondistributing.com). All proceeds will be used to support the Great Falls Americans Junior A hockey team!



The Americans have a new online team store this season with a variety of items to buy. [Click here](#) to buy online or purchase your Americans souvenirs at any of the home games.

Please check out the Americans website at www.greatfallsamericans.com for all your updated news, game summaries, rosters, photo galleries, etc.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: Bodie Shepardson of the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs (4-0-0-0) scored two of his team's four third period goals to help them defeat the #5 Badlands (SD) Sabres (0-2-0-0), 5-2 on the road to remain undefeated in league play after two weeks of competition. Sean Smer improved his record to 2-0-0-0 by stopping 21 of 23 shots for the visitors. Ryan Jordan and Carter Kilien scored the first two goals for the Sabres in the first and second periods, respectively but gave up five goals in the last one and a half periods for their second consecutive setback of the season. Despite making 32 saves against Bozeman, Easton Eriksmoen lost his first contest (0-1-0-0) with Badlands ([Box Score](#)).

The top-ranked Helena Bighorns (4-0-0-0) easily kept their winning streak alive by dominating the #8 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (0-4-0-0), 8-1 to earn the weekend sweep in Sheridan, Wyoming on Saturday

night. Helena's Braden Cunningham scored a hat trick (three goals) to lead the Montana team to victory. Ty Moore and Camden Cunningham each earned three assists for Helena. Sheridan's lone goal was made by Daniil Viscu in the third frame. Gabe Swanson (1-0-0-0) started out his third season with the Bighorns with a victory in the net by stopping five of six shots by Sheridan's offense. Tyler Ouren (0-1-0-0) opened his first year with the Hawks with a loss. The Minnesota goaltender made 46 saves in his debut ([Box Score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: The Americans started out the season with seven consecutive home dates with three more remaining before their first road test. The Americans will close out the month of September with three games against the Badlands (South Dakota) Sabres on Friday (September 29th), Saturday (September 30th), and Sunday afternoon (October 1st). The Friday and Saturday contests will begin at 7:00PM (MST) and Sunday's contest will start at 12:00PM (MST).

After every home game on Friday and Saturday nights, the Americans invite their fans and supporters to their post-game dinner at [P. Gibson's Sports Grill and Casino](#) (1600 Fox Farm Road).

[NAHLTV](#) is the NA3HL's new streaming platform and is the place to catch all the action for fans that are unable to attend the home and away games this season. [Click here](#) to learn more about how to view any of the Americans home and away contests.

[Click here](#) for the 2023-24 Great Falls Americans schedule and results.

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