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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

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**Koliha's three goals against Great Falls keep the Ice Dogs undefeated on the season**

**By Kevin Scott**

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BOZEMAN, Mont., October 8, 2023 — So far this season, the #4 Great Falls Americans (4-4-0-0) have reeled in four wins in seven appearances with all games taking place at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Great Falls opened the season in early September with a weekend sweep of the Yellowstone (WY) Quake but fell in two games to the #3 Gillette Wild before rebounding for a 2-1 record against South Dakota's Badlands Sabres last weekend.

A trio of players lead in goal scored and assists made for the Americans after the first month of the season including Ty O'Bey (five goals) and Dmitri Kuleshov (seven goals) and Christian Crutcher with six assists.

On Sunday, Great Falls finally got to play with competition from Montana when they traveled to Haynes Pavilion in Bozeman, Montana for a single game against the #2 Ice Dogs (7-0-0-0). Currently, Bozeman and the Helena Bighorns (8-0-0-0) are both undefeated in league play.

The Ice Dogs, under returning coach Mike Perkins, returns twelve players off the 2022-23 team with Livingston, Montana native Bodie Shepardson leading the team in scoring with nine goals (eight assists) and Chris Porciuncula's leading the squad with 11 assists.

The #6 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (2-5-1-0), #8 Yellowstone (WY) Quake (0-8-0-0) and the #5 Badlands (SD) Sabres (2-3-0-2) were the latest teams to suffer defeats against Bozeman.

Great Falls was looking to upend the Ice Dogs on their home ice on Sunday night.

The Great Falls Americans dropped a 4-2 decision to the Bozeman Ice Dogs on Sunday night in Great Falls' first road contest of the season in Bozeman, Montana. Bozeman forward Braden Koliha scored a hat trick by sending the puck into the back of the net three times and Ben Fries and Matthias Godfrey picked up two assists in the win. Meanwhile Dmitri Kuleshov was one goal short of a hat trick as he

produced one goal in the second and another in the third frame for the visitors. Kuleshov from Sydney, Australia now leads the Americans with seven goals scored.

The Ice Dogs struck first thirteen minutes into the first period. Defenseman Ben Fries passed to forward Mason Czarnecki, who lit up the lamp, for the opening score and the only goal by either team before the first intermission. Great Falls and Bozeman combined for 29 shots.

The host team took 82 seconds off the clock at the start of the middle period before they held a 2-9 advantage. Braden Koliha successfully scored off a dish from Matthias Godfrey with Ben Fries getting the secondary assist. The Americans never gave up and pulled within one score (2-1) before the second stanza concluded when Masen Kerr obtained his second assist in his first season with Great Falls when Dmitri Kuleshov found the back of the net as the puck sailed over Ice Dogs netminder Matthew Ryynanen. Great Falls offense took a 21-6 advantage on the shots-on-goal category.

Bozeman increased their lead back to two goals when Braden Koliha secured his third goal of the season when the California duo of Matthias Godfrey and Reese Tittle earned the assists on Koliha's second scoring drive of the game. Koliha got the home team cheering again fourteen minutes later when his goal off the stick of teammate Spencer Wilkinson put the game out of reach for Great Falls. Dmitri Kuleshov added another goal (seventh overall) with under a minute remaining, but the comeback attempt was too late in the first meeting between these two clubs. Phil Harrell and Jacob James gathered their third assists of the season.

The Americans took 34 of their 48 shots before the third period. Bozeman finished with 36.

Michigan goaltender Matthew Ryynanen (4-0-0-0) kept his undefeated streak alive for the home team. His fourth victory came by swatting away 46 shots.

Ryan Stowe, the lone goaltender returning from last season, compiled 32 saves in his first defeat of the season. The netminder from Calgary, Alberta, Canada is now 3-1-0-0 as he has appeared in five of eight games for coach Greg Sears' squad.

**NOTES:** Between periods at the September 30<sup>th</sup> game against the Sabres, the Great Falls Americans Booster Club drew the winning ticket for their RTIC Cooler Raffle filled with meat from Central Avenue Meats, one of the Americans top sponsors this season. Congrats to Karen Leeper for winning the cooler with meat. The raffle, spearheaded by Booster Club President Adam Stanczak, raised over \$4,000 to help support activities produced by the booster club. The Booster Club is looking to do another raffle soon with the drawing to be held over Thanksgiving Weekend.



The Great Falls Americans were in attendance this week at the University of Providence Argos men's hockey team cheering them on as they played against the three Utah schools (Utah State, Weber State and Utah Valley University).

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](http://www.greatfallsamericans.com) for all your updated news, game summaries, rosters, photo galleries, etc.

**FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE:** No other Frontier Division teams competed today.

**NEXT CONTEST:** After completing just one game this week, the Americans keep looking to climb up in the NA3HL Frontier Division standings with three back-to-back games this upcoming week. The Badlands Sabres return for a single contest against Great Falls on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup> with a 7:00PM (MST) puck drop at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The team will then head to Sheridan, Wyoming for a two-game series against the Hawks on Friday and Saturday, October 13-14<sup>th</sup>. Both games begin at 7:30PM (MST) inside Whitney Rink in the M&M's Center.

Fans that can't make the trip can watch on the NA3HL's new streaming service, [NAHLTV](#). [Click here](#) to learn more about how to view any of the Americans home and away contests.

All road games (including the Friday and Saturday games at Sheridan) will be shown live at the Stadium Bar and Casino located at 1121 5<sup>th</sup> Street South in Great Falls where fans are invited for a "watch party." [Click here](#) to view the photo gallery from tonight's Watch Party.

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

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