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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Bozeman halts the Americans five-game win streak with 5-2 win

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Score Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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BOZEMAN, Mont., December 1, 2023 — In a rematch from last Sunday (November 26, 2023) in Great Falls, the #3 Great Falls Americans (13-10-0-0) and the #4 Bozeman Ice Dogs (12-11-0-1) met for the second time in Bozeman, Montana on Friday night.

The Americans have posted victories in two out of their three matchups this season. The most recent win was in Sunday's 4-1 victory at the Great Falls Ice Plex where Americans forward Dmitri Kuleshov scored half of Great Falls' goals, Aaron James and Sam Duehlmeier assisted on two scoring drives and goaltender Kaden Ryhder made 21 saves. Bozeman's Mason Czarnecki put in the lone Ice Dogs score in the first stanza ([game story](#)).

This was the final time these two Montana clubs met until January 2024 when the Americans host Bozeman in their first home game weekend of 2024. The January 12-13th games will start at 7:00PM (MST).

The fourth-ranked Bozeman Ice Dogs redeemed Sunday's road loss to the #3 Great Falls Americans by downing the Americans, 5-2 during Friday's NA3HL junior hockey action from Haynes Pavilion. Five different scorers contributed to the stat sheet for Bozeman including Lex Steckelberg, Casey Sturm, Spencer Wilkinson, Tyler Klingbeil and Ben Fries. Aaron James and Dmitri Kuleshov were awarded the goals for Great Falls in the second period.

Bozeman was the first and only team to score in the first period. Bozeman native Lex Steckelberg recorded his first goal of the season in his first year with the Ice Dogs off a pass from Sam Ingram, who added his fourth assist of the year and Joe Kline, who gathered his second assist. Ingram is one of 12 returners from the 2022-23 season for head coach Mike Perkins.

Dmitri Kuleshov needed 52 seconds into the second frame to gather his 19th goal of the 2023-24 season. Kuleshov's game-tying goal came on the set-up play by Luke Pizzey and Ty O'Bey. Casey Sturm and Spencer Wilkinson chipped in back-to-back scores for the home team as Bozeman stretched their lead to

3-1 at the middle point of the period. Mason Czarnecki tacked on two assists while Bodie Shepardson and Braden Koliha also assisted. Great Falls' Aaron James accumulated his sixth goal with assistance from Dmitri Kuleshov and Ty O'Bey as the period ended with the Americans trailing 3-2 at the second intermission. After two periods, Bozeman created 30 shots and Great Falls attempted 18.

In the final stanza, recently acquired Tyler Klingbeil successfully made his first lamplighter with the Ice Dogs with helpers going to Wes Innes and Great Falls native Westin Weisenburger eight minutes into the last period. As the Americans were down 4-2, the Great Falls coaching staff took out goaltender Kaden Ryhder and brought in an extra attacker, but the Bozeman Ice Dogs sealed their 12th win of the year with a goal with five seconds remaining. A pass from Spencer Wilkinson and Braden Koliha to Ben Fries helped Ben score his first goal on the final play.

There were ten total power play chances during the fourth meeting between these two rival clubs. Each team successfully scored on one of their opportunities.

Matthew Ryynanen (Bozeman) chipped in his eighth win in nineteen contests (8-9-0-1). Ryynanen had 16 stops and is now 2-1-0-0 when playing Great Falls. A 27-save performance could not get Americans netminder Kaden Ryhder his ninth win. The first-year goalie for Great Falls is now 8-4-0-0 including two wins against the Ice Dogs.

NOTES: On Thursday, November 30th, the NA3HL announced their game schedule for the upcoming 2023 NA3HL Showcase occurring on December 17-19, 2023, at the NSC Super Rink in Blaine, Minnesota. Many scouts in the NCAA and ACHA scouts attend and recruit at this prestigious once-a-year event. The Showcase pairs up evenly matched teams against one another based on the current standings and features balanced competition with cross-divisional games. Great Falls will play the New Jersey Titans (4:15PM MST on Sunday, December 17), the Minnesota-based Alexandria Blizzard (5:15PM MST on Monday, December 18) and will finish out the event with a 11:00AM (MST) contest battling the Louisiana Drillers. [Click here](#) to read the full story.

A former member of the Great Falls Americans roster is now an Assistant Coach with the National Hockey League's (NHL) Minnesota Wild. Patrick Dwyer is originally from Great Falls, Montana and starred on the Americans from 1999-2001 and helped them win an American West Hockey League (AWHL) championship. Dwyer played seven seasons for the NHL's Carolina Hurricanes from 2008-2001 and played many years in the AHL. [Click here](#) to read the full story.

Great Falls was represented by two Frontier Division "Stars of the Week" that ended on November 26, 2023. Goaltender Kaden Ryhder was the recipient of the 2nd Star in the Frontier Division and defenseman Phil Harrell received Honorable Mention honors for their play against two Montana opponents, the Butte Irish, and Bozeman Ice Dogs. Ryhder, from Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, collected 72 saves and had two wins (Friday vs. Butte and Sunday vs. Bozeman). Harrell had two assists in Saturday's 3-1 against the Irish. [Click here](#) for the story.

In this week's "Baldy's Puck Drop" Newsletter, Americans team owner Matt Leaf has a player profile of goaltender Kaden Ryhder, sponsor information, and upcoming Americans events. He also had a look back at the successful "Wine, Women, and Hockey" seminar that took place prior to Sunday's game against Bozeman. [Click here](#) to view this past week's newsletter and all the weekly "Baldy's Puck Drop" Newsletters.

Be sure to check out Staradio's Weekly Interview with Greg Sears hosted by Troy Mellinger. The short radio interview gives a recap of last Saturday's game against the Helena Bighorns and previews the home series against the Sheridan Hawks. Listen live every Monday throughout the season at 12:20PM (MST) on [FOX SPORTS RADIO \(98.3FM/1400AM\)](#) and on [Q106.1 FM](#) on Wednesday mornings at 10:00AM (MST). To listen to this interview and the previous others from the 2023-24 season, please [click here](#).

Check out all the Americans photos throughout the season with many of the game action photos taken by Americans photographer, Dustin Bauer. [Click here](#) to view all the photos from the 2023-24 season.



[Click here](#) to view the Americans online team store that features a variety of different souvenirs to purchase. A store is available at all home games. Fans can also buy game day tickets on the website prior to the game by [clicking here](#).

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

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: Seven players got in the scoring column for the top-ranked Gillette (WY) Wild (21-1-0-1) during Friday's 7-0 shutout victory over the last place Yellowstone (WY) Quake (0-20-1-0). Elliot Testa, Adam Severson, Zach Lebens, Gavin Black, Chase Hapka, Wylee Gladen, and Jayden Rogers all scored for coach Ethan Hayes' squad. Gillette's offense cranked out 101 shots and limited the Quake to ten. Dominic Hite improved his record to 5-0-0-0 including his second win against the Quake this season. The returning netminder from the 2022-23 season rejected all ten shots. John Hughes from Yellowstone had another disappointing night as he allowed seven goals and accrued 94 saves ([Box Score](#)).

The #2 Helena Bighorns (18-2-0-0) escaped with a 3-1 decision over the #6 Butte Irish (8-13-0-0) in Butte, Montana on Friday evening. Cai Robinson and Braden Cunningham scored two first period goals and Gavin Barr added another in the third for the Bighorns. Kazden Stineff racked up the lone goal for the host team to prevent the shutout by Helena in the middle period. The visitors out shot Butte 35-5 in the first to end their night with 67 and limited the Irish to 27. Jesse Schindel (5-0-0-0 in six games) was the winning goaltender by redirecting 26 of 27 shots. Braylon Rogers (4-4-0-0), who is in his third season with the Butte NA3HL franchise, made 64 saves in the loss ([Box Score](#)).

The #7 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (7-14-1-1) pulled off the minor upset against the #5 Badlands (SD) Sabres (9-8-2-2) in front of the home fans at Whitney Rink in the M&M's Center in Sheridan, Wyoming. Each team scored twice after two periods. The third frame belonged to the Hawks by scoring two additional goals for a 4-2 win. The four goals scored by Sheridan went to Tanner Freed, Kiefer Dunham, Ayden Attungana, and Daniil Viscu. Badlands scoring stopped after the first period as Hunter Walla and Carter Kilen got the puck in the net prior to the second period. After playing the first two seasons for the Badlands Sabres, Zach Broxterman bested his former team by delivering 36 saves for his third win (3-8-1-1). Easton Eriksmoen saw his record drop to 6-4-0-0. The Crosby, North Dakota goalie gathered 49 saves for the South Dakota junior hockey team ([Box Score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: The Great Falls Americans will return to action on the weekend of December 8-9, 2023, when they make the trip to Cody, Wyoming for a two-game series with the #8 Yellowstone Quake. The action begins both nights from Riley Arena at 7:05PM (MST).

Great Falls and the rest of the NA3HL teams will all meet in Blaine, Minnesota for the 2023 NA3HL Showcase (December 17-19), where teams will play three other teams not in their division during the three-day tournament with scouts in attendance.

AMERICANS WATCH PARTY: The Stadum Bar and Casino, located at 1121 5th Street South in Great Falls, hosts the “Americans Watch Party” this season when the Americans are on the road. Fans are invited to get food and drinks and watch the game.

After the Christmas break, the Americans will travel to Butte, Montana for two games against the Irish on January 5-6 before Great Falls returns to the friendly confines of the Great Falls Ice Plex for two games against the Bozeman Ice Dogs on January 12-13. [Click here](#) for the 2023-24 Great Falls Americans schedule and results.

[NAHLTV](#) is the place to catch all the Great Falls Americans contests all season long. [Click here](#) to learn more about how to watch any of the Americans NA3HL junior hockey games on NAHL TV during the 2023-24 season.

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