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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Kuleshov's hat trick helps Great Falls defeat Badlands to move into fourth place

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Score Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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RAPID CITY, S.D., February 24, 2024 — The #4 Great Falls Americans (20-23-0-1) were back on the ice for the second of a three-game series against the #5 Badlands (SD) Sabres (17-21-3-3) on Saturday evening.

Great Falls is now 4-2-0-0 against Badlands this season including a 3-2 win to snap their five-game losing streak on Friday. Ty O'Bey scored two goals and Garren Narvaez added the eventual game-winning goal in the third frame for the Americans who are one step closer to securing a spot in the Frontier Division playoffs with their 19th win of the 2023-24 season. Kaden Ryhder swatted away 40 shots (while allowing two) for Great Falls. Badlands standout Zach Vockler scored the lamplighters for the Sabres ([game story](#)).

Great Falls forward Dmitri Kuleshov accounted for three goals and Zac Orwig added another as the Great Falls Americans defeated the Badlands (SD) Sabres for the second consecutive night to reclaim fourth place in the NA3HL Frontier Division standings. The 4-2 victory moved the Americans (temporarily) into the fourth and final spot for the upcoming playoffs in two weeks.

The Sabres accrued 13 of the 20 shots-on-goal during the scoreless first period.

The Americans and the Sabres each scored once during the middle period. Dmitri Kuleshov got the visiting Montana team on the scoreboard first when he put the puck in the net with twelve minutes remaining before the second intermission. Luke Pizzey and Cal Laggis had the first of their two assists on the night to give the Americans a short-lived lead. Badlands even the score (1-1) when Peyton Wilson scored off a pass from Hunter Walla and Brady Ridnour 14 seconds after the Great Falls scoring drive.

In the third, Zac Orwig and Dmitri Kuleshov stretched the lead for the Americans to 3-1 seven minutes into the final period of regulation. Garren Narvaez and Hayden Grabas assisted on the tally by Orwig with fifteen minutes remaining and Kuleshov followed up with his second goal of the night with Zac Orwig and Luke Pizzey getting credit for the assists. Zach Vockler pulled the Sabres within one goal midway through the stanza as Brooks Roaldson and Ryan Jordan adding the helpers for the home team's second goal. The Americans ensured a victory by scoring a fourth goal with 84 seconds left in the contest with Dmitri Kuleshov's 28th goal of the season. Tariq Khan and Cal Laggis earned the assists.

After the final buzzer, Badlands outshot Great Falls 53-33 including 25 occurring in the middle period.

Each team was whistled for five minor penalties with Great Falls turning one of their power play opportunities into a goal.

A night after making 40 saves, Great Falls netminder Kaden Ryhder (13-10-0-1) redirected 51 of the 53 shots sent his way by the Sabres offense. Ryhder now has three wins against their South Dakota foe. Easton Eriksmoen (9-11-0-1) got the start again for the home team and finished with 29 saves on Saturday after a 36-save performance on Friday evening.

Great Falls and Badlands will play their third consecutive contest this week on Sunday (February 25) afternoon.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: The NA3HL Frontier Division “Game of the Night” belonged to the top two teams in the Frontier Division. Both the #1 Helena Bighorns (42-2-1-0) and the #2 Gillette (WY) Wild (39-5-0-1) have already clinched a playoff spot. Helena has not trailed often this season, but they did on Saturday. Gillette led 3-2 after the second period and for 19 minutes of the third period before Patrick Crooks scored with 53 seconds remaining in regulation to send the game into an extra period. After a Cam Young score in the first to give the Bighorns the lead, the Wild outscored the Bighorns 3-1 in the second period. Gavin Barr scored for the visitors while Adam Severson scored two goals and Isaac Young put in another for Gillette. The Wyoming squad won (4-3) by scoring in overtime. Weston Gerke (Gillette) won the duel against previously undefeated Jesse Schindel of Helena. Gerke finished with 40 saves in 63 minutes of action. Schindel had 42 saves but lost for the first time this season as he dropped his record to 15-0-1-0 ([Box Score](#)).

After winning 9-0 on Friday, the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs (30-14-0-1) continued their dominance over the #8 Yellowstone (WY) Quake (0-42-3-0) by blanking them for the second time this week. Bodie Shepardson, Mattias Godfrey, and Magnus Lowham erupted for two goals each in the 12-0 victory for the Ice Dogs. Isaac Weatherford played flawlessly as he stopped all 22 shots made by the Quake. He is now 3-1-0-0 in eleven appearances. John Hughes (0-15-2-0) of Yellowstone (42 saves) suffered the setback by allowing all 12 goals ([Box Score](#)).

Sheridan’s Keifer Dunham scored a hat trick (three goals) to lead the #6 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (17-24-2-2) to a 7-2 road victory over the #7 Butte Irish (16-28-1-0) during NA3HL hockey action on Saturday night. Butte’s Kazden Stineff and Andrew Browe each scored once for the Irish. Kansas goaltender Zach Broxterman (5-12-1-2) recorded 23 saves for the Wyoming squad while his counterpart, Nicholas Ulyanov saw his record drop to 3-2-0-0 on the season. Ulyanov finished with 49 saves ([Box Score](#)).

NOTES: Forwards Ty O’Bey and Aiden Kennedy received Honorable Mention honors for the weekly “NA3HL Stars of the Week” for the week ending February 18, 2024, for their play last week against the top-ranked Helena Bighorns. [Click here](#) for more information.

This week, another episode of the “Americans Podcast with Jim Quick” was completed with his guest Luke Pizzey, a forward from Black Diamond, Washington. Quick has done thirteen podcasts this year featuring the history of the Americans, interviews with former American and now Associate Coach, Alex Leaf, and some current players. Fans can listen to the full podcasts by [clicking here](#).



The NA3HL released their all-new and updated App this week for the App Store and Google Play. Download and set your favorite team to the Great Falls Americans today and stay up to date with the NA3HL. [Click here](#) to download from the App Store (Apple) or [click here](#) to download from the Google Play Store (Android).

Check out all the Americans photos throughout the season including some 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.

NEXT CONTEST: The seventh and final encounter between Great Falls and Badlands will be on Sunday, February 25, 2024, starting at 12:00PM (MST) from the Roosevelt Park Ice Arena in Rapid City, South Dakota.

The Americans will return to the Great Falls Ice Plex for their regular season home finale on Friday, March 1st when the Butte Irish arrive in town for a 7:00PM (MST) contest that can be seen live on [NAHLTV](#). On Saturday, March 2nd, Great Falls will travel to Butte, Montana to play the Irish in the last regular season contest before the playoffs begin the following week.

To learn more about how to watch the Americans in action on NAHL TV, please [click here](#).

The Stadium 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.

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

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