



BALDY'S PUCK DROP

Weekly E-Newsletter March 21, 2024

Dear Great Falls Americans Enthusiast:

I'll start this week with the upcoming plans for **Baldy's Puck Drop**. This will be the last Edition for a few weeks with the plan to go monthly over the summer. Look for the next issue sometime the end of April and then will follow up with updates each month until mid-August when we will be up and running again weekly. For this issue, I'll share what is happening this time of the year and some of the plans for next season.

One announcement I am extremely excited to be able to share with you is we will be partnering with **Eagle**



Mount-Great Falls Therapeutic Recreation to re-start their Sled Hockey Program next season. Eagle Mount offers exciting programs that allow individuals of all ages with challenges (who they call their "participants") to explore recreation and take on new adventures based on their abilities, not their disabilities. Their mission is to: *to provide therapeutic and recreational activities for children and adults with physical, developmental, behavioral and/or mental challenges, striving to improve the quality of life for them and their families.* They did run a Sled Hockey Program from 2011-until

COVID hit and when their Executive Director, Deb Sivumaki, approached me at a Chamber of Commerce function to ask if the Americans were interested – it might have been the easiest decision I have ever made.

We will officially be launching our partnership with a very special **"Try Sled Hockey for Free" event at the Ice Plex on Saturday, May 4th, from 10:00 AM-11:00 AM.** Everyone (including able-bodied individuals that would like to experience what it is like) is welcome to attend and learn more about what we are doing. Then look for more information over the summer months as we plan for a full season of supporting Sled Hockey Programming in Great Falls starting next Fall. I am also excited to include specific disabled hockey options within our partnership opportunities for next season. To learn more about the various Disabled Hockey Disciplines (wouldn't it be awesome to include programming for all?), check out the Disabled page of USA Hockey here: [Disabled Hockey \(usahockey.com\)](https://www.usahockey.com/disabled-hockey).

One other exciting thing we have coming up is we have partnered with **Play It Again Sports** to host a 3 vs. 3 FUN league this Spring at the Ice Plex. All ages and skill levels are welcome and teams will be established once we have all those who register. They will get 10 ice sessions on Monday and Thursday nights from April 1 through May 2nd playing ½ ice in a very informal pond hockey environment. The entire format is designed to have fun and allow those who have a passion for the sport to work on skills and do things without the burden of systems or the pressure of winning and losing. If you are aware of anyone who may be interested, they can register at our website www.greatfallsamericans.com.



Our Prospects Camp will be held May 4th and 5th in Great Falls. This camp is an opportunity for any player (birth years 2004-2008) who is interested in playing for the Americans to participate in an open tryout. Our coaching staff will be on the ice with the players for 4½ hours as well as have an opportunity to tour our facilities and get to know the Great Falls area. We hope to have players from several different states and provinces along with any local players who have an interest. We will also be running skills and drills sessions with an emphasis in power skating and competitive contact for players of all ages and abilities the week of April 29th. Look for more info on all these programs on our website or our social media channels.



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As mentioned before, I have learned a ton this first season as the owner of the Americans and am pleased with the progress we have made in creating the culture we strive for with our team. However, there is still a lot of work to do, and we are using these few weeks to reflect on the season both on and off the ice. There are a few areas where I know we can do better and look for some changes to take place as we head into next season. These include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing better communication and outlining expectations with our amazing billet families – specifically in dealing with injured players and in player movement. We will also be increasing the billet fees next season.
- Continuing to work with the Ice Plex and the various user groups in scheduling and enhancing the overall game day experience. I do not want to jump too far ahead, but the addition of a video board, special lighting, fan promotions, and better use of the VIP area are just some of the things off the top of my head. If successful, it will not only enhance the fan experience, but also the value that we are able to offer to our partners.
- We made some huge strides this year on our social media platforms and a very huge thank you goes out to our social media guru Jessica Sanstra. Our followers and page views both increased exponentially throughout the season with over 27,000 Facebook views in February alone. This is in no way my area of expertise, but in talking with Jess, she has some great ideas on some things we can do to be even better and, once again, provide even better value to our partners. We will also be doing some work on our website this summer, as well.
- The advertising we provide to our partners – both in the presentation of dasher board ads and in distribution of our game day programs. We are already looking at ways to address both of these issues with the intention to greatly increase overall exposure to our partners advertising with us and with better quality throughout the season.
- Continue to build relationships with our other primary Ice Plex users including Youth Hockey, University of Providence and Figure skating. We need to continue to work together to grow the skating disciplines (hockey and figure skating and maybe even start some short track speed skating along with broomball and curling) so the Ice Plex can operate more efficiently and be able to financially support the improvements needed.

There are several other areas that we will be looking at to improve our operations for next season and I very much appreciate your patience as we go through this learning curve.

Finally, I would like to leave this edition with the sincerest heartfelt thank you to all our partners that are listed in the following pages. They have been an amazing group of community members that welcomed this newcomer to the community and support us in ways that allowed us to be able to accomplish what we did achieve. They took a chance on me and the Great Falls Americans and I only hope that they feel they received something of value in return. One of the things they will likely learn about me is just how deep my loyalty conviction can be as I reach out to each of you in the coming months with more detailed plans for next season. In the meantime, please accept this thank you, along with my request of all our fans to support those local business that have supported the Americans this past season.

Have a wonderful Spring and we will be back in touch in about 4-5 weeks. Feel free to reach out to me directly if there is anything I can do to make your Great Falls Americans experience a better one.



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Player Profile – #40 Blake Komrofske (Colorado Springs, CO) 5'11" 155 lbs. FOR - Shoots Right

Favorite Team: Colorado Avalanche **Favorite Player:** Nathan McKinnon

Favorite Movie: Happy Gilmore **Favorite Actor/Actress:** Adam Sandler

Favorite Food: Chicken Wings **Favorite Pre-Game Meal:** Chicken Alfredo

Musical Group You Won't Miss in Concert: \$uicideboy\$

Song or Artist Guaranteed to get you hyped: \$uicideboy\$

One Item you would bring with you to a deserted Island: Matches

Hobbies other than Hockey: Golf, Video Games

Three People you would invite to Dinner: Adam Sandler, Peyton Manning, Cale Makar

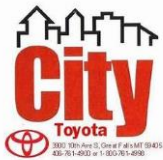
College/University of Choice: University of Iowa

Like Most About Great Falls: The community

How would you define a successful season: Become brothers with teammates and win games.



Thank you to all our existing **Eagle's Nest, Diamond and Platinum Level** partners for their continued support.



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Gold, Silver and Bronze Level Partners

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|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|---|
| Century Gaming | Great Falls Hospital & Clinic | Anderson Glass-Door | Point S Tire & Auto Service |
| 2 J's Complex | Borries Italian Supper Club | Murphy Law Office | Stadium Sports Bar & Casino |
| Heidelberg Lounge | Treasure State Eyecare | Craftmaster Cabinets | Floors and More Abbey Carpets |
| Tuttle Tile | Teriyaki Madness | Central MT Lock & Safe | 3D International Restaurant |
| Jersey Mike's | Noble's West Side Liquor | Annie's Taphouse | Hotel Avron-Celtic Cowboy |
| Scheel's | Croxford Funeral Home | Big Sky Laboratory | AllState- Tammy Quintrell-Stubbs |
| All State Signs | Highwood Creek Outfitters | Automotive Machine | She Bare Wax & Sugar Boutique |
| Wheat Montana | Stifel Investment Services | Bigelow Endodontics | Best Western Plus Riverfront Hotel |
| Culligan Water | Best Med Urgent Care | Buffalo Wild Wings | Tilleraas Landscape & Nursery |
| Stockman Bank | SpringHill Suites by Marriott | Central Avenue Meats | Todd Neighbor at Comparion Insurance |
| Fuddrucker's | Play It Again Sports | The Beacon IceHouse | Nate and Renae Weisenburger |
| Life in Bloom | Comparion Insurance | United Materials | Fox Sports Radio, Q 106, 104.9 The Wolf |
| Hampton Inn | Traynor Capital | Bravera Bank | Discount Meats |
| KFBB | Cascade Electric | | |

Thank you for being a part of our family and we look forward to seeing you at the rink.

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