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Great Falls Americans Press Release
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Houlihan's hat trick helps Great Falls blowout Missoula

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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MISSOULA, Mont., December 2, 2017 — The Great Falls Americans (16-5-2-0) and the Missoula Jr. Bruins have had their games so far this season decided by no more than a two-goal difference.

That was until Saturday evening in the Garden City.

Michael Houlihan had a breakout game by netting three goals and goaltender Bryan Sharp added 20 saves as Great Falls routed Missoula 9-1 at the Glacier Ice

Rink in Missoula, Montana.

The Great Falls Americans were 25 seconds away from another shutout win this season, but Missoula scored in the final minute to prevent that from happening. The Americans, under the direction of coach Jeff Heimel, scored four of their goals during the middle period.

Michael Houlihan scored two of his three goals in the last period and Cody Dearing was one goal shy of a hat trick.

Michael Houlihan and Kyler Mack each scored to give the Americans a 2-0 advantage after the first stanza. Michael Fary, Adam Vandenbos, and Tanner Rath all received assists.

Cody Dearing scored twice followed by a goal apiece by Tanner Rath and Weston Goodman to put the visiting team ahead 6-0 after intermission. Payton McSharry dished out two assists while Michael Fary, Michael Houlihan, Matt Janke, Kody Thomas and Jens Juliussen provide assists. Goodman's goal was one of three successful power play scoring opportunities that the Americans took advantage of while the Bruins were down a man.

The visiting team continued to produce goals in the last period of regulation. After Kody Thomas and Michael Houlihan's scored during the first two minutes of the period, Houlihan cemented his hat trick with his fourth goal of the season off the stick of Luke Richesin and Tanner Rath with less than 12 minutes

remaining. JJ Blondin prevented the Americans from their second shutout victory of the season with his second goal as a Bruin this season. Rhys Cottle and Zach Jaffe accumulated the assists.

The Americans easily out-shot the Bruins 56-21 including taking over 20 shots in the second and third periods.

The visiting squad took advantage of the host team's penalties by scoring on three power play chances. Missoula couldn't connect on any of their four attempts.

Bryan Sharp continued to be successful in the net as he ran his record to 8-3-1 and stopped 20 of 21 shots that Missoula attempted. Missoula utilized two netminders as Billy Yoder picked up the loss after playing the first twenty minutes. Duncan Wiest replaced him for the final 40 minutes and recorded 38 saves.

NEXT CONTEST: The Helena Bighorns will play host the Great Falls Americans on Friday, December 8th for a 7:05PM showdown between these two interstate rivals.

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