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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**  
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## **Frontier Semifinals: Larson's two goals send Great Falls to the NA3HL Frontier Division Finals next week**

**By Kevin Scott**

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BOZEMAN, Mont., March 18, 2016 — The Great Falls Americans (36-11-2) and the Bozeman Ice Dogs (29-12-8) had to be tired after Thursday's 2-1 double overtime contest won by the Great Falls in Game 1 of the 2015-16 NA3HL Frontier Division Semi-finals in Great Falls.

Would Bozeman win the second game on Friday night to even up the series and force a game three back in Great Falls on Sunday afternoon?

The second-ranked Great Falls Americans scored two goals by Josh Larson in the opening period and avoided a comeback scare in the final period to hold on to a 2-1 win at Haynes Pavilion in Bozeman, Montana to close out the best-of-three semifinals against the Bozeman Ice Dogs. The back-to-back victories over the Ice Dogs mean the Americans have secured a spot in next week's 2016 NA3HL Frontier Division Finals against either the top-ranked Yellowstone Quake or the fourth-ranked Gillette Wild.

Josh Larson accumulated two goals in a five-minute span in the first period. Larson, one goal shy of a hat trick, scored his 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> goals off assists by Tanner Congdon and Ricards Bernhards. Congdon led the team this season with 43 assists including two playoff games. The penalty-free period saw a combined 20 shots-on-goal for both squads.

The middle period was when all of the penalties took place and neither team picking up any points. Great Falls and Bozeman took just two shots apiece against goaltenders Jake Stephan (Great Falls) and Stephen Frank of Bozeman. The two Montana teams each acquired six minutes of penalty time with three minors.

After assisting on a goal in Thursday's loss, Casey Gobel cut the deficit by the Ice Dogs to 2-1 during the first five minutes of the last period of play with his strike set up by Daniel Liberko and Nicholas Thompson. That would be as close as Bozeman would come as the Americans defense held up and prevented the Bozeman offense from scoring the rest of the way.

Bozeman managed to attempt 15 shots in the third and combined for ten in the first and second periods while Great Falls had half (12) of their 24 shots taken in the first period.

Jake Stephan swatted away 24 of the 25 shots for Great Falls on a night after he finished with 40 saves in the first game of the series. Stephen Frank finished his final game of the season for the Ice Dogs by rejecting 22 shots.

Nick Greene added a hat trick in the other NA3HL semifinal as he helped the Yellowstone Quake even up their series (1-1) with a 6-4 win over the Gillette Wild on Friday night in Gillette, Wyoming. The third and decisive game three will head back to Cody, Wyoming on Saturday night at 7:30PM with the winner going to the NA3HL Frontier Division Finals against Great Falls next week.

**NEXT CONTEST:** The Great Falls Americans will await the winner of Saturday's other semifinal contest between the Gillette Wild and the Yellowstone Quake for the 2016 NA3HL Frontier Finals that will start next week in a best-of-three series with the winner going to the NA3HL Silver Cup Championship in Romeoville, Illinois at the end of March.

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