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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Helena's Cross receives hat trick in 4-1 victory over Great Falls

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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HELENA, Mont., December 8, 2018 — The Helena Bighorns (21-2-0-0) are a tough squad for the Great Falls Americans (19-5-0-1) to match up against this season in the North American 3 Hockey League's (NA3HL) Frontier Division. The top two teams in the division have conducted business on the ice four times this season with Helena coming out with three victories including a 5-4 win in a shootout last week in Great Falls.

In addition to the three defeats by Helena, Great Falls also fell once to Missoula and Gillette this season. Helena's two loss came from Great Falls (8-3 loss in October) and a December 1st setback to the Bozeman Ice Dogs, 5-2.

Helena Bighorns forward Luc Cross scored three goals to help the top-ranked Helena Bighorns pick up a 4-1 victory over the second-ranked Great Falls Americans during Saturday's NA3HL hockey game in Helena, Montana. Great Falls was denied their 20th win after a 1-1 score after two periods.

A packed house of 875 fans at the Helena Ice Arena saw the Americans jump out to a one-goal lead with 1:05 to go in the first period. Luke Richesin and Jack Olson each assisted on the play that brought Cody Dearing his seventh goal of the season. Olson secured his 18th assist while Richesin received his ninth assist. Great Falls held a 16-12 advantage in the shots-on-goal category.

The Bighorns offense was able to score once against the defense of the Americans in the middle period. Luc Cross, who also suited up last season for the Helena, tied up the score at 1-1 seven minutes into the stanza after firing a shot by Americans goaltender Viktor Wennberg. Ricards Groskops, the Latvian forward and Alberta native Nicholas Noel created the assists for the home team on the power play score. The Bighorns attempted 19 shots after the first intermission and held Great Falls to 13.

Helena broke the tie during the middle of the third frame when Nicholas Noel collected his second assist when his pass to Luc Cross went by the Great Falls netminder. Helena led 2-1 after Great Falls was down a man due to a penalty. Helena lit up the lamp again 64 seconds later when Ricards Groskops got the

puck to Luc Cross for his third score (hat trick) while Great Falls was in the penalty box. Helena capitalized on Great Falls' mistakes when they netted their third goal in a span of 86 seconds. Darren Donovan found the back of the net for this 20th scoring drive this season with help from Henry Kipper and Helena native Kaden Lindberg. Both defenses prevented any more scoring during the final six minutes of the contest.

The Bighorns out-shot Great Falls in the final forty minutes (43-33) to finish with 55 shots. Great Falls produced 20 of their 49 shots in the third stanza.

Eight of the fourteen penalties came in the final period with all three of Luc Cross' goals coming via the power play for Helena. Great Falls failed to provide any goals on their three power play chances.

Alexander Rogers, the goaltender from California, ran his undefeated record to 9-0 after stopping 48 of the 49 shots that Great Falls generated. Viktor Wennberg accumulated 51 saves in 56 minutes for the Americans. The Sweden resident now has an 8-2 record with both losses coming from Helena.

NEXT CONTEST: The Great Falls Americans will have a busy weekend (December 14-18) with four games in five days. Great Falls returns to the Great Falls Ice Plex on Friday, December 14th when the Bozeman Ice Dogs come to town for a 7:30PM showdown and the final home game of 2018. Great Falls then travels to Blaine, Minnesota for the three-day [NA3HL Showcase Tournament](#). For the complete tournament schedule and information, please click on the link above.

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