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Great Falls Americans Press Release
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Simpson, Cowden and Scites help Great Falls blank Bozeman, 5-0

By Kevin Scott

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|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Box Score | Game Sheet | League Scoreboard | Americans Team Statistics |
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BOZEMAN, Mont., February 8, 2019 — The #1 Great Falls Americans (33-7-0-1) and the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs (23-12-4-0) have had four encounters on the ice during the 2018-19 North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL) junior hockey season.

Great Falls, currently on a 11-game winning streak, have won all four previous meetings against the Ice Dogs with two games each in Great Falls and Bozeman.

The Americans have outscored Bozeman 19-9 including a 4-3 overtime victory on December 28th in Bozeman.

The Americans and Helena Bighorns have already clinched one of the four Frontier Division playoff spots with three teams currently in contention for the final two spots including Bozeman, Missoula Jr. Bruins and the Gillette (WY) Wild.

Great Falls has been led throughout the season by two forwards, Payton McSharry and Jens Juliussen, who lead the Americans in goals scored and assists, respectively. Both standouts were also selected to play with the Frontier Division squad at next week's 2019 Top Prospects Tournament in Massachusetts (Feb. 18-19). McSharry's 41 goals tops all players for Great Falls while Juliussen has continued to pile up the assists with 58. Defenseman Nate Simpson (8 goals, 20 assists) will also represent Great Falls at the Top Prospects Tournament. Drew Scites (17-4-0-1 record, 608 saves) and Viktor Wennberg (15-2 record, 488 saves) have both had solid performances in the net for coach Greg Sears' team this season with Wennberg being invited to the prestigious tournament as well.

Meanwhile, Bozeman is led by Hazen McKay, Dominic Canic and Mikael Levokari. McKay's 41 goals, Canic's 53 assists and Levokari's 759 saves lead the third-place Ice Dogs with one month to go in the regular season.

Would Great Falls continue their win streak and pick up their fifth consecutive victory over Bozeman?

Great Falls American defenseman Nate Simpson and Trent Cowden each scored two goals apiece and Drew Scites stopped all 20 shots in the net to lead the top-ranked Great Falls Americans to a five-goal shutout victory over the Bozeman Ice Dogs at Haynes Pavilion in Bozeman, Montana on Friday evening.

Great Falls started the scoring midway through the first period when George Nuutinen and Hendrik Robel gathered the first of their two assists when Nate Simpson lit up the lamp for the first of his two scores. Jens Juliussen put the visiting squad up 2-0 two minutes later with help from Payton McSharry and Cody Dearing. Great Falls took 16 of the 22 total shots taken during the penalty-free stanza.

The lone goal during the middle period was made by Nate Simpson. The Claremont, California native netted his eighth goal of the season thanks to Robel and Nuutinen, who also assisted on his first period goal. The Americans committed just one minor penalty after the first intermission while Bozeman racked up four penalties resulting in 26 minutes of penalty time including a 20-minute unsportsmanlike conduct on the Ice Dogs bench. The Americans created 20 second period shots and limited the home team to six.

The Americans buried two more goals in the third frame. Trent Cowden accumulated two goals to increase his season total to seven goals scored. Justin Ohnstad and newcomer Blake Nerney assisted on Great Falls' fourth scoring drive with 11:12 remaining. Cowden's second score came via a power play with a few minutes to go before the period expired and was assisted by Jens Juliussen and Nate Simpson.

The Americans attempted 49 shots during the sixty-minute contest while the Ice Dogs finished with 20.

The seven combined power play opportunities only produced one goal by the Americans in the third period. The Americans kept the clock moving and committed just two minor infractions on the night. Bozeman registered all six of their penalties in the final two periods that resulted in 30 minutes in the penalty box.

The two starting goaltenders (Great Falls' Drew Scites and Bozeman's Mikael Levokari) played the entire contest for their respective teams. The difference was Levokari allowed five goals and Scites swatted away all 20 shots taken by Bozeman's offense. Levokari finished with 44 saves in the loss.

NOTE: Great Falls made a few roster changes this past week when they released two of their international players, Sean McLean and Alexi Suchomlin. McLean, a forward from Scarborough, Australia, tallied five points (3 goals, 2 assists) in 25 appearances and Suchomlin added 12 points (6 goals, 6 assists) in 17 contests. The Americans added 6'1" forward Blake Nerney of St. Louis, Missouri to the squad. [Click here](#) to view an updated roster (as of February 8, 2019).

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls has four of their remaining seven regular season games at home including the next three games. Due to the Great Falls Amateur Hockey Association's (GFAHA) Terry Casey Memorial Cup hockey tournament being held at the Great Falls Ice Plex this weekend for high school teams, the Americans will host the Butte Cobras on Sunday, February 10th at 4:00PM at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The Yellowstone Quake (Cody, WY) comes to Great Falls for a two-game series against the Americans on Friday and Saturday, February 15th and 16th with games starting at 7:30PM each night.

Here is the remaining regular season schedule for the Great Falls Americans.

| FEBRUARY | | | |
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| Day/Date | Opponent | Time | Location |
| Sun. Feb. 10 | vs. Butte Cobras | 4:00PM | <u>Great Falls Ice Plex</u> |
| Fri. Feb. 15 | vs. Yellowstone Quake | 7:30PM | <u>Great Falls Ice Plex</u> |
| Sat. Feb. 16 | vs. Yellowstone Quake | 7:30PM | <u>Great Falls Ice Plex</u> |
| *Mon. Feb. 18 | 2019 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament: Frontier Division vs. Northeast Division | 8:00AM (MST) | New England Sports Village, Attleboro, Massachusetts |
| | 2019 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament: Frontier Division vs. Coastal Division | 1:45PM (MST) | New England Sports Village, Attleboro, Massachusetts |
| *Tues. Feb. 19 | 2019 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament: Frontier Division vs. Central Division | 6:00AM (MST) | New England Sports Village, Attleboro, Massachusetts |
| Fri. Feb. 22 | @ Bozeman Ice Dogs | 7:30PM | Haynes Pavilion, Bozeman, MT |
| MARCH | | | |
| Fri. Mar. 1 | @ Helena Bighorns | 7:05PM | Helena Ice Arena, Helena, MT |
| Sat. Mar. 9 | vs. Butte Cobras | 7:30PM | <u>Great Falls Ice Plex</u> |
| END OF REGULAR SEASON | | | |
| <p>NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament: Great Falls Americans participating for the Frontier Division squad include Payton McSharry, Jens Juliussen and Nate Simpson. Great Falls Americans head coach Greg Sears will serve as assistant coach under Helena Bighorns head coach Bob Richards for the Frontier Division squad.</p> | | | |

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