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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**  
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**McSharry and Wennberg lead Frontier Division squad to overtime victory over Northeast club**

**By Kevin Scott**

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<b>Coastal Division vs. Frontier Division</b>			
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ATTLEBORO, Mass., February 18, 2019 — The North American Tier 3 Hockey League's top prospects spread among all six divisional teams came together to take part in the NA3HL's Top Prospects Tournament in Attleboro, Massachusetts. The two-day tournament takes place today (Monday) and Tuesday (Feb. 18-19) from the [New England Sports Village](#), home of the NAHL and NA3HL's Northeast Generals.

The [2019 NA3HL Top Prospects Tournament](#) along with the North American Hockey League (NAHL) Top Prospects Tournament provides an opportunity for both leagues to showcase their best hockey players in front of coaches and scouts from the junior and NCAA college levels to the National Hockey League (NHL).

The Great Falls Americans, the top team in the Frontier Division with a record of 36-7-0-1, had four players represented on the Frontier Division squad including forwards [Payton McSharry](#) and [Jens Juliussen](#), defenseman [Nate Simpson](#) and goaltender [Viktor Wennberg](#). Helena Bighorns head coach Bob Richards guided the Frontier squad with assistance from Great Falls Americans mentor [Greg Sears](#).

Each 20-man roster team (12 forwards, 6 defensemen, 2 goaltenders) played twice on the first day of competition at the prestigious tournament. In the second game of the tournament, the Frontier Division squad challenged the Northeast Division team (8:00AM MST) and played in the second game in the afternoon against the Coastal Division team (1:45PM MST). [Click here](#) for the full two-day tournament schedule and results. Each game consisted of (3) 17-minute periods with a single ice cut in the middle of the second period.

The Frontier Division team led by Helena Bighorns head coach Bob Richards and assisted by Great Falls Americans head coach Greg Sears needed overtime to defeat the Northeast Division squad, 2-1 in the second game of the 2019 Top Prospects Tournament on Monday morning.

Great Falls Americans forward had a hand in both scoring drives for the Frontier team. The Anchorage, Alaska native scored the first goal for the Frontier team and assisted on the game-winning score in overtime. Americans goaltender Viktor Wennberg played 27 minutes (out of 51 minutes) and stopped all 22 shots from going into the net.

The 17-minute first period saw one minor penalty called on the Northeast team and 32 total shots, but no successful scoring drives were awarded.

Both squads scored one goal each in the middle period. Trevor Christopher (Skylands Kings) put the Northeast club up 1-0 six minutes into the stanza on the unassisted play over Frontier goaltender Michael Allman (Yellowstone Quake). Great Falls Americans standout Payton McSharry, who currently leads the Americans in goals scored with ???, received a pass from Trevor Prince (Missoula Jr. Bruins) and tied the contest at 1-1. The first goal for the Frontier team came with 4:06 remaining before the second intermission. The Northeast Division took six more shot overall after two periods (34-28).

Despite 26 shots taken between these two divisions, neither team accumulated any scoring drives in the third period and an overtime was needed to declare a winning team.

Fifty-eight seconds and one-shot attempt was all that was needed in overtime. Gillette Wild forward Gage Thompson netted the game-winning score with assistance from Americans forward Payton McSharry while the Frontier team was on a power play.

The Frontier Division finished up the 51-minute contest (17-minute periods) by creating 41 of the 89 shots.

Five minor penalties were issued accounting for ten total minutes of penalty time in the exhibition contest. Payton McSharry's score that tied the contest in the middle period was the only power play for either team that was successful with the Frontier team going 1-for-2 and the Northeast squad coming up short in three attempts.

Michael Allman (Gillette Wild goalie) started the contest for the Frontier team but Great Falls Americans goaltender Viktor Wennberg picked up the win by swatting away all 22 shots by the Northeast Division team. Allman ended the morning game with 25 saves. Meanwhile, Northeast netminder Jeff Zero (Binghamton Jr. Senators) had 21 saves in 25 minutes of action before being replaced by Kavan Johnson (Skylands Kings), who suffered the overtime setback. Johnson allowed two goals including the final one in overtime.

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### **Frontier squad falls in a shootout to the Coastal Division team, 3-2**

ATTLEBORO, Mass., February 18, 2019 —Lewiston/Auburn Nordiques (L/A Nordiques) forward Colby Audette scored the game-winning shootout goal to lift the Coastal Division team to a 3-2 victory over the Frontier Division squad on Monday afternoon in Attleboro, Massachusetts in the second game of the day for both clubs.

During the first four minutes of the first stanza, the Frontier Division team went up 2-0 thanks to goals by Dominic Canic (Bozeman Ice Dogs) and Great Falls Americans standout Payton McSharry. Bozeman teammate Hazen McKay and Yellowstone Quake's Luke Hartge chipped in the assists for the first score

of the contest by Canic. Payton McSharry followed up Canic's goal with his second goal of the day with 12:50 on the clock. Dominic Canic created the assist. The Coastal Division squad fought back late in the period and scored two goals before the 17-minute period concluded. The Long Beach Shark connection of Cade Lambdin and Dino Mukovoz tallied the first goal for the Coastal team to cut the deficit to 2-1. Valeri Rykov of the L/A Nordiques lit up the lamp to even the score at 2-2. His unassisted score came with 1:57 left.

Both NA3HL division teams skated around during the second and third periods but couldn't capitalize on any scoring drives with both defenses prevailing.

The five-minute overtime came and went without any scoring, so a shoot-out was necessary.

The only player to score in the shootout came from Colby Audette as he scored the one-one goal over Great Falls Americans netminder Viktor Wennberg for the winning tally.

The Frontier team held a 34-31 shots-on-goal advantage after the three periods of regulation. Five unanswered shots were taken in the overtime and the 56-minute game saw the Frontier Division taking one more shot than the Coastal Division team (36-35).

No power play chances were awarded. The Frontier Division accrued two of the seven total penalties for four minutes. Five penalties were called on the Coastal squad that resulted in 10 minutes in the sin bin.

Andrew Ghimpeteanu (Coastal Division, Maine Wild) and Viktor Wennberg (Frontier Division, Great Falls Americans) were the only goalies used. The winning netminder, Ghimpeteanu, stopped 34 of the 36 shots. Wennberg took the shootout loss after winning the earlier contest of the day, 2 to 1 in overtime over the Northeast Division. The Sweden native registered 32 saves in game two.

Great Falls Americans forward Jens Juliussen and defenseman Nate Simpson also saw action today.

**TOURNAMENT NOTES:** For more information about the Top Prospects Tournament, please [click here](#). Fans can also follow the action live at [HockeyTV](#) and see the stats updated live on the [NA3HL Tournament Scoreboard](#). View the first day of action (rosters/schedules/box scores) by [\\*\\*\\*clicking here](#) for the NA3HL article.

**NEXT CONTEST:** The second and final day of the 2019 Top Prospects Tournament in Attleboro, Massachusetts takes place on Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> with each team playing one game. The Frontier Division squad plays against the Central Division standouts in the first game of the day at 6:00AM (MST).

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