



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Great Falls Americans Press Release

Contact: Kevin Scott, GF Americans Public Relations Coordinator

Phone: (406) 403-8146

Third period proves costly for the Americans; Helena downs Great Falls 4-2

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
---------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------------	---



GREAT FALLS, Mont., October 19, 2018 — The Great Falls Americans (11-2-0-0) have had a long hockey history with the Helena Bighorns (11-0-0-0) throughout the years.

None bigger than this year when both teams face each other for the second time this season as two of the top two teams in the NA3HL this season battle it out on the ice for bragging rights in the Frontier Division. This game was also the “NA3HL

Game of the Week” brought to you by [Hockey TV](#).

During their first encounter in Helena on September 29th, Great Falls had trouble for the first time this season trying to get their offense going and score goals as the Bighorns won easily 7-1.

On Friday evening in front of the home crowd, the Americans were trying to get back at them with a win.

The Great Falls Americans led 2-1 entering the third period before the Helena Bighorns rattled off three goals to give the home team their second loss of the season. Helena’s 4-2 victory puts them in sole possession of first place in the Frontier Division with their 11th consecutive win. There were over 1,000 spectators cheering on both squads at the Great Falls Ice Plex.

Payton McSharry, the forward from Alaska, gave the home team a 2-0 lead midway through the first stanza. Matt Janke assisted on the first goal with 11:35 and received his 17th assist on McSharry’s second goal a few minutes later. The undefeated Bighorns would not go away as Hayden Seitz got the puck to teammate Luc Cross with 38 seconds left before the first intermission to cut the lead for Great Falls in half. Great Falls took nine shots (Helena had 17) during the opening twenty minutes of action. Americans goaltender Viktor Wennberg had 16 saves at this point of the contest.

Great Falls and Helena skated to a scoreless tie during the middle period despite both squads combining for 34 total shots. Each team registered one minor penalty.

The Bighorns offense got going in the final period as they scored three unanswered goals. Helena's Elliott Plourde's 17th goal of the season evened up the score at 2-2 with 14 minutes remaining in the final period of regulation. Latvia native Ricards Groskops gathered his 12th overall assist of the season. Minutes later, Luc Cross put the biscuit in the basket for the second time to break the tie.

Great Falls pulled starting goaltender Viktor Wennberg with 74 seconds to go but Canadian Nicholas Noel ensured the victory for Helena by skating around the American defenders for the Bighorns fourth goal with 13 seconds remaining. Luc Cross was credited with his eighth assist on the empty net scoring drive.

The Americans were led by forward Payton McSharry, who received a 2nd Star for his play last week in the NA3HL's Weekly Stars of the Week, scored both goals for Great Falls while Matt Janke added two assists. Meanwhile, Luc Cross recorded two of the four goals for the Bighorns while dishing out one assist.

Both top NA3HL squads finished the contest with just three penalties for six minutes. The Bighorns and the Americans came up empty-handed on their three power play chances. The top team in the Frontier Division attempted 51 shots on Great Falls as the Americans took 34 shots after having 23 after the first two periods.

Carver Thompson of Laurel, Montana, who participated in his third game, picked up his second win in the net for Bob Richards' team. He tallied 32 saves and gave up two first period goals. Viktor Wennberg redirected 47 of the 50 shots as his record fell to 4-1.

NOTE: Former Great Falls Americans coach and current University of Providence (Great Falls, MT) head coach Jeff Heimel was in attendance scouting the highly-anticipated matchup.

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls continues their long home streak as the Missoula Jr. Bruins come to the Great Falls Ice Plex for a Saturday night showdown at 7:30PM with the Americans on Saturday, October 20th. After Saturday's contest, the Americans are home for the next six of their seven games during the rest of October and the month of November.

CONTACT:

Greg Sears
Great Falls Americans Head Coach/General Manager
Cell Phone: 715-566-2811
Email: gsears@greatfallsamericans.com

Visit our website: <http://www.gfamericans.com>
Join Us on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/greatfalls.americanshockey>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/gfamericans>

North American 3 Hockey League: <http://www.na3hl.com/>

