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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

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**Great Falls native Barta makes NCAA Commitment to play hockey in Michigan**

By Kevin Scott



**Connor Barta**

GREAT FALLS, Mont., July 26, 2016 — The Great Falls Americans, a member of the [North American 3 Hockey League \(NA3HL\)](#), are pleased to announce that a local player from Great Falls has committed to play men's ice hockey collegiately.

Connor Barta, a 6'2" defenseman signed on to further his education and play men's hockey at [Aquinas College](#). The Grand Rapids, Michigan school is a small catholic college with an enrollment of 2,200. The Saints are members of the [American Collegiate Hockey Association \(ACHA\)](#).

The ACHA Division III hockey program finished with a 29-8-1 record and earned a trip to the 2016 ACHA Final Four. Aquinas advanced to the Division III Vezina Cup title game where they lost to Oakland (MI) University, 5-4.

The 20-year-old from Montana has played with his hometown Great Falls Americans for the previous five seasons. The Great Falls Tier III junior hockey team are the 2015 and 2016 league champions in the Frontier Division.

Barta, a graduate of C.M. Russell High School, has scored five goals in each of his last three seasons for the Americans. He also accumulated 13 assists during the 2015-16 season while seeing action in 46 of the 47 regular season contests as well as the eight playoff games. He finished his career with the Americans with 70 points (18 goals and 52 assists). The Americans standout helped Great Falls sweep the Divisional Semi-Finals against the Bozeman Ice Dogs and the Divisional championship to the Yellowstone (WY) Quake in two games apiece. The Americans advanced to the Silver Cup Tournament where they won two of their four games and made an appearance in the semifinals this year. The team finished with a 40-13-2 overall record including a 20-5-1 at home at the Great Falls Ice Plex.

He was selected and played in the 2016 Top Prospects Tournament in Plymouth, Michigan in February with Great Falls teammates Arseny Ivanov, Josh Larson and Jake Stephan. Americans coach Jeff Heimel was the head coach of the Frontier team that won all three games. The three-day tournament had many college coaches and scouts in attendance.

Some of his biggest accomplishments in an Americans uniform included winning back-to-back Frontier Division titles and breaking the record for most games played at 117.

"It's always been a dream to play at the collegiate level (of hockey)," said Barta. "What's really most exciting (about playing in college) is playing for a school since I never really played for a school before."

Barta, who will major in Business said that Americans head coach Jeff HeimeI “helped everybody on the team. It wasn’t about just winning games it was developing as a person within the organization.”

[Click here](#) to view Connor Barta’s career statistics.

[Click here](#) for a full listing of NA3HL college commitments.

**Additional Links:** [Great Falls Americans](#)

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