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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**  
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**Gudz, Henningsgard help Great Falls rally for 5-2 win over Helena, clinch playoff spot**

By Kevin Scott

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HELENA, Mont., March 13, 2021 — The #2 Great Falls Americans (23-11-2-0) have not played prior to tonight’s contest since February 27th when they hosted the #5 Helena Bighorns (17-17-1-1) in the final regular season home contest for the 2020-21 season.

Great Falls was scheduled to travel to the Butte, Montana (Butte Cobras) and Bozeman, Montana (Bozeman Ice Dogs) last weekend but due to an unspecified illness, those games did not occur. Since then, those two games have been rescheduled (as well as the remaining schedule) can be viewed below:

**2020-21 Great Falls Americans Updated Schedule (Updated March 13, 2021)**

Wed. Mar. 17	@ Bozeman Ice Dogs	2:00PM	Haynes Pavilion, Bozeman, MT
Fri. Mar. 19	@ Butte Cobras	7:00PM	Butte Community Ice Center, Butte, MT
Sat. Mar. 20	@ Missoula Jr. Bruins	4:00PM	Glacier Ice Rink, Missoula, MT
Tues. Mar. 23	@ Helena Bighorns (Final Regular Season Contest)	7:05PM	Helena Ice Arena, Helena, MT

During the final contest in February, the Great Falls Americans put on a performance as they needed a shootout to declare their 22<sup>nd</sup> victory of the season by posting a 2-1 win at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Jackson Henningsgard provided the winning goal in the shootout for Great Falls.

The Americans and Bighorns have met on the ice six times this season with Great Falls earning victories in four of them including a 3-1 record at home and they earned a win and a loss in Helena.

Helena is the fifth seed and needs to be in the top four to earn the fourth and final playoff spot in the 2021 NA3HL Playoffs that begin in April while #2 Great Falls and the top-ranked Sheridan (WY) Hawks are playoff bound.

Forwards Lucas Gudz scored twice, and Jackson Henningsgard assisted on three scoring plays as the #2 Great Falls Americans rallied by the Helena Bighorns 5-2 during Saturday's NA3HL action at the Helena Ice Arena. The Americans 23<sup>rd</sup> victory came with four games remaining in the 2020-21 NA3HL regular season. The win also ensured the Americans a playoff spot in next month's NA3HL Playoffs and gave Coach Greg Sears his 100<sup>th</sup> victory with the Americans.

Twelve minutes in the first period, the home-standing Bighorns acquired the first goal of the game when Nick Cofer's pass to Andrew Deskin sailed by Great Falls netminder Trever Mellen for the early lead. The visiting squad evened up the contest before the teams went into the locker room after the first period. Hunter Maschke and AJ Benit set up the successful goal by Lucas Gudz. Gudz, who calls Wasilla, Alaska home, scored his tenth goal of the season with 2:35 remaining in the opening stanza. Great Falls accumulated 16 of the 36 shots.

Early in the second period, both teams traded goals. Helena's Isaac Ellingson quickly put the Bighorns back on top (2-1) with his 13<sup>th</sup> goal with assistance from Gavyn Galloway, who earned his team-leading 26<sup>th</sup> assist. The Americans got their second goal of the night with 11:53 remaining when Nick Silance received his fifth assist of the season when Alex Jackson lit up the lamp for his 17<sup>th</sup> goal as Bighorns goaltender Andrew Adleman could not stop the puck from going in. Later in the frame, Great Falls secured their first lead of the contest when Thomas Gazich, a newcomer to the team last month, chipped in his first goal on another Americans scoring play at the 7:49 mark. Jackson Henningsgard and Kobe Pane accrued the assists on the first successful power play. Following that goal, Lucas Gudz scored his second goal 12 seconds later to stretch the Americans lead to 4-2. Jackson Henningsgard and Jake Hayes provided the assists. After two periods, Helena amassed 37 shots and Great Falls garnered 31.

During the third period, the Americans would outscore the Bighorns, 1-0. Jackson Henningsgard racked up his third assists while Kobe Pane created his twelfth when they dished off to Jake Hayes for the 5-2 advantage midway through the period.

The rivalry saw 11 penalties with most of them coming in the middle period that resulted in 64 minutes of time spent off the ice. Great Falls earned two of their five goals with Helena in the penalty box. The home team squandered their four power play chances.

Trever Mellen added his 18<sup>th</sup> season win in the goal for Great Falls. The veteran netminder recorded 50 saves and now has a season total of 878. Helena utilized two goaltenders (Anthony Adleman and Nat Gulsvig) but Adleman was credited with his 12<sup>th</sup> setback in 27 games. Adleman finished with 25 saves and Gulsvig had 17.

**NOTES:** Great Falls remains in second place behind #1 Sheridan Hawks (35-1-0-0), who cruised to a dominating 11-4 victory over #3 Missoula (Junior Bruins) on Saturday in Wyoming ([see box score](#)). With the win, Great Falls is now four points (48-44) ahead of Missoula (21-15-2-0) in the race for second place with two weeks remaining in the regular season. The regular season ends for all teams on March 28.

**NEXT CONTEST:** The Great Falls Americans will have three of their final four contests of the regular season this week. The next game is scheduled for Wednesday (March 17<sup>th</sup>) for a 2:00PM (MST) matchup with the Bozeman Ice Dogs at Haynes Pavilion before they travel to Butte, MT to face the Cobras on Friday (March 19<sup>th</sup>) followed by an afternoon tilt against the #4 Missoula Junior Bruins in Missoula's

Glacier Ice Rink at 4:00PM on Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. All games can be viewed on the NA3HL's streaming platform, [HockeyTV](#) with a paid subscription.

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