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**Great Falls Americans Press Release**

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**Americans featured on '31 teams in 31 days' NA3HL series**

By Kevin Scott



GREAT FALLS, Mont., August 17, 2014 —The Great Falls Americans Junior A team was featured on Sunday in the league-wide (NA3HL) '31 teams in 31 days' season preview series that features all 31 league teams.

Since August 6<sup>th</sup>, the league has previewed one team each day leading up to the first regular season game on September 6<sup>th</sup>. The North American 3 Hockey League (NA3HL) begins their fifth year this upcoming season, takes

an in-depth look into each team including interviews with the head coaches with their expectations and outlook along with potential team rosters and club strengths for the upcoming 2014-15 season. The preview includes a look back from last season and how each team fared and their accomplishments.

Below is the Great Falls Americans '31 in 31' Season Preview:

**Great Falls Americans**

**Head Coach:** Jeff Heimel

**2013-14 Record:** 36-9-3-0, 75 Points (2nd, AWWHL)

**2013-14 Leading Scorer:** Aaron McInnis (29 G, 43 A, 72 P, +50)

**Playoffs:** 2nd overall, Eliminated by Helena in the AWWHL Championship Series, 3 games to 0

**2014-15 Division:** Frontier

**First Regular Season Game:** Sat. September 20th 7:30 pm at Glacier

**Home Opener:** Fri. September 26th 7:30 pm vs Bozeman

With a 36-9-3-0 record, the Great Falls Americans ended up 2nd in the regular season in the AWWHL. They made a deep run in the playoffs and ended up taking home 2nd place in the AWWHL league championship, losing out to the Helena Bighorns 3 games to 0. Aaron McInnis led the team in scoring with 29 goals and 43 assists.

"We were definitely satisfied and a bit surprised with the result last season," said Coach Jeff Heimel. "Following a 16-win season during our 2013-2014 season and a one-win season during our 2011-2012 campaign, we set our goals as an organization to make the playoffs for the first time since the reforming of the AWWHL in 2011. We knew we had a good group of veterans from the prior year coming into last

season and we were proud of what they achieved during the course of the year. They certainly exceeded our expectations for them as a group.”

With a strong season last year, it is a time for reflection for the organization. “The summer has been spent looking for important pieces of the puzzle for our team that we feel can help us take the next step as a hockey club,” said Heimel. “We are constantly looking for ways to continue to grow as an organization and this year will be no exception. We were very humbled by our championship series against the Helena bighorns last season. We felt like we had accomplished so much getting to that point and yet at times in the series it seemed like we couldn’t have been further away from our eventual goal of winning a league championship.”

“We are very excited to be a part of the NA3HL, said Heimel when asked about the league now being at 31 teams and five divisions. “I am Impressed with the level of coaches and talent across all 5 divisions. I think that being able to stand behind the NAHL brand was one of the contributing factors in our former league’s decision to move from the AWWHL to the NA3HL.”

“The professionalism exhibited amongst coaches, staff members and the league personnel have been a joy of an experience thus far,” said Heimel. “We are looking forward to our first full season in the league and the opportunity and exposure that it will bring for the players.”

Advancing players and having them grow up at a physical and mental level is top priority for Great Falls.

“We believe in balance as an organization and we understand the influence that we have on these young men at a very important stage in their lives,” said Heimel. “Certainly, the goal is to develop players both on and off the ice. We want to provide players with an avenue to succeed on many different levels.”

Coach Heimel also said, “For some that will be advancing to higher levels of hockey and for some it will be moving on to new and exciting challenges in their lives. Some important values that we want to instill in our players are a desire to succeed in life, a wish to be a productive member of their individual communities, and the ability to cope with and overcome adversity on a day to day basis.”

The Great Falls Americans will be looking to make another strong run this year. Only this year they will be a part of a bigger footprint.

For a look back at the ‘31 days in 31 teams’ previews, please go to the official league website at <http://www.na3hl.com> or visit the NA3HL’s [Facebook page](#) and [Twitter pages](#).

**Additional Links:** [Great Falls Americans](#) | [Great Falls Americans: 31 in 31 Series](#)

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