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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Big second period lifts Bozeman past Great Falls, 6-4

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., October 29, 2021 — The Montana rivalry continues this season as the #3 Great Falls Americans (7-4-2-1) are hosting the #4 Bozeman Ice Dogs (8-3-2-0) on Friday at the Great Falls Ice Plex.

Great Falls jumped ahead of Bozeman in the Frontier Division standings (temporarily) thanks to the Americans 6-4 win over the #6 Butte Cobras on Thursday night in only Great Falls' second home contest of the season due in part to playing on the road for September and most of October due to ice issues at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Prior to Thursday's game, the Ice Dogs were the #3 seed while the Americans were #4 in the standings.

Great Falls won just five of their first eleven games (5-3-2-1) to start the season on the road before the past two weeks of being back on home ice. Until tonight's action, the Americans of head coach Greg Sears had currently been on a four-game win streak and are led by four players with 16 points apiece including Micah Serino (9 goals, 7 assists), Thomas Gazich (8 goals, 8 assists), Hunter Maschke with 7 goals, 9 assists and Jackson Henningsgard (5 goals, 11 assists).

How is Bozeman faring on the ice this season? They had a two-game losing streak after winning the previous five with a pair of road losses last weekend (October 22-23) to the unbeaten Gillette (WY) Wild (14-0-0-0). The Ice Dogs totally revamped their lineup with all new players and a pair of new coaches in Mike Perkins and Jeff Miller in the offseason. Goaltender Collin Soderholm is 4-1-2-0 on the season with 244 saves and a save percentage of 0.900. Soderholm was the winning goalie with 26 saves in the net for Bozeman when they played the Americans in Bozeman on September 18th. The game was close throughout with Bozeman and Great Falls tied at 3-3 after the five-minute overtime came and went and a shootout was necessary. Bozeman defeating Great Falls 4-3 in a shootout. Bozeman's Ian Bowman and Nick Stevens were the only players to tally a goal in the one-on-one drive with the opposing goaltenders ([see story](#)).

Forward Ian Bowman leads the new-look Ice Dogs with 23 points (12 goals, 11 assists) in 12 games. None of his teammates have more than 13 points or more than five goals heading into tonight's contest.

Would the Americans be able to redeem their September loss to the Ice Dogs?

The Bozeman Ice Dogs scored four of their six goals in the second period to upend the Great Falls Americans 6-4 in a NA3HL Frontier Division contest that started late and finished early Saturday morning with a small crowd at the Great Falls Ice Plex. Grayden Pond led the Ice Dogs with four points (1 goal, 3 assists) and Jackson Henningsgard added a goal and dished out three assists in the setback. The loss snapped a four-game winning streak for the Americans.

In the first period, Great Falls got off to a great start by producing two goals during the opening twenty minutes of action. A pair of defensemen got credit for the goals with Thomas Dalsin's second scoring drive of the season came 2:32 into the contest and AJ Benit was the recipient of the second score that quickly happened 41 seconds later. Tyler Sunagel and Jackson Henningsgard assisted on Dalsin's goal while Jackson Henningsgard and Silas Hughes set up Benit's goal. Henningsgard's eleventh assist came with 16:47 remaining. Later in the stanza, the Ice Dogs cut into the lead as Nick Stevens amassed his fifth goal while Bentley Simcox earned his fourth assist and Luke Busher acquired his ninth helper.

Bozeman's offense got going after the first intermission by outscoring Great Falls 4-1. Forrest Musselman, Grayden Pond, Bentley Simcox and Liam Massie each accounted for the scoring drives for the Ice Dogs. Americans forward Tae Evans chipped in his seventh goal on the unassisted tally midway through the period. Grayden Pond and Ian Bowman each helped on two scoring plays for the visitors while Clayton Brown, Luke Busher, Liam Massie, and Jaden Aguilera gathered one apiece. Bozeman outshot Great Falls in each of the first two periods and took ten more shots (38-28) before the second intermission.

The Americans trailed the Ice Dogs 5-3 as both teams came out of the locker room for the final period of regulation. The score changed 14 minutes into the frame when Grayden Pond and Nolan Conrad passed the puck to Ian Bowman for Bozeman's sixth scoring drive that came early on Saturday morning. Although Great Falls outshot Bozeman, 23-9 in the third, they could only muster one score. Jackson Henningsgard produced his fifth goal with help from Billings, Montana native Patrick Crooks and Alaskan Silas Hughes with 2:20 remaining. Both third period scores came during a power play opportunity.

Thanks to 23 shot attempts in the third stanza, the Americans finished with four more shots (51-47) than their counterparts.

In a game that lasted two hours and 11 minutes, both teams combined for ten minor infractions and one major penalty during the late night and early morning affair. The difference in the game was the Ice Dogs took advantage of the penalties made by the Americans and scored on both of their power play chances. The host team went 1-for-5 with Jackson Henningsgard's late goal in the final period being the only successful opportunity.

Collin Soderholm (4-1-2-0) has now won three of his last four games, finished with 47 saves after allowing two Great Falls goals get by him in the opening period and one in each period during in the final forty minutes. Ben Winkler had a tough second period as four of Bozeman's six goals came during that time frame. The Illinois product ended the night with his third loss (2-2-1-0) but not before redirecting 41 of the 47 shots by the visitors.

NOTES: The Americans game did not start until 10:43PM (MST) as the University of Providence Argonaut men's college hockey team played the University of Mary (ND) Marauders at 7:00PM (MST) at the Great Falls Ice Plex. The University of Mary (ND) defeated the University of Providence 6-1. The Americans contest concluded early Saturday morning at 12:54AM (MST).

Great Falls' No. 3 ranking in the Frontier Division lasted just one night. Bozeman's win moved them back to the third spot while Great Falls settled back into the fourth seed ([see the league standings](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: The Great Falls Americans will end their 'three-games-in-three-days' week with a trip to Butte, Montana for a matchup against the Butte Cobras on Saturday, October 30th with a start time of 7:00PM (MST) from the Butte Community Ice Center.

The Americans will return to the friendly confines of the Great Falls Ice Plex on Friday (November 5th) and Saturday (November 6th) for a two-game series with the #8 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (2-13-0-0). Both games will start at 7:30PM (MST) and fans can watch [HockeyTV's](#) play-by-play coverage with Megan Lewis on both nights.

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