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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Great Falls completes weekend sweep with 4-2 victory over Sheridan

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Game Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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SHERIDAN, Wyo., October 2, 2021 — After Friday's (October 1st) 4-2 win, the #3 Great Falls Americans (3-1-2-1) were looking for their third win of the season when they faced the #8 Sheridan Hawks (1-6-0-0) for the second time in as many nights on Saturday.

Great Falls' Micah Serino continues to be one of the leaders for coach Greg Sears' squad this season. He scored two goals and one assist in Friday's performance as he leads the team with six goals scored (1 assist) and is second on the team with seven points (Hunter Maschke has four goals and four assists).

The #3 Great Falls Americans secured the weekend sweep over the #8 Sheridan Hawks by posting a 4-2 victory in Sheridan, Wyoming during Saturday's NA3HL junior hockey action. The four goals were provided by four different players including Garrett Weisenburger, Micah Serino, Thomas Gazich, and AJ Benit.

The home team scored once during the first four minutes of the contest when Dakota Kott racked up his second scoring drive as Nathan Gilleshammer collected his seventh assist and Teejay Torgrimson garnered his sixth. The Hawks lead lasted until the final 2:56 when Garrett Weisenburger buried the equalizer set up by Micah Serino and Jay Alford. There were just three minor infractions and 16 shots taken before the first intermission.

Early in the middle period, Micah Serino pulled the Americans ahead for the first time in the game as his shot lit up the lamp thanks to Russ Rasmussen and Joshua Serino, who earned the assists. Great Falls' 2-1 lead would hold up until the final 26 seconds of the period when Sheridan's Makhai Sparks accumulated his sixth goal. Dakota Kott and Taylor Frerichs contributed the assists on the power play score. The Americans attempted 26 shots during the first forty minutes. Sheridan took 19 shots.

The Americans offense took control in the third frame by outscoring the Hawks, 2-0. Thomas Gazich and AJ Benit each found the back of the net. Gazich's fifth scoring drive came 3:50 with helpers from Tae Evans and Noel Rahn. Both teams skated around the rest of the period until AJ Benit's score during the last 32 seconds of regulation to help Great Falls preserve their third overall victory and the weekend sweep over the Hawks. Benit's (empty net) score was made while Sheridan pulled their goaltender, Thomas Kuriscak in favor of adding another player on the ice.

The visiting team from Montana needed 36 shots to produce four goals. The Hawks had 10 of their 27 total shots come during the middle stanza.

Emotions ran high during the final nine seconds of the weekend series, when both teams were called for major penalties (with ejections) after the game was decided. Great Falls finished with eight infractions with 55 minutes of penalty time while Sheridan rang up 14 penalties that resulted in 75 minutes spent in the penalty box. The Americans had seven power play chances go unanswered while Sheridan went 1-for-5.

Ben Winkler, playing in his third game of the season, was the winning goaltender for the Americans. The Gurnee, Illinois product allowed one goal in the first and second periods to finish with 25 saves. Winkler has one overtime setback this season as he was the netminder when the Gillette Wild defeated Great Falls 4-3 in overtime on September 25th. Thomas Kuriscak fell to 0-4 on the season with his second consecutive defeat of the weekend. The Minnesota native recorded 32 saves.

NEXT CONTEST: The #3 Great Falls Americans will visit Helena, Montana for a two-game series with the second-ranked and undefeated Helena Bighorns (5-0-0-0) on Friday and Saturday, October 8th and 9th with the puck dropping at 7:05PM (MST) both nights. Fans are encouraged to watch the action on the NA3HL's streaming service, [HockeyTV](#) with a paid subscription ([see subscription details](#)).

Great Falls is still hoping to make their much-anticipated home debut of the 2021-22 season (if the ice is back up at the Great Falls Ice Plex) on the following weekend (Oct. 15th-16th) when they entertain the Sheridan (WY) Hawks. Stay tuned to the Great Falls Americans website for details in the coming week.

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