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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Great Falls ends three-game skid with their first victory of the season over Bozeman

By Kevin Scott

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BOZEMAN, Mont., January 16, 2022 — Entering Sunday's game against the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs (19-12-3-1, 42 pts.), the #4 Great Falls Americans (16-13-3-2, 37 pts.) have faltered in all three contests against their Montana foe this season.

During Saturday's game in Great Falls, the Americans scored the final two goals in regulation after being down 4-2 with 5:52 remaining to send the contest to overtime. The five-minute extra period came and went without any scoring. In the shootout, the Americans could not find an answer to get the puck by Bozeman netminder Cameron Milewski. Bozeman's Bentley Simcox was the only player to light up the lamp to seal the win in a wild NA3HL junior hockey finish ([see story](#)).

Since the #5 Butte Cobras (15-20-2-0, 32 pts.) lost at home to the #7 Yellowstone Quake (8-21-2-0, 18 pts.) on Saturday night in Butte, the Americans are five points ahead of the Cobras in the latest NA3HL Frontier Division standings in the race for the fourth playoff spot with about six weeks remaining in the 2021-22 regular season.

Great Falls was trying to notch their tenth road victory (16th overall) on Sunday night in Bozeman.

Thomas Gazich scored twice in a repeat performance from Saturday night and Micah Serino added one goal as the #4 Great Falls Americans ended their three-game losing streak with a 3-1 win over the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs on Sunday night in Bozeman, Montana. Bryson Fletcher and AJ Benit assisted on two of the goals. The Americans defeated the Ice Dogs for the first time this season.

A pass from Bryson Fletcher and AJ Benit to Thomas Gazich midway through the first period was the only score made after twenty minutes of ice time. Gazich accumulated his 14th goal with 10:33 left on the clock.

Bozeman evened up the score on a power play in the middle period. Liam Massie put in his 12th goal thanks to assistance from Ian Bowman and Makhai Sparks. Bowman's 38th assist moves him up to fourth in the NA3HL in total points scored (63).

The third period belonged to the visiting team. Forwards Micah Serino and Thomas Gazich each put the puck in the net during the final three minutes of the contest. Jay Alford and Daniel Crutcher assisted on Serino's score with 3:12 remaining while Bryson Fletcher and AJ Benit did the same for Gazich's empty net score with 49 seconds remaining to ensure an Americans win. Great Falls' defense stymied Bozeman's offense and prevented them from scoring in the last twenty minutes of action.

NOTE: Total shots-on-goal were not available on Sunday night.

The Sunday night matchup saw seven of the eight power plays go unanswered (Bozeman went 1-3) along with 13 total infractions with 32 minutes spent in the penalty box.

Will Simpson (Great Falls) and Collin Soderholm (Bozeman) were in the net for their respective teams. Simpson's sixth win (6-5-0-2) came after he redirected 25 of the 26 shots sent his way by Bozeman's offense. The Alaska goalie won for the first time since December 21st at the 2021 NA3HL Showcase in Blaine, Minnesota against the Mid Cities (TX) Jr. Stars ([4-0 win](#)). Soderholm, who calls Monticello, Minnesota home, recorded 36 saves and two goals. This was Soderholm's fourth consecutive loss dating back to their December 20th game at the NA3HL Showcase Tournament against the Oklahoma City Ice Hawks. Oklahoma City won in a shootout 6-5 ([box score](#)).

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls will be the home team for three of the final five games in January. The Great Falls Americans host a two-game home series against the South Dakota-based Badlands Sabres on Friday and Saturday, January 21-22 with the puck dropping at 7:30PM (MST) both nights from the Great Falls Ice Plex. Join the game on [HockeyTV](#) if you can't make it in person.

Great Falls will finish out the month of January against the #3 Bozeman Ice Dogs on January 23 in Bozeman, Montana in a make-up game from January 9th and then they will take on the #2 Helena Bighorns in a home-and-away series on January 28-29. [Click here](#) to see the times and locations of those games as well as a full printable schedule for the rest of the 2021-22 season.

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