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Great Falls Americans Press Release

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Bighorns come from behind to down the Americans in overtime

By Kevin Scott

Box Score	Score Sheet	League Scoreboard	Americans Team Statistics
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GREAT FALLS, Mont., January 10, 2025 — And the rivalry continues... The #3 Great Falls Americans (20-10-2-0, 3rd in Frontier) and the #1 Helena Bighorns (25-3-1-1, 1st in Frontier) have already played five of their eight NA3HL regular season contests this season entering Friday's contest. Great Falls is 2-3-0-0 against their rivals, including a 3-2 (September 21) win at the Great Falls Ice Plex ([game story](#)) and a 1-0 road victory inside Helena's Steed Arena on November 16th ([game story](#)). The Bighorns bested the Americans in Helena, [7-1](#) (September 20), [6-2](#) (September 28) and a [3-1](#) setback on December 7th.

Since the December encounter, Great Falls has gone 5-1-0-0 with two wins in three games at the NA3HL Showcase (December 15-17), a single (7-0) win on New Year's Eve in Great Falls against the Butte Irish and two road victories (9-3 and 3-2) in Cody, Wyoming as the Yellowstone Quake (1-32-1-0) on January 3-4, 2025.

The NA3HL Showcase proved to be difficult in the win column for the Bighorns as they finished with a 1-1-1-0 and had one victory and one shootout loss at home on January 3-4 against the Badlands (SD) Sabres.

Ty O'Bey and Garren Narvaez have participated in all 32 games and continue to lead coach Greg Sears' squad after four months of competition. O'Bey, the Wisconsin native, has scored 24 goals and has accumulated 47 points while Narvaez has gathered 30 assists. The Bighorns are led by Finn Theriault with a team-high 22 goals (38 points) and Kade Pareja has dished out 23 assists (39 points) to lead coach Damon Hanson's top Frontier Division squad.

After Friday's game, Great Falls and Helena will play twice in February in Great Falls. Both teams close out their 2024-25 NA3HL junior hockey rivalry on February 1st and a February 14th matchup beginning at 7:05PM (MST) each night with live streaming coverage on [NAHLTV](#).

The Great Falls Americans held a 3-0 advantage in the second period before the top-ranked Helena Bighorns began a comeback and ended regulation in a 3-3 tie. Helena's Colin Becker registered his second goal and the game-winning score with 16 seconds to go in the five-minute overtime to hand the visiting Bighorns squad a 5-4 victory at the Great Falls Ice Plex on Friday evening.

Helena outshot Great Falls, 18-5, after the first period but neither team was able to produce any successful scoring opportunities.

During a nine-minute stretch, five goals were scored between these two NA3HL rivals. John Lang, Chase Hapka, and Aiden Kennedy helped the home team lead 3-0. John Lang's first score was assisted by Cal Laggis and Garren Narvaez, Cooper Clouse and Ty O'Bey assisted on Hapka's (power play) score and Keegan Hanson and Garrett Driscoll earned the helpers on Kennedy's scoring drive. The NA3HL's top Frontier Division team fought back and answered with two goals before the second intermission. Austin Uecker connected on a pass from Kade Pareja and Trey Pareja for the first Bighorns score with 5:05 left. Finn Theriault added the second goal 59 seconds later off the stick of Brandon McIlhany and Cam Young. After the first forty minutes, Helena accumulated 30 shots while Great Falls' offense accrued 14.

In the third period, Zac Orwig's sixteenth goal increased the lead for the host team (4-2) with 12:12 remaining. Masen Kerr and Sebe Perez offered the assistance on the Americans fourth goal of the night. Three minutes later, Helena cut into the Americans lead as Caden Fenstein's pass to Kade Pareja proved to be successful (4-3) for the Bighorns. Hunter Coulombe added the secondary assist. The Bighorns made sure that the game would not end in regulation as Jason Hammett's ninth goal of the season evened the score at 4-4 with 77 seconds left in the third. Austin Uecker made the game-tying assist.

The Bighorns prevailed in overtime as Kelton Chadwick's pass to Colin Becker near the goal got by Americans netminder Kaden Rhyder with 16 seconds left for the game-winning tally.

Austin Uecker and Kade Pareja each chipped in one goal and one assist apiece for the winning club. Great Falls had four different scorers including John Lang, Chase Hapka, Aiden Kennedy, and Zac Orwig.

Helena outscored Great Falls in each of the three regulation periods and the overtime. The Bighorns accounted for 54 of the 87 shots-on-goal.

Each squad took advantage and scored on one of their power play chances. A total of nine minor infractions occurred during the 64-minute junior hockey contest.

Malik Johnson got the start and played during the first 33 minutes, allowing three goals before Tyler Miller took over in the net for the Bighorns. Miller, the Bismarck, North Dakota netminder redirected 24 of the 25 shots to improve his record to 8-2-1-0. Kaden Rhyder fell to 2-2-1-0 against Helena this season and 16-6-1-0 overall. The Pennsylvania goalie finished with 49 saves.

FRONTIER DIVISION UPDATE: Vincent Leaf scored three goals (hat trick), and Daniel Shelden added two more as the #2 Sheridan (WY) Hawks (21-9-2-0) survived a 7-4 battle over the visiting Gillette (WY) Wild (13-18-1-0) during Friday's contest in Sheridan, Wyoming. TJ Wonnacott (8-2-2-0) stopped 26 shots on his way to his eighth victory of the season for the Hawks. Wylen Cambensy made 28 saves in his third setback (1-3-0-0) of the year for Gillette ([Box Score](#)).

The #4 Badlands (SD) Sabres (16-13-3-2) overwhelmed the #8 Yellowstone (WY) Quake (1-32-1-0), 9-1 during Friday's NA3HL action in Cody, Wyoming. Max Goulden scored the only goal for the Quake in the first period as the Sabres piled on nine goals over the sixty-minute contest. Badlands standouts Carter Kilen and Dawson Wirth each netted two goals for the winning side. Laurence Lundberg provided three assists for the visiting squad. Hunter Oger won his sixth game (6-3-1-0) and his fourth overall against the Quake this season. He contributed 33 saves as the starting goaltender. Nate Whitson (1-6-0-0) played 32 minutes for Yellowstone and is now 0-2-0-0 against South Dakota. Matthew Neeser also saw action in the net finishing off his night with 30 saves in 32 minutes ([Box Score](#)).

The #5 Bozeman Ice Dogs (16-12-1-1) built a 4-1 lead before the second intermission but the #6 Butte Irish (15-15-1-1) outscored the Ice Dogs 4-1 in the third frame to send the game into overtime where neither team was able to get the puck in the net. Baron Masopust was the only skater from either team to successfully score against the opposing goaltender. Bozeman won in a shootout, 6-5. Bozeman's

Matthew Stamp, Reid Wilkinson, Dan Upton, Ryan McCreary, and Andrew Kaunas all lit up the lamp for the Ice Dogs. In a losing effort, Easton Langemo scored three third period goals for Butte. Jack Ryan is now 2-0-0-0 against Butte as he redirected 39 shots and is now 4-5-0-0 in ten appearances. Second year goaltender Nicholas Ulyanov (0-0-0-1) played in his first game for the Irish this season after going 3-3-0-0 during the 2023-24 season. Despite the loss, he totaled 41 saves ([Box Score](#)).

NOTES: There were a few milestones that occurred for the Americans during last weekend's road games against the Yellowstone Quake. Great Falls forward Ty O'Bey collected his 100th point with the Americans (54 goals, 46 assists) in 78 contests. Two goaltenders, Karanveer Kooner on Friday and Kale Witt on Saturday each posted their first wins in the net and Owen Kronk (Great Falls, MT) recorded his first goal. Congrats to Ty, Karanveer, Kale, and Owen!!!

Read about all the Americans hockey action in print through the Great Falls Gazette, a newspaper that is published on Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday each week with game recaps written by Kevin Scott, the Great Falls Americans Public Relations/Media Coordinator. [Click here](#) for more information on how to subscribe.

Season Two of the **"Americans Podcast with Jim Quick"** premiered on September 5, 2024, with his first guest of the season, Cole Molaski, a forward from Suamico, Wisconsin, who is in his first season with Great Falls. Other players featured this season include Ty O'Bey, Easton and Aiden Kennedy, Sebe Perez, Mercer Twomey, Zac Orwig, Cal Laggis and Blayne Juszczak. [Click here](#) to learn more about Blayne Juszczak on the official podcast of the Great Falls Americans. Each podcast will feature one American player as we get to know the team this season. Jim completed 13 episodes during his first season. Fans can listen to the full podcasts from Seasons One and Two by [clicking here](#).

560AM KMON Weekly Radio Interview with Coach Greg Sears: Join KMON Radio Sports Director "Baker Bob" McNamee every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings during the 2024-25 season with Great Falls Americans Head Coach and General Manager, Greg Sears as he talks about the Americans. The Weekly Radio interview on 560AM KMON in Great Falls can be heard locally every Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings during the Hourly Sports Report (6:15AM (MST), 7:15AM (MST), and 8:15AM (MST) live. [Click here](#) to listen to the current and previous radio interviews.

AMERICANS PHOTOGRAPHER: Look for game photos from all of the home games from Michael Noel, the Americans Official Photographer by [clicking here](#).

AMERICANS E-NEWSLETTERS: The Americans have two email newsletters for fans to receive in their inbox this season. Kevin Scott, the Americans Media Coordinator, has an **Americans E-Newsletter** that you can get on Sunday's during the regular season filled with game summaries, press releases, links, schedule, etc. [Click here](#) to subscribe (if you haven't already).

Americans Owner Matt Leaf creates and sends out a weekly email called **"Baldy's Puck Drop"** that features team news, player profile, sponsor information and lots of other tidbits relating to Americans hockey that is published on Thursday mornings. [Click here](#) to receive the weekly newsletter (if you haven't already).



NA3HL MOBILE APP: If you haven't already, download the NA3HL App available at the App Store and Google Play. Fans can set your favorite team to the Great Falls Americans today and stay up to date with the NA3HL. [Click here](#) to download from the App Store (Apple) or [click here](#) to download from the Google Play Store (Android).

2024-25 PHOTOS: Check out all the Americans photos throughout the season including some taken by Americans photographer, Michael Noel and Gentle Thug Media's Tim Ljunggren. [Click here](#) to view all the photos from the 2024-25 season.



AMERICANS TEAM STORE: [Click here](#) to view the Americans online team store that features a variety of different souvenirs to purchase. A store is available at all home games. **AMERICANS GAME TICKETS ONLINE:** Fans can also buy game day tickets on the website prior to the game by [clicking here](#).

Please check out the Americans website at www.greatfallsamericans.com for all your updated news, game summaries, rosters, photo galleries, etc.

NEXT CONTEST: Great Falls will face the #6 Butte Irish on the road at the Butte Community Ice Center on Saturday, January 11th at 7:30PM (MST). Great Falls has claimed three wins in their four contests when facing the Irish. Live NA3HL coverage for this game along with all of the Americans home and away games can be seen on [NAHLTV](#).

[P. Gibson's Sports Grill and Casino](#) (1600 Fox Farm Road) is the place to be after Friday and Saturday night home games where the Americans invite their fans and supporters to their post-game dinner.

[Buffalo Wild Wings](#), located at 17 Northwest Bypass in Great Falls, hosts the "Americans Watch Party" this season when the Americans are on the road. Fans are invited to get food and drinks and watch the game.

[NAHLTV](#) is the NA3HL's new streaming platform and is the place to catch all the action for fans that are unable to attend the home and away games this season. [Click here](#) to learn more about how to view any of the Americans home and away contests.

[Click here](#) for the 2024-25 Great Falls Americans schedule and results.

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