Lights will play 11 games in 2014

MSU-N will open the football season at Montana Tech

By George Ferguson
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The Montana State University-Northern football team is in the middle of spring drills, but Aug. 30 is the day the Lights are really getting ready for.

That’s because Aug. 30 is Northern’s Frontier Conference and season-opener, and it will be against a bitter rival on the road.

Northern opens its season at Montana Tech. A kickoff time has yet to be determined, but it will be a big game for the Lights inside Tech’s Alumni Coliseum. The last time Northern faced the Orediggers, the Lights lost a heartbreaking game on a last-second Hail Mary pass in November under the lights of Blue Pony Stadium.

But the opener against the Orediggers is just one of many intriguing games on Northern’s 2014 schedule, which was finalized recently. MSU-N will play an 11-game schedule for the first time in several years, and while the Dickinson State Blue Hawks will be MSU-N’s home-opener, the game won’t be a Frontier Conference matchup.

DSU left the Frontier after last fall for the new North Star Athletic Conference, but the Lights and Blue Hawks will keep their nonconference rivalry. They will meet at Blue Pony Stadium Sept. 6.

Also different on the Lights’ schedule this year, and in the Frontier as a whole, is the format for which teams play each other twice. Though DSU left, College of Idaho joins the league this coming season, giving the Frontier three schools outside Montana. So instead of two spate divisions, with inter-division teams meeting twice, the schedule will rotate through the years, and for MSU-N, the first year of the rotation has the Lights playing Tech, Rocky Mountain College and UM-Western twice. A new twist to Northern’s schedule is, the Lights will only face rival Carroll College once this coming season.

After the home opener against DSU, the Lights remain at home to face RMC Sept. 13. Northern plays three of its first five at home, as the Lights wrap up September with a visit from Southern Oregon Sept. 27.

MSU-N only plays at home once in the month of October, an Oct. 18 meeting with the Orediggers. The Lights play twice at home in November, first Nov. 1 against Carroll and then Nov. 8 against Western.

MSU-N’s road games include, a Sept. 20 visit to Western, an Oct. 11 trip to College of Idaho and an Oct. 25 visit to Eastern Oregon. The Lights also close the season Nov. 15 in Billings against RMC.

Northern has one bye week this year. The Lights will be off Oct. 4.

2014 Lights Football Schedule

Aug. 30 at Montana Tech
Sept. 6 vs Dickinson St.
Sept. 13 vs Rocky Mountain
Sept. 20 at UM-Western
Sept. 27 vs Southern Oregon
Oct. 4 Open
Oct. 11 at College of Idaho
Oct. 18 vs Montana Tech
Oct. 25 at Eastern Oregon
Nov. 1 vs Carroll College
Nov. 8 vs UM-Western
Nov. 15 at Rocky Mountain