MSU-N golf teams shine in Missoula
Skylights reach semifinals, will play for third place, Lights finish fifth at Frontier Championships
George Ferguson
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With perfect weather, the Montana State University-Northern men's and women's golf teams played a high caliber of golf on the first day of the 2012 Frontier Conference Championship.

The match-play, bracket-style tournament is being held at Larchmont Golf Course in Missoula, and the Skylights scored a first-round upset.

The Northern women defeated fourth-seeded Carroll College 350-367 in the opening 18-hold match. Ali Ward fired an 81 to lead the Skylights, while Stacey Sheppard shot 88, Katie Ross 89, Haley McLain 92 and Taylor Faulkinberry 103.

The victory over the Saints moved Northern into Monday afternoon's semifinal round. There, the Skylights ran into top-seeded Westminster and lost by a team score of 315-366.

Ross carded an 84 in the second 18 holes, while Sheppard shot 89, Faulkinberry 85, Ward 98 and McLain 100.

Still, it was an impressive day for the Skylights and head coach Dave Boles. And Northern is still playing. The Skylights till take on third-seeded Lewis-Clark State in the consolation final Tuesday morning in Missoula.

The first-year MSU-N men also played well Monday.

In the first round, the Lights ran into a red-hot Westminster team, losing by a score of 284-315. The Griffins were seeded fourth and the Lights fifth.

Northern was led by impressive rounds from former Havre Blue Ponies Matt Hedstrom and Jeremy Jensen. Hedstrom fired a 1-under-par 71, while Jensen shot an even-par 72. Spencer Ratliff and Tony Clark each shot 86 for the Lights while Mike Whitmore shot 90.

The loss to the Griffins dropped Northern into the fifth-sixth place match in the afternoon and the Lights defeated the University of Great Falls 308-312 in that 18-hole match.

Jensen was low man with a 73 for the Lights, while Hedstrom shot 77 and Ratliff 78. Clark finished with an 80 and Whitmore shot 89 in what was the Lights' final round of their inaugural season.

Tuesday is the final day of play for Frontier Conference golf. Carroll and Rocky Mountain College will play in the men's championship match while Westminster will play LC State in the third-place match. The women's final pits Westminster against Rocky, while Northern takes on LC State. The finals are scheduled for 36 holes with the winning teams receiving an automatic bid to the NAIA national tournament next month.