The Montana State University-Northern men’s basketball team wasn’t expecting a dogfight with King’s College of Alberta.

But for a time, that’s exactly what the Lights got. Northern beat the Eagles 74-43 Wednesday night at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse in Havre, but the win didn’t come without a few tough moments.

“I think any time you play a team that you certainly have a big advantage over, you have the chance to not be as crisp as you’d like to be,” MSU-N head coach Shawn Huse said. “These guys are basketball players and sometimes, they’ll take what they get, and that can lead to sloppy play and mistakes, and that’s what happened to us tonight in some situations. We certainly weren’t at our best. But we also found a way to build a good sized lead and keep it.”

Northern did play well early on. The Lights jumped all over the Eagles at the start of the game, leading 12-0 behind two 3-pointers from LaVon Myers and a thunderous dunk in transition by Joe Simpson, who wound up having a great outing for the Lights. Simpson finished the night with 17 points and five rebounds.

And the Light upped their lead to 20-7 at one point, but also allowed the Eagles to cut back into that lead via 11 first-half turnovers. Still, Northern proved to be too much for the Eagles and led 33-19 at the half. And it didn’t take MSU-N long in the second stanza to push the Eagles aside for good. The Lights started the half on a 15-3 run, and sophomore Devin Jackson started to heat up, hitting back-to-back three’s which essentially sunk any chance of an Eagles comeback. Jackson wound up scoring all of his team-high 18 points in the second half, as he provided Northern with the firepower to pull away for good.

Junior Jordan Harris was another bright spot for Northern. Harris came on in both halves and contributed points, rebounds and stellar defense. He had his best all-around game of the season, scoring 15 points and pulling down five boards. Myers was the fourth Light to finish in double figures, chipping in with 10 points. And while the Lights weren’t always sharp on offense Wednesday night, they certainly put the clamps on the Eagles on defense. MSU-N forced the Eagles into a whopping 30 turnovers and held them to 41 percent shooting for the game. Northern’s defense has now held its last three opponents under 50 points, while improving to 9-4 on the season.

“I thought our effort was still very good tonight,” Huse said. “We’ve had several of these games where we have a big advantage over a team just before we play a very good team, and that happened tonight. We weren’t as crisp as we would have liked, but we found a way to win and win pretty convincingly, and I’m pretty sure these guys will bounce right back and be ready to be very sharp when we play Black Hills next week. They’ve done it all year, so they’re used to it.”

The Lights will now have a few days off for the holiday’s but they return to action with games against Black Hills State on Wednesday night and Lethbridge on Thursday. The two games next week are part of the AmericInn Classic in Havre, and will also be Northern’s last two games before the start of Frontier Conference play.
Harris lifts Lights

Lights are 9-4 overall

Lights 74, King's College 47

**KC** — Matthew Price 1-6 0-0 2, Shawn Owen 2-3 0-0 4, Dillon Knoll 2-2 0-0 4, Sander Lekas 0-2 0-0 0, Mackenzie Stobart 1-4 0-0 2, Jarred Wenzel 3-3 0-0 6, Tyler Fournier 4-6 0-0 9, Anthony Skepple 0-3 0-0 0, Craig Batterham 1-3 2-2 4, Damian Yeboah 0-1 0-0 0, Dustin Drolet 3-4 3-4 12. Totals 17-37 5-6 43.

**MSU-N** — David Maddock 1-5 0-0 3, Devin Jackson 6-13 2-3 18, Jordan Harris 6-9 3-6 15, Shaun Tatarka 2-10 0-0 6, LaVon Myers 3-12 1-2 10, Joe Simpson 7-11 3-4 17, Sean Kelly 1-3 1-2 3, Chris Brown 1-5 0-0 2, Ben Mitchell 0-0 0-0 0. Totals 27-68 10-17 74.

Halftime: MSU-N 34-19. 3-pt FG: King's University 4-12 (Owen 0-1, Lekas 0-1, Stobart 0-2, Fournier 1-2, Skepple 0-1, Yeboah 0-1, Drolet 3-4), MSU-Northern 10-32 (Maddock 1-4, Jackson 4-10, Tatarka 2-9, Myers 3-8, Brown 0-1). Rebounds: King's University 27 (Batterham 7), MSU-Northern 37 (Simpson 7). Fouls King's University 17, MSU-Northern 15. Fouled out: none. Technical: none. Assists: King's University 2 (Stobart 1, Skepple 1), MSU-Northern 10 (Maddock 2, Jackson 2, Tatarka 2, Myers 2). Steals: King's University 7 (Skepple 2), MSU-Northern 16 (Maddock 5). Blocked shots: King's University 0, MSU-Northern 1 (Brown 1). Turnovers: King's University 30, MSU-Northern 14.