MSU-N earns a quality win
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports editor
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The MSU-Northern men’s basketball team has had some close calls when it comes to playing ranked opponents this season. And one of those close calls was against Black Hills State.

Coming into Wednesday night’s 83-75 win over the seventh-ranked NAIA DII power BHSU, the Lights had a loss to the Yellowjackets, to go along with losses to now No. 1 Robert Morris and No. 9 Azusa Pacific.

So there was no doubt the Lights needed a signature win against a quality opponent. And through hard work on the defensive end, a 50 percent night from the floor and nine 3-pointers, all of them timely, the Lights did just that.

“This was a big win for us,” MSU-N head coach Shawn Huse said. “We have had our chances against ranked teams this season, and we’ve come close a time or two. So I think we needed this one. We needed to know we can play with and beat good teams, and Black Hills is a very good team. So this win does a lot for us going forward.”

And Huse is right. Wednesday’s win over the Yellowjackets will do plenty for the Lights. It should help them climb back up the NAIA polls, but more than that, it will give the Lights even more confidence as they head into Frontier Conference play next week.

And the win also shows Northern just how far its come since its 3-point loss to the Yellowjackets in just the second game of the season. Black Hills is as seasoned a team as the Lights will face all year, and Northern started the year with no returning starters and only two returning players.

So to go from losing to the Jackets early in the season, to being able to come back from a 12-point deficit in the second half and win a game against a quality opponent really validates the progress the Lights have made over the last two-plus months.

“We had three chances to beat Top 10 teams and we finally got one tonight,” Huse said. “So I’m really happy and proud of this team for getting over that hump. Beating a team like Black Hills is a big step for us, but to be able to beat them after losing to them this season, that really shows us what we’re capable of and we needed to know what we’re capable of as we go into conference play. So this was a very big win for us.”

The Lights will look to make it four wins in a row to end non-league play when they take on the University of Lethbridge Pronghorns tonight at 6 at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse.

Lights get revenge
MSU-N plays Lethbridge tonight at 6

Lights 83, Black Hills 75
BHSU — Luke Enos 6-11 6-10 18, Travis Haney 0-0 0-0 0, Will John Johnson 4-7 1-7 9, Cain Atkinson 5-14 4-5 16, Clay Pottorff 2-4 1-1 5, Spencer Childress 1-4 0-0 2, Craig Von Allman 5-7 3-4 16, Tanner Adler 3-4 0-0 7, Jordan Dolph 0-0 0-0 0, Rob Johnson 1-3 0-0 2, Brady Bisguard 0-0 0-0 0, Jeff Smith 0-2 0-0 0. Totals 27-56 15-27 75

MSU-N — David Maddock 3-6 1-2 9, Devin Jackson 4-10 1-1 10, Jordan Harris 3-3 2-2 8, Shaun Tatarka 6-10 0-0 15, LaVon Myers 4-11 3-5 12, Joe Simpson 4-6 3-5 11, Sean Kelly 3-7 0-0 7, Chris Brown 2-2 0-1 4, Ben Mitchell 2-3 2-2 7. Totals 31-58 12-18 83