George Ferguson Column: Northern basketball fans rock the house
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports
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The regular season is over. The playoffs are here. And for the Montana State University-Northern men’s basketball team, the postseason march to March will begin at home.

To some teams, that might not mean that much, but I know it means plenty to the Lights, who enter the Frontier Conference playoffs as the No. 2 seed and hosting Rocky Mountain College on Wednesday night.

Why does playing at home mean so much to the Lights? Because this season at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse or the Armory Gymnasium (whichever you like), has seen raucous crowds, crowds which harken back to the old days of Lights basketball and the old Friday-Saturday Frontier wars.

The atmosphere in Havre this year has been tremendous each and every night the Lights and Skylights have played at home. And a big part of that is due to growing support in the Northern student section. The “Armory Animals” as they like to be called have certainly brought the noise this season, as has the rest of the crowd at Northern, and it’s made a big difference.

Simply, you Northern fans have created a true college basketball atmosphere this season, and here’s hoping it continues.

“Our crowds, our fans have been great,” Northern head coach Shawn Huse said. “I’ve said for years, this is the best environment in the Frontier Conference, and it’s because of our fans, it’s because of the support they give us during games. It’s something our players love, they love playing here and they appreciate all the support our fans have given us this season.”

And the Lights need that support again this week.

The Frontier playoffs are much different than the regular season because it’s win or go home. So Northern having home-court advantage, at least through the semifinals is a huge advantage, and if the same crowd shows up on Wednesday night, RMC will be in for a rough night.

A rough night because the fans in Havre know how to electrify an arena, they know how to get right on top of the opposing team and make noise. It might not be Cameron Indoor Stadium at Duke, but in my opinion, Northern fans create the best college basketball environment in Montana, and that includes Griz games in Missoula and Bobcat games in Bozeman. I’ve been to both many times, and our fans make those games seem more like watching golf rather than a college basketball game with so much on the line.

So here’s hoping that Lights’ fans bring the noise one more time. You’ve been great all season long, and the Lights need you one, two, maybe even three more times.

You’re the best college basketball fans in Montana, so keep up the good work.
Note: For Frontier Conference playoff games, season tickets will not be honored. All fans attending playoff games must purchase a ticket to the game, but reserved seats will be held. Tickets for MSU-Northern playoff games are $7 for adults and $5 for students. Children under 12 get in free. Advanced tickets for the Lights’ game with RMC on Wednesday go on sale this morning.