Breaking Sports: Lights capture Frontier title
Lights 79, Saints 70
Tuesday, March 8th, 2011

It had been 15 years since the Montana State University-Northern men's basketball team had won a Frontier Conference postseason championship. On Tuesday night, in their arch rivals gym, the Lights brought that streak to an end. Northern exploded early in the first half, then held off No. 19 Carroll College to win the Frontier title 79-70 Tuesday night in Helena. With the win, the Lights clinched the league's automatic berth to the NAIA national tournament, which starts March 16 in Kansas City.

The Lights (24-8) fell behind early, but ripped off a 17-3 run to take command of the first half. Carroll (23-8) didn't go away however, and the Saints cut Northern's 13-point second-half lead down to four with 4:34 to play. That's when MSU-N went on a quick 8-0 run capped by a Sean Kelly dunk, and from there, the Lights shot free throws en route to their first conference tournament championship since 1996.

Inside, Joe Simpson scored 22 points and Shaun Tatarka scored 20 for the Lights, who have now won seven straight games heading into the national tournament. Northern is headed to Kansas City for the second time in the last three years.

For full coverage, see Wednesday's Havre Daily News.