

MSU-N men ranked to start the season

Lights tabbed 15th in NAIA Preseason Men's Basketball Poll

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Tuesday, November 1st, 2011

The Montana State University-Northern Lights are already 4-1 early in the 2011-12 basketball season. Now, the Lights can add the No. 15 ranking in the NAIA to their list as the season starts to heat up.

The NAIA Top 25 Men's Basketball Preseason Coaches Poll was released recently and the Lights will start the year ranked 15th. Northern finished as the No. 19 in the final NAIA poll last spring after the Lights won a Frontier Conference championship and advanced to the first round of the NAIA national tournament.

Northern, which was picked to win the Frontier title this season, is only one of two Frontier Conference teams ranked to start the season. Carroll College sits at No. 23 in the first poll. The Saints also went to the national tourney a year ago and finished as the No. 22 in last season's final poll. UM-Western, which too went to the big dance last season, received 12 votes in the preseason poll, while Westminster College received three votes.

Defending NAIA national champion Pikeville of Kentucky starts the year as the No. 1 team in the country. Other than the other Frontier teams which are rated, the Lights don't have any games scheduled against current Top 25 teams.

On the women's side, Frontier Conference powerhouse Lewis-Clark State begins the year ranked No. 5. Westminster starts the year ranked No. 9, while Carroll and Rocky Mountain College received votes in the NAIA Women's Preseason Coaches Poll.

The first regular season men's and women's polls will be released Dec. 5.

The Lights return to the floor this Thursday with a three-game road trip to Oregon. The MSU-Northern Skylights are back in action on Monday when they travel to Missoula to take on the University of Montana Lady Griz.

NAIA Preseason Men's Top 25

1. Pikeville (Ky)	300
2. Mountain State (W. Va)	295
3. Robert Morris	293
4. Concordia (Calif)	288
5. Martin Methodist	268
6. LSU Shreveport	255
7. Oklahoma Baptist	254
8. Georgetown (Ky)	240
9. Azusa Pacific	233
10. Texas Wesleyan	223
11. Rogers State	202
12. Shorter (Ga)	188
13. Tougaloo (Miss)	185
14. Columbia (Mo)	166
15. Biola	158
15. MSU-Northern	158

17. St. Catherine (Ky)	149
18. Southern Nazarene	141
19. Evangel (Mo)	132
20. Southern Poly (Ga)	121
21. Xavier (La)	94
22. Union (Tenn)	88
23. Carroll	75
24. Saint Xavcier (Ill)	66
25. Fresno Pacific	63

Others receiving votes: Park (Mo.) 55; Lee (Tenn.) 45; MidAmerica Nazarene (Kan.) 33; Mobile (Ala.) 31; Oklahoma Christian 26; Campbellsville (Ky.) 24; Our Lady of the Lake (Texas) 22; Freed-Hardeman (Tenn.) 21; Life (Ga.) 16; Montana Western 12; Westminster (Utah) 3.

NAIA Women's Preseason Top 25

1. Azusa Pacific	312
2. Union (Tenn)	202
3. Oklahoma City	290
4. Shawnee State	280
5. Lewis-Clark State	266
6. Freed-Hardeman	248
6. Bethel (Tenn)	248
8. Campblesville (KY)	234
9. Westminster	222
10. Vangaurd	221
11. Southern Nazarene	220
12. Olivet Nazarene (Ill)	202
13. Saint Xavier (Ill)	179
14. Lindsey Wilson	175
15. Lee (Tenn)	174
16. Xavier (La)	166
17. Lubbock Christian	158
18. Columbia (Mo)	157
19. Langston (Okla)	152
20. Westmont (Calif)	124
21. Shorter (Ga)	110
22. Evangel (Mo)	85
23. William Woods	77
24. Rogers State (Okla)	72
25. Belhaven (Miss)	58

Others receiving votes: The Master's (Calif.) 57; Carroll (Mont.) 39; Cumberlands (Ky.) 26; Southern Poly (Ga.) 22; Robert Morris (Ill.) 18; Avila (Mo.) 15; Point Loma Nazarene (Calif.) 11; Texas Wesleyan 10; Southern-New Orleans (La.) 9; Loyola (La.) 7; Wayland Baptist (Texas) 5; (Ark.) 4; Biola (Calif.) 3; Voorhees (S.C.) 1; Rocky Mountain (Mont.) 1; Benedictine (Kan.) 1; Georgetown (Ky.) 1.