

## **MSU-Northern men roll to wins in California**

*Daniel Horton*

Monday, November 21st, 2011

The Montana State University-Northern men's basketball team brought a four-week road odyssey to an end with a pair of emphatic wins over the weekend.

The Lights were at a tournament in Vajello, Calif., on Friday and Saturday and MSU-N showed good form, winning two games against good California NAIA competition. On Friday night, the Lights bested Menlo College, 87-62 then took care of a tough California Maritime Academy squad on Saturday night.

"I thought in both games we did a really good job of building leads and keeping our foot on the gas," Northern head coach Shawn Huse said. "We really good about not letting down against either opponent and that was really good to see. It was a really strong finish to our nonconference road schedule and now we're excited to finally be at home until January."

The No. 15 Lights blistered Menlo on Friday night. Northern jumped out to a 34-19 lead and rode strong performances from Devin Jackson and Joe Simpson to victory. Jackson was 8-for-11 from the field and scored 17 points. Simpson went 7-of-9 from the floor, adding 16 points. In all five Lights reached double figures with David Maddock scoring 11, including three 3-pointers, while Shaun Tatarka and Ben Mitchell each chipped in with 10 points. Chris Brown gave the Lights a lift off the bench as well, adding nine points to the win.

The tougher game for the Lights was Saturday against the Keelhaulers, but MSU-N never wavered. The Lights led 28-19 at intermission and got another big game from Jackson, who scored 14 points and grabbed 11 rebounds for his first double-double of the season. Simpson added 11 points, Tatarka scored 10 and Maddock and Mitchell scored nine and eight points, respectively.

"Those were two very good wins for our team, and it was a total team effort in both games. The guys really did a great job of responding to playing on the road this last month and I'm excited about the way we're playing right now," Huse said.

And now Northern won't have to leave home until Jan. 19. The 10-2 Lights host Augustana College on Dec. 3 and Dickinson State on Dec. 8.