

Lights climb in NAIA Poll

George Ferguson

Tuesday, January 17th, 2012

After a huge weekend sweep at home, the Montana State University-Northern men's basketball team continued its ascent in the NAIA Coaches Poll.

The Lights beat Montana tech on Friday night and then took care of No. 23 UM-Western on Saturday night. As a result, Northern moved up one spot to No. 12 in the latest NAIA Top 25, which was released Monday night. It's Northern highest-ever ranking under head coach Shawn Huse, who reached career win No. 200 on Saturday night in Havre.

Meanwhile, after two tough losses to Montana Tech and Western, the Northern women's team dropped out of the NAIA Women's Coaches Poll all together this week. The Skylights received three votes last week, but none on Monday.

In the men's poll, Western moved up to No. 22 despite falling to the Lights on Saturday. Westminster got 16 votes. Rocky Mountain College moved into the poll this week after sweeping Westminster and LC State. The Bears received one vote. On the women's side, LC State moved up from No. 7 to No. 6 this week after the Warriors swept Rocky and Carroll College. Westminster also swept this weekend and moved up to No. 24. Western received three votes after a split with UGF and Northern over the weekend.

In the new Frontier Conference power rankings, the Northern men are No. 1, followed by Western, Westminster and Rocky. On the women's side, the Skylights are No. 4, just ahead of Rocky. LC State is No. 1, followed by Westminster and Western.

Westminster's Jake Orchard was named Frontier men's player of the week. Orchard averaged 22.5 points, 2.5 rebounds, 2.5 assists and 3.5 steals. He hit 57 percent of his field goals (16 of 28), 73 percent of his 3-point field goals (8 of 11) and 83 percent of his free throws (5 of 6). UGF's Kezia Ford earned the women's honor. Ford averaged 18.5 points, 8.5 rebounds, three assists and two steals. She was 9 of 22 from the field (41 percent) and 82 percent (18 of 22) from the free throw line. In the win over Western, she had 27 points including 6 of 10 from the field and 14 of 18 from the free throw line over the weekend. Northern's LaVon Myers and Laramie Schwenke were nominated this week.

The Lights and Skylights go on the road for the first time in conference play. MSU-N is at Carroll on Thursday night and Rocky Mountain on Saturday. For the complete NAIA Polls, see Page A7.

NAIA Men's Coaches Poll

	Rec.	Pts.	Prv.
1. Shorter (Ga.)	17-0	280	2
2. Oklahoma Baptist	15-1	269	1
3. Robert Morris	16-1	267	3
4. Southern Poly (Ga.)	13-2	240	10
5. Rogers State (Okla.)	15-2	238	8
6. Concordia (Calif.)	14-3	231	4
7. Azusa Pacific	14-3	224	7
7. Georgetown (Ky.)	15-3	224	5
9. Martin Methodist	13-3	223	9
10. Our Lady of Lakes	13-3	199	17
11. Lindsey Wilson (Ky.)	13-4	189	14

12. MSU-Northern	17-2	184	13
13. Texas Wesleyan	12-3	169	6
14. Southern Naz. (Okla.)	13-4	165	12
15. Mountain St. (W. Va.)	12-6	157	11
16. Westmont (Calif.)	13-2	133	RV
17. Evangel (Mo.)	14-5	132	15
18. Lee (Tenn.)	11-3	126	21
19. Xavier (La.)	12-5	104	18
20. Campbelsville (Ky.)	13-5	102	22
21. Saint Xavier (Ill.)	13-4	96	23
22. UM-Western	15-5	86	23
23. Cumberland	12-3	83	RV
24. Columbia (Mo.)	14-5	68	RV
25. Tougaloo	14-5	59	RV

Others receiving votes: The Master's (Calif.) 49; Freed-Hardeman (Tenn.) 43; Oklahoma City 31; SAGU (Texas) 21; Cal State San Marcos 21; Pikeville (Ky.) 21; Westminster (Utah) 16; MidAmerica Nazarene (Kan.) 10; Missouri Baptist 1; Science & Arts (Okla.) 1; Cumberlands (Ky.) 1; Oklahoma Christian 1; Wiley (Texas) 1; Union (Tenn.) 1; Benedictine (Kan.) 1; Rocky Mountain (Mont.) 1; Life (Ga.) 1.

NAIA Women's Coaches Poll

	Rec.	Pts.	Prv.
1. Freed-Hardeman	15-2	312	3
2. Oklahoma City	15-1	299	1
3. Union (Tenn.)	16-2	293	2
4. Westmont (Calif.)	16-1	278	4
5. Langston (Okla.)	16-0	273	5
6. Lee (Tenn.)	16-1	257	7
7. Lewis-Clark State	17-2	256	6
8. Cumberlands (Ky.)	16-1	244	8
9. Lubbock Christian	12-3	225	12
10. Vanguard	11-3	218	10
11. Saint Xavier (Ill.)	13-4	215	10
12. Shawnee State	14-4	212	9
13. Azusa Pacific	11-5	189	13
14. Olivet Naz. (Ill.)	14-5	181	14
15. Southern Naz. (Okla.)	13-4	174	16
16. Xavier (La.)	14-5	161	17
17. Campbelsville (Ky.)	13-6	149	18
18. Georgetown (Ky.)	13-6	136	15
18. Belhaven	14-5	136	19
20. Lindsey Wilson (Ky.)	14-5	114	20
21. Westminster	11-6	106	24
22. Robert Morris (Ill.)	12-3	95	23
23. Loyola (La.)	14-1	87	RV
24. MidAmerica Naz.	13-5	81	RV
25. William Woods (Mo.)	11-5	73	22

Others receiving votes: Lyon (Ark.) 71; Shorter (Ga.) 63; Columbia (Mo.) 26; Rogers State (Okla.) 26; LSU Shreveport (La.) 13; Avila (Mo.) 10; Rio Grande (Ohio) 4; Park (Mo.) 3; Montana Western 3; Point Loma Nazarene (Calif.) 1; Oklahoma Baptist 1; Martin Methodist (Tenn.) 1; Our Lady of the Lake (Texas) 1; St. Catharine (Ky.) 1.