Frontier Notebook: Just two weeks left in wild Frontier seasons
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The stretch run — It’s always exciting and the Frontier Conference men’s and women’s races will certainly be all of that over the next two weeks.

That’s right, there’s only two weeks left in the regular season, and conference titles aren’t even close to being decided.

However, that might change this weekend, especially on the women’s side. On Saturday night in Salt Lake City, the Westminster Griffins can wrap up their third straight regular season Frontier title with a win over the Lewis-Clark State Warriors. The Warriors may be ranked No. 8 in the NAIA, but the Griffins have the one-game lead in the conference standings heading into Saturday night’s huge showdown.

However, if the Warriors prevail, things get more complicated as they would have a season sweep over the Griffins. So it’s only fitting that the Frontier title comes down to one game, between clearly the two best teams in the league.

The men’s race is much more clouded, especially considering Northern, which had spent the first six weeks of the season atop the Frontier standings, is now on a three-game losing streak.

The Lights are 6-4 in league play and will try to regroup with their last two home games of the season, rematches with Rocky Mountain College and Carroll College. And because of Northern’s recent skid, UM-Western is in the driver’s seat for the regular season title. The Bulldogs are 8-3 in league play, and though they finish the season at Carroll and Rocky, always a tough trip, a 1.5 games lead over the Lights is a nice cushion to have with three games to go.

Then there’s the middle of the pack.

On the women’s side, Rocky is red-hot and trailing the leaders by just one game. The Bears have a tough road trip ahead of them, but get to finish the season on their home floor. Northern is in good position too. The Skylights have tough games with Carroll and Rocky at home this weekend, and they finish with games at Westminster and LC State. But a pair of wins at home, coupled with a Western win over Montana Tech this weekend and the Skylights will be in a position to finish at best third and no worse than fourth- which would mean being home for the first round of the playoffs.

The men’s side is crowded in the middle. While the Lights are still battling for a regular season title, they also have a host of teams nipping at their heels. Westminster is 6-5, only a half-game behind, while Carroll and UGF, two teams with wins over Northern this season, are sitting at 5-5 with four games to go.

Those numbers are going to make for an exciting finish.

A Dawg' weekend

Things couldn’t have gone better for the Western men this past weekend. The Bulldogs swept Northern and UGF at home, while senior forward Kyle Erickson earned Frontier and NAIA Player of the Week honors.

Erickson lit up the Lights for a career-high 34 points on Friday night, then came back and dropped in another 16 in a nail biter against the Argos on Saturday. Erickson is having a big season for the Bulldogs, though he is often overshadowed by superstar guard Brandon Brown and forward Tyler Hurley.
Streaking

Two teams are on fire right now in Frontier Conference play, and they couldn’t have picked a better time. On the men’s side UGF has won five of its last seven games and is now receiving votes in the NAIA Poll. The Argos are the highest scoring team in the Frontier and for good measure, are the second-best defensive team in the league behind the Lights.

On the women’s side, Rocky may be getting overlooked, but there’s no doubt, head coach Brian Henderson’s team is having a big season. The Bears are on the verge of an NAIA national tourney berth and are just two games out of second in the Frontier standings with four games left to play.

Power Rankings

Western tops the Frontier men’s power rankings this week. The Bulldogs rose nine spots in the latest NAIA Poll, from No. 24 to No. 15. Northern dropped to No. 22 and is second in this week’s power rankings. Westminster is third on the men’s side followed by the Argos.

Though, Westminster has the one-game lead in the women’s standings, the Griffins are still behind LC State in the latest women’s power rankings. Rocky is third and Northern is fourth, while Montana Tech is fifth.

Busy home games

It will be a festive weekend in Havre as the Lights and Skylights play their final regular season home games. On Friday night against Rocky, Northern will honor its adopted parent program, while Northern students have a dress-up night planned, and there are halftime performances planned for both games.

Saturday night is senior night as Carroll comes to town. There are special start times for both games, with the Skylights tipping off at 5:30 p.m. and the Lights getting underway at 7:30 p.m. In between games, both the Skylight and Lights’ seniors will be honored. There is also a planned “white-out” for the game, with all fans asked to wear predominantly white clothing, while the Northern student section has deemed it 80’s night.