Versatile Schwenke sparks MSU-N
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports editor
Friday, December 17th, 2010

MSU-Northern junior guard Laramie Schwenke has been having a good season for the Skylights.

And no one is more excited to be on the floor than Schwenke herself, as she’s had to battle injury problems in both her freshman and sophomore seasons at MSU-N.

But on Thursday night, in Northern’s 86-70 win over UGF in Havre, Schwenke, the former Malta prep star showed just how far she’s come, just how versatile a player she is, and how important she is to MSU-N’s success this season.

Senior guard Taylor Keller went down with an injury in the first half of Thursday night’s game between the Skylights and Argos, the second time in three weeks the Skylights have lost Keller to an injury during a close game.

The first time it happened was three weeks ago in Salt Lake City, and the Skylights fell to highly-regarded Master's College. But on Thursday night, Schwenke wasn’t about to let that happen. She took over the point guard spot for the rest of the night (Schwenke has been starting the two-guard this season), and proceeded to score 16 points, pull down a game-high 10 rebounds, come up with five steals and dish out seven assists.

And perhaps more importantly, spark her team when the Skylights needed it the most.

“I think we responded much better tonight when Taylor (Keller) went out,” Schwenke said. “We didn’t do a good job of responding to it when it happened down in Salt Lake. But tonight, we rallied together. We talk all the time about fighting together, bleeding together, and whether it’s 10 bodies out there or five, we just have to keep fighting together and when we were without Taylor tonight, I thought we did a good job of fighting together, as a team.”

And as the point guard, Schwenke did a great job of helping hold the Skylights together at a time when the Argos were making 3-pointers and keeping things close. She ran the point well, sparked a 10-2 Northern run with a back-to-back thefts when UGF had again clawed to within one point, and made perhaps the biggest shot of the night, a 3-pointer as the shot clock expired with 2:48 left in the game. At the time of the shot, UGF was on an 8-2 run and trying hard to close the gap. But Schwenke’s cold-blooded three epitomized the game she had and really put any chance of a UGF comeback to rest.

“Laramie really stepped up tonight,” Northern head coach Chris Mouat said. “She did a great job at the point and made a really crucial 3-pointer for us. She had a good game and her play was a big reason why we were able to gap them (Argos) and then hold on to that lead.

“I just thought we did a great job of playing team basketball tonight,” Schwenke added. “We were unfortunately down two players with Taylor going out and Kylee (Denham) who didn’t play tonight. And I just thought the whole team really rallied around each other, and we did a great job of playing team basketball in the second half.”

Skylights 86, UGF 70

UGF — Marissa Skogen 7-11 3-7 22, Katie Wright 0-3 2-2 2, Shorty Ramos 0-2 0-0 0, Kara Peterson 1-2
0-0 2, Sigourney Thompson 1-1 0-0 2, Chelsea Adams 4-12 1-2 10, Kezia Ford 5-7 3-4 15, Sarah Sciascia 2-5 4-4 10, Jamie Young 2-6 1-2 5, Donica Chrest 0-5 2-2 2. Totals 22-54 16-23 70.

**MSU-N** — Laramie Schwenke 5-7 5-5 16, Taylor Keller 1-1 0-0 2, Samm Schermele 6-11 8-10 22, Valerie Gee 3-5 2-2 8, Jordan Bruursema 3-9 6-7 13, Nicole Wilk 1-7 2-2 4, Courtney Blume 4-5 0-1 9, Monica Hollowell 3-5 0-0 8, Stren Tramelli 1-3 2-4 4. Totals 27-53 25-31 86.

Halftime: MSU-Northern 33-31. 3-pt FG: University of Great Falls 10-19 (Skogen 5-5, Peterson 0-1, Adams 1-4, Ford 2-3, Sciascia 2-3, Young 0-1, Chrest 0-2), Montana State University- 7-16 (Schwenke 1-1, Schermele 2-4, Bruursema 1-3, Wilk 0-3, Blume 1-1, Hollowell 2-4). Rebounds: University of Great Falls 30 (Sciascia 5), Montana State University- 36 (Schwenke 10). Fouls University of Great Falls 22, Montana State University- 18. Fouled out: Young . Technical: Montana State University- Coach. Assists: University of Great Falls 11 (Sciascia 3), Montana State University- 15 (Schwenke 7). Steals: University of Great Falls 9 (Skogen 3), Montana State University- 4 (Schwenke 3). Blocked shots: University of Great Falls 1 (Young 1), Montana State University- 2 (Bruursema 1, Hollowell 1). Turnovers: University of Great Falls 17, Montana State University- 14.