Skylights fall in Las Vegas
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports editor
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The Montana State University-Northern women’s basketball team knew its game with Fresno Pacific at the Las Vegas Shootout would be tough, especially without starting point guard Taylor Keller.

And while Tuesday’s game against Golden State Athletic power Fresno was indeed a grind, the Skylights showed at times while they’ll be tough to handle when Frontier Conference play opens next week.

Fresno beat the Skylights 75-61 on Tuesday afternoon in Las Vegas, thanks in large part to a blistering second-half performance. But it was Northern which looked like the better team for the first 20 minutes.

The Skylights assumed command right away, shooting 50 percent from the floor and 50 percent from beyond the arc as they staked a 36-29 lead. Northern played at a high level against an NAIA power for 20 minutes, but in the end, it was the size of Fresno and the 3-point-line which wore the Skylights down.

FPU made seven three’s in the second half and outscored Northern 45-26 to come up with a 14-point victory, dropping the Skylights to 7-7 on the season. Still, MSU-N played well against a team expected to make a stout postseason run this year, and it was a good game to prepare the Skylights for their upcoming Frontier schedule.

Northern senior Samm Schermele also took Las Vegas by storm Tuesday, scoring a season-high 24 points on 9-of-22 shooting. She also had five rebounds and three assists, while sophomore Monica Hollowell came off the bench to score 11 points. Junior point guard Laramie Schwenke also had a big game for MSU-N, scoring eight points, but grabbing a team-high 11 boards.

The Skylights have two more games in Las Vegas, starting today at 2 against Ursuline College. MSU-N wraps up tournament play on Thursday against Siena Heights College.