George Ferguson Column: Skylights showed heart and toughness
George Ferguson, Havre Daily News sports editor
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Excitement was in the air, even before the opening tip-off on Friday night at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse.

But who knew what would follow?

The MSU-N men provided us with plenty of drama, emotion and entertainment on Friday and Saturday night as the Lights swept Frontier Conference powers Carroll and Rocky Mountain College.

After watching the Lights take care of business at home, it’s quite clear they are going to be a force well into March.

But what can’t be overlooked, or overstated from this weekend’s games is what the MSU-Northern women accomplished.

The Skylights seemingly and literally limped home from last Saturday’s loss at UM-Western. Northern had just lost its third straight conference game, was 0-3 in league play, was injured from starters to reserves, and all-in-all, just wasn’t feeling good about where the season was headed.

But what a difference a few days can make.

On Friday night, the Skylights pulled it all together and exercised some demons along the way.

Northern has been ahead of Carroll College in games at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse before, only to be snake bitten at the end. Last year in the playoffs, or years ago by Jolene Fuzesy, the end of Northern-Carroll games in Havre haven’t gone MSU-N’s way too often.

But Friday night was different because the Skylights never let it get that far.

Through teamwork, passing, defense, rebounding, good offense, smart play, you name it, the Skylights took out three weeks worth of frustration in 40 minutes against the Saints. And there was no drama at the end.

Instead, in the end, the Skylights were too perfect for the heavenly Saints.

And nothing changed on Saturday.

Against a bigger and stronger Rocky Mountain College team, the Skylights kept on playing. They carried their emotions from Friday night over to Saturday, and the result was more of the same — Perfection on the floor, at least for two nights.

And what doesn’t show up in the box score is the heart of the Northern players and coaching staff. With injuries to Taylor Keller and Laci Keller, two important pieces to the MSU-N puzzle, and a three-game losing streak, it could have been all too easy for the Skylights to write this season off, especially with the Saints and Bears coming to town.
Instead, Northern rose to the challenge, showed the heart and character of a team who has plenty left to play for and plenty left to fight for this season.

Instead of giving up, instead of accepting the difficulties that go with basketball sometimes, these Skylights decided to change destiny, to take matters into their own hands.

Instead, at least for the last 80 minutes of basketball in Havre, these Skylights decided to chase perfection. And for moments in both games this weekend, that’s exactly what they were.

Perfect.

**Note:** The Skylights are now 2-3 in Frontier Conference play, and moved to 11-10 overall. Their win over Carroll on Friday night was the second straight regular season win over the Saints in Havre. The Skylights visit Carroll and RMC next month.