For the second time in four days, the Montana State University-Northern women’s basketball team played Frontier Conference powerhouse Lewis-Clark State very tough.

But for the second straight time, the Skylights just couldn’t find a way to beat the Warriors, and this time, their season came to an end as a result. On Tuesday night in Lewiston, Idaho, the 10-ranked Warriors beat the Skylights 71-60 in the first round of the Frontier playoffs. The loss eliminated the Skylights from the playoffs and brought a difficult, up-and-down season to a close with a 13-18 overall record.

“It was a year where we faced a lot of adversity,” Northern head coach Chris Mouat said. “We lost a bunch of close games, and had we won those, things could have been different. And we had some injuries. We faced a lot of challenges, but that’s not an excuse because every team does. That’s basketball. But I thought our kids battled and faced all of those challenges all season long. I’m proud of them for this year.”

And Northern battled on Tuesday night. Like last Saturday in Havre, the Skylights seemed to give the Warriors trouble, especially late in the first half when MSU-N made a charge. The Warriors had led by 11 points early but Northern closed the gap to 33-27 at intermission. Early in the second half, the Skylights got as close as four points, but they never got any closer.

“It was pretty similar to Saturday in that, they (Warriors) just defended us so well in the second half, and we couldn’t make a shot. Then they also just hammered us on the boards, like they have done all year,” Mouat said. “I thought we played very well in stretches, but we also went through a stretch in the second half where we hurt ourselves with giving up offensive rebounds and turnovers, and the fact that we shot the ball very poorly in that time. We just couldn’t get over the hump against them. But credit LC too, they did what they do, they defend and rebound as well as anybody in this conference.”

LC led 32-18 in points in the paint and 14-6 in second chance points, and also had a 46-28 advantage in rebounds which helped it maintain a double-digit lead for the final seven minutes of the game. Its largest lead of 20 came with 2:09 left in regulation. Northern made a late push but it wasn’t enough.

Jordan Bruursema had another strong showing for the Skylights with 14 points and five rebounds. Taylor Keller scored 12 points and dished out six assists in her final game in a Skylight uniform, while Courtney Blume scored 12 as well and Laramie Schwenke added 10 points and seven rebounds. In the final game of her storied career, Samm Schermele scored nine points, the second straight game in which LC held her under double figures.

And while the Warriors are moving on to Friday’s semifinal where they’ll host Montana Tech, while Westminster hosts Carroll in the other semi, the Skylights will look to start new again next season.

“We had some good moments this season and I’m proud of the way this team fought and brought the effort every night,” Mouat said. “Things didn’t always go the way we were hoping and it didn’t end like we wanted, but this team can be proud of the way they played this year. They should be proud of themselves and I know I’m very proud of them.
**The end in Idaho**

**LC State 71, Skylights 60**

**MSU-N** — Laramie Schwenke 3-9 2-2 10, Taylor Keller 4-10 2-2 12, Kylee Denham 0-1 1-2 1, Samm Schermele 3-10 2-3 9, Val Gee 1-3 0-0 2, Jordan Bruursema 5-10 3-4 14, Courtney Blume 3-7 6-7 12. Totals: 19-51 16-20.

**LCSC** — Tasha Bishop 2-8 0-0 6, Annie Kane 0-2 2-3 2, Kirsi Voshell 7-10 2-2 16, Kenna Reiter 4-9 1-2 9, Jasmine Stohr 5-13 1-2 11, Madison Mendenzona 3-5 0-0 7, Nichole Miller 2-4 1-2 5, Alyssa Fierro 3-9 2-5 9, Laren daling 2-4 2-2 7. Totals: 28-66 11-18.

Halftime: LCSC 33-27. 3-pointers: MSU-N 6-21 (Schwenke 2, Keller 2, Schermele 1, Bruursema 1), LCSC 4-17 (Bishop 2, Mendenzona 1, Daling 1). Rebounds: MSU-N 28 (Schwenke 7), LCSC 46 (Voshell 11). Fouls: MSU-N 17, LCSC 14.