

Northern's Schwenke honored by the Frontier

Lights sit at No. 17 in new NAIA Coaches Poll

George Ferguson

Tuesday, December 6th, 2011

The NAIA basketball season is in high gear, and the first NAIA Men's and Women's Coaches Polls of the year are out. One poll, includes the Montana State University-Northern Lights, while the other should have included the MSU-N women.

On Monday, the NAIA Polls were released for the first time during the regular season and the Lights are ranked No. 17. Northern was ranked 15th in the preseason poll back in October, and after an 11-2 to start to the 2011-12 season, the Lights are ranked as high as they've been in quite some time during the regular season.

Among the Frontier Conference, Westminster College made the biggest jump from the preseason rankings. The Griffins weren't ranked in the Top 25 in October, but moved all the way up to No. 11 after an 8-2 start, which included last week's 13-point win at 2011 Big Sky Conference champion Northern Colorado. The Bears went to the NCAA tourney last spring. No other Frontier men's teams cracked the Top 25 this week, but the UM-Western Bulldogs are close. Western received 26 votes. Carroll College also received a vote in this week's poll.

On the women's side, the Frontier garnered plenty of respect, but the Skylights did not. Northern won its first eight regular season games and sits at 9-1 heading into Thursday's home game with Dickinson State. MSU-N was the last Frontier team to be undefeated this season, yet the Skylights didn't receive a single vote in this week's poll. Western joined the Griffins as teams receiving votes.

The Northern women did get some good news this week as senior point guard Laramie Schwenke was named Frontier Conference Women's Player of the Week. Schwenke is a 5-foot-8 senior guard from Malta. MSU-Northern went 2-1 last week. The Skylights won at Dickinson State 78-49 and then split their two games at the Westminster Tournament. Northern lost to Simpson University 66-67 and beat Holy Names 81-66. Schwenke averaged 21 points, seven rebounds and five assists per game. She hit 50 percent of her field goals (14 of 33) and 53 percent of her 3-point field goals (10 of 19) and 68 percent from the free throw line (13 of 19).

Also nominated: Dana Bates of Westminster College, Erin Cooke of Rocky Mountain College and Dannielle Devenny of Montana Tech.

On the men's side, Westminster's Jake Orchard earned player of the week honors. Northern's Shaun Tatarka was also nominated this week.

The Lights and Skylights return to action on Thursday night when they host DSU. The Skylights tip off at 5 p.m. at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse and the Lights and Blue Hawks will get started at 7 p.m.

NAIA Men's Top 25

	Rec.	Pts.	Prv.
1. Robert Morris	9-0	306	3
1. Concordia (Calif.)	8-0	306	4
3. Oklahoma Baptist	8-0	292	7
4. Georgetown (Ky.)	10-0	284	8
5. Shorter (Ga.)	9-0	269	12
6. Rogers State (Okla.)	7-0	261	11

7. Texas Wesleyan	6-1	251	10
8. Martin Methodist	8-2	237	5
9. Mountain State (WV.)	8-3	236	2
10. Azusa Pacific	6-2	219	9
11. Westminster	10-2	208	NR
12. Cumberlands (Ky.)	8-1	206	NR
13. Souther Nazarene	6-1	195	18
14. Evangel (Mo.)	9-3	181	19
15. Biola	7-3	136	15
16. Lindsey Wilson	7-3	136	NR
17. MSU-Northern	11-2	133	15
18. Southern Poly (Ga.)	6-2	130	20
19. Freed Hardeman	7-3	124	NR
20. Tougaloo (Miss.)	9-4	119	13
20. John Brown (Ark.)	9-1	119	NR
22. Pikeville (Ky.)	7-3	102	1
23. Saint Xavier (Ill.)	7-3	80	24
24. Our Lady of Lakes	5-3	74	NR
25. Fresno Pacific	6-3	62	25

Others receiving votes: Xavier (La.) 54; Columbia (Mo.) 43; Voorhees (S.C.) 32; Baker (Kan.) 28; Montana Western 26; Cumberland (Tenn.) 22; William Carey (Miss.) 19; SAGU (Texas) 8; Oklahoma Christian 4; MidAmerica Nazarene (Kan.) 3; Lee (Tenn.) 1; Spring Hill (Ala.) 1; Northwestern Oklahoma State 1; Olivet Nazarene (Ill.) 1; Carroll (Mont.) 1; Westmont (Calif.) 1; St. Catharine (Ky.) 1.

NAIA Women's Top 25

	Rec.	Pts.	Prv.
1. Oklahoma City	6-0	312	3
2. Union (Tenn.)	10-1	298	3
3. Azusa Pacific	5-1	296	1
4. Freed Hardeman	9-0	278	6
5. Lewis-Clark State	8-1	274	5
6. Westmont (Calif.)	8-1	253	6
7. Shawnee State	8-2	241	4
8. Langston (Okla.)	8-0	232	19
9. Lee (Tenn.)	9-0	230	15
10. Vanguard (Calif.)	6-1	228	10
11. Olivet Nazarene	8-1	210	12
12. Bethel (Tenn.)	6-2	202	6
13. Saint Xavier (Ill.)	9-2	195	13
14. Campbelsville (Ky.)	7-3	186	8
15. Cumberlands	8-1	165	NR
16. Southern Nazarene	5-3	162	11
17. Xavier (La.)	7-3	154	16
18. Shorter (Ga.)	8-1	136	21
19. Lubbock Christian	5-3	133	17
20. Columbia (Mo.)	7-3	107	18
21. Georgetown (Ky.)	9-1	106	NR
22. Robert Morris	9-1	89	NR
23. Belhaven (Miss.)	7-2	88	25
24. Rocky Mountain	9-2	68	NR
25. Lindsey Wilson (Ky.)	6-3	60	14

Others receiving votes: William Woods (Mo.) 56; Rogers State (Okla.) 56; Avila (Mo.) 24; Biola (Calif.) 24; Westminster (Utah) 22; The Master's (Calif.) 17; Loyola (La.) 15; Lyon (Ark.) 15; Park (Mo.) 14; LSU Shreveport (La.) 11; Benedictine (Kan.) 4; Oklahoma Baptist 1; St. Gregory's (Okla.) 1; Graceland (Iowa) 1; Montana Western 1.