The Montana State University-Northern women’s basketball team has never won at Lewis-Clark State. That trend continued in the final game of the 2012 Frontier Conference regular season Saturday night in Lewiston, Idaho – But the Skylights put up a great fight.

Northern upset the nationally-ranked Warriors last month in Havre, so the Skylights knew they’d be in for a battle Saturday night. However, Northern took a one-point lead into halftime and only wound up falling to the No. 13 Warriors 53-46.

The loss dropped the Skylights to 7-7, but they finished in a third-place tie with Rocky Mountain College in the final Frontier standings. Northern, which was picked to finish sixth in the Frontier back in the fall, also ended the regular season with a stellar 20-8 overall record and will be the No. 3 seed in the upcoming Frontier Conference playoffs, which start Wednesday night.

Saturday night against the Warriors, who were celebrating Senior Night in front of a crowd of over 1,000, saw the Skylight defense clamp down on the high-powered Warriors early. Northern held LCSC to just 29 percent shooting in the first half and the Skylights were up 21-20 at the break.

The second half opened in much the same way with neither team catching fire, until the Warriors went on a short run at the 14-minute mark. LCSC broke a 28-28 tie with six unanswered points in the paint and Brittaney Niebergall hit a 3-pointer a couple of possessions later to jump to a 39-30 lead. From there the Warriors continued to produce on the offensive end and with a 3-pointer by Annie Kane took their largest lead of 52-39 with 4:13 left on the clock.

The Skylights didn’t quit and went on a short run of their own to narrow the gap down the stretch, but LCSC had enough in the tank to hold Northern off and earn the season split.

Jordan Bruursema led the way for Northern with 13 points and nine rebounds, while Laramie Schwenke scored 11 points and Laci Keller added eight. MSU-N went 5-for-22 from three and committed 18 turnovers, thought the Skylights once again battled LCSC hard on the boards, only getting out-rebounded 34-32.

It’s been a remarkable season for Northern and head coach Chris Mouat, filled with some amazing wins and some heartbreaking losses. And with the regular season now over, the Skylights, who have fought hard to put themselves in a good position in the postseason, will turn their attention to the UM-Western Bulldogs, a team that has beaten Northern twice in 2012.

The Skylights and Western will play Wednesday night at 7 p.m. at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse in Havre.

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Rocky Mountain       7- 7 18-11
Western             5- 9 15-12
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Montana Tech        5- 9 10-16
Great Falls          3-11 9-18

2012 Frontier Conference Women’s Playoffs

First Round

Tuesday
No. 1 Westminster vs No. 8 Great Falls

Wednesday
No. 4 Rocky Mountain vs No. 5 Carroll College
No. 3 MSU-Northern vs No. 6 UM-Western
No. 2 Lewis-Clark vs No. 7 Montana Tech

Semifinals will be played Saturday. Championship, March 6.