Warriors stop Skylights in Frontier semifinals
George Ferguson
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During two regular season games, the Montana State University-Northern women’s basketball team gave the Lewis-Clark State Warriors all they could handle. Included in that was a stunning win by the Skylights back in January in Havre.

For parts of the game, Northern did the same to the No. 13 Warriors in Saturday night’s Frontier Conference semifinal in Lewiston, Idaho. However, there’s a reason the Warriors have won several Frontier postseason championships in a row, and an even bigger reason they rarely lose at home. And on Saturday night LCSC may have brought a great season MSU-N to an end with a 60-49 victory.

“They (Warriors) were very good tonight,” Northern head coach Chris Mouat said. “We were good in stretches too. I thought we competed very well again. But every time we made a run at them, they answered with an even bigger one. So hats off to them, they played great.”

Northern, which narrowly lost just last Saturday at LC State, quickly fell behind 14-2 on Saturday night. But the Skylights had come too far to get blown out, and instead, they battled back. In a low-scoring first half, which saw LCSC really turn up the defensive pressure, MSU-N found a way to get back to within six points at halftime, trailing the Warriors 25-19.

LCSC again jumped ahead in the second half, but just as the Skylights have done all season, they never quit. Down by 13 points with nine minutes remaining, the Skylights got huge 3-pointers by Jordan Bruursema and Nikki Tresch, and only trailed 46-40 with 5:22 left in the game. Northern was again down just seven with 2:13 to go, but LCSC went on a 7-0 run and the Skylights didn’t have enough time to catch up.

“Our kids gave everything they had tonight,” Mouat said. “Sure, we could have been better in a few areas, but I am very proud of the fact we didn’t fold when we went down 14-2. Our kids battled hard and never gave up. They clawed their way back into it and I’m proud of them for that.

“But again, credit to LC,” he added. “This is a long trip and they are a great team, and to have a chance to get them on their home floor, you have to be at your very best and then some. They played great and we didn’t have an answer for Jasmine Stohr tonight.”

Stohr led all scorers with 21 points, thought the MSU-N defense did limit LCSC to just two three’s. However, the Warriors shot 29 free throws to MSU-N’s four. Alyssa Fierro was also big scoring 18 points. The Skylights were paced by 15 points from Bruursema and 13 in what could be Laramie Schwenke’s final game of a brilliant MSU-N career.

While LC State advanced to Tuesday night’s championship game at Westminster, the Skylights sit at 21-9 and are likely on the outside looking in at the NAIA national tournament picture. The NAIA Field of 32 will be announced on Wednesday afternoon.

“It’s tough,” Mouat said. “It’s tough that we’re not ranked higher right now and it’s tough that this might be Laramie’s last game. This has been a great season and I’m very proud of this team for what they’ve accomplished.

“We’re receiving votes in the poll right now and we’ll hold it hope for a chance to keep on playing,” he added. “These kids have had a great year and they want to keep on playing. But the reality is, we just
might not be ranked high enough to get in. So all we can do is keep our fingers crossed and see what happens on Wednesday.”

**LC State 60, Skylights 49**

**MSU-N** — Jordan Bruursema 6-15 1-1 15, Laci Keller 3-6 0-1 6, Laramie Schwenke 5-11 0-0 13, Nikki Tresch 1-7 0-0 3, Kylee Denham 0-6 1-2 1, Rachelle Bennett 0-1 0-0 0, Taylor Cummings 1-2 0-0 3, Kelly Millager 3-9 0-0 6, Michaela Howe-Cobb 1-3 0-0 2. Totals: 20-60 2-4 49.

**LCSC** — Kirisi Voshell 2-8 2-2 6, Alyssa Fierro 6-13 5-9 18, Tasah Bishop 0-3 1-2 1, Brittaney Nibergall 1-3 6-7 8, Jasmine Stohr 7-18 6-7 21, Kelli Rice 0-2 2-2 2, Tanis Fuller 2-5 0-0 4. Totals: 18-52 22-29 60.

Halftime: Lewis-Clark 25-19. 3-point field goals: MSU-N (Bruursema 2-6, Schwenke 3-8, Tresch 1-5, Cummings 1-2); LCSC 2-12 (Fierro 1-1, Stohr 1-4). Rebounds: MSU-N 24 (Schwenke 7), LCSC 31 (Voshell 8, Fierro 8); Fouls: MSU-N 22, LCSC 10. Fouled out: Tresch.