Sunday Matinee: Skylights trounce Cougars
By George Ferguson
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If the Montana State University-Northern Skylights got off to a sluggish start in their season-opening win over the University of Lethbridge last Thursday night, the Skylights were the exact opposite in their second outing of the young season.

Sunday afternoon at the Armory Gymnasium, Northern got off to a quick start on both ends of the floor and wound up racing by Mount Royal University, 78-41. The win improved MSU-N to 2-0 on the season, and head coach Chris Mouat credited his team for coming out ready to play.

"I liked our start," Northern head coach Chris Mouat said. "I was really proud of our focus defensively. Mount Royal is an explosive team. They had a big lead on Carroll last night. They do things that can really put pressure on you defensively. So I was really proud of the way we played defensively against them, especially in the first half."

The Skylights did indeed take the Cougars out of anything they were trying to do on offense, right from jump. In fact, the Cougars would go two stretches of more than five minutes without a field goal in the first half, while Northern got off to a hot start on offense.

Kacie McKeon opened the game with a 3-pointer, one of three she hit on the afternoon. And by the time Taylor Cummings buried the first of her two triples, Northern was out in front 16-6. MSU-N would go on to runs of 12-0 and lead 22-8 with 7:55 left in the first half, then an 11-0 run to lead 35-11 with a little over a minute until halftime. Late buckets by Megan Feldman and Rachelle Bennett would send Northern into the break with a commanding 39-15 edge.

"On Thursday night, I thought we executed fine," Mouat said. "But we missed too many free throws, too many easy shots and some layups. Tonight we finished those. We were much better from the free-throw-line and we made the easy ones, and we got some transition baskets too. We just finished much, much better offensively today than we did on Thursday."

The second half saw MSU-N continue to dominate on both ends of the floor. Offensively, reserves Natalee Faupel and Jordan Powers led the way, while the Skylights wound up forcing the Cougars into 19 turnovers and just a 33 percent shooting night from the field. Northern also held a decided edge on the glass, out-rebounding the Cougars 39-24.

Meanwhile, MSU-N was efficient and balanced in its scoring. The Skylights shot 45 percent from the field and made 7-of-20 three's. Even better, Northern went 25-of-29 from the foul line.

McKeon, Cummings, Bennett and Faupel each scored 10 points, while A’Jha Edwards chipped in nine, and Powers scored nine off the bench. Feldman added seven and Kassie Barta scored six points, while Faupel and Feldman each had five rebounds.

"I really liked our balance," Mouat said. "We were very balanced offensively, we shared the ball really well tonight, and we had everybody who suited up get in and contribute. Tonight was a lot of fun."
And the fun's just beginning. After starting out 2-0 at home, Northern will head out on the road, not playing in Havre again until a Nov. 30 meeting with Carroll College.

This Friday and Saturday the Skylights are in Spokane for games against Cascade Conference stalwarts Eastern Oregon and Corban College.

**Skylights 78, Mount Royal 41**

**MR** – Candice Duckett 1-1 0-0 2, Alicia Tan 1-7 1-2 4, Danica Raybachuk 3-7 0-0 6, Nikki Golding 3-12 3-4 10, Carrie Campbell 2-2 0-1 4, Nidia Ashboth 1-4 4-4 6, Yasmene Saghir 1-3 0-0 2, Brooke Lister 2-6 0-1 5. Totals: 14-43 9-14 41.

**MSU-N** – A’Jha Edwards 3-5 3-4 9, Taybra Teeters 1-4 0-0 2, Kacie McKeon 3-10 1-2 10, Rachelle Bennett 2-2 6-6 10, Taylor Cummings 3-6 2-2 10, Kassie Barta 3-8 0-0 6, Natalee Faupel 7-1 7-8 10, Megan Feldman 2-3 3-3 7, Taryn Norby 0-0 0-0 0, Molly Kreycik 2-4 1-2 5, Jordan Powers 3-3 2-2 9. Totals: 23-52 25-29 78.