GREAT FALLS — No matter how good you are, in college basketball, some nights are not going to be yours. Some nights, things just won’t go your way.

And that was never more evident than Saturday night inside the McLaughlin Center in Great Falls as the No. 10 Montana State University-Northern Skylights dropped a Frontier Conference road game at arch rival UGF. The No. 22 Argos, who are having their best season in program history, shot their way past the Skylights 82-64, snapping a seven-game losing streak to MSU-N in the process.

From the outset, things just didn’t click for the Skylights, who lost back-to-back games for the first time this season, and dropped just their second game of the year. Northern struggled to make shots on offense, the Skylights ended up getting out-rebounded by the Argos 37-24, and most importantly, MSU-N’s top-ranked defense couldn’t find a way to slow down a blistering UGF offense, which shot 52 percent from the field and made seven 3-pointers.

“It’s incredibly frustrating, it is for me, it is for our kids and for the great group of fans who came down to support us,” said Northern head coach Chris Mouat. “No one’s happy right now. We have to evaluate what happened out here tonight. We have to look in the mirror this week and figure out how to get better from here because I thought we had a great week of practice and came here very well prepared. We knew it was going to be a tough game, we know them (Argos) well, and they know us well. So we were prepared. But we just got out-played in every phase. That’s the bottom line. UGF just out-played us tonight.”

Things looked fine at the get-go as Taylor Cummings hit a 3-pointer in the opening minute of the contest. But, it didn’t take long for the high-scoring Argos to show they were hungry for a huge upset.

UGF rattled off a 6-0 run to take an 8-5 lead, then, Nneka Nnadi came off the bench and hit two 3-pointers, while Erin Legel added another to give the Argos a 24-13 lead halfway through the half. The Skylights, playing without starting guard Jacy Thompson, did what they could to battle, as A’Jha Edwards dominated the interior. But defensively, MSU-N didn’t have an answer for the Argos, who wound up leading 41-31 at the half.

In the second half, it was more of the same. Nnadi hit another bomb early on, and though Natalee Faupel, Cummings and Edwards did all they could do to keep the Skylights in it, they just didn’t have the answers they needed defensively. Northern cut the Argos’ lead to nine points with 9:52 to play, but the Argos answered the charge with more big buckets from Legel and Nnadi and a three by Lindsey Abramson to put MSU-N away.

“Our girls executed the game plan tonight,” UGF coach Bill Himmelberg said. “I thought it was the first time all year we followed the game plan offensively and defensively from horn to horn.”
"UGF played really well," Mouat added. "I thought they defended us really well, and they shot the ball incredibly well tonight. We struggled with a lot of what they threw at us tonight. We tried a lot of different things defensively, but they were definitely in rhythm, and they are a very dangerous team when they're shooting it like that."

Conversely, Northern didn’t shoot well enough to keep pace. Edwards did have another double-double with 21 points and 12 rebounds, while Cummings added 15 and Faupel 12. But in a game where the Skylights made just one trey and UGF got 22 points each from Legel and Abramson, it wasn’t enough.

“I thought we shot ourselves in the foot a lot tonight,” Mouat said. “We missed a ton of point-blank looks at the basket. I thought we executed well. We got the shots we wanted, we just didn’t make nearly enough of them tonight. But they (Argos) also had their way with us on the other end. They out-played us. They did a great job tonight.”

Indeed, while the Argos tied their highest win total in program history with Saturday night’s win, the Skylights lost for the second straight game. Northern fell to 5-2 in the Frontier, but the Skylights are still a remarkable 20-3 overall. Now however, Northern will have to regroup, as it goes back on the road to face Lewis-Clark State Thursday night and Montana Tech this Saturday night.

“We’ve got good leadership,” Mouat said. “We’ve got to look in the mirror and figure out what we’re all about again. Tonight, we let a lot of what we’re all about not show up, particularly defensively and on the boards. Those things can be cleaned up. And I think we will. These kids are a very focused group. They know what needs to be done, and that’s what we’ll do, we’ll go back to work and try to get better.”

UGF 82, Skylights 64

**MSU-N** - Megan Feldman 2-2 2-2 6, A’Jha Edwards 8-17 5-9 21, Natalee Faupel 4-13 4-4 12, Taylor Cummings 5-10 4-4 15, Molly Kreycik 3-8 0-0 6, Taryn Norby 0-0 0-0 0, Cydney Auzenne 0-2 0-1 0, Brandy Lambourne 0-0 0-0 0, Makhayla Farmer 0-0 0-0 0, Taybra Teeters 1-4 0-0 2. Totals: 24-58 15-20 62.

**UGF** - Stephanie McDonagh 2-7 1-1 6, Darah Huertas-Vining 3-8 2-2 8, Kendalyn Brainard 3-6 0-0 6, Lindsey Abramson 8-10 5-5 22, Erin Legel 7-14 5-7 22, Nneka Nnadi 6-9 0-0 14, Mary Wilmore 2-4 0-0 4. Totals: 31-60 13-18 82.

Halftime: UGF 41-31. 3-pointers: MSU-N 1-6 (Cummings 1), UGF 7-16 (McDonagh 1, Abramson 1, Legel 3, Nnadi 2); Rebounds: MSU-N 28 (Edwards 12), UGF 37 (Abramson 14); Fouls: MSU-N 16, UGF 19; Fouled out: Feldman, Nnadi.

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