

Lights hit the mat tonight

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To say the Montana State University-Northern wrestling team will be happy to be on its own maroon and gold mat tonight might be an understatement. The No. 13 Lights haven't wrestled at home since the first week of December, and not only have they been on the road, but they have been riddled with injuries which have left them depleted. Still, the season marches on and tonight at 7, the Lights will take to the mat against the Northwest College Trappers at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse. The Trappers are one of the premier powers in the NJCAA and they should give the Lights a stern test as MSU-N prepares for the push towards the postseason. The Trappers have five wrestlers ranked nationally, and two of them will face two of MSU-N's best. Feature matches include MSU-N's Austin Ouelette against No. 3 Nick Petersen at 174 pounds, while No. 7 Evan Mattingly will face No. 4 Mak Jones at 197 pounds. The Lights also have Evan Hinebauch, who is ranked second at 189 pounds and is having a monster season. While injury has cost MSUN its heavyweight, the Lights will also likely forfeit at 133 pounds, meaning they'll have to make up ground tonight against some of the Trappers' best wrestlers. NWC has ranked wrestlers at 125 pounds where Ryan Shelstad will go for the Lights, and at 141 pounds where MSU-N's Steven Quesada will compete. The rest of tonight's Northern lineup will see Brandon Lelifeld at 149 pounds, either Jim Smith or Tay Todd at 157 and transfer Jose Vera at 165. Tonight's dual is just one of two remaining at home for the Lights. The first match is slated for 7.