

## Lights wrestle hard in Spokane

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The Montana State University- Northern wrestling team had a busy week. Not only did the Lights dual Northwest College in Powell, Wyo., last Wednesday, but they also squared off against rival UGF on Thursday before heading to Spokane for the Inland Northwest Collegiate meet on Saturday. And according to MSU-N secondyear head coach Tyson Thivierge, the Lights had their best showing of the young season in Spokane. "Overall, I think this weekend was our best performance yet.," Thivierge said. "We are getting better every week and that shows in our results. Each athlete is starting to find themselves and they are learning how to work through adversity. We still are not 100 percent, but we are getting close and things are definitely heading in the right direction. It was a tough trip being on the road since Wednesday and having two duals prior to the tournament. We have some time now to heal up before we wrestle at home against Southern Oregon and Dickinson." Northern entered 17 grapplers in Saturday's open event in Spokane, and several individuals came away with good results. The Lights placed five wrestlers, led by an outstanding performance from second-ranked Evan Hinebauch at 184 pounds. Hinebauch was in the toughest bracket in the tournament, and in the quarterfinals he squared off against Oregon State's Ty Vinson, a former Class AA state champion from Great Falls. Hinebauch got past Vinson in overtime, then defeated 2008 NAIA All-American Clete Hansen of Simon Fraser in the semifinals. The championship match at 184 pounds turned out to be another classic between Hinebauch and UGF rival Michael French. It was just three days earlier that Hinebauch beat French in five overtimes in Great Falls, but on Saturday, it was French who wrestled to a hard-fought 5-4 decision. The Lights also got a pair of fourthplace finishes from freshmen Steven Quesada (141) and Max Payne (174), Quesada went 6-2 on the day and Payne was 4-2. Cody Miller turned in a strong performance at 149 pounds, going 4-2 to finish fifth, while Sean Costello finished sixth at 125 pounds after forfeiting a match due to injury. "I was very pleased with several of our younger competitors," Thivierge said. "Steven Quesada had a great tournament wrestling up a weight. Cody Miller is another that I have to say, wrestled beyond my expectations. Max Payne wrestled a great tournament as well, he is starting to show us his ability and consistency with the way he competes week in and week out. I am very excited about his abilities and his future here at Northern. " The Lights had four wrestlers in at 125 pounds. Harlem's Chase Dirden went 1-2 and former Havre Blue Pony Ryan Shelstad went 3-2, while Derik Drake went 2-2. Nico Barker was 1-2 for the Lights at 133 pounds, while Brandon Liefeld was 2-2, Joe Drinkwater was 4-2 and Sean Baker was 2-2 all in the 149-pound bracket. At 157 pounds, Tay Todd was 2-2 on the day, Jim Smith was 0-2 at 165 pounds, and Kody Reed went 2-2 at 184 pounds. Rounding out the Lights day was No. 8 Evan Mattingly going 2-2 at 197 pounds and Jim Eavenson, who was 3-2 at 285 pounds. "All-in-all, we had the best weekend we have had yet in our young season," Thivierge said. "We look forward to using this to help prepare us for more success in the near future." The Lights will now prepare to make their home debut on Dec.3 when they host Southern Oregon and Dickinson State University in duals at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse.