

MSU-N matmen roll Mustangs

Lights shine in season debut

George Ferguson

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The Montana State University-Northern wrestling team got a run, and the Western Wyoming Mustangs were powerless to stop it.

Despite not being as sharp as Northern head coach Tyson Thivierge would have liked, the Lights won eight straight matches in a 34-12 win over the Mustangs Wednesday night at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse.

Thivierge was happy his sixth-ranked Lights opened the season with a home win, but he saw plenty to work on as well.

"I have mixed emotions," Thivierge said. "Because I don't think the score really indicates what happened tonight. They (Mustangs) took the fight to us, and that's not what we're about. Our conditioning looked poor, we weren't nearly as aggressive as I wanted us to be and we looked uncertain at times. There's a lot I saw that we need to work on.

"But I am happy with the win," he added. "It's good to get the season off on the right foot and there were some guys who wrestled some really good matches."

Northern fell behind 12-0 with a loss by fall from freshman Riley Miller and a forfeit at 133 pounds. But it didn't take MSU-N long to turn the dual around.

Hunter Azure, making his MSU-N debut got out of an early hole by pinning Mario Luna at 141 pounds. Then, fourth-ranked Anthony Weerheim won a hard-fought decision in which he trailed after two periods. Weerheim's comeback 13-12 decision edged the Lights to within 12-9 and the fun was just starting.

Freshman Mickey Cheff, also making his MSU-N debut kept the streak going with an impressive 10-3 decision over Jordan Schroeder at 157 pounds, while former Havre Blue Pony Ethan Hinebauch needed just 1:59 to pin Western's Ross Taylor. Hinebauch's win gave the Lights an 18-12 lead, while ninth-ranked Jared Miller earned a scrappy 7-4 decision at 174 pounds.

"We did have some guys who had to fight out of some early holes," Thivierge said. "Hunter Azure, Anthony Weerheim, and even Jared Miller to an extent, they had to really dig deep and find ways to get it done and the fact that they did was good to see. But again, those are guys who, if they wrestled a little tighter of a match, wouldn't have been in those early holes in the first place. So there were some really good things and some things we definitely need to improve on."

Ahead 18-12, the Lights in the upper weights quickly finished the Mustangs off.

At 184 pounds, Kody Reed pinned Riley Argyle in just 1:39, while Evan Hinebauch technically dismantled Simas Norkus at 197. Hinebauch won by a 13-0 major decision, then heavyweight Nick King capped the dual with a 15-8 win over Trey Kirk.

"I was really happy for Kody Reed and Nick King," Thivierge said. "They wrestled complete matches and they saw good things happen when they do that."



Former Havre Blue Pony and current Montana State University-Northern 165-pounder Ethan Hinebauch (left) is locked up with Western Wyoming's Ross Taylor during the Lights' season-opening dual Thursday night at the MSU-Northern Fieldhouse. The Lights beat the Mustangs 34-12, while Hinebauch pinned Taylor in the first period.

“Overall, this was a learning experience for us,” he added. “We’ve had the flu bug go through our entire team, and now we’re healthy again. So we have to go back to the mat, work really hard to get better and next time, we have to take the fight to our opponent.”

And Northern’s next opponent will be a tough one. On Saturday night, the Lights travel to Coeur d’Alene, ID for a dual with NJCAA powerhouse North Idaho.

Lights 34, W. Wyoming 12

125 – Ronnie Wardleigh, WW pinned Riley Miller, MSU-N, 1:50;
133 – Richard Serna, WW wins by FFt.;
141 – Hunter Azure, MSU-N pinned Mario Luna, WW, 2:19;
149 – Anthony Weerheim, MSU-N dec. Markos Serna, WW, 13-12;
157 – Mickey Cheff, MSU-N dec. Jordan Schroeder, WW, 10-3;
165 – Ethan Hinebauch, MSU-N pinned Ross Taylor, WW, 1:59;
174 – Jared Miller, MSU-N dec. Shawn Seppala, WW, 7-4;
184 – Kody Reed, MSU-N pinned Riley Argyle, WW, 1:39;
197 – Evan Hinebauch, MSU-N maj. dec. Simas Norkus, WW, 13-0;
HWT – Nick King, MSU-N dec. Trey Kirk, WW, 15-8.

Exhibition Matches

Caleb Walker, WW pinned Jesse Werdal, MSU-N 4:44;
Kaine Zetterberg, MSU-N pinned Richard Serna, WW, 6:25;
Trevor Goss, MSU-N pinned Brock Dalton, WW, 2:03;
Trent Jones, MSU-N dec. Dylan Busby, WW, 8-2;
Willie Miller, MSU-N pinned Aaron Cutler, WW, 2:16;
Carlos Saabedra, WW pinned Levi Nagel, MSU-N 5:49.