

## Northern places four at Northwest Open

*George Ferguson*

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Competing in their first tournament of the 2011-12 season, the Montana State University-Northern Lights found out they have some work to do.

The Lights placed four wrestlers at the Northwest Open last Saturday in Powell, Wyo., with no Northern wrestlers reaching the finals.

The field was a solid one on Powell, and Northern's Ethan Hinebauch was the top finisher. Hinebauch finished third at 165 pounds after going 3-1 on the day and winning his consolation final match.

The Lights also got fourth-place finishes from Anthony Weerheim (149), Kody Reed (184) and Evan Hinebauch (197). All three wrestlers went 3-2 on the mat Saturday in Powell. All four who placed are now qualified for nationals.

"This weekend was a tough weekend for us," Northern head coach Tyson Thivierge said. "The field of competition was better than it has been in the last 10 years and it showed."

The Lights put six wrestlers into the semifinals. The four wrestlers who placed all advanced to the semis, as did Hunter Azure at 141 pounds and James Petersen at 149 pounds.

"I believe this field showed some holes in our wrestling and it's early and we will improve off of this showing," Thivierge said. "We wrestled extremely well for the first six hours of the tournament and then we got sloppy and couldn't finish the day out. In my opinion, we were the best conditioned group, but if we can't compete for four or five straight matches and lock down championships, then we are going to have a hard time reaching our goal of winning a national title. We will learn from this and move forward towards our goals."

The Lights return to Wyoming Wednesday night to dual Western Wyoming. MSU-N opened the season with a dominating win over the Mustangs last month in Havre. The Lights return to Havre to face Southern Oregon on Nov. 19.