

Lights place four at Cowboy Open

George Ferguson

Tuesday, November 15th, 2011

The Montana State University-Northern wrestling team continued to wrestle well on its three-day trip to Wyoming.

On Saturday, the Lights were in Laramie, Wyo., where they competed in the NCAA Division I Cowboy Open hosted by the University of Wyoming.

Northern placed four wrestlers in the event, including an outstanding first-place finish by Ethan Hinebauch at 165 pounds. Hinebauch went a perfect 4-0 on the day and won three of his matches by fall. Evan Hinebauch also reached the finals at 197 pounds before losing his only match of the day, while Hunter Azure placed second at 141 pounds in the Amateur Division. Azure went 4-1 on the day.

MSU-N's Max Payne, wrestling in his first tournament of the season, also went 5-2 on the day and finished fourth at 174 pounds.

"Hunter and Ethan were extremely dominant for the entire tournament and proved they could wrestle close matches," MSU-N head coach Tyson Thivierge said. "Ethan getting pins to the finals was a pleasant surprise to me and he wrestled really smart in all of those matches. He is right on track and looking impressive. Hunter is finally getting back to his true form and wrestles like a machine. He is moving well again and wrestles harder and harder every minute.

"Unfortunately, Evan was caught in a funky move. We analyzed it instantly and he just rushed up too soon. Basically he had the kid going to his back off a takedown and jumped up too soon and should have settled in and secured the takedown first. He knows what he did wrong and he will make the adjustments. Max looked well after sitting out the first portion of the season. Conditioning was not a factor for him, and he showed minimal rust with his shots and technique.

Saturday's Cowboy Open wrapped up a successful trip to Wyoming in which the Lights went 2-0 in duals earlier in the week. Now Northern returns home to face No.1-ranked Southern Oregon on Friday night in Havre.

"Overall we wrestled extremely well as a team compared to the last weekend," Thivierge said. "These guys truly stepped up and had a load of momentum into the weekend after great performances at Northwest and Western Wyoming. We were looking for these guys to wrestle better and they did. We cleaned up a lot of mistakes and got back to basic wrestling. So far this season, our conditioning has not been an issue and after going to compete in Laramie at 7,200 feet in elevation, I am pleased with how we were looking deep in this tournament."