

Lights grapplers face a busy month

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The Montana State University-Northern wrestling team is off to a great start in 2011. But the Lights have an ultra-tough December ahead of them.

Northern goes into the month of December as the No. 7 team in the NAIA. The newest coaches poll has the Lights rated seventh while Southern Oregon slipped to No. 2. Campbelsville of Kentucky is the new No. 1 team, followed by SOU, Grand View and Lindsey Wilson. The University of Great Falls Argos are ranked fifth.

Individually, the Lights have six nationally-ranked wrestlers. Senior Evan Hinebauch started the year ranked first at 197 pounds, but he is dropping back to 184 and has taken over the No. 1 ranking at that weight class. Hinebauch's younger brother Ethan made a big jump in the first regular season ratings. He was unranked to start the season but has since moved to No. 5 at 165 pounds.



MSU-Northern's Ethan Hinebauch (right) locks up with a Western Wyoming opponent during an NAIA dual last month in Havre. Hinebauch is one of six Lights who are nationally-ranked this month.

Sophomore Jared Miller is also moving up the rankings. Miller is now ranked seventh at 174 after starting the year at No. 9. Fellow sophomore Max Payne is also ranked 11th at 174.

Senior Anthony Weerheim moved up to No. 3 at 149 pounds and sophomore Cameron Neiss remains at No. 4 at 133 pounds. Neiss has yet to compete this season due to an elbow injury.

Great Falls has seven nationally-ranked wrestlers, including former Havre Blue Pony Myles Mazurkiewicz, who's ranked third at 141 pounds.

In the most recent West Region rankings, the Lights are third behind UGF and SOU. Individually, Northern's Riley Miller is ranked fifth at 125 pounds, Neiss is first at 133, Kaine Zetterberg is sixth at 133, Weerheim is first at 149, James Petersen is fifth at 149, Ethan Hinebauch is second at 165, Miller is first and Payne second at 174, Evan Hinebauch is first at 184, Kody Reed is sixth at 184 and Nick King is fourth at heavyweight.

The Lights start a critical December off with a home dual against Embry-Riddle on Friday night at 6 p.m. They then trek to Great Falls for the Battle of the Rockies hosted by UGF on Saturday. Northern goes back to Great Falls next Tuesday for the much-anticipated first dual with the Argos and the Lights close out the month with a trip to Reno for the prestigious Reno Tournament of Champions.

NAIA Top 25

1. Campbelsville, KY	115.5
2. Southern Oregon	114.5
3. Grand View (Iowa)	91
4. Lindsey Wilson, KY	83
5. Great Falls	77.5
6. Oklahoma City	71
7. MSU-Northern	64
8. Midland (Neb.)	63.5
9. Morningside (Iowa)	47
10. Missouri Valley	43

11. Missouri Baptist	32
12. Baker (kan.)	26
13. Northwestern (Iowa)	23.5
13. Dakota Wesleyan (S.D.)	23.5
15. William Penn (Iowa)	20
16. Embry-Riddle (Ariz.)	19.5
17. Concordia (Neb.)	16.5
18. Shorter (Ga.)	15.5
19. Cumberlands, Ky	14.5
20. Dickinson State	11

Others receiving points: Menlo (Calif.) 10; Indiana Tech 9; Waldorf (Iowa) 6.5; Jamestown (N.D.) 4; Bacone (Okla.) 1; Wayland Baptist (Texas) 1; Cumberland (Tenn.) 1.