Lights find road success
By George Ferguson
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After a three-dual home stand, the Montana State University-Northern wrestling team was back on the road this weekend. And it was a highly-successful weekend for the Lights.

Northern, which is ranked No. 4 in the new NAIA Coaches Poll, went 2-0 in the Cardinal Duals Saturday in Coeur d’alene, Idaho. The meet was hosted by NJCAA powerhouse North Idaho College. The Lights then moved on to the Spokane Open Sunday where they finished in first place and crowned four individual champions.

In Spokane, the Lights saw Ethan Hinebauch (165), Willie Miller (184) and Garrett DeMers (197) go undefeated and earn individual championships. Cole McCarthur, wrestling unattached at 174 pounds, also went a perfect 4-0 in the way to an individual championship, his first as a Light.

But the day was especially special for Hinebauch. He went 6-0 in the weekend with six pins, including pins in all four of his matches in Spokane. As a result, he passed former MSU-N national champion and current UGF head coach Caleb Schaeffer for the most pins in Northern history. Currently, Hinebauch has 88 career pins.

“I know his career goals are not met and this is nothing to him (he wants that NAIA National Championship), but it is a feat that I can respect,” said Northern head coach Tyson Thivierge of Hinebauch’s accomplishment. “This season is still young and he is paving the way for not only our upper weights, but he is a role model for the entire team. He is rightfully the ‘Head Pinner in Town’ now.”

And while Hinebauch was his dominant self, the Lights were rolling as a team Sunday. Overall, Northern placed six grapplers in Spokane, as Andrew Bartel went 3-2 and placed fourth at 165 pounds, and Tommy Cooper went 5-2 and placed fifth at 157 pounds.

In Northern’s varsity lineup, Justin Rodgers also went 2-2, Rainier Montes went 1-2, Logan Foster went 1-2 and Jorrell Jones went 4-2. Other Northern grapplers wrestling unattached included Austin Olson (133, 0-2), Terry Mason (157, 1-2), Kris Newport (165, 1-2) and Mhar Caballa, 125, 1-1). Caballa had to eventually withdraw due to injury.

“For me, the big story of the weekend would be our upper weights,” Thivierge said. “Tommy Cooper is starting to produce like we have been expecting, going 7-2 over the weekend in the duals and tournament. He is looking really solid right now and we expect that to continue. The streak we pulled together in the upper weights, winning championships at 165, 174, 184 and 197 puts us in good position heading into the middle portion of the season. Cole McArthur is returning to his All-American form, Garrett DeMers is tearing it up again going 7-0 this weekend with five pins, and Willie Miller continued to improve going 6-0 over the weekend. We have had huge success in our upper weights this season.”

The Lights’ success over the weekend started with the Cardinal Duals Saturday. In their 32-18 win over Highline College, Riley Miller got the Lights started with a pin at 125 pounds, while Cooper, Hinebauch, Willie Miller and DeMers also won matches. MSU-N then beat Simon Fraser 40-16. In that dual, the Lights were dominant as Cooper, Hinebauch, Demers and Jones all earned pins and Willie Miller picked up a major decision.

Northern will now have a week off before heading to Great Falls for the annual Battle of the Rockies, which takes place Dec. 5-6. The Lights wrestle at home again Jan. 6.
Lights 32, Highline 18

125 – Riley Miller, MSU-N pinned Brian Alonzo, 2:34;
133 – Brad Reddeway dec. Justin Rodgers, MSU-N, 11-4;
141 – Erick Garcia pinned Rainier Montes, MSU-N, 4:00;
149 – Logan Foster, MSU-N won by fft;
157 – Tommy Cooper, MSU-N tech fall Justin Weiding, 19-3;
165 – Ethan Hinebauch, MSU-N pinned Tyler Noon, :26;
174 – Antonio Melendez won by fft;
184 – Willie Miller, MSU-N dec. Conner Rosane, 10-6;
197 – Garrett DeMers, MSU-N pinned Sean McAlavey, 1:02;

Lights 40, Simon Fraser 16

125 – Riley Miller, MSU-N won by fft;
133 – Cruz Velasquez maj. dec. Justin Rodgers, MSU-N 15-2; Rainier Montes, MSU-N won by fft;
149 – Kenji Yamasita pinned Logan Foster, MSU-N, 3:35;
157 – Tommy Cooper, MSU-N pinned Eric Bauer, :36;
165 – Ethan Hinebauch, MSU-N pinned Reid Watkins, 4:33;
174 – Morgan Smith won by fft;
184 – Willie Miller, MSU-N maj. dec. Josh Kim, 11-3;
197 – Garrett DeMers, MSU-N pinned Brokie McKenzie, :15; Jorrell Jones, MSU-N pinned Ben Tynan, 1:34.

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