GREAT FALLS - The new NAIA wrestling rankings were released just hours before the Montana State University-Northern Lights and University of Great Falls Argos were set to square off in their annual February rematch. And in those rankings, the Argos and Lights traded places, as UGF moved up to No. 3 and the Lights fell to No. 5.

Hours later, inside UGF's McLaughlin Center, the Argos certainly wrestled like the No. 3 team in the country.

For the second time this season, UGF jumped out to a 25-0 lead over the Lights, and while Northern once again rallied, the Lights couldn't overcome the rough start, as the Argos won 34-18 Wednesday night. The win gave UGF a season sweep of the Lights for the first time in four years.

"We just didn't come out and take the fight to them in the lower weights," said Northern head coach Tyson Thivierge. "We talked about that for the last week and a half, and we didn't do it. UGF definitely has a strong lineup in the lighter weights, and they wrestled well. But we can be better there. I thought Riley (Miller) set the tone right away, he just didn't do enough when he was on bottom. But the bottom line is, we have to get better in the lighter weights. Those guys have to step out on the mat with a lot more confidence than they did tonight."

The start to the dual, through the 157-pound match, must have felt like déjà vu to the Lights. Miller lost a hard-fought decision to Luke Schlosser at 125 pounds, then Clinton Garvin pinned Justin Rodgers at 133 to give UGF a 9-0 lead. Third-ranked Kyle Wilson then earned a major decision over Rainier Montes at 141 and all of a sudden, the Lights were down 13-0.

And for two more matches, things didn't get any better for the short-handed Lights. Ryan Martin and Chad Cebulski scored back-to-back pins, and after five matches, UGF had all but locked up the dual with a 25-0 lead, because unlike back in November in Havre, the Lights were without No.2-ranked Jared Miller at 174 pounds and third-ranked Willie Miller at 184.

But, as expected, Northern fought as hard as it could.

Ethan Hinebauch quickly dispatched Brock Picard with a pin at 165 pounds, while Cole McCarthur lost a hard-fought 3-0 decision to third-ranked Shawn Lau. Then the Lights had to forfeit at 184, ending any possible chance of a comeback.

Still, Garrett DeMers and Toby Cheff proved Northern should still be feared in the upper weights. The duo gave the Lights two pins to close the dual, with DeMers pinning Sam Voightlaender at 197 pounds and Cheff pinning Dylan Lemery at heavyweight.
And while the latest salvo in the bitter rivalry between the Lights and Argos could have been different if Northern had two of the top-ranked wrestlers in the country, Thivierge wasn't interested in any excuses Wednesday night.

"We make no excuses," Thivierge said. "We didn't wrestle with confidence in the lighter weights, we didn't bring the fight to them (Argos) at all. Sure it would have helped to have those other guys in there, but these guys need to believe they can win under any circumstances, no matter who's out there wrestling. We're six months into the season, and those guys should have a lot more confidence in themselves than they had tonight.

"So we just have to keep at it, keep working hard, and get back out there next week," he added.

Next week is the big one for both the Lights and Argos, because next Saturday is the Western Regional NAIA Qualifier, where four spots in each weight class to the NAIA national tournament will be on the line. The Western Regional will be held on MSU-N's own mats inside the Armory Gymnasium.

**Argos 34, Lights 18**

125 – Luke Schlosser, UGF dec. Riley Miller, MSU-N, 8-3;  
133 – Clinton Garvin, UGF pinned Justin Rodgers, MSU-N, 2:16;  
141 – Kyle Wilson, UGF maj. dec. Rainier Montes, UGF, 10-2;  
149 – Ryan Martin, UGF pinned Logan Foster, MSU-N, 1:20;  
157 – Chad Cebulski, UGF pinned Tommy Cooper, MSU-N, 4:54;  
165 – Ethan Hinebauch, MSU-N pinned Brock Picard, UGF, 1:42;  
Shawn Lau, UGF dec. Cole McCarthur, MSU-N, 3-0;  
184 – Taylor Vaughn, UGF won by FFT;  
197 – Garrett DeMers, MSU-N pinned Sam Voightlaender, UGF, 2:26;  

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