Bulldogs bite Lights, again
By George Ferguson
November 9, 2015

There have been a lot of rough days for the Montana State University-Northern Lights football team this season and, now, one rough night, too.

Under the lights of Vigilante Stadium Saturday night in Dillon, Northern was sent to its 10th straight loss as the Lights were dominated by No. 13 UM-Western, 52-6. The loss dropped MSU-N to 0-9 in the Frontier Conference, while Western kept its hopes of sharing the Frontier title alive.

A difficult start once again doomed the Lights as Western reeled of 31 unanswered points in the first half. Western put together a solid opening drive, with J.D. Ferris hitting Matt Lickfold for a score with 10 minutes left in the first stanza. Hunter Thomsen added a two-yard touchdown run with five minutes to go in the period to up the score to 14-0.

The MSU-N defense did well to limit the Bulldogs on the ground, but Western ended up passing for 327 yards between Ferris and Bradley Smith. Smith connected with Matt Fuhrman early in the second period to add to the lead, while Sam Rutherford scored a 23-yard rushing touchdown and Seth Mason added a 22-yard field goal to end the first half.

For the second time this season, the stout Bulldog defense also kept the Lights out of the endzone. Northern’s lone points would come on a 46-yard interception return by Logan Sprouse in the third quarter. After that, Western tacked on three more scores, a Smith pass to Tyler Murray in the third, another to Melvin Walser in the fourth, and a 13-yard TD run by Dylan Kramer.

Offensively, Western, which improved to 7-2, ran up 439 yards on the Lights. Northern did hold Rutherford to just 55 yards on seven carries, and the Bulldogs only had 129 yards rushing. Jon McGinnis led the Lights with seven tackles, while Tyler Craig had six stops and three tackles for loss, and Garrett Jericoff added six stops as well.

But, as much as the Lights hung tough on defense, the Western defense was too good. The Bulldogs held Zach McKinley to a mere 56 yards on 20 carries. Jess Krahn finished the game 21-of-38 for 149 yards, no touchdowns and no interceptions. He was sacked four times. Jake Messerly caught three passes for 40 yards, while Mario Gobbato caught a game-high six for 29 yards. Jett Robertson, Seth Roemmele and Kagen Khamanah each had two grabs, while McKinley had three. Northern managed just 202 yards of offense.

Western will now have a chance to share the Frontier title as the Bulldogs head into their annual rivalry game with Montana Tech. If Western wins, it will share the title with the Orediggers, and possibly Southern Oregon.

Northern (0-10), meanwhile, will look to end its season the same way it did last year — with a win over Rocky Mountain College. The Lights host the Battlin’ Bears at noon this Saturday at Blue Pony Stadium.

Western 52, Lights 6

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<td>Score</td>
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Scoring
UMW -- Matt Lickfold 11 pass from JD Ferris (Seth Mason kick)
UMW -- Hunter Thomsen 2 run (Mason kick)
UMW -- Matthew Fuhrman 54 pass from Brad Smith (Mason kick)
UMW -- Sam Rutherford 23 run (Mason kick)
MSU-N -- Logan Spouse 46 interception return (Kick failed)
UMW -- Tyler Murray 51 pass from Smith (Mason kick)
UMW -- Dylan Kramer 13 run (Mason kick)
UMW -- Melvin Walser 30 pass from Smith (Mason kick)

**Rushing:** MSU-N -- Zack McKinley 20-56, Mario Gobbato 7-18, Jett Robertson 1-1, Jess Krahn 7(-33).  
UMW -- Rutherford 7-55, Thomsen 5-37, Kramer 6-36, Fuhrman 1-11, Ferris 5-2, Smith 6-1, TJ Leep 1(-3).

**Passing:** MSU-N -- Krahn 21-38-0, 149 yards; Holden Maki 1-3-0, 11 yards. UMW -- Smith 8-15-1, 230 yards; Ferris 4-13-0, 80 yards.