

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB



PRESS RELEASE

Wins for Senior Men and Cadette Women but four other games result in losses for the Northants Club

“Thunder” up to third in Midlands Conference

Division Four National League (Midlands Conference)

Charnwood College “Riders” 73 – 91 Northants “Thunder”

On the face of it this looks like a routine win for the “Thunder” senior men but there were several factors that made it far from this. “Thunder” were without three players, two of them ‘big’ man, while Charnwood had drafted three Division 3 players into the team that had lost to Mansfield the previous evening. Add to this the fact that the college players were very familiar with the very helpful rings and in the first quarter they connected with five, three point shots. “Thunder” were able to execute some efficient half court offences and at the end of the quarter led 25-17.

The Charnwood, three point bombardment continued in the second quarter but for “Thunder, Jason Tucker was able to keep the scoreboard ticking over while Jacob Holt and Terrell Salmon were a constant threat close to basket. “Thunder” edged the second quarter 28-27 to lead 53-44 after a high scoring first half but they knew they were in a real contest.

In the first two quarters, Charnwood had hit no less than 11, three pointers including a buzzer beating ‘Hail Mary’ to conclude the half. The message to the “Thunder” players during the half time break was very simple, “Close out on the Charnwood shooters and get a hand in their faces.

So far this season “Thunder” have been guilty of some appalling third quarter performances and when they missed their first six shots a repeat performance looked to be on the cards. In the event “Thunder” were able to steady the ship and three scores from Tucker and a Holt put back helped them to edge the quarter 17-14 to extend their lead to 70-58.

During the third quarter the “Thunder” defence had been much improved and this continued in the final ten minutes despite the best efforts of the students. “Thunder” took the final quarter 21-15 to record an impressive win despite being ‘short-handed’.

For “Thunder”, Salmon had his best game for the club scoring 21 points while Tucker had 19. Holt and rookie Hayden Alcindor both recorded double-doubles and Sam Mennell contributed 11 invaluable points. Coach John Collins was delighted with the win and was particularly pleased that his team had only turned the ball over on nine occasions and made 20 assists led by nine from Matt Yates.

With Nottingham University beating Conference leaders Birmingham “Rockets” on Saturday evening the Conference is now wide open with “Thunder” occupying 3rd place with a won 6 lost 3 record.

Double loss for Junior Men despite Chris’s best efforts

Junior Men's
(Premier Central League)

Northants "Thunder"

69 – 80

City of Birmingham "Rockets"

The Northants junior men opened their 'double' weekend with a home fixture against a below strength Birmingham "Rockets" team.

"Thunder" made a good start to the game and thanks to the efforts of an aggressive Chris Amankoma jumped out to a 20-15 lead after the first quarter, Amankomah contributing 12 of those 20 points.

"Thunder" made an appalling start to the second quarter as "Rockets" went on a 14-2 run over a three minute spell to take a 29-22 lead. During these three minutes "Thunder" were guilty of turning the ball over on numerous occasions against the "Rockets" 'press'. "Thunder" battled back and thanks to the efforts of Ed Wallhead and Jacob Herdiman- Barlow took the quarter 18-17 to lead 38-32 at half time.

Having lost the ball on so many occasions in the first half it was to be hoped that the "Thunder" players had learnt that trying to dribble the ball out of the Birmingham 'press' was not a good idea and passing was the best way of advancing the ball. Regrettably this lesson was ignored at the start of the third quarter and thanks to a hatful of "Thunder" turn-overs "Rockets" were able to mount a 13-zero charge to take a 45-38 lead. This lead was reduced to 50-54 by the end of the quarter and there seemed to be every chance of a "Thunder" win.

These hopes were boosted when baskets from Amankomah and Ed Wallhead initiated a 12-zero "Thunder" run which took them into a 62-58 lead. At this stage of the game the Birmingham team needed someone to 'step up' and they found that person in the form of Woodward and the "Rockets" forward became a points scoring machine with 19 points in the fourth quarter. His efforts inspired "Rockets" to a 22-7 run over the final six minutes of the game as the West Midlands recorded an 11 point victory.

For "Thunder", Amankoma led the scoring with an impressive 33 point haul but Ed Wallhead with 12 points was the only other Northants player to score in double figures.

Birmingham "Elite"

111 – 67

Northants "Thunder"

Twenty-four hours after their defeat against C.O.B. "Rockets" the Northants junior men took on another Birmingham Team Birmingham Elite in the second city. "Thunder" was forced to travel short-handed because of injuries and work commitments.

"Thunder" made a slow start to the game and found themselves trailing 3-20 after seven minutes of play. A time out by Coach Darijus Maldutis steadied the ship and going into the last minute before half time had reduced the deficit to seven points at 31-38; but during that final minute Birmingham were successful with two speculative three-pointers to lead 46-33 at the half.

The effort the "Thunder" players had put in during the first twenty minutes had taken its toll with several of them in foul trouble. Birmingham came out for the third quarter with an aggressive full court press which forced a number of turn-overs as fatigue also began to play a part. The home side continued with their pressure defence eventually winning by 111 points to 67 with several "Thunder" players 'fouling out' of the game.

In the heavy defeat Chris Amankomah scored 24 points to add to the 33 he had scored the previous day. Jamal Jack supported well with 14 points despite playing with a leg injury while Aaron Mutari contributed 10 points.

Disappointing loss for lack luster Cadet Boys

Under 16 Boys National League

(Midlands West Conference)

Northants “Thunder” 55 – 61 Coventry “Tornadoes”

The Northants “Thunder” cadet boys slipped to a disappointing defeat at the hands of Coventry “Tornadoes” a team “Thunder” had convincingly beaten earlier in the season

Both teams made a very slow start in the opening the quarter, with “Thunder” missing a number of easy scoring opportunities. With “Thunder” leading 4-2 after eight minutes, scores by Spatcher and a three pointer by Solazzo saw Thunder leading 9-7 lead after a low scoring quarter.

Despite back to back scores from Kris Dambrauskas to open the second quarter, “Thunder” lacked discipline and consecutive turnovers resulted in Coventry sparking a 13-0 run to lead 15-20. A “Thunder” time-out allowed them to regroup and a 10-2 run saw them lead 25-22 at the half time.

“Thunder” opened the second half in a more composed mood and six straight points from Tom Greenfield helped “Thunder” to extend their lead to 31-22. Having established a lead “Thunder” we’re again guilty of turning over the ball carelessly which helped the Coventry team to build their confidence. “Tornadoes” hit four 3 pointers in 3rd quarter which took them into a 46-43 lead going into the final quarter.

Coventry extended their lead to 59-47 late three minutes of the game remaining but three pointers from Cebatoriunas and Kitchen and an inside score from Tom Peachy gave “Thunder” some hope but unfortunately for “Thunder” it was too little too late as time ran out with “Tornadoes” securing their first win of the season.

In the disappointing defeat “Thunder” were led in scoring by Kris Dambrauskas with 13 points, supported by 9 points from Dematas Cebatoriunas while Ashley Kitchen and Tom Greenfield both scored 8 points.

Cadette Girls up to second North Conference

Under 16 Girls National League

(North Conference)

Northants “Lightning” 76 – 46 Manchester “Mystics II”

Over the past few weeks, under the direction of Coach Emma Salisbury the Northants cadette women have been working very hard and that hard work was rewarded last Saturday at the Basketball Centre with a convincing victory over the Manchester “Mystics” second string.

When the two teams met in Manchester earlier in the season, “Lightning” won by just three points, so a close contest was expected in the return fixture. In the event the speed of “Lightning’s” play and their aggressive defence proved too much for the northerners. With Lucy Needham looking particularly impressive “Lightning” took the first quarter 20-13 and this lead was extended to 43-24 by half time with Needham and Sade Chambers being consistent offensive threats.

With the Northants relaxing their efforts in the third quarter “Mystics” were far more competitive only losing the quarter 17-18. Coach Salisbury insisted that her team raised their efforts in the final quarter and her players responded superbly outscoring “Mystics” 15-5 to take the game 76-46.

Ten players contributed to “Lightning’s” final total led by Needham with 21 points; Poppie Barnett, Sade Chambers and Dina Kosnikovska all scored in double figures but Coach Salisbury wasn’t pleased with the statistic that her team had missed 26 of the 44 free throws they were awarded but the win was good enough to take the team up to second lace in the North Conference table.

Under 14 Girls edged out in local derby

Under 14 Girls National League

(Midlands East Conference)

N.E.B.C. “Titans” 62 – 61 Northants “Lightning”

The Northants under 14 girls slipped to a one point defeat against local rivals “Titans” who were indebted to the contribution of the talented Imogene Williams who scored 32 of her team’s 62 points.

“Lightning” struggled at the opening of the game with Williams proving almost unstoppable as the home side opened up an 11-0 lead. Under the ‘all must play rules’ “Lightning” were much more competitive in the second five minutes and by the end of the first quarter had closed the gap to 12-19.

In the second quarter “Lightning” made a better job of containing Williams and again, in the second five minutes seized the initiative. For “Lightning” Ruby Harkins was an offensive threat and thanks to her efforts and some solid rebounding from Gee Joksaite, “Lightning” had closed the gap to 29-32 at half time.

The second half of the game was a highly competitive affair with “Lightning” continuing to struggle to contain Williams but they were able to launch a number of fast break attacks orchestrated by Lucie Wilson-Grey and Fiona Arthur. “Lightning” won the second half 32-30 but it wasn’t quite enough as “Titans” held on for the single point win. “Lightning” were left to reflect on and number of missed put back shots and missing a total of 16 free throws.

Once again all nine “Lightning” players scored led by Hawkins and Arthur with 13 points apiece, Wilson-Grey supporting well with 10 points.

Going into the Christmas break “Lightning” lie second in the Midlands East Conference with a won 5 lost 3 record.

County Upper too strong for Under 13 Girls

County Upper “Wolves” 92 – 55 Northants “Lightning II”

Boosted by their win against Norfolk “Inceni” the previous week the Northants under 13 girls travelled to County Upper in optimistic mood. Coach Karen Goodrich knew her team was in for a tough game because “Wolves” had a couple of outstanding players which the Northants under 14 team had found difficult to contain the previous week. Her fears were well founded as Kent scored 35 points for her team despite the best efforts of “Lightning II” to stop her.

The Northants girls trailed 3-9 after the first five minutes but their younger unit dragged the score back to 8-11 at the end of the quarter with Keris Ndubisi playing with a great deal of determination.

The second quarter followed the pattern of the first with “Lightning II” struggling to contain Kent in the first five minutes only for the second five to pull the scores back and half time arrived with “Wolves” leading 32-27.

With the ‘all must play’ restrictions not applying in the second half “Wolves” were able to keep their five strongest players on the court and this allied to an aggressive full court pressure defence was too much for the young Northants players. Upper won the third quarter 43-5 and the game was as good as over as a contest but to their credit the Northants girls battled hard in the fourth quarter with Athena Thompson putting in an outstanding defensive shift and Mia Gajaga rebounding well. “Lightning II” lost the final quarter 17-23 to go down 55-92 with Ndubisi scoring 14 points and Ashia King 13.

CHRISTMAS BREAK

The Northants Basketball Club has completed their games for 2018, and will be taking a three week break with fixtures resuming on 12 January 2019.

The Management Group, players, coaches, and team managers of the Club wish everyone.



For more information on this Press Release contact: [John Collins on 07801 533 151](#)