

# **NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

Last weekend was designated as a national teams training weekend which meant that the only team in action was the senior men. They travelled to unbeaten Birmingham “Mets II” and returned after recording a battling eleven point win.

### **Senior Men stay unbeaten**

**VCARS.co.uk Men’s Division Four Midlands Conference**  
**Birmingham “Mets II”                      81 – 92                      Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants “Thunder” senior men retained their unbeaten record and with it top spot in the Midlands Conference of the VCARS.co.uk Division Four after a win over previously unbeaten Birmingham “Mets II”.

“Thunder” took to the floor in the knowledge that they were likely to be in for a tough game. The “Mets” second string had only played two games previously but had comprehensively defeated teams “Thunder” had struggled against. At the start of the game Asher Kirby was able to put a lot of pressure on the “Mets” point guard leading to the home side forcing up shots. When these missed Leome Francis and Nick Waller gobbled up the rebounds and were able to launch Leon Henry and Jonny Yates on a number of fast breaks in broken play and this helped “Thunder” to establish a 23-16 lead after the first period of play.

The second quarter opened with “Mets” scoring from a put back but then it was all “Thunder” as they went on a 21-2 charge. This was led by Henry with excellent scoring support coming from Waller and Tomas Vladicka. “Mets” replied with a 9-zero run of their own but at half time “Thunder” had established a 15 point lead at 49-34.

The suspicion was that “Mets” got something of an ‘ear bashing’ from their coach at half time because they came out for the third period of play in very determined mood. Defensively they switched to an aggressive zone which caused “Thunder” some problems. With these offensive problems came a relaxation at the defensive end and this resulted in a number of unnecessary fouls which sent the Birmingham team to the free throw line on no less than 16 occasions. “Thunder” were relieved that Vladicka and Yates were hitting some key perimeter shots but “Mets” still edged the period 25-24

With “Mets” sensing a comeback and their fans getting more and more vociferous “Thunder” began to lose their composure and the game became very scrappy. Once again “Thunder” were guilty of sending “Mets” to the free throw line on too many occasions but to their credit “Thunder” were able to retain control and ‘manage the clock’ efficiently. Their lead got down to eight points but a three-pointer from Yates ended the “Mets” challenge as the Northants team was able to record their fifth consecutive league win which the coaching staff hope will be pivotal for the whole season.

In the 11 point victory Leon Henry top scored with 26 points well supported by Jonny Yates who had his best game of the season with 19 points. Other major contributions came from Tomas Vladicka who scored 12 points while Leome Francis recorded a double-double with 14 points and 13 rebounds.

## THIS WEEKEND'S ACTION

### Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> December

11.30am	U14 Girls v Brentwood "Fire" U13 Boys v Herts Warriors
1.30pm	U15 Boys v Northamptonshire "Titans"
3.30pm	U15 Girls v Bucks Hornets

These games will be played at the Northants Basketball Centre at Northampton School for Girls in Spinney Hill Road, Northampton

Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

Junior Women travel to Chiltern "Pumas"  
Junior Men travel Manchester  
U14 Boys travel to Leicester "Blaze"

### Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

Cadet Men travel to Trafford  
Cadette Women to Nottingham "Wildcats"  
U15 Girls travel to Wiltshire "Demons"