

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

“Thunder” keep that winning habit and remain undefeated

Men’s National League Division 3

South Conference

Cardiff Met “Archers” 76 – 80 Northants “Thunder”

The Northants senior men made the long trip to South Wales last Sunday to take on Cardiff Met “Archers” and returned after recording a four point win. This win means the team are undefeated in the South Conference and it came despite trailing at half time

Coach Grahame Yates was delighted with the ‘road’ win but was frustrated that once again, his team had not played to their full potential for the full forty minutes of the game.

After the long journey down the M.4., “Thunder” were offensively lethargic in the first two periods of play. They could manage just 25 points but a great defensive effort restricted their opponents to just 29 points meaning they were still ‘in’ the game going into the second half.

The third quarter saw “Thunder” at their best and thanks to three, three-pointers from Johnny Yates they blasted “Archers” by 30 points to 19 to take a 55-48 lead into the final quarter, The Cardiff scoring had been led by Waite and Kizito and they were in the forefront of the home sides attempt to take the game. For “Thunder”, Yates had found good support from the ever reliable Jacob Holt and Devon Adams and despite the best efforts of “Archers” in the last ten minutes, “Thunder” held on for the four point victory.

The “Thunder” scoring was led by Holt with 21 points, while Yates managed 19 points, brother Matt 14 and Adams 16.

This Saturday, “Thunder” take on top of the table Sussex “Bears at the Basketball Centre. The game tips off at 3-30pm and the team would welcome all the support they can get

Brave Under 14 Boys just go down to Team Birmingham “Elite”

Under 14 Boys East Midlands II Conference

Team Birmingham “Elite” 53 – 51 Northants “Thunder”

For the second week running the Northants under 14 boys made their way up the M.6 to Birmingham this time to take on undefeated Team Elite. They made the return journey contemplating a two point defeat and a game they might well have won. The team did really well to get so close to the Midland II Conference leaders especially as they were forced to play without the services of influential guard Ashley Kitchen who was injured.

The first quarter was a very tight encounter, and despite an aggressive full court press by Team Elite Birmingham. Thunder displayed good composure and were able to combat the press scoring consecutively on the fast break. Jonathan Nutmba had a strong scoring quarter with nine points as “Thunder” were able to put together a strong quarter against their illustrious opponents and they only trailed 13-15 after the first ten minutes of play

The home side were proving to be Thunder's toughest opponents of the season so far and as they maintained their aggressive full court defence "Thunder" began to display signs of fatigue. They then began to rush their offense resulting in a series of turnovers by which led to a 6-2 Birmingham run so extending their lead to 23-17 midway through the quarter. "Thunder" Coach Rob Crump was forced to take a time out and when they returned to the court they were in upbeat mood and proved to be strong competitors for the West Midlands team. Unfortunately as half time approached and "Thunder" rotated their bench, they were guilty of performing some poor passing against the press which Team Elite capitalised on extending their lead to 10 at the half.

During the half time break, Coach Crump urged his team to maintain their level intensity and consider the importance of valuing the possession of ball against the press. As the action resumed both teams continued to exchange baskets with Thunder's offence predominantly going through Ntumba and in the final four minutes of the quarter, Thunder made an 8-1 run reducing the lead to 37-40.

Crump urged his team to produce a strong team defensive performance in the final period of play against the driving tactics of the home side. Team Birmingham extended their lead to 46-41, but then "Thunder" produced a stunning 8-0 run with back to back scores from Kalonji Campbell giving "Thunder" a 49-46 lead. Panic was starting to appear in the Team Birmingham ranks forcing their coach to take a time out. Back to back scores from Team Birmingham put them back in the lead, but again Ntumba restored Thunder's advantage who now seemed on course to producing an upset. In the final minute, Team Birmingham calmly restored their lead through back to back free throws with Thunder trailing by one.

Over the final seconds of the game both teams continuously battled for rebounds and dive for the loose balls. With 18 seconds remaining, Thunder had one final possession and as Team Birmingham focused all their efforts on stopping Ntumba several Thunder players had the opportunity to win the game for their team but under heavy pressure around the basket they failed to get a shot off. One such effort resulted in the ball being deflected away from the basket, and Birmingham were able to score a layup on the break to beat the final buzzer and marginally escaping their first defeat of the season.

In the titanic battle Thunder were led in scoring by Jonathan Ntumba with 25 points while Patrick Adedeji scored 12 points.

Coach Crump commented "This was a very brave and determined performance of which the boys should be very proud of. It was not the prettiest game, but the team showed huge progress on defence and refused to give in against a strong Team Elite Birmingham side. It was very pleasing to see some of younger players step up defensive and demonstrate understanding of the team concepts and principles we have been implementing and working on in practice."

"It is very important we build upon this performance going forwards!"

No action for Junior Men

Junior Men's Midlands Conference Ilkeston Outlaws versus Northants "Thunder"

The Northants junior men, still smarting from the previous week's two narrow losses were denied the opportunity of getting back to winning ways when Ilkeston were unable to field a team. The game will be re-scheduled.

THIS WEEKEND'S ACTIVITIES

Saturday 5th November

9-30am – 11.00am	Junior Ballers Session
11-30am	Under 14 Boys versus Worcester "Wolves"
1-30pm	Junior Men versus Coventry "Tornadoes"
3-30pm	Senior Men versus Sussex "Bears"

These games will be played at the Basketball Centre which is situated at Northampton School for Girls | Spinney Hill Road, Northampton

	Cadet Boys travel to Leicester "Riders"
10am – 1pm	Girls Central Venue League at Northampton School for Boys
1pm – 4pm	Under 9 and Under 11 Central Venue League also at N.S.B.

For further information contact:

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