

# NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Hot and cold “Thunder” see off “Hoods”**

#### Men’s National League Division 3 North

**Northants “Thunder”                      86 – 65                      Nottingham “Hoods”**

On the face of it this looks like a routine win that keeps the Northants senior men’s team in second place in the Division 3 North table. In fact “Thunder” blew hot and cold throughout the game displaying some scintillating up-tempo offensive basketball at one moment and then becoming lackadaisical and lethargic the next.

“Thunder” led 17-13 at the end of the first period of play during which time they had contrived to miss six free throws and allowed the “Hoods” guard Silzek a number of scoring opportunities. In truth “Hoods” should have been contained to a single figure score. Needing to maintain the intensity they had occasionally shown in the first quarter “Thunder” became very sloppy in the second quarter and found themselves trailing 24-27 midway through the period. Inspired by some aggressive rebounding from Jacob Holt combined with sublime passing from Jason Tucker and deadly finishing from Leon Henry, “Thunder mounted a 16-6 charge to go into the half time break leading 40-33.

The third quarter mirrored the first two with “Thunder” combining some excellent play with error strewn periods. This combined with some bewildering refereeing decisions made for a messy section of play but an 11-zero charge midway through the period gave “Thunder” the edge and they went into the final stanza leading 65-50. This lead was extended to 84-55 thanks to an aggressive trapping defence but with the game won “Thunder” once again reverted to casual mode and a 10-2 “Hoods” run brought some respectability to the final score line for them.

In the 21 point win Henry top scored with 23 points well supported by Holt and Jonny Yates with 16 and 11 points respectively but once again it was Tucker who caught the eye with 18 points, 12 rebounds and seven assists.

### **“Thunder’s” Cup dream ended by Derby**

#### National Cup Round 3

**Northants “Thunder”                      65 – 96                      Derby “Trailblazers”**

The Cup dream of the Northants senior men was destroyed last Sunday by a ruthlessly efficient display by 2<sup>nd</sup> Division outfit Derby “Trailblazers”. There was always a worry that “Thunder” might suffer a little bit of a hangover after their exertions against Nottingham “Hoods” the previous evening, and so it proved with “Trailblazers” starting the game with a 14-6 sprint. The Northants team battle back thanks to the determination of Jacob Holt and Richard Higgins close to the basket but after the first ten minutes of play the visitors had opened a 20-14 lead.

Throughout the first period of play “Thunder” had found scoring difficult scoring with too many of their attacks dependent on individual efforts rather than team play. Derby on the other hand, were efficient both close to basket and from the perimeter but “Thunder” managed to stay in contention until a late surge by the visitors saw them extend their lead to 44-28 by half time.

Needing a good start to the second half “Thunder” got just the opposite. Jonny Yates scored with a nice perimeter shot but his next contribution to the game saw him lose the ball and then commit his second unsportsmanlike foul his fifth which mean he had to leave the game. “Trailblazers” went on a 17-4 charge and that was game over.

Leading by 70 points to 38 going into the final quarter both teams virtually went through the motions with “Thunder” edging the period 27-26 but they also lost a second player with Merson Paul disqualified from the game as Derby cruised to a 31 points win.

In the disappointing result Jacob Holt with 14 points was the only “Thunder” player to score in double figures. The team now has to re-group ready for their next league game against Rossendale this coming Saturday.

### **First win of the season for Junior Men**

#### **Junior Men’s Premier Division North**

**Northants “Thunder”                      111 – 60                      Cheshire “Panthers”**

The Northants junior men picked up their first win of the season with an overwhelming victory over a game Cheshire “Panthers” team. The game was significant for two outstanding personal performances. First, an impressive 48 points haul combined with 16 rebounds and seven steals from the mercurial Linas Bajorunas and the return to form of Sam Round. The former England international who suffered a serious knee injury 16 months ago had an amazing nine three pointers in his 36 points total.

“Thunder” were leading 23-17 after the first quarter but it was a switch to a zone defence midway through the second period that was to prove decisive. With pressure on the “Panthers” ball handlers and match up principles behind “Thunder” were able to force a number of turn-overs leading to easy scores. By half time the county team had moved 57-29 ahead but stand in coach John Collins emphasised the importance of maintaining intensity at the start of the third quarter. Thanks to the efforts of Declan Burke, Luke Joines and George Paul this intensity was maintained and with George Calvey, Josh Round and Karan Virdee rebounding strongly; Bajorunas was able to score from numerous breakaways while the elder Round hit repeatedly from the deep perimeter.

Leading 90-46 going into the final ten minutes “Thunder’s” offensive efficiency dipped a little but they still won the period 21-14 with Round hitting four three pointers in the last four minutes to close out proceedings.

### **Junior Women second best at “Warriors”**

#### **Junior Women’s Midlands South West Conference**

**Herts “Warriors”                      73 -46                      Northants “Lightning”**

“Lightning” coach Stacey Shakespeare was pleased that her team had improved on the 50+ early season Cup loss to “Warriors” but the improvement wasn’t enough to secure a win.

The damage was done in the first quarter which “Warriors” took 23-13 thanks to some aggressive man to man defence. “Lightning” played with much more control in the second period of play which they only lost 16-12 with Lois Bain and Rio Blessyn battling hard to secure defensive rebounds.

The Northants girls needed a big charge in the third quarter but despite the best efforts of Lauren Brookes, Stephanie Ogden and rookie guard Sarah Round they lost it 19-11 and at 36-58 down they had left themselves with a mountain to climb.

Herts took the final quarter 15-10 to run out comfortable winners but “Lightning” will be in more positive mood as they look forward to another stiff challenge this weekend in the shape of Reading “Rockets”.

### **Round leads Under 14 Boys to a big win**

#### **Under 14 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Shropshire “Warriors”                      86 – 33                      Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants under 14 boys travelled to Telford last Saturday and completed a routine win over Shropshire “Warriors”. “Thunder” won all four quarters with “Warriors” only really competitive in the third period.

In the 53 point victory Jacob Round had another scoring extravaganza netting 40 points but Coach Grahame Yates was pleased with the efforts of Zin Zan Ousthuizen who scored 14 points.

## **Cadette band wagon rolls on**

### **Under 16 Girls Midlands South Conference**

**Wiltshire “Demons”                      80 - 27                      Northants “Lightning”**

For the third week running the Northants “Lightning” recorded a comfortable win over inexperienced opposition. Once again the game was over midway through the first quarter with “Lightning” leading 20-zero. From then on, for Coach Karen Goodrich it was a case of no pressure defence and controlled offence as “Lightning” cruised to a 53 point victory.

Coach Goodrich was pleased that all ten of her players scored and with two ball handlers missing from the line out she was delighted with the performances of Charlotte Berridge and Caitlin Stewart.

The “Lightning” scoring was led by Ruchae Walton who totalled 20 points and pulled down eight rebounds. Team captain Lauren Milne recorded a double, double with 14 rebounds to go with her 15 points while Berridge was one assist away from an impressive triple double with 17 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists.

## **Ball change helps Under 13’s to first season win**

### **Under 13 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Northants “Thunder”                      80 – 25                      Coventry “Tornadoes”**

“Thunder” Under13 Boys recorded their first win of the season with a convincing victory over a young Coventry “Tornadoes” last Saturday. “Thunder’s” shooting was rather wayward at the start of the game up to the point where one of the players spotted that they were playing with the wrong size ball. This partly, explained why “Thunder” had missed so many of their early shots and were only three points up after the first quarter, leading 16-13. Coach Mike Round however, was more concerned about the lack of defensive intensity.

Using the correct size ball and after a stern talking to, “Thunder’s” shots began to drop and their defence improved considerably. Back-to-back baskets from the rapidly improving Lucy Amena started a 27-2 run during which Ed Wallhead netted 15 points. “Thunder” took the second quarter 30-8 and had a comfortable 46-21 half-time lead.

As Coventry tired, “Thunder’s” strength in depth and height advantage became more and more apparent. The visitors could only manage two baskets in the whole of the second half as “Thunder” forced turnover after turnover. Steals and defensive rebounds enabled Thunder to initiate numerous fast breaks. Although they lacked discipline and patience when it came to running the set offence, they won the third and fourth quarters 16-2 and 18-2. The 80-25 result gave the team a much needed boost and highlighted the importance of high intensity defence.

Ed Wallhead was unstoppable pouring in 31 points and the two girls, Holly Winterburn and Lucy Amena, contributed 23 points between them. Coach Round was also impressed by the efforts of Noah Wilborn and James Reid who both worked extremely hard when out on the floor.

## **THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**

**11-30am**

**1-30pm**

**Under 14 Boys versus Derby “Trailblazers”**

**Junior Women versus Reading “Rockets”**

**Cadette Women versus Exeter**

**These games will be staged at the **Northampton Basketball Centre** which is based at Northampton School for Girls in Spinney Hill Road, Northampton**

**Spectators are most welcome for the games and admission is **FREE****

Also on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November

Senior Men travel to Rossendale  
Cadet Men travel to Worcester "Wolves"  
Under 15 Boys travel to Derby "Trailblazers"

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

Under 14 Girls travel to Southend "Swifts"  
Junior Men travel to Leeds Carnegie

For further information contact:

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