

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

Senior Men stay unbeaten

VCARS Men's Division Four Midlands Conference

College of West Anglia "Fury" 100 - 64 Northants "Thunder"

The Northants senior men completed a routine win over bottom of the table College of West Anglia "Fury" last Saturday. The Northants players might have been guilty of thinking too much about the next day's National Shield game but they certainly 'hit the ground running' in the first period of play jumping out to a 28-15 lead.

"Fury" re-grouped in the second quarter which "Thunder" just edged 22-21 so for both teams the third quarter was going to be vital. "Fury" were looking to close the 17 point half time deficit while "Thunder" were looking to put the game away. As the third quarter developed it was obvious that "Thunder" would be the team to achieve their aim. Based on some determined defence inspired by the efforts of Jason Tucker, "Thunder" restricted their opponents to just 13 points whilst scoring 33 themselves to put the game beyond the East Anglian's at 83-50.

"Thunder" were guilty of going into cruise control for the final period of play which they edged 17-14 eventually hitting the 'ton' and running out comfortable winners by 36 points with no less than six of their players scoring in double figures. The scoring was led by Leon Henry and Leome Francis with 19 and 18 points respectively while Merson Paul, Jason Tucker, Tomas Vladika, and Jonny Yates scoring in double digits.

Nightmare third quarter costs Junior Women dear

Junior Women's Midlands South-West Conference

Northants "Lightning" 59 - 79 Herts "Warriors"

With a half time score line of 48-31 in favour of Herts "Warriors" the Northants junior women were still in contention in this Midlands South-West Conference game thanks to some sharp shooting from Hannah Nolan that kept her side in contention. The Basketball Centre crowd expected a rousing third quarter effort from "Lightning" but they were sadly disappointed. The Northants girls managed just one basket in the first six minutes of the period which "Warriors" eventually took 16-6 and at 64-37 the game was as good as over as a contest.

Fourteen fourth quarter points from Steph Ogden helped "Lightning" to take the final period of play 22-16 but it was a case of two little too soon as "Lightning" slipped to their second defeat of the Conference campaign as "Warriors" stayed undefeated.

In the 20 point loss Ogden and Izzie Johns top scored with 14 points apiece while Hannah Nolan supported well with 12 points all scored in the first half while Lis Bain contributed 11 points.

Overtime win for sick' lame and wounded "Lightning"

Cadette Women's South-West Conference

Bucks "Hornets" 68 - 82 Northants "Lightning Too"
(66 - 66)

The Northants under 16 girls picked up their third win of the season with a hard fought overtime win over Bucks "Hornets" despite playing the game with a number of players feeling distinctly under the weather. After a traumatic journey to Aylesbury, "Lightning Too" made a good start to the game jumping out to a 16-12 first quarter lead. They extended this lead by a further two points in the second period of play and with a 32-26 at half time lead a routine win looked to be on the cards.

"Hornets" came out in determined mood for the third period of play and as the game became more and more physical the Northants girls found themselves on the back foot and thanks to thirteen visits to the free throw line the home side took the quarter 23-18 and at 50-49 it was 'game on'.

The two teams exchanged baskets in the fourth quarter then with the scores tied at 66 all “Lightning Too” missed a lay up and the game went into overtime. The Northants team that came out for the extra period was a very difficult animal with Coach Stacey Shakespeare employing an aggressive denial defence. “Hornets” were forced to shoot under pressure which gave Tara Hings and Amber Leiba the opportunity to haul down rebounds and launch numerous fast break attacks. “Lightning Too” totally dominated the extra period which they won 16-2 to take the game by 86 points to 68.

In the 14 point win Steph Ogden top scored with 31 personal points with good support coming from Hings and Hannah Nolan with 16 and 15 points apiece while Amy Boot and Lauren Brookes both chipped in with 10 points.

No problem for Under 15 Girls as they shoot “Rockets” down

Reading “Rockets

30- 95

Northants “Lightning”

The Northants “Lightning” under 15 girls completed a comfortable 65 points win over a game but inexperienced Reading “Rockets” side last Saturday. The win takes the under-aged team into third place in the South-West Conference.

“Lightning” totally dominated all four periods of play with Coach Karen Goodrich able to try out a number of defensive tactics in preparation for the next day’s big Sure Shot Cup game. Defensively Hari Owens and Lauren Milne rebounded superbly allowing Sarah Round the opportunity to launch countless fast breaks invariably finished by Charlotte Berridge who ended the game with 25 points. Ruchae Walton had her usual sound game with 14 points and all ten of the other “Lightning” players contributed to the final score.

Big win for Under 15 Boys

Under 15 Boys Midlands Conference

Northants “Thunder

88 -48

Bromsgrove “Bears”

Northants “Thunder” Under 15’ consolidated their fourth place in the Midlands Conference with a forty points win over bottom of the table Bromsgrove “Bears” despite missing a number of influential players.

“Bears” arrived at the Basketball Centre without a win to their name; but very little separated the two teams in the first quarter. “Bears” opened the scoring with “Thunder” responding with successive scores from Kaan Uyduran and Brendan Ross along with a 3 pointer from Rhys Hill. The visitors reacted positively levelling the score at 7 all with “Thunder” unable to find any kind of momentum. They were also guilty of missing a number of easy scoring opportunities and at the end of the first period only led 19-15.

In the second quarter “Thunder” were once again sluggish offensively but were able to restrict “Bears” to just six points in the quarter and thanks to nine points from Carlo Nieva they were able to take the period 15-6 to secure a 34-21 half time lead.

A more energetic Thunder started took the court the second half with two assertive drives to basket and a three point shot from Ollie Thomas. Nieva continued with his scoring burst as “Thunder” scored 35 points in the period more than they’d managed in the whole of the first half. They took the quarter 35-12 to extend their lead to 69-33 with the downside being a nasty looking ankle injury to Will Grosvenor.

Despite holding a substantial lead, the “Thunder” coaching staff encouraged their players to display the same intensity in the final stanza but their players were unable to respond only winning the period 19-15 to close out an 88-48 win.

For “Thunder” Nieva led their scoring with 24 points but Coach Rob Crump was pleased with the contributions from a number of other players. Jacob Killeya rebounded well and scored 15 points the same total as the energetic Rhys Hill while Will Grosvenor contributed 10 points before his injury.

Third win of the season for Under 14 Boys

Under 14 Boys Midlands Conference

Northants “Thunder” 96 – 55 Leicester “Warriors”

The Northants under 14 boys notched up their third win of the season with a comprehensive victory over Leicester “Warriors”. The game started well for “Thunder” with scores from Jacob Round and David Nieva putting them into a 6-0 lead but “Warriors” got back on terms at 9all before an unanswered run from the Northants team put them 26-16 up by the end of the first period. The teams exchanged baskets in the early stages of the second period until Thunder went on another burst to stretch their lead to 48-29 at half time with the mercurial Round scoring 34 first half points.

In the third quarter “Thunder” were bothered by “Warriors” pick and roll offences and their sagging man to man defence and were only able to edge the period 19-14 to extend their lead to 67-43. In the final quarter “Thunder” benefitted from some excellent defensive rebounding from Emmanuel Arimoro, Solomon Day-Adley and Ayo Oluyede allowing David Nieva to orchestrate a number of fast breaks. A tiring “Warriors” went scoreless for the last five minutes of the game as “Thunder” cruised to a well deserved 96-55 win.

Jacob Round put in a captain’s display with 45 points. David Nieva finished with 27 whilst Hayden Sayers contributed nine points.

“Thunder’s dreams are thwarted

National Shield Quarter Final

Huddersfield “Heat” 87 - 68 Northants “Thunder”

In their first season the Northants senior men’s dream of making it to a national semi-final ended in the ‘frozen north’ last Sunday. They were beaten by 19 points by a talented Huddersfield “Heat” team in the quarter final of the National Shield and will now concentrate on gaining promotion from the 4th Division.

After their late arrival home from their league game in Kings Lynn the previous evening and the journey to Yorkshire there was always a danger that “Thunder” would ‘leave their game on the bus’, and so it proved. “Heat” were ready for the Shield giant killers and with efficient play they jumped out to a 29-11 first quarter lead. “Thunder” knew they would have to tighten up their defence in the second quarter and they managed this restricting their opponents to 17 points but they could only score 15 themselves and found themselves trailing 46-26 at half time.

If “Thunder” were to advance to the semi-finals they would need a monumental effort in the third period of play and they responded with a more controlled offensive display to take the period 27-21 so closing the deficit to 53-67 and give themselves an outside chance of causing another upset in the competition. In the event “Heat” were able to call on their experience and produce ten minutes of excellent defence restricting “Thunder” to just 15 points whilst scoring 20 themselves to take the game by 87 points to 68.

On the long journey home “Thunder” were left to contemplate a difficult weekend which saw them travel to an away game on Saturday evening followed by another away game the next day. On a positive note the team know that if they gain promotion to the 3rd Division next season they will be well able to compete.

In the defeat last Sunday Leon Henry led “Thunder’s” scoring with 22 points with good support coming from Tomas Vladika and Nick Waller with 16 and 11 points respectively.

Sure Shot National Cup

Junior Men

Junior Men march on

Northants “Thunder” 89 – 76 Surrey “Rams”

The Northants junior men will face City of Sheffield in the quarter finals of the Sureshot National Cup after a hard fought win over a game Surrey “Rams” outfit. At the end of the game “Thunder” were relieved after they had allowed “Rams” to pull back from a 45-70 deficit to close to 74-77 midway through the fourth quarter and they were heavily indebted to captain Matt Yates who recorded a 48 point tally.

Conference outfit “Rams” showed they were a team of some quality in the first period of play which “Thunder” just edged 25-22 with all 22 of the “Rams” points coming from two players. In the second quarter “Thunder” showed their class and extended their lead to 53-39 by half time with 33 of the “Rams” points coming from Beyai and Seipt.

During half time “Thunder” coach Rob Eddon organised his team into a triangle and two defence in an attempt to curtail these two high scorers and his move led to “Thunder” moving out to that 25 point lead. At this stage “Rams” switched to a zone defence and immediately the game changed with “Thunder” failing to show patience against the zone. “Rams” were able to launch a number of fast break attacks from missed “Thunder” shots and a 13-zero run got the visitors back to 70-58 at the end of the third quarter.

By now “Thunder’s” offence seemed to be almost totally based on the individual efforts of Yates and when his efforts failed “Rams” were able to capitalise and at 77-74 a major upset looked to be on the cards. To the relief of the “Thunder” supporters Yates was able to find his scoring touch. He scored 15 of his team’s 19 fourth quarter points as “Thunder” were able to close out the game at 89-76.

	<u>Junior Women</u>	
Northants “Lightning”	20 -0	Stockport “Lapwings

The Northants junior women have advanced to the semi final of the Sure Shot National Cup without even breaking sweat when Stockport were unable to raise a team for this quarter final game. This means that “Lightning” have advanced to the final four stage after receiving a bye, beating Chiltern 86-33 and now getting a walk over .

Under 15 Girls exit the National Cup after an epic

	<u>Under 16 Girls</u>	
Northants “Lightning”	42 - 49	Haringey “Angels”

The Northants Basketball Centre has already witnessed a number of epic games and this Sure Shot game will surely rank amongst one of the best. In the end the Northants under 15 girls were defeated by a team that is unbeaten in all competitions this season but the Londoners returned home knowing they had been involved in a true contest.

Haringey arrived at the Basketball Centre for the 3rd Round Cup game without three leading players and their usual coach. Obviously, they were expecting an easy win over the under aged Northants team but they were in for a big shock. “Lightning” showing scant respect for their illustrious opponents and despite missing seven free throws only trailed 12-11 after the first period of play.

In the second quarter both teams switched to a zone defences and defences dominated as players on both sides failed to score from the perimeter. With “Lightning” trailing 17-16 the enthusiastic crowd were delighted by successive scores from Charlotte Berridge which gave her team an unlikely 20-19 half time lead.

“Lightning” extended their lead to 28-23 early in the third quarter but “Angels” showed their class with a 12-6 surge to take a one point lead going into the final ten minutes of play. By now several of the “Lightning” players were close to exhaustion. Haringey began to benefit from their superior height advantage scoring from a number of put backs and went on a 10-zero charge to extend their lead to 45-34. The game looked to be all over bar the shouting but Coach Karen Goodrich appealed for one last push from her players. They responded superbly mounting an eight zero surge to close to 42-45.

With the game on the line “Angels” scored with a put back and then forced a “Lightning” turn-over and score the game’s final basket. Their delight at the end of the game showed just how relieved they were to record the seven point win.

In a superb performance a number of “Lightning” players came out of the game with a great deal of credit. Their scoring was led by Caitlin Stewart with 15 points and she also pulled down 12 rebounds to complete a wonderful double-double. Charlotte Berridge contributed eight points and Ruchae Walton seven and together with Lauren Milne rebounded superbly against opponents several inches taller than them

Another big win for Under 14 Girls

Under 14 Girls Midlands South-West Conference
Northants "Lightning" 76 – 33 Norfolk Iceni

The Northants under 14 girls picked up their fourth Conference win of the season and maintained their fourth place in the Midlands South-West Conference table.

Coach Karen Goodrich was able to give all her players ample court time with her more experienced players playing minimal minutes before the big Cadette women's quarter final Cup game. In the absence of these players Georgia Collins and Charlotte Price were able to display their developing skills.

"Lightning" comfortably won the first three periods of play establishing a 66-24 lead but to their credit "Iceni" came strong in the fourth quarter which "Lightning" just shaded 10-9.

THIS WEEKEND'S ACTION

Saturday 15th December

11-30am Under 15 Boys versus Leicester "Dynamite"
1-30pm Senior Men versus Derby "Trailblazers III"

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 Sporting Club West Bromwich
Cadet Men travel to City of Birmingham
Under 14 Girls travel to Haringey "Angels"
Under 14 Boys travel to Shropshire "Warriors"

Sunday 16th December

11-00am Under 13 Girls versus Bury St Edmunds
11-15am Cadette Women versus Reading "Rockets"
1-15pm Junior Women versus Reading "Rockets"
 Under 15 Girls versus Wiltshire "Demons"
3-15pm Cadet Men versus Sheffield "Junior Sharks"

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 Men travel to City of Birmingham