

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB



PRESS RELEASE

“Thunder’s” Play Off hopes take a big hit after Derby mauling

Men’s National League Division 4 (Midlands Conference)

Team Derby 117 – 68 Northants “Thunder”

With the top of the Midlands Conference getting tighter this top of the table clash was almost certainly going to be decisive in deciding which team would advance to the end of season Play Offs. Both teams went into the game picking up wins the previous week against other Play Off contenders so a close game was expected, so the 49 point blow out came as a bit of a shock to everyone.

“Thunder” made a good start to the game and scores from Jacob Holt, Sam Mennell and the Yates brothers Johnny and Matt saw theme ease into a 10-6 lead but the next few minutes were to prove decisive. Derby scored off a back-door cut, “Thunder” missed three lay ups after breaking the derby press then back up guard Tom Higgins picked up an ankle injury and had to withdraw from the game. These events seemed to affect “Thunder’s” concentration and from 14-13 up they found themselves trailing 21-33 at the end of the first quarter.

Needing a good start to the second period of play “Thunder” were hit by a 12 point Derby blitz to trail 21-45 and to all intents and purposes it was ‘game over’. “Thunder” were finding it very difficult to match up against their opponents and a switch to a zone defence didn’t improve matters with the home side draining six, three-pointers in the second quarter as they took a 68-34 lead into the half time break.

Matters didn’t get any better in the third period of play as Derby extended their lead by a further 18 points but their was a little consolation for “Thunder” as they edged the final quarter 21-18 finally losing by 68 points to 117.

In the disappointing defeat Matt Yates top scored with 22 points, decent support coming from Jacob Holt and Johnny Yates with 13 and 14 points respectively while Richard Higgins battled hard for his 10 points.

The loss means that “Thunder” have now lost four games to Derby’s three all they can do now is win their remaining fixtures and hope that Team Derby or “Trailblazers II” slip up but there is no doubt that Saturday’s loss may well prove to be decisive.

Short handed Cadet Boys go down to Richardson and Co.

Under 16 Boys National League

(Midlands Conference)

Team Birmingham “Elite”

86 – 46

Northants “Thunder”

The Northants Under 16 Boys travelled to Birmingham last Sunday to take on Team Birmingham “Elite” with just one genuine ‘big’ man and missing leading scorer Connor White. The short-handed squad battled hard for three quarters of the game and going into the last period of play trailed by a respectable 30 points. They were then hit by an aggressive zone press and went to pieces throwing speculative passes and trying to dribble out of trouble losing the period 12-22 to go down by 40 points.

Team “Elite” fielded the talents and physically strong Richardson who had scored over 50 points when the two teams met just before Christmas. Coach John Collins gave Grigori Litsai the unenviable job of marking Richardson and thanks to his efforts and with ‘Help’ from his team mates he was restricted to 34 points.

Throughout the game “Thunder” found scoring difficult with little inside presence they were restricted to fast break offences and perimeter shooting. Rookie Ashley Kitchen top scored for “Thunder” with 18 points which included five three-pointers, Patrick Adeji supported well with 13 points but no other Northants player could get into double figures although Tom McLeod rebounded well.

Much improved Under 16 Girls lose to “Lapwings”

Under 16 Girls National League

(North Conference)

Stockport “Lapwings”

63 – 51

Northants “Lightning”

After the long journey to the north-west for their game against Stockport “Lapwings”, last Saturday the Northants Under 16 Girls left their ‘game on the bus’ and failed to score for the first six minutes of the game. In the entire first quarter they only managed six points with “Lapwings” netting 17. Looking at the final score that 11 point margin was to prove decisive because “lightning” were competitive for the other three periods of play. Losing the second and third quarters by narrow margins and winning the fourth 18-11.

Throughout the game the Stockport’s Rouse caused the “Lightning” defence problems and the tall centre finished the game with a 35 point haul, while for “Lightning”, Dina Kosnikovska scored 22 which included four, three-pointers with Poppy Barnett and Lucy Needham supporting well with 13 and 12 points respectively.

Coach Janis Kosnikovski pronounced himself proud of his team’s efforts but he was disappointed that on the number of occasions they had created scoring opportunities after good ball movement only to miss the final shot.

THIS WEEKEND'S ACTIVITIES

Saturday 24th February

9-30 – 11-00am	Junior Ballers sessions
11-30am	Under 14 Boys versus Bristol "Flyers"
	Under 16 Girls versus NEBC "Titans"
2-00pm	Under 16 Boys versus Stoke "Knights"
4-00pm	Junior Men versus Frankley "Falcons"
6-00pm	Senior Men versus University of Nottingham

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

Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

11-30am – 3-00pm	Under 15 Boys CVL @ Northampton School for Boys
2-30pm – 5-00pm	Under 11 CVL @ Northampton School for Boys

Sunday 15th February

12-00 noon	Under 16 Boys versus City of Birmingham "Rockets II"
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For more information contact: John Collins on 07801 533 151