

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

“Thunder well beaten by top of the table “Cavaliers”

National League Division 3 (South Conference)

Thames Valley “Cavaliers”

112 – 80

Northants “Thunder”

Thames Valley Cavaliers showed why they are top of the Division 3 South Conference when they convincingly beat Northants Thunder last Sunday and although their behaviour was hardly that of champions elect. like Thunder they had a player ejected from the game which became increasingly tetchy as it progressed.

Thunder were up against it from the outset and by half time Cavaliers had established a convincing 60-33 lead. Thunder enjoyed their best phase of the game in the third quarter which they won 28-23 but it was business as usual for the home side in the final period as they closed out the 32 point win.

Cavaliers are laden with former BBL players and two of them Perre and Baptiste top scored for Cavaliers with 33 and 21 points respectively. For Thunder Richard Higgins continued in his fine form with 20 points, Jacob Holt and Devon Adams supporting well with 14 and 11 points.

This latest loss means that Thuneder drop one place to 8th in the Conference table and on Saturday they will match up against London United who are one place below them.

Play Off blow for Junior Men with loss against “Dynamite”

Junior Men’s East Midlands Development League

Leicester “Dynamite”

73 – 64

Northants “Thunder”

The Northants Thunder junior men’s hopes of reaching the end of season Play Offs suffered a major set back last Saturday when they were beaten by fellow Play Off challengers Leicester Dynamite.

An aggressive full court press gave Dynamite the initiative at the start of the game. Thunder were guilty of rushing their offence and turning the ball over giving the home side easy scores and earning them a 15-6 lead. Thunder nerves were calmed with some good ‘inside’ scoring from James Barden allied to a number of brave drives to the basket by Ollie Thomas. This gave the rest of the Thunder team more confidence and they were able to reduce the deficit 15-19; but consecutive scores from Dynamite gave them a 23-15 advantage at the end of the quarter.

During the first period of play Thunder had struggled to match up with Dynamite forcing Coach Rob Crump to implement a zone defence. This did little to control the Dynamite offence and a 9-zero run extended their lead to 31-16 and forcing Crump to take a time out. The break in play allowed Thunder to compose themselves and they responded with a 13-4 run of their own with scores coming from Carlo Nieva, James Barden and Ollie Thomas as the deficit was reduced to single figures at 29-37.

The third quarter was another tight encounter, and an extended defence by Thunder forced some Dynamite errors and inspired by some excellent perimeter shooting by David Nieva and Ollie Thomas the deficit was further reduced to 43-49. As the period progressed Dynamite became very physical on the offensive boards and Thunder were guilty of allowing a number of second chance shots. The home side took advantage of this extending their lead 58-43 leaving Thunder with a lot of work to do in the final quarter.

Thunder hopes were hindered when Jake Nailer was forced to leave the game due to a heavy knock to the ribs when colliding with a player for a loose ball. They also became frustrated on offense when shots from the perimeter failed to drop. The Northants boys did manage to reduce the deficit to 60-67; but unfortunately couldn’t push on to further threaten Dynamite’s lead as they held on for the nine point victory

In the disappointing loss, Thunder were led in scoring by Ollie Thomas with 20 points and he was supported by David Nieva and James Barden with 11 and 12 points respectively.

Coach Crump commented “Dynamite demonstrated today why they are top of the league. There were phases of the game where we panicked on offense resulting in rushed shots or turnovers. The boys displayed a strong effort to reduce the score to single figures, unfortunately we could not produce that final run to threaten Dynamite lead.”

Thunder remain in second place in the East Midlands Conference table and face two games this weekend. They take on fellow Play Off contenders Mansfield Giants on Saturday and bottom of the table Notts Nova the following day.

“Titans” Under 16 Girls earn local bragging rights with convincing win over “Lightning”

Under 16 Girls Premier Division North

NEBC “Titans” 80 - 46 Northants “Lightning”

Games between these two local rivals have traditionally been close run affairs but at Weavers Leisure Centre last Saturday, Titans recorded a convincing victory winning all four periods of play.

Lightning welcomed Holly Winterburn back into their ranks and the England international top scored with 15 points while Odera Onwumechili with 11 points was the only other Lightning player able to score in double figures. Lightning were able to force a number of turn overs and secured a number of defensive rebounds through Tia Dunrad-Allen but were guilty of failing to capitalise on the scoring opportunities they created.

Under 14 Girls go down to hungry “Warriors”

Under 14 Girls East Midlands Development League

West Herts “Warriors” 114 - 36 Northants “Lightning”

With Play Off places at a premium and points difference coming into play the leading teams in the various Development Leagues are showing no mercy against weaker opponents. This was very clear last Saturday when the young Lightning team travelled to West Herts Warriors. The home team employed a full court press for most of the game and poured in the points in all four periods of play finally closing on 114.

Lightning managed just one basket in the first quarter while West Herts scored 33 and with a 33-2 score line the game was as good as over as a contest. Lightning were far more competitive in the next second half but by then but were never in serious contention.

The Northants girls never gave up the cause with Ony Onwumechili and Katie Dinnell their main scoring threats while Sade Chambers and Lucy Needham worked tirelessly on defence but they were never in serious contention.

Under 14 Boys’ so close to beating second placed “Warriors”

Under 14 Boys Midlands Development League

Northants “Thunder” 64 -66 Leicester “Warriors”

The Northants under 14 boys have been given the toughest possible list of fixtures to close their season. After taking on 3rd in the table Shropshire Warriors the previous week they faced up to another Warriors outfit on Saturday this time second placed Leicester.

It was possible that the Leicester boys had anticipated an easy win but Thunder gave them second thoughts as Thunder inspired by Jude Carmichael and Oliver Dominique, stormed out to a 20-16 lead after the first period of play. Warriors came out for the second quarter in more determined mood but with Connor White and Ashley Kitchen connecting with three point shots and Jonathan Ntumba rebounding strongly Thunder were able to extend their lead by another four points to 38-29 at half time. Their cause had been helped by the fact that the visitors had missed no less than 12 free throws in the quarter.

The two teams exchanged baskets in the third quarter but Warriors closed the period with an 8-1 charge to reduce the deficit to 45-51 with everything to play for in the final stanza. In the final ten minutes of play Thunder became increasingly nervous and with key players in foul trouble Warriors went more and more to an isolation offence for their talented guard Sandhu. This player began to score freely and a 9-zero Warriors run gave them the advantage at 63-58 but back to back scores from Ntumba got Thunder back to within a single point.

Sandhu drained a 'three' after a very long offence and Dominique responded with a put back to get Thunder back to within one score. Even then the drama wasn't over as, during Warriors' next offence the Northants bench was convinced that a Leicester player had stepped out of bounds but the referees disagreed and the visitors held on to possession and held off for the win.

In a game which showed just what Thunder are capable of, Oliver Dominique top scored for his team with 20 points. Jude Carmichael supported well with 14 points while 8 point contributions from Ashley Kitchen, Jonathan Ntmba and Connor White were invaluable.

Clashes against top of the table teams continue on Saturday when the team travels to leaders Worcester Bears.

THIS WEEKEND'S ACTIVITIES

Saturday 12th March

9.30am to 11.00am "Ballers" Session

11-45am Under 14 Girls versus N.E.B.C. "Titans"

1-45pm Senior Men versus London United

These games will be played at the **Northants Basketball Centre** which is situated at Northampton School for Girls in Spinney Hill Road, Northampton NN3 6DG

Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

Under 14 Boys travel to Worcester "Bears"

Under 16 Boys travel to Mansfield "Giants"

Junior Men travel to Mansfield "Giants"

Sunday 13th March

Junior Men travel to Notts Nova

For further information contact John Collins on 07801 533 151