

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

Northants senior men slip to defeat against the students of Loughborough

National League Division 3 (North Conference)

Loughborough Student "Riders" 89 – 81 Northants "Thunder"

With just 55 seconds of this Division 3 game remaining Northants Thunder held a one point lead, this after trailing for the entire game. At a time when control was essential Thunder reacted poorly when the students of Loughborough drained a three pointer and a series of poor decisions handed the initiative to the home side who closed out the game for a rather flattering eight point win.

During the closing stages Thunder had been handicapped by injuries to Adam Thomas and Abraham Twumasi while Richard Higgins had 'fouled out' of the game.

Loughborough held the initiative for most of the game without ever being able to open up a substantial gap. This was largely down to the efforts of Danny Barrett from the perimeter and Jacob Holt close to the basket while Johnny Yates controlled matters from the back court.

In the narrow defeat Barrett netted 21 points including five 3 pointers while Holt contributed 18 points and Yates 16.

Junior Men open their league campaign with a win

**Junior Men's East Midlands Development League
Ilkeston "Outlaws" 69 - 78 Northants "Thunder"**

Northants Thunder Junior Men opened up their season with a hard fought away win against a gutsy and determined Ilkeston "Outlaws" outfit.

It was Ilkeston Outlaws who took immediate control of the game jumping out to a 20-6 lead with "Thunder" guilty of conceding too many scores close to basket. After a "Thunder" time out, it was Ollie Thomas and Ayo Oluyade scoring 6 points apiece who inspired Thunder to reduce the deficit but the Northants boys still trailed by 9 points at the end of the first period of play.

The second quarter saw a more energetic Thunder, influenced with some strong hustle from Jake Nailer which fuelled Thunder's offence and enabling them to reduce the lead to two points at 36-38 with 3 minutes remaining of the quarter. During this surge it had been Ollie Thomas with 11 quarter points including two 3 pointers, who had been most influential. Having got to within 'touching distance' Thunder were guilty of a number of turn-overs allowing Ilkeston to extend their lead to 43-36 at the half.

"Thunder" were challenged both physically and mentally in the second half. Not only were they fatigued with only seven players available for the game, they also had to contend with some rather inconsistent refereeing. Rather than knock Thunder's enthusiasm it seemed to spur them into action as they mounted fast break offences at every opportunity.

This momentum was disrupted when Carlo Nieva was called for his fourth foul but midway through the quarter a 10-zero including back-to-back scores from David Nieva, saw them tie the game at 57 all. A lapse of concentration from Thunder in the final seconds saw Outlaws nail a three point shot on the buzzer to lead 62-58.

A tired Thunder were determined not to let Outlaws win and they stormed out at the start of the fourth quarter with a stunning 15-2 run to open up the game. Thunder's were employing a 2-3 zone fuelling consecutive fast breaks as they jumped out to a 73-64 lead and forcing an Ilkeston timeout. Despite a small surge from Outlaws to reduce the Thunder's leader to six, Thunder closed the game out to win 78-69. Thunder was led in scoring with a strong performance from Ollie Thomas who amassed 33 points, whilst Ayo Oluyede and Jacob Killeya scored 16 and 12 points respectively.

Coach Crump commented "This was a tough game to start our season, despite a slow start Thunder demonstrated excellent character to finish the game. Ollie Thomas in particular was superb leading the team in key moments of the game".

Junior Men exit Cup after losing to Warriros

Junior Men's National Cup

(Round 1)

Leicester "Warriors"

66 – 57

Northants "Thunder"

Less than 24 hours after defeating Ilkeston Outlaws in the league the Thunder junior men faced Leicester Warriors on the road in the National Cup.

With both teams fielding a small roster, Warriors had the height advantage over their East Midland rivals but Thunder started the game in promising style by storming into 12-5 lead thanks to some strong inside play from Jacob Killeya. Despite a response from the opposition to reduce the deficit, scores from Ollie Thomas and Carlo Nieva gave Thunder a 14-17 lead after the first period of play.

Thunder were getting a strong scoring performance from guard David Nieva, who scored 12 of Thunder's 14 second quarter points while their 3-2 zone was causing Warriors problems. The home side were being limited to long range perimeter shots and when they missed Thunder were able to launch a number of fast break offences. Despite this Warriors edged the quarter 16-14 to reduce Thunder's lead to just one point at 31-30 at half time.

The message for Thunder was very clear and that was to use their superior speed against the bigger Warrior's team and thanks to this tactic they mounted a 12-zero charge. The Nieva brothers Carlo and David were proving to be a handful for the Warriors defenders and by the end of the quarter the visitors had opened up a 49-38 lead.

Determined not to lose on their own court Warriors exploded into the fourth quarter with a 17-zero charge, to take the lead at 55-49. Thunder had gone seven minutes without a score, with too many fumbles and errors on the fast break which allowed Warriors to capitalise and seize the initiative. Carlo Nieva hit a three pointer to reduce the lead to 55-52, but with fatigue playing a major part all the momentum that Thunder had shown throughout the game had been lost and this seriously affected the player's decision making down the stretch. Despite some strong full court defense and hustle from Thunder in an attempt to get back into the game Warriors closed out the game to win 66-59, leaving Thunder bitterly disappointed.

In the seven point loss David Nieva led the Thunder scoring with 21 points, whilst brother Carlo supported him well with 18 points.

Coach Crump commented "Despite three strong quarters, the boys are obviously disappointed to lose the game in this way. Unfortunately, we failed to executed in transition, missing too many lay ups and turned the ball over which Warriors capitalised on in key moments of the game. However, the team is aware we face Warriors next week at home in the National League, we will use this as motivation to ensure this result is not replicated."

Impressive second quarter sees Cadet Men past Hoods

Cadet Men's Midlands Development League

Northants "Thunder"

90 – 54

Nottingham "Hoods"

After the previous week's loss the message from Coach Grahame Yates to his players was simple, "Forget about last week and concentrate on today's game." He also asked his team to put into practice the things they had worked on during training.

The team certainly seemed to take their coach's advice on board as they came out and took control of the game. With Ed Taylan controlling matters from the back court Thunder were able to set up scoring opportunities and led 18-13 after the first period of play. During the first quarter they had missed a number of scoring chances and the score didn't really reflect their dominance.

That domination was there for all to see during the second quarter with Josh Lloyd causing havoc with strong drives to basket which produced scores and drew fouls from the Hoods' defenders. Chris Amankonah was

also looking impressive both on offence and defence as the visitors were restricted to just five points during the period while Thunder poured in 26 to take a 44-18 half time lead.

With the game as good as won Coach Yates was able to give his whole squad lots of playing time and of the players to respond was Zinzan Ousthuizen who popped in a couple of sweet scores. Thunder were moving the ball well on offence but missed a number of easy scoring opportunities and a determined effort on the part of the Hoods players saw them take the quarter 17-14 to reduced the Thunder lead to 23 points by the end of the quarter.

The fourth quarter was to be a scoring feast as defence became a forgotten art. The two teams scored a total of 51 points, Thunder dominating to the tune of 32 points 19 to take the game 90-54. Josh Lloyd added another 10 points to his personal tally and while Noah Wilborn who had been working hard in the background bagging four points for his effort.

In the conclusive win Lloyd top scored with 19 points. Shekina Ntumba and Ousthuizen both scored 10 points while Zak Kitchen and Chris Amankonah made valuable 9 point contributions. Coach Yates was full of praise for Ed Taylan who had been asked to take on the point guard role, the player responding with 15 points and a number of assists. He was pleased with the way the squad had worked as a team with ten of the 11 players getting onto the score sheet.

Coach injury leads to game cancellation

Under 16 Girls Premier League North Manchester "Mystics" versus Northants "Lightning"

The Northants "Lightning's" Cadette Women's first fixture of the season was cancelled in unusual fashion when "Lightning" coach, Stacey Shakespeare slipped and injured herself which prevented her from driving the mini bus.

Inexperienced Under 14 Girls go down to Brentwood

Under 14 Girls East Midland Conference Brentwood "Fire" 82 - 51 Northants "Lightning"

An inexperienced "Lightning" team, with several players making their National League debut travelled to Brentwood "Fire" and put on a brave performance before going down to a 30 plus points defeat. Despite the margin of the defeat Coach Stacey Shakespeare was pleased that at times her team were able to play some very positive play and with the exception of the third period of play which they lost 24-7, "Lightning" were competitive in the other three quarters.

All nine "Lightning" players contributed to the 51 points total led by Ony Onwumechili with 24 personal points. Ruby Mabbutt contributed 10 points and caught the eye with a number of steals while Sade Chambers rebounded well. Shakespeare was confident that the team will develop well as they gain valuable experience of play at this level.

THIS WEEKEND'S ACTION

Saturday 10th October

9-30am to 11.00am

11-45pm

1-45pm

Junior "Ballers" session

Under 14 Girls versus Brentwood "Leopards"

Under 14 Boys v Ilkeston Outlaws

Under 16 Girls versus Nottingham "Wildcats"

U18 Boys v Leicester Warriors

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

Spectators are welcome and admission is **FREE**

Cadet Boys travel to Derby Trailblazers

Sunday 11th October

Senior Men travel to Middlesex LTBC

For further information contact John Collins on 07801 53315