

# **NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Holt's 'buzzer beater' wins it for "Thunder"**

#### **VCars Senior Men's Division Four**

**Bromsgrove "Bears"                      77 – 79                      Northants "Thunder"**

With just seventy seconds of this Division Four game remaining Bromsgrove "Bears" were holding a five point lead at 76-71 and "Thunder" looked to be heading for their first league defeat of the season. In desperation "Thunder" sent their opponents to the free throw line and the home side cooperated by missing a number of the resulting free throws allowing "Thunder" to launch a number of fast break attacks to draw level at 76 all.

Another "Thunder" foul once more sent "Bears" to the charity stripe and they converted the first of two free throws to lead 77-76 but missed the second; Nick Waller hauled down a huge rebound and "Thunder" launched one last desperation shot. To the dismay of players and coaching staff alike the shot missed but Jacob Holt who had rebounded superbly all game, scored a vital put back and was also fouled. Holt duly converted the bonus shot to give his side an unlikely 79-77 win.

Earlier "Thunder" had made a lethargic start to the game allowing "Bears" to take a 10-2 lead but they were able to reduce the deficit to 17-19 by the end of the first period of play. The second quarter saw a contrast in playing styles with "Bears" running well organised patient offences while "Thunder" relied on their usual fast break attacks. "Thunder" edged the quarter 25-20 to lead 42-39 at the half time break.

The third quarter saw a highly motivated "Bears" team take control of the game and "Thunder" being punished with a series of technical fouls for questioning decisions. This allowed the home side to win the quarter 17-10 and take a 56-52 lead which they maintained throughout the first nine minutes of the final stanza and setting up the bizarre and unbelievable finale.

In the nail-biting win "Thunder" had ten scorers led by Leon Henry with 27 points while good support came from Nick Waller with 10 points

### **Senior Men complete an impressive double**

**Sporting Club Albion                      56 – 84                      Northants "Thunder"**

After all the excitement of the previous evening the Northants "Thunder" senior men made another trip to the West Midlands the following day and picked up a routine win that takes them to joint leadership of the VCars Division 4.

"Thunder" edged the first quarter 23-15 and this lead was extended by two points to 43-33 at half time. Coach Grahame Yates called for a better defensive effort in the second half and his players led by David Nuttall, responded superbly restricted Albion to just 23 second half points. Meanwhile at the offensive end Leon Henry once again looked impressive as "Thunder" poured in 41 points to take the game by 86 points to 54.

For "Thunder" Henry top scored with 31 points while Thomas Vladicka enjoyed his best game for the club in scoring 10 points while the "Thunder" big men, Nick Waller and Leome Francis performed well.

### **Disappointing loss for Junior Men**

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

**Leeds Carnegie                      73 – 53                      Northants "Thunder"**

The Northants Junior Men made the long journey to Leeds and on the return trip were left to contemplate a disappointing 20 point set back. "Thunder" made a lethargic start but edged the first quarter 18-7 but then everything went 'pear shaped' as Leeds outscored them by 23 points to nine.

Trailing 40-27 “Thunder” needed a decisive second half revival but although they avoided the carnage of the second quarter they still lost the half 26-33 to end up on the wrong side of a 73-53 score line.

### **Hot and cold Cadets pick up win number two**

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

**Leeds Carnegie                      55 – 70                      Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants cadet men picked up their second league win of the season with a 15 point win over Leeds Carnegie but in so doing displayed both the good and bad sides of their character. At times they played excellent decisive basketball but they were also guilty of missing easy shots and defending naively.

After the long journey north “Thunder” looked a little jaded during the first period of play with their four England squad players looking fatigued after attending a two day training camp. Leeds edged that first quarter 13-12 but by half time “Thunder” had taken a 29-23 lead. The half time team talk was all about looking after the ball because “Thunder” had been guilty of turning the ball over no less than 15 times during the first 20 minutes of play.

“Thunder” could only extend their lead by a single point during the third quarter and Leeds were still in the game midway through the fourth. “Thunder” then switched back to their full court man-to-man defence and Leeds cracked coughing the ball up on a number of occasions to give “Thunder” easy scores.

In the morale boosting win George Paul top scored with 19 points and he was well supported by Pauli Laurinolli with 13 points while Josh Round scored 8 points and pulled down 8 rebounds. The performance of the day came from Andre Arissol who scored 18 points hauled down 10 rebounds and stole the ball on nine occasions although the point guard wouldn’t have been happy with his double figure total of losses.

### **No problems for Cadettes**

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

**Solent “Suns”                                      35 – 69                                      Northants “Lightning”**

The previous weekend the Northants under 15 girls had beaten Solent so the under 16’s were expecting a similar result and that’s how it turned out. By half time the Northants girls led by the scoring power of Steph Ogden, had taken a 31-17 lead thanks in the main to their full court pressure defence and some excellent perimeter shooting from Hannah Nolan.

“Lightning” went off the boil in the third period of play which they only won 17-15 so Coach Stacey Shakespeare switched her team to a pressure zone defence in the final quarter. With Amber Leiba and Tara Hings dominating on defence and making numerous interceptions “Lightning” were able to run in a number of easy scores taking the period 21-3 to record a 34 point win.

For “Lightning” Ogden top scored with 27 points, Nolan contributed 12 while Leiba matched her 9 points with the same number of rebounds.

### **Under 15 Boys come out on top in physical encounter**

#### **Under 15 Boys Midland Conference**

**Coventry “Trojans”                                      67 – 89                                      Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants “Thunder” under 15 boys made it two back-to-back wins after getting the better of Coventry “Trojans” in what turned out to be a very physical game.

“Thunder” started the game in lively mood bursting into a 7-zero lead initiated by a Carlo Nieva three point shot. The Northants full court press was intimidating the Coventry players who repeatedly turned the ball over leading to easy “Thunder” scores. After a “Trojans” time out the home side responded strongly but a 10-zero “Thunder” run at the end of the quarter, gave them a 28-20 lead.

The two teams exchanged baskets during the second period of play as the game became increasingly physical. "Thunder" were struggling with "Trojans" height advantage and thanks to a number of second chance shots the home side took the quarter 19-18 to reduce the deficit to 39-46 at half time.

The message for the "Thunder" players at half time was simple, maintain the full court defensive pressure, box out and don't get physically intimidated. The Northants boys were struggling to contain the "Trojans" big men and Coventry got the score line back to 53-57. Coach Rob Crump decided to 'front' the "Trojans" post players and this had the effect of restricting their options. "Thunder" were still unhappy about the physical nature of the game and things came to a head when Jacob Round was 'submarined' whilst making a lay up. The period was tied at 18 all which meant going into the final quarter "Thunder" held a narrow 64-57 lead.

In the final quarter the relentless "Thunder" pressure finally told and with Carlo Nieva dominating proceedings they went on a 15-4 charge to put the game beyond Coventry but the final score line gave no indication of what a tight game it had been. Coach Crump was delighted with the character shown by his players in very difficult conditions.

In the 18 point win ten "Thunder" players scored led by Nieva and Round with 19 and 17 points respectively while Will Grosvenor contributed 14 points and Josh Arimoro 11 points.

### **Heavy loss for Under 14 Boys in Nottingham**

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

**Notts Nova                      98 – 35                      Northants "Thunder"**

Against one of the best under 14 teams in the country "Thunder" came out a very poor second in this Midland Conference game. The Northants boys were heavily outscored in all four periods of play and were guilty of turning the ball over on numerous occasions. They were also guilty of missing no less than 25 free throws in the game.

Coach Mickey Paul was disappointed that his team had been unable to execute the skills they practice every week but recognised that his players just weren't used to the intense pressure applied by the Nova players.

For "Thunder" David Nieva did his very best to inspire his team finishing the game with 29 points but no other player was able to score in double figures.

### **Under 14 Girls cruise to win over Youngblood's"**

#### **Under 14 Girls Midlands South Conference**

**Newham "Youngbloods"                      20 – 106                      Northants "Lightning"**

The Northants under 14 girls travelled to London last weekend for what was a new fixture for the Club. Against "Youngbloods" they totally dominated the game restricting their opponents to single figures in all four periods of play. After seeing her team charge into a 33-3 lead after the first quarter Coach Karen Goodrich restricted her team's pressure defence and imposed restrictions on their attacking options. She also used the game as an opportunity to give her less experienced players lots of court time and they responded well by all getting on the score sheet.

Throughout the game Cat Askham, Charlotte Price and Abbie Turner rebounded superbly giving their team ample possession when Newham missed shots. Sarah Round was her usual productive self dishing out a stream of assists to Caitlin Stewart who scored 16 points and Abbie Hobbs who had her best game for the Club with 18 points but pride of place has to go to the excellent Ruchae Walton who scored 33 points pulled down six rebounds and made six steals

### **Easy win for Under 13 Boys in local derby**

#### **Under 13 Boys Midland South Conference**

**NEBC "Titans"                      51 -86                      Northants "Thunder"**

As a contest this local derby was over as early as the seventh minute with "Thunder" leading 27-2 with "Titans" unable to handle "Thunder's" full court pressure defence. This pressure forced numerous turn-overs leading to easy scores.

“Thunder” dropped to a half court defence which gave the home side a little more space to play but by half time “Thunder” had established a 58-19 advantage.

In the second half “Thunder” coach Mike Round restricted his team’s offensive options by stopping fast breaks and making his players practice their rotation offence. To their credit “Titans” rallied strongly and actually won the second half 32-28 to restrict “Thunder’s” winning margin to 35 points with all eight of their players getting on the score sheet.

For “Thunder” Jacob Round top scored with 37 points while good support came from Ainsley Reynolds and Laurence Williams who both contributed 10 points apiece.

### **THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION**

#### **Saturday 10th November**

11-30am Under 14 Girls versus Herts “Warriors”  
1-30pm Under 14 Boys versus Derby “Trailblazers”  
3-30pm Under 15 Girls versus Herts “Warriors”  
5-30pm Under 15 Boys versus Derby “Trailblazers”

All four of these games will be played at Kingsthorpe Community College in Boughton Green Road, Northampton. Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

Under 13 Boys travel to Bucks “Hornets”  
Junior Women travel to Bristol “Storm”  
Junior Men travel Cheshire Juniors

#### **Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> November**

11-00am Cadette Women versus Southend “Swifts”  
1.00pm Cadet Men versus Notts Nova  
3.00pm Junior Women versus Chiltern “Pumas”  
5.00pm Junior Men versus Sporting Club Albion

Again these games will be played at Kingsthorpe Community College in Boughton Green Road, Northampton. Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

Under 15 Girls travel to Bristol “Storm” (National Cup)  
Under 14 Boys travel to City of Birmingham