

# **NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Thunder comeback is not enough to defeat Oxford**

**National League Division 3**  
**(North Conference)**

<b>Northants "Thunder"</b>	<b>86 – 94</b>	<b>Oxford Brookes</b>
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The Northants senior men slipped to another North Conference defeat last Saturday when they went down by eight points to Oxford Brookes. The team seems to be finding numerous ways of losing games and the latest loss was down to a combination of an appalling six minute spell at the end of the first and start of the second quarters and allowing two opponents to pour in a total of 63 points between them.

Thunder made a good start to the game easing out to an 18-16 lead, but then 'the lights went out'. Oxford poured in 12 unanswered points to lead 28-20 at the end of the first period of play and the rot continued at the start of the second. Trailing by 13 points, Thunder were able to steady the ship but still found themselves 38-55 down at half time.

The two teams traded baskets in the third quarter so Thunder had everything to do in the fourth if they were to pull the game out of the fire. The team gave their fans cause for optimism with a 19-5 run which got Thunder to within six points at 81-87 with two minutes of the game remaining, they were then forced to send Oxford to the free throw line and the visitors remained cool in making the resulting free throws and closing out the game for the win.

For the record Sylla and Sofiyani with 39 and 24 points respectively were the Oxford high scorers. Glodi Bomolo top scored for Thunder with 25 points with good support coming from Danny Barrett with 17 points and Jacob Holt with 15

### **Thunder blow a sixteen point lead and exit the National Shield**

**National Shield Round 3**

<b>Newcastle-under-Lyme College</b> <b>"Knights"</b>	<b>90 – 85</b>	<b>Northants "Thunder"</b>
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The day after their defeat against Oxford Brookes the Northants senior men hit the M6 to travel to The Potteries for a National Shield game against the students of Newcastle-under-Lyme College. Thunder travelled with just seven players because of injuries incurred the previous day and made a slow start to the contest slipping to a 10 point deficit.

The second quarter saw guard Glodi Bomolo come to light as he hit 16 personal points which helped his team reduce the deficit to just six points at half time.

The third quarter saw Thunder at their very best, with outstanding defensive intensity and awesome ball movement as they carved the young Newcastle team to pieces and set up what looked to be a game winning 16 point lead going into the fourth quarter. In that third period of play Johnny Yates and Danny Barrett hit a barrage of three-pointers while the Higgins, Richard and Tom together with Jacob Holt, totally dominated in the rebounding stakes.

The key to the fourth quarter was fitness and the effect of only having seven players and two intense games in two days proved fatal for the Northants team with absolutely everything going wrong. Shots that were dropping in the third suddenly fell short and once again the team's free throw shooting let them down. Having made inroads into the deficit Knights gained confidence and by using their bench were able to employ an aggressive full court press. Fatigue saw Thunder coughing up the ball on a number of occasions leading to easy scores for Newcastle as they pushed on for the five point win.

In the disappointing loss Glodi top scored with 23 points, while Barrett scored 18 points, and Holt 15. Good support came from player-coach Johnny Yates with 12 points and Richard Higgins with 10.

Despite the two losses over the weekend the team remains optimistic about the future with bans now served and new players integrated into the squad. The team's sole concentration will now be on the league and a major push for a play off place.

### **Blank weekend for Junior Men**

#### **Junior Men's East Midlands Development League** **Northants "Thunder"      versus      Mansfield "Giants"**

With Mansfield unable to field the requisite eight players, this Midlands Development League game had to be postponed. The two clubs will attempt to re-schedule the fixture.

### **Cadet Boys edged out by Morell and Harris**

#### **Under 16 Boys Midlands Development League** **Northants "Lightning"      60 – 66      Leicester "Dynamite"**

A total for 47 points from guard Morrell and forward Harris was enough to see Leicester Dynamite home against a determined Thunder team in an enthralling game at the Basketball Centre last Saturday.

Thunder started the game in positive fashion establishing a 13-6 lead after five minutes of play. At this stage Harris the son of the Dynamite coach, took control of the game and 11 points from him saw his team get back to 19-20 down at the end of the first quarter.

Thunder's game plan in the second quarter was to shut down scoring opportunities for Harris and this was successful as the Leicester forward was kept scoreless throughout the quarter but the concentration on Harris gave Dynamite guard Morrell some space on the perimeter and he drained two three-pointers as he collected for 10 personal points in the period. Meanwhile Thunder were finding scoring difficult allowing the visitors to edge the quarter 16-12 and take a narrow 35-32 lead.

Whatever stand-in coach Rob Eddon said to his charges during the half time interval certainly worked as his charges went on a 13-2 charge at the start of the third quarter giving them a 45-37 lead after six minutes of the period. Their success was coming from some impressive defence which was forcing a number of Dynamite turn overs leading to numerous fast break scores. The Thunder effort was disrupted when Shekina Ntumba picked up his fourth foul leaving Zak Kitchen as the only 'big man' available to Thunder. Dynamite were able to use their height advantage to claw back the quarter which ended with a 49 all score line.

With the game hung in the balance, Ntumba was brought back into the game at the start of the final period, to eliminate Dynamite's their height advantage but he picked up his fifth foul early in the quarter. The rest of the Thunder team battled valiantly, but they were eventually undone by Morrell who had 12 points in the final stanza to lead his team to a 66-60 victory.

In the six point loss the ever-improving Ed Taylan top scored with 22 points while Chris Amankona and Shekina Ntumba both contributed 12 points but the team desperately needs more players to step up and contribute to the points scoring. Dynamite have only lost one game for this season, this by just three points; the rest, on average, being won by comfortable margins. The fact that Thunder only lost by six points means that the team had nothing to be ashamed of. Obviously there is still work to be done but the team is making progress. Coach Eddon was pleased that the team had stuck to the game plan despite failing to clinch the win.

### **Under 14 Boys maintain their winning streak"**

#### **Under 14 Boys Midlands Development League** **Northants "Thunder"      101 - 47      Derby "Trailblazers II"**

After the close encounter against Nottingham Hoods the previous week the Northants Under 14 boys faced a much easier task last Saturday when they took on a young and inexperienced Derby Trailblazers second string. It soon became apparent that Thunder players were able to beat defenders very easily in a one versus one situation none more so than Jake Carmichael who scored 16 points in 28-11 first quarter romp.

Coach Darius Malutis tried to impress the importance of team play not just going one versus one and he was able to give all 11 of his players ample playing time. Thunder continued to dominate the contest but to their credit the young Derby players stuck to their task and only lost the fourth quarter 15-18.

In the 50 plus points win Carmichael top scored for Thunder with 30 points while Jonathan Ntumba scored 20 points and Matteo Baja 14. Useful 8 point contributions came from Henri Berry, Oliver Dominique and Ashley Kitchen but the team won't be pleased about missing no less than 11 free throws.

### **Under 14 Girls bounce back to beat gutsy "Iceni"**

#### **Under 14 Girls East Midland Conference**

**Northants "Lightning"      68 – 32      Northants "Iceni"**

After their hammering at the hands of Southend Swifts the previous week the Northants under 14 girls were pleased to welcome one of the more inexperienced teams in the Conference to the Basketball Centre last Saturday.

From the very start of the game it was very clear that Lightning were going to be too strong for their opponents. They proceeded to win all four periods of play with Coach Stacey Shakespeare able to give all her players plenty of court time. To their credit the Norfolk girls never gave in and showed a great deal of promise for the future.

Shakespeare was very pleased with the defensive intensity of her team and the contribution that all ten players made to the final score with Dina Kosnikovska with 20 points leading the scoring for Lightning. Chloe Amena with 12 was the only other player to reach double figure but Sade Chambers, Katie Dinnell and Ony Onwumechilli all contributed 8 points.

### **Second "Hoopsterz" League win for "Thunder"**

#### **"Hoopsterz" Under 19 Boys League**

**Duston "Hawks"      36 – 37      Northants "Thunder"**

The Northants team made up of players from the Cadet and Junior squads took on a tall Duston Hawks team last Friday and came out of the game with a narrow win. Initially Thunder seemed to intimidate by the size of the opposition and Duston rushed out to an 11-2 lead after five minutes of play minutes. Thunder settled down and closed the gap to six points by half time and during the interval the players were urged to just relax and play.

Thunder boys started the second half well and drew level at 31 all within 12 minutes but were then began to play like the proverbial headless chickens falling behind 33-36. A time out was used to remind the boys that to lose while doing the right things was acceptable, what was not acceptable was throwing the game away due to silly turnovers. They were also reminded that what was important here was to do what was practiced and maintain possession of the ball. The team responded well and with one minute to go had to keep out a very determined Duston which was throwing everything but the kitchen sink at them but they hung on to win by one point.

All the boys worked hard but Ainsley Reynolds was once again a rock steadyng the ship and getting the squad moving forward. Unsung heroes in a good turnaround win were Noah Wilborn, Aaron Maturi and Zinzen Oostenhuizen, who were always hustling and working hard to force turnovers.

### **THIS WEEKEND'S ACTION**

#### **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November**

9-30am until 11.00am      Junior "Ballers" Session  
11-45am      Under 16 Girls versus Sheffield "Hatters"

This game will be played at the Northants Basketball Centre which is situated at  
Northampton School for Girls, Spinney Hill Road, Northampton

Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE

Senior Men travel to Plymouth "Raiders II"  
Under 16 Boys travel to Leicester "Warriors"  
Under 14 Boys travel to Leicester "Riders"

#### **Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> November**

Junior Men travel to NEBC "Titans II"  
Under 14 Girls travel to Ipswich "Bobcats"