**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Wins last weekend saw four teams from the Northants Basketball Club**

**sitting on top of their respective Conferences**

**Under 16 Boys win ‘ugly’ to stay top of Midlands Conference**

**Under 16 Boys EBL Midlands 1 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 63 – 53 City of Birmingham “Rockets II”**

The Northants Under 16 Boys stay top of the Midlands I Conference after this battling comeback win against the City of Birmingham “Rockets” second string. C.O.B. led at half time and it wasn’t until the third minute of the third quarter that “Thunder” got their noses in front for the first time.

The first quarter saw “Thunder” missing a couple of key players, produce some of their worst basketball of the season so far combining lacklustre offence with naïve defence as their full court man-to-man defence was ripped apart by “Rockets”. Trailing 9-22 after the first ten minutes of play “Thunder” were able to re-group in the second quarter which they won 19-9 to close the gap to 28-31 at half time.

The “Thunder” team that appeared for the second half was a different animal than the one that had been on display in the first. Employing a ‘soft’ full court trapping defence they forced a number of “Rockets” turn overs resulting in easy scores. The Northants boys won the quarter by 22 points to six and despite tossing the final quarter held on for a ten point victory that at one time had looked very unlikely.

In the 63 to 53 win the “Thunder” scoring was led by Fran Guei and Harry Dutton with 17 and 16 points respectively while Logan Ormshaw gave god support with 13 points.

“Thunder” stay to of the Midland 1 Conference but they have lost two games while Warwickshire “Hawks” have lost just one. The title is likely to be decided when the two teams meet next month

**“Wildcats” no match for rampant Under 14 Girls**

**Under 14 Girls Midlands Conference**

**Northants “Lightning” 78 – 42 Nottingham Wildcats”**

This top versus second game was expected to be a close-run thing but as the final score indicates it ended with a runaway victory for the Northants “Lightning” who remain undefeated with a six and zero record.

The first quarter was a cagey affair with the visitors getting their noses in front at 14-11 but a late surge gave “Lightning” the edge at 18-15 at the end of the quarter. “Lightning” then ‘blew’ the game apart at the start of the second quarter with 15 - 2 and 10 – 2 charges led by their captain Cambell Spatcher to take a 43-24 half time advantage.

“Wildcats” were able to stay in touch in the third quarter without ever threatening to close the gap and the final quarter saw them overwhelmed by 20 points to six as “Lightning” cruised to a 78 -42 victory which makes them hot favourites to take the Conference title In the impressive win Campbell Spatcher top scored with 25 points Queendy Yeboah and Danielle Makuna both scoring 12 points and good support came from Macie Latimer and Grace Eighteen who was also impressive on the offensive boards.

**Missed free throws cost “Thunder Too” dear**

**Under 16 Boys EBL Midlands 1 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder Too” 65 -76 Warwickshire “Hawks”**

The Northants “Thunder” Under 15 Boys missed out on an opportunity of claiming a major scalp and doing their Under 16 team a big favour when they played high flying Warwickshire “Hawks” last Saturday. The major factor for not achieving this was mainly down to the simple fact of missing an alarming nineteen free throws.

“Thunder Too” made an excellent start to the game and with Oliwier Andrzejczac causing the “Hawks” defence all sorts of problems close to basket won the first quarter 18-15. They were able to keep their noses in front through the second quarter and at half time held a narrow one point lead at 37-36.

Needing a good start to the second half “Thunder Too” were outscored 14-2 as “Hawks” jumped out to a

50-41 lead which they were able to maintain to the end of the game. That they did was largely down to “Thunder Too’s” inability to convert more than just two of the twelve free throws they were awarded as they slipped to a 65 to 76 defeat.

In the disappointing loss Andrzejczac and Logan Tanner top scored for “Thunder Too” with 19 and 18 points respectively and the fact that the year young “Thunder Too” could compete with one of the leading teams in the Conference has to be a big positive

**Under 14 Boys blow hot and cold in beating “Hawks”**

**Under 14 Boys EBL Midlands Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 72 – 54 Warwickshire “Hawks”**

Ten “Thunder” players led by Jerome Maroodza and Jowell Skiete-Franch contributed to “Thunder’s”

72 point total as they recorded a comfortable win over Warwickshire “Hawks” which keep them on top of the Midlands Conference.

The win was very much based on an excellent first quarter which saw “Thunder” outscore their opponents by 23 points to 13. “Thunder” extended their lead to 46-31 by half time thanks to seven points from Maroodza. “Hawks” put in a determined effort at the start of the third quarter and closed the gap to nine points at 52-43 but a 12-1 “Thunder” charge re-established the home sides advantage.

Leading 64-44 going into the final ten minutes of play “Thunder” were guilty of a rather sloppy final quarter which “Hawks” edged 10-8 without ever threatening to “Thunder’s” lead. The Northants team will have to be at their very best when they face their closest rivals West Bromwich who beat them earlier in the season this coming Saturday.

**“Riders” too strong for game “Storm Too”**

**Under 12 Mixed EBL Region II**

**Leicester “Riders” 55 – 34 Northants “Storm Too”**

The second Northants Under 12 Boys team travelled to Leicester last Saturday to take on “Riders” and ended up on the wrong end of a 55-34 scoreline after a battling performance which saw them win the third quarter by six points. “Storm Too” were able to field a full-strength team for the first time this year but found themselves trailing at half time before the encouraging third quarter, but “Riders” re-grouped in the final quarter to run out comfortable winners.

In the defeat Jack Thompson, Deev Patel and Finn Campbell led the scoring for “Storm Too” who are back in action this Saturday with a game against Mansfield “Giants”

**Strong second half sees Under 13 Boys home against “Tornadoes”**

**Under 13 Mixed YBL**

**Coventry “Tornadoes” 79 – 49 Northants “Storm”**

The Northants Under 13 team maintained their unbeaten record after a what appeared to be a comfortable victory over Coventry “Tornadoes”, but it came after a Jekyll and Hyde performance which saw them leading by just nine points at 31-22 at half time. Stern words from Coach Danielius Jokulis saw a different “Storm” team take to the court for the third quarter and they proceeded to outscore “Tornadoes” by 21 points to 11**.**

Trailing 33-52 the Coventry coach gave some of his younger players court time and they were no match for “Storm” who won the fourth quarter to take the game by a comfortable thirty points on the back of 29 points from Sam Dominici while Jensen McCauley and Arlo Dominici contributed 15 and 10 points respectively.

**Two late cancellations for Northants teams**

The Under 14 Girls East of England Regional League game against Southend “Scorpions” was cancelled because Southend were unable to raise a team and the Under 12 Boys National League game against Birmingham “Bears” was also called off because the Birmingham Coach wasn’t available.

The Club will attempt to re-schedule both games.

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 3rd February**

**9-30am to 10-30am** Budding “Ballers”

**10-30am to 11-45am** Junior “Ballers”

**12-15pm** Under 12 Boys II versus Mansfield “Giants” (EBL)

Under 14 Boys versus West Bromwich (EBL)

**2-30pm** Under 15 Boys versusWest Bromwich (EBL)

Under 14 Girls versus Mansfield “Giants” (EBL)

**4-45pm** Junior Men versus Worcester “Wolves” (EBL)

**Sunday 4th February**

**10-15am** Under 16 Boys versus Under 15 Boys (EBL)

**12-30pm** Under 14 Girls II versus Braintree “Blue Devis” (ERL)

“Storm I” versus Oxford “Hoops”

**1-15pm** “Storm” Under II versus Oxford “Hoops) (YBL)

**2-00pm** “Storm” Under 11 I versus Oxford “Hoops” (YBL)

**2-45pm** “Storm” Under 11 II versus Oxford “Hoops” (YBL)

**2-30pm** Under 14 Boys versus Bromsgrove “Bears” (EBL)

**The “Ballers” activities and the above games** **will take place at The Basketball Centre which is based at Northampton School for Girls, Spinney Hill Road, Northampton NN3 6DG**

Under 16 Girls travel to Leicester “Warriors” (EBL)