

# **NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **“Thunder” off the top after loss to “Trailblazers II”**

#### **Men’s National League Division 4**

#### **(Midlands Conference)**

**Derby “Trailblazers II”      103 – 79      Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants men’s team slipped down to third place in the Midlands Conference after suffering a defeat at the hands of the Derby “Trailblazers” second string while close rivals Team Derby picked up a win against Charnwood College “Riders”. “Thunder” went into last Sunday’s game as Conference leaders but they knew they would be in for a tough game against the previously unbeaten “Trailblazers”.

The determination of the home side was clear from the get go with several “Thunder” players unhappy that they were being defended illegally and they were guilty of worrying too much about this as Derby jumped out to a 10-2 lead. The Northants team battled back and two three pointers from Sam Mennell got them back on track but their cause was severely handicapped when point guard Johnny Yates was disqualified from the game after a scuffle with a “Trailblazers” player.

Trailing by 18 points to 27 after the first period of play and their player rotation disturbed by the loss of Yates, “Thunder” knew they were up against it but thanks to the efforts of Jake Barr and Matt Yates they were competitive throughout the second quarter and by half time Derby had only extended their lead by a single point to 51-41.

“Thunder” made a good start to the second half reducing the deficit to six points early in the third but over a four minute period they were outscored 22-7 with Wesselingh coming off the Derby bench to hit 15 personal points. Trailing 60-83 going into the final ten minutes of play “Thunder” knew the game was as good as over but to their credit they battled hard only losing the fourth quarter 19-20 finally losing by 79 points to 103.

After the game Coach John Collins expressed concern about the amount of holding the “Trailblazers” had been allowed to get away with but accepted his team had been beaten by the better team who connected with no less than 15 three point shots.

In the disappointing 24 point defeat Matt Yates and Jake Barr top scored with 29 and 16 points respectively. Jake Wyatt with 10 points and as many rebounds was the only other “Thunder” player to score in double figures. The team will need to battle back this Saturday when they entertain Shropshire “Warriors” a team that defeated them earlier in the season.

## **Junior Men return to top spot after one point win over City Of Birmingham II**

### **Junior Men's National League**

**(Midlands West Conference)**

**Northants "Thunder"**

**44 – 43**

**City of Birmingham "Rockets II"**

After grinding out a one point win against City of Birmingham "Rockets II" the Northants junior men find themselves top of the Midlands West Conference on the basis of having played more games than other teams.

Against C.O.B. "Thunder" struggled to score throughout the game and were guilty of missing numerous lay ups. They were thankful for the fact that their opponents could only convert four of the 17 free throws they were awarded.

"Thunder" took the first period of play 14-9 and that difference was to prove significant as they lost the second and tied the third quarters. Holding a 35-32 lead going into the final period "Thunder" allowed their opponents to close to 42-41 but a breakaway score for Cameron Samuels and four missed shots from the charity stripe by C.O.B. saw them holding on for the win.

For "Thunder", Samuels top scored with 20 points, Zac Kitchen and Chris Amanjonah contributing 11 and 8 points respectively which meant that the rest of the team could only contribute 5 points between them. This statistic will have to improve if they are to be competitive against unbeaten West Bromwich Albion this Saturday.

## **Cadet Boys see off much improved "Titans Purple"**

### **Under 16 Boys National League**

**(Midlands West Conference)**

**Northants "Thunder"**

**56 – 49**

**NEBC "Titans Purple"**

Earlier in the season "Thunder" had comfortably beaten "Titans Purple" but they were aware that they would face a much stiffer challenge when the two teams locked horns at the Basketball Centre last Saturday and so it proved.

"Thunder" led 12-8 after the first quarter but "Titans" enjoyed a productive eight minutes in the second outscoring "Thunder" 15-4 to take a well deserved 23-16 lead. "Thunder" coach John Collins took a time out and urged his players to be more patient on offence. They responded well and led by six points from Patrick Adeji they closed the quarter with an 8-zero run to lead 24-23 at half time.

The two teams traded baskets during the third quarter with "Titans" edging it 12-11 to tie the scores up at 35 all. With everything to play for over the final 10 minutes Collins urged his players to exert more pressure on the "Titans" and they did just that. The pressure defence caused a number of turnovers and when "Thunder" missed shots Jacob Barlow-Hurdeman was on hand to convert 'put backs'. A 13-1 "Thunder" charge put them 48-36 ahead and despite missing an alarming 8 free throws at the end of the game they held on for the 56-49 win.

In the seven point win nine "Thunder" players scored led by Adeji with 14 points and he was well supported by 12 points from Connor White and 10 from Barlow-Hurdeman all of them coming in the last quarter.

## **Morale boosting win for Under 16 Girls**

### **Under 16 Girls National League**

**(North Conference)**

**Northants “Lightning”                      57 – 39                      Lancashire “Spinners”**

When the Lancashire “Spinners” arrived at the Basketball Centre with just five players after their long journey from the north west, their coach apologized that he was going to play a containing zone defence. For most of the game they persisted with this tactic not even bothering to contest rebounds in free throw situations.

Against a defence they had only briefly practiced against the “Lightning” players struggled to create any shooting opportunities close to basket. Stand in coach Karen Goodrich implemented a pressure defence in the hope of forcing turnovers but “Spinners” had a more than competent guard who handled the pressure well and at the end of the first quarter held a narrow 11-8 lead.

The Lancashire side showed they were a real threat in the second period but “Lightning” began to connect with some perimeter shots and scores from Olivia Baldwin, Lucy Needham and Chloe Stevens helped them to extend their lead to a 28-21 at half time.

The third period saw “Spinners” begin to tire and the Northants girls were able to capitalize. Helped by the fact that their opponents missed a massive 12 free throws during the quarter “Lightning” were able to win the period 18-6 and establish an unassailable 46-27 lead.

This lead was extended to 56-31 midway through the final period of play but the “Lightning” players were guilty of relaxing their efforts and “Spinners” were able to close the game with a spirited 8-zero run but the “Lightning” players could be well pleased with their defensive efforts.

In the 18 point win Poppy Barnett top scored for “Lightning” with 22 points, Dina Kosnikovska contributing 18 points with four three pointers.

## **“Wolves” too strong for Under 14 Girls**

### **Under 14 Girls National League**

**(Midlands Conference)**

**Northants Lightning”                      34 – 74                      Oaklands “Wolves”**

Earlier in the season the Northants under 14 girls had been comprehensively beaten by “Wolves” who since that game had recruited the best player from another club. The “Lightning” players were made aware of how hard the game was going to be as “Wolves” opened with an 11-zero blitz and by the end of the first quarter the visitors had opened up a 25-9 lead.

This advantage was extended to 42-17 by half time and the final result was no longer in doubt. During the half time break Coach Karen Goodrich tried to instil some confidence in her players but the failed to respond were hit by a 15-zero “Wolves” barrage at the start of the third as “Wolves” extended their lead to 57-17.

To their credit “Lightning” regrouped and with a the “Wolves” coach resting some of his main players, they were able to stay with their opponents over the last 12 minutes of the game both teams scoring 17 points; Oakland’s finally winning by 74 points to 34 with Dina Kosnikovska scoring 14 points for the losing team .

## THIS WEEKEND'S ACTIVITIES

### Saturday 13th January

9-30 am to 11-00 am

11-30am

2-00pm

4-00pm

6-00pm

Junior "Ballers"

Under 14 Girls versus Bucks "Hornets"

Under 16 Boys versus Shenley

Under 16 Girls versus Stockport "Lapwings"

Junior Men versus West Bromwich Albion

Senior Men versus Shropshire "Warriors"

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

**Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE**

Under 14 Boys travel to NEBC "Titans"

**For more information contact: John Collins on 07801 533 151**