

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB



PRESS RELEASE

Win over “Giants” takes “Thunder” to the top of the pile.

Men’s National League Division 4
(Midlands Conference)

Mansfield “Giants” 73 – 91 Northants “Thunder”

This win over Mansfield “Giants” and defeat for City of Birmingham “Rockets II” at Warwickshire “Hawks” took “Thunder” to the top of the Midland Conference table. One team, Derby “Trailblazers II” are undefeated but have played fewer games than any other team in the Conference and “Thunder” travel Derby on the first weekend of the New Year.

The game against “Giants” was a strange affair with “Thunder” holding a 29-24 advantage after the first period thanks to 14 points from Matt Yates. The game had been played at a breakneck speed with both teams struggling defensively. The second quarter was a far more controlled affair with “Thunder” extending their lead by two points to 44-37 at half time.

Coach John Collins’ half time talk was all about transition defence but his words fell on deaf ears as “Giants” continued to hurt “Thunder” on the counter attack and a 10-4 run gave the home side a 65-64 lead going into the final ten minutes of play.

Things got worse for “Thunder” at the start of the fourth with “Giants” scoring the first two baskets of the quarter to move 69-64 ahead. With both their starting centres on four fouls things were looking bleak for “Thunder” but they responded magnificently and two three-pointers from Johnny Yates and back to back scores from Chris Kitchell saw them restore their advantage. The young “Giants” team became frustrated and began forcing up shots and “Thunder” were able to close out the game with an impressive 27-4 run to put a rather unrealistic look to the final score.

In the 18 point win Matt Yates had an impressive 40 point haul, brother Johnny contributing 12 and Jacob Holt 10 and the team’s hard work at shooting practice was rewarded with eleven 3 pointers.

Under 14 Boys beat Oxford in overtime

Under 14 Boys National League
(Midlands West Conference)

Northants “Thunder” 68 – 63 Oxford City “Hoops”
(62 – 62)

The Northants “Thunder” under 14 boys made it three wins in a row with a hard fought victory in overtime against Oxford City “Hoops”.

“Thunder” opened the game assertively, storming into an 11-zero lead with scores coming from Ashley Kitchen and Tom Greenfield. Despite this dominant start, “Thunder” became complacent and their lead was reduced to 18-14 by the end of the quarter.

Oxford continued to put pressure on “Thunder” at the start of the second quarter with a 10-4 run to take a 26-22 lead with “Thunder” guilty of committing too many turn-overs . This forced Coach Crump to take a time out and his team responded positively with a 9-0 surge led by backcourt duo Kris Dambrauskas and Ashley Kitchen allowing the home side to regain a 35-28 lead.

The third quarter proved to be a tight encounter, it was “Thunder” who managed establish 51-41 lead influenced by some good execution on the fast break. Oxford refused to go away, concluding the quarter with two quick back to back baskets to reduce the score line to 51-45.

Thunder received a major blow in the fourth quarter, when leading scorer Ashley Kitchen injured his ankle forcing him permanently out of the game. This unsettled “Thunder” who panicked on offence forcing bad passes and taking rushed shots. Oxford took advantage to make it a one point game with five minutes remaining. Oxford thought they had won the game in the final minute with a lay-up, but a free throw by Benas Maldutis in the dying seconds took the game into overtime.

A tired Thunder knew a big effort was needed to in order to secure a win. Another Maldutis free throw saw Thunder regain the lead 63-62. Some good ‘helpside’ defense denied Oxford scoring opportunities close to basket, and this was allied to a strong rebounding performance from Dambrauskas. “Thunder” secured the 68-63.win thanks to a three pointer and layup by Malduits.

Thunder were led in scoring by Ashley Kitchen with 24 points, supported with a strong scoring performance from Benas Maldutis with 21 points.

Coach Crump commented “It is pleasing to win three games in a row. We displayed strong character in overtime to see out the without Ashley (Kitchen) win and it was pleasing to see players step up in key moments of the game.”

“Titans” Under 14 Girls gain revenge over “Lightning”

Under 14 Girls National League

(Midlands Conference)

N.E.B.C. “Titans” 70 – 60 Northants Lightning”

Northamptonshire “Titans” exacted revenge for a defeat by “Lightning” just a few weeks ago with “Lightning” struggling to contain “Titans” significant height advantage.

“Titans” dominated the opening exchanges rushing into a 12-4 lead and it was fully seven minutes before “Lightning” scored their first field goal. “Titans” maintained their advantage to the end of the quarter at which stage they led 24-12.

“Lightning” reduced the deficit to 28-36 by half time by taking the second quarter 16-12 thanks to 8 points from Dina Kosnikovska but they were struggling to contain Ella McCahill-Brown close to basket and they knew a big effort would be required in the second half.

In the event it was “Titans” who took control and an 8-zero run midway through the third quarter saw them extend their lead to 16 points with “Lightning” guilty of committing numerous turn overs after securing defensive rebounds.

Trailing 40-52 going into the final period of play “Lightning” knew a massive effort would be needed to rescue the game but with Kosnikovska well defended, “Titans” were able to extend their lead to a game winning 68-50. To their credit “Lightning” continued to battle to the end and a 10-2 run at the end of the game gave the final score a more respectable look. With the two teams having secured one win apiece the decider will be on Saturday 27th January at the Basketball Centre.

In the ten point loss Kosnikovska top scored for “Lightning” with 28 points, Fiona Arthur with 10 being the only other player to score in double figures while for “Titans”, McCahill-Browne had 25 points, L. Virag 18 and E. Williams 15.

Rest of the World edge out N.S.G.

Under 14 Girls Challenge Game

Northampton School for Girls 52 – 65 Rest of the World

With so many girls turning up for practice and other clubs reluctant to play games the Northants Club arranged a challenge games for all the girls not involved in the National League fixture against “Titans the following day. The 16 girls were divided into a team of girls from Northampton School for Girls and the other multi-national team representing the Rest of the World.

It was the N.S.G. team that took early control of the game establishing a 20-4 lead after the first quarter. The R of t W team fought back in the second period of play taking it 25-9 to tie the scores up at 29 all at half time.

The Rest team continued to dominate the third period of play and going into the last ten minutes of play had edged ahead 48-41. They continued to dominate in the final period holding on to win by 65 points to 52 for a wonderful ‘comeback’ victory. Top scorers in the game were Vera Gulbenova for N.S.G. with 16 points while Dzesmina Vizgaudyte netted 13 for the R of T W, but coach Emma Salisbury and Kim Thompson were full of praise for all their players

So, a win for the Rest of the World but the most pleasing aspect was the fact that 16 girls had played in a competitive game in addition to the 2 who would play against “Titans the next day.

CHRISTMAS BREAK

The teams of the Northants Basketball Club have completed their fixtures for 2017 and will be taking a two week break; games will resume on **Saturday 6th January 2018.**

Saturday 6th January

9-30 am to 11-00 am	Junior “Ballers”
11-30am	Under 14 Girls versus Oaklands “Wolves”
1-30pm	Junior Men versus City of Birmingham “Rockets”
3-30pm	Under 16 Girls versus Lancashire “Spinners”
5-50pm	Cadet Boys versus N.E.B.C. “Titans”

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

Sunday 7th January

Senior Men travel to Derby “Trailblazers II”

For more information contact: John Collins on 07801 533 151