

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB



PRESS RELEASE

Three teams from the Northants Club were in Play Off action last weekend and all three exited at the first hurdle.

Short handed “Tigers” too good for “Thunder”

Men’s Division 4 Play Offs **(1st Round)**

Northants “Thunder” 86 – 90 Huish Taunton “Tigers”

When the Taunton team arrived with just seven players (their Junior players were in Play Off action in Reading) the Northants team knew they had a great chance of advancing to the next round of the Play Offs.

The Northants coaching staff had been made aware of “Tigers” ability to shoot from the deep perimeter and they made their players very aware of this fact in the pre-game meeting. Five three pointers in the first five minutes of the game proved that the scouting report was accurate as “Tigers” jumped out to a 24-6 lead. For their part “Thunder” were struggling against Taunton’s 3-2 zone defence but a time out saw them get the ball to players close to basket resulting in fouls. They were able to convert only one of the resulting free throws but three-pointers from Jason Tucker and Sam Mennell helped “Thunder” to close the gap to 15-24 by the end of the first quarter.

The two teams traded baskets during the second quarter with “Tigers” hitting another four ‘treys’ but their effort was handicapped when one of their players was disqualified with two technical fouls. Despite now playing against just six players “Thunder” were still outscored 26-21 in the third quarter to trail 36-50 at half time.

The half time message to the “Thunder” players was simple, get out to the “Tigers” shooters and keep up the offensive tempo in order to tire out the opposition. The third quarter was punctuated by technical and unsportsmanlike fouls and “Thunder” were incensed when on three occasions play was stopped when they were about to score. Still trailing by 14 points with four minutes of the quarter remaining “Thunder” mounted a determined charge and outscored “Tigers” 18-9 to close the gap to 62-67 by the end of the quarter.

Sensing victory the “Thunder” effort was seriously affected by a plethora of foul calls against them which saw their player rotation seriously disturbed and “Tigers” were able to extend their lead to 80-67 going into the final ten minutes of play. Coach Collins called on his players for one last surge and they responded well with Hayden Alcindor looking impressive close to basket while two three-pointers from Johnny Yates got the score back to 82-86 going into the final minute of play.

“Thunder” were forced to foul in order to send their opponents to the free throw line in the hope they would miss the resulting free throws. In the event the Taunton players were able to convert enough free throws to keep their noses in front while “Thunder” missed crucial attempts from the charity stripe. A Tucker three-pointer gave “Thunder” one last hope but “Tigers” were able to hold out for the four points win.

In the disappointing loss, Johnny Yates and Sam Mennell led the “Thunder” scoring with 17 and 15 points respectively; good support coming from Alcindor and Matt Yates

Under 14 Girls suffer shock defeat at the hands of Norfolk

Under 14 Girls Play Offs (1st Round)

Northants “Lightning”

52 -53

Norfolk Iceni “Demons”

Having beaten Norfolk on two occasions in Conference play, “Lightning” went into this game full of confidence but their nervousness was evident in the first quarter as they missed an alarming 10 free throws. Despite this they led 14-8 after the first ten minutes of play but “Demons” gained confidence in the second quarter which they won 16-11 to close the gap to 24-25 by half time.

During the first two quarters “lightning” had found it difficult to contain Norfolk’s. Wilkinson and the “Demon” combi-guard went on the score a total of 26 points in the game. A Wilkinson score at the start of the third quarter took her team into the lead but “Lightning” responded with an 8-zero surge to regain the lead. “Lightning” were then guilty of some lethargic defensive work and urged on by a large group of travelling supporters finished the quarter with a 10-4 charge to edge ahead 42-38 going into the final quarter.

By now the Northants senior men had arrived for their Play Off game and their raucous support seemed to urge on the “Lightning” players. Led by eight points from Zoe Ormshaw and an Oti Ata put back “Lightning” were able to regain the lead and at 48-43 seemed to have the game under control. “Demons”, and Wilkinson however had other ideas and a 10-zero charge put the Norfolk team back in front at 53-48. Scores from Fiona Arthur and Gee Joksaita reduced the deficit to 52-53 and a ‘stop’ gave “Lightning” one last chance but Arthur’s shot fell short and it was “Demons” that advanced to the 2nd Round.

In the heartbreaking loss Ormshaw and Arthur led the “Lightning” scoring with 13 and 11 points respectively, Lucie Wilson-Grey supporting well with 9 points.

Under 13 Girls well beaten by Newcastle

Newcastle “Eagles”

79 – 35

Northants “Lightning Too”

As a reward for their achievements in Conference play the Northants Under 13 Girls faced the long journey for Newcastle for their 1st Round Play off game.

The outcome of the game was virtually decided after the first quarter when a well drilled and aggressive “Eagles” team jumped out to a 28-6 lead. Led by Keris Ndubisi “Lightning Too” battled back in the second quarter winning it 12-10 but it was business as usual in the third which “Eagles” took 20-9 and the home side went on to clinch a convincing victory by winning the final quarter 21-8 despite the rebounding efforts of Mia Gajaga and Aishia King.

Coach Kim Thompson was proud of the way her team gave of their all and the achievement of such a young team reaching the Play Offs was something to be proud of.

THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION

Saturday 6th April

9-30am – 11.00am

Junior “Ballers” session for Years 1 to 4

Sunday 7th April

Under 12 Girls travel to Sheffield for the North of England Central Venue League Final Three Play Offs where they will play Manchester “Mystics” and Sheffield “Hatters”

End of Season Presentation Evening

Last Friday almost 200 players and parents assembled in the “Our Kitchen” dining room of Northampton School for Girls for The End of Season Presentation Evening of the Northants Basketball Club. The coaches of the club’s nine teams were able to reflect on their season and make an award to an outstanding player.

The award winners were:

Under 12 Girls	Keris Ndubisi	
Under 12 Boys	Thomas Bates	
Under 13 Girls	Lorraine Zgurean	
Under 14 Girls	Lucie Wilson-Grey	
Under 14 Boys	Thomas Greenfield	
Under 16 Girls	Poppy Barnett	
Under 16 Boys	Dimantis Cerabalin	
Under 18 Boys	Chris Amankonah	
Senior Men	Hayden Alcindor	(Most Improved Player)

The Penny Westwood Award for outstanding contributions to the Club went to Dawn Greenfield while John Collins gave his Presidents Award to Ethan Clarke.

During the course of the evening special mention was made of Chloe Stevens for her remarkable fund-raising efforts in the Sponsored Free Throw event.

The following day the “Ballers” presentations were made by the Young Volunteers who coach on the programme. This season over 80 boys and girls have participated in the Programme, and the award recipients were:

Isabella Brinkley	Nveah Cox	Mikey Hagger	Mylo Isaac
Preston Mee	Gabriel Noel	Matas Paniulaitis	Huni Poltl
Logan Tanner			

**For more information on this Press Release contact:
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