

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

Senior Men return to winning ways

Men's National League (South Conference)

Northants "Thunder" 81 – 58 Middlesex L.T.B.C.

After last week's shock defeat in the National Shield the Northants senior men were keen to get back to winning ways against the Lithuanians of Middlesex LTBC. "Thunder's" hopes of making a good start to the game were hampered when two players made late withdrawals from the game with sickness while two others were delayed en route to the game. With a disrupted warm up, and poor preparation, "Thunder" fell behind 10-18 after five minutes of play. It was however, obvious that LTBC did NOT want to get involved in a running game, and this was a big encouragement to "Thunder". As the period drew to a close LTBC visibly tired and "Thunder" took advantage going on a 10-2 run and the quarter closed with the teams tied at 20 all.

LTBC's tiredness had an immediate effect very early in the second period of play. Within minutes of the quarter commencing they found themselves in foul trouble with their captain and point guard, Antanavicius picking up his third personal foul. "Thunder" were treated to 11 free throws throughout the period, whilst "Thunder" guards Thomas, Adams and Yates were able to pressurise the LTBC ball carriers so disrupting their offence. "Thunder" only just edged the quarter by 3 points at 18-15, but the team was confident that their chance would come in the 2nd half.

The third quarter saw "Thunder" playing their best basketball of the season so far, turning up the tempo and hitting LTBC with a number of fast breaks. The highlight of the game came when "Thunder" forward Turiccki, returning after sickness, injury and a vacation, drove baseline to catch a sleeping help-side defender at the rim. The resulting body contact during the powerful dunk 'and-one' shook the sports hall, giving the home crowd something to really cheer about. The game could well have been over had it not been for LTBC's guard Kazlauskis dropping eight personal points. During that third period "Thunder" pushed their lead out to 13 points at 63-50 but they knew a strong finish would be needed to take victory.

By now the travelling team was starting to look very tired in their tempo, as well as their shooting. "Thunder" saw this and put them to the sword. After early back-to-back baskets from "Thunder" forward Holt, the lead was 20 points, and it was simply a case of seeing out the win. LTBC battled until the end, but some intelligent play from a number of the "Thunder" players saw out a 23 point win. The "Thunder" scoring was led by Danny Barrett with 16 points with good support coming from Holt and Turiccki with 13 points each while Curtis Hadley shipped in with 11 points

Coach Rob Eddon was upbeat at the end of the game "We improved on we what saw last week, and the week before. Our squad is starting to blend, and when we eventually have all of our players available, we're going to be a force to be reckoned with. What impresses me most is how they seem to pull together during the tough parts of the game. It makes coaching them a pleasure."

Junior Men collapse against Nova's pressure

Junior Men's Midland Conference

Northants "Thunder" 72 – 82 Notts Nova

The Northants junior men faced East Midlands rivals Notts Nova in what proved to be a very frustrating encounter. "Thunder" started the opening quarter very positively by displaying some of their best basketball of the season so far. Northants had been criticised in previous games for their lacklustre efforts towards defensive rebounding but now they looked a different team with all players securing rebounds allowing "Thunder" to score consecutively in transition to lead 25-14 with two minutes of the first quarter remaining. The "Thunder" scoring had been by Carlo Nieva with 12 points including a perfect three of three from beyond the arc, but at the end of the period "Thunder" were guilty of turning the ball over on numerous occasions allowing Nova to conclude the quarter with a 9-0 run to reduce the deficit to 25-23.

Coach Rob Crump regrouped his team encouraging them to compose themselves ready for the second period but his team's efforts were hindered when big man George Calvey picked up his third personal foul and had

to be substituted. With “Thunder” fielding a smaller line up Notts Nova extended their defense up court which caused the Northants boys a lot of problems. “Thunder” failed to execute their press breaker and were guilty of over dribbling against the press. Nova capitalised on the home team’s errors resulting in a huge turnaround as they opened up a 17 point lead at 30-47. Despite two Crump time outs in which he attempted to reinforce his team’s structure, “Thunder” simply failed to execute and at the end of the quarter found themselves trailing 36-52.

After that disastrous second quarter, “Thunder” continued to make the same errors in the third period. They continued to commit sloppy turnovers against Novas’ trapping defence, and they were also guilty of some poor transition defence with players failing to get back on defence. With the visitors extending their lead to the biggest so far at 67-40 there were some positives for “Thunder” as they showed much more composure against the Nova press. Even so having advanced the ball through the press they proceeded to miss consecutive lay ups and found themselves trailing 51-76 going into the final stanza.

With game now out of reach, “Thunder” only had their pride to play for and as the Notts Nova coach played a weaker line up, “Thunder” was able to reduce the deficit. Scores came from Josh Round, Carlo Nieva and Ollie Thomas as “Thunder” won the final quarter 21-6 to add some respectability to the final 72-82 scoreline.

In the topsy-turvy game the “Thunder” scoring was led by Carlo Nieva and Josh Round with 19 points apiece. They were well supported by Ollie Thomas and Rhys Hill who both scored 10 points.

Coach Crump commented “Despite a positive first quarter, we were taught a nasty lesson today. We have to learn to take care of the ball against the opposition defence. Too many times today we committed careless turnovers and were severely punished by Nova. As a team we must improve our effort levels on court during adverse situations, particularly defensively.”

Sweet revenge for Junior Women

Junior Women’s South Conference

Herts “Warriors” 45 – 62 Northants “Lightning”

In the first game of their season a Northants junior women’s team short of several key players slipped to a heart-breaking one point defeat to Herts “Warriors”. Last Saturday “Lightning” had an early opportunity to exact revenge and they did just that with a convincing 17 point win.

Some up-court pressure gave “Lightning” the early advantage but it had come at a cost with the team quickly into the foul penalty. “Lightning” took the first quarter 16-14 with all 14 of “Warriors” points coming from the free throw line. “Warriors” took the second period 17-14 to lead 31-30 at half time with another close finish in prospect. The third quarter was a dour affair with both teams finding it difficult to find the basket. “Lightning” edged the period 9-6 thanks to some superb defence as they retook the lead at 39-37 and that close finish still seemed a safe bet.

The “Lightning” players had other ideas, however and with Lauren Milne a proverbial rock on defence and Stephanie Ogden and Lauren Brookes putting pressure on the “Warriors” ball handlers the Northants girls took total control of the game. They romped the period 23-8 to the delight of Coach Stacey Shakespeare who was full of praise for the efforts of all her players.

In the 62-45 win Ogden top scored with 24 points well supported by the Laurens, Brookes and Milne with 11 and 9 points respectively

Cadet Men not at their best as they see off Nova II

Cadet Men’s Midland Conference

Notts Nova II 48 – 91 Northants “Thunder”

After beating the Notts Nova first string in the Cup the previous weekend the Northants Cadet Men returned to Nottingham to take on the Nova second team in optimistic mood. Coach John Collins urged caution and was insistent that his team started the game with a high tempo and they did just that blitzing Nova 20-2 in the first four minutes of play. The Nova players were totally rocked by “Thunder’s” zone press defence which forced numerous turn overs and early scores.

Second half “Lightning” blitz too much for “Hornets”

Under 14 Girls Midlands South-West Conference Northants “Lightning” 78 – 26 Bucks “Hornets”

With three minutes of the second quarter remaining “Hornets”, Ella Mecsetter drained a three-pointer to get her team to within three points of “Lightning” at 22-25. The home side responded with a 10-zero charge including a ‘down-town’ buzzer beater from Holly Winterburn.

Earlier “Lightning” had dominated the contest but that “Hornets” run suggested a close second half. Nothing could have been further from the truth as the Northants girls outscored their opponents 43-4 which included a total ‘shut out’ in the fourth period of play.

In the 52 point win the “Lightning” scoring was heavily dominated by Winterburn and Lucy Almena who scored 32 and 28 points respectively.

THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES

Saturday 1st November

9.30 am until 11am	Under 10 and Under 12 “Ballers” Academy
10.00 am until 11am	Junior “Ballers”
11.30am	Under 14 Girls versus Leicester “Warriors” Under 13 Boys versus Mansfield “Giants”
1.30pm	Under 16 Girls versus Team Birmingham Cadet Men versus Worcester “Wolves”

All the games will be played at the Northants Basketball Centre which is situated at Northampton School for a in Spinney Hill Road

Spectators are welcome and admission is **FREE**

Junior Men travel to Sheffield “Saints”
Senior Men travel to Oxford City “Hoops”

Sunday 2nd November

Under 15 Boys travel to North Herts Knights”

For further information contact **John Collins on 07801 533 151**