**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Another busy weekend for the Northants Basketball Club with five teams in action**

**and just two wins achieved.**

**Junior Men beat “Ballers Heaven” in a topsy-turvy game**

**Under 18 Boys Midlands 2 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 74 – 59 Ballers Heaven Warwickshire “Warriors”**

A six – zero run at the start of the third quarter saw “Warriors” take a 40 points to 36 lead. “Thunder” coach Darjius Maldutis switches his defence to a zone press and in the blink of an eye the game changed. Suddenly “Warriors” totally lost their composure and “Thunder” went on a stunning 20 to three run to take what appeared to be an unassailable 56-43 lead into the final quarter.

With the game seemingly won “Thunder”, then became guilty of poor shot selection and sloppy defence which allowed the visitors to outscore them 13-3 and at 61-56 the game was back in the balance. To cap a totally topsy-turvy game “Warriors” then went through the last four minutes of the game without scoring a basket with just three points from the free throw line while “Thunder” restored some order back to their play scoring 13 to secure what looked on paper to be a comfortable win.

Earlier in the game offences dominated the first quarter with seven “Thunder” players contributing to their 29 point haul while “Warriors” managed 21 thanks to some poor “Thunder” defence.

After the glut of points in the first quarter the second quarter was totally attritional with both teams struggling to score. “Warriors” outscored “Thunder” 12-7 to close the gap to three points at half time and then take the lead early in the third to trigger a roller-coaster 15 minutes of basketball.

In the 15 point win the “Thunder” scoring was led by Dylan Dominici and Benas Maldutis ith fifteen points apiece, good support coming from Rapolas Radavicius with 10 points.

The win keeps “Thunder” in second place in the Midlands 2 Conference but they face a tricky game this weekend when they take on Milton Keynes “Breakers II” a team they beat by 16 points just week ago but “Thunder” will be without the services of four players based at Moulton College. They will be in Italy playing for the college in a European competition.

**Another heavy defeat for Under 16 Girls**

**Under 16 Girls East Conference**

**Northants “Lightning” 50 – 82 Southend “Scorpions**

For the second time in two weeks the Northants Under 16 Girls faced one of the top teams in the East Conference. In the shape of Southend “Scorpions”.

After a competitive six minutes “Scorpions” found another gear an 11-zero run gave them a 24-10 lead after the first quarter. The aggressive “Scorpions” were called for 12 fouls in the second quarter but Lightning” were unable to capitalise from the free throw line missing seven free throws. Despite these misses “Lightning” were able to edge the quarter 17-12 and at 27-36 at half time it was ‘game on’.

Needing a good start the third quarter, “Lighting” kept in touch for three minutes before being hit by a 13-zero Southend surge to fall 30-51 behind. Again, the gap could have been close if “Lightning” had been able to convert from the free throw line, but they were guilty of missing another seven attempts from the charity stripe.

Led by Jennifer Oamen and Luci Caulfield “Lightning” mounted a spirited start to the final quarter outscoring “Scorpions” 10-zero to close the gap to 46-51 but they were only able to score four points over the last eight minutes of play, “Scorpions” cruising to 32 points win with two of their players scoring almost 60 of those points. For “Lightning”, Caulfield and Oamen scored 16 and 15 points respectively, but they missed the services of Karly Osgood who fouled out in the third quarter, and they will reflect on missing a massive 25 free throws.

**Under 16 Boys second best in Coventry**

**Under 16 Boys Midland 1 Conference**

**Coventry “Tornadoes” 84 – 35 Coventry “Tornadoes”**

The Northnats Cadet Boys travelled to Coventry expecting a tough physical game and they certainly got that with “Tornadoes” torching them 19-2 in the first quarter of the game. Things didn’t get any better in the second quarter which the home side took 26-8 to establish an unassailable 45 to 10 half time lead.

“Tornadoes” extended their lead to 64-19 winning the third quarter 19-9 before “Thunder” rallied a little against the “Tornadoes” bench in the fourth quarter which they only lost 16-20.

In the heavy defeat no “Thunder” player could score in double figures their leading scorers being Jake Muxlow, Logan Ormshaw, and Angus Slater

**Under 13 Boys cruise to victory over Leicester “Riders”**

**YBL East Conference**

**Leicester “Riders” 45 -68 Northants “Thunder”**

Trips to the Morningside Arena are never easy with the confusion of three games being played side by side at the same time. The Northants Under 13 Boys made this trip last Sunday without their coach Peter Dewsnap but secured a 29 points plus win thanks to a stunning third quarter which they won by 24 points to seven.

“Thunder” made a good start to the game taking the first quarter 19-8 with no less than eight players contributing to their 19 points. “Riders” ‘upped’ their game in the second quarter which they took 18-12 to close the gap to 26-31 at half time.

At half time stand in coach Brad Hughes urged his players to mount a big effort in the third quarter and they responded superbly, none more so than Luca Garratt who score 12 personal points. Thanks to their aggressive full court pressure defence “Thunder” outscored “Riders” by 24 points to seven to take a convincing 55-33 lead into the final ten minutes of play.

“Riders” did everything they could to close the gap in the fourth quarter but led by some excellent defence from Joelle Stiete-French “Thunder” were able to edge the quarter 13-12 to hold on for a convincing and well-deserved win by 68 points to 45.

Coach Hughes was impressed by the contributions of all eleven of his players with Anton Kelly leading the team’s scoring with 14 points well supported by Garratt and Stiete-French with 13 and 12 points respectively.

**Late comeback not enough for “Storm” Under 12 Mixed team**

**Under 12 Mixed League Regional 1 Conference**

**Leicester “Riders” 49 -44 Northants “Storm”**

Trailing by 12 points deep into the fourth quarter the Northants “Storm” Under 12 team mounted a massive effort and outscored “Riders” 10-3 to close the gap to just five points before they ran out of time. “Storm” were upset that during the closing stages of the game the game clock hadn’t been stopped and two of “Riders” three points came from an illegal rebound following a free throw.

Against a bigger “Riders” team “Storm” struggled to secure defensive rebounds throughout the game but despite this they managed to win the first quarter 19-12. The home side’s defensive efforts became more and more physical for the rest of game with Samuel Dominici and Dominykas Jokulis being particular targets for attention.

With “Storm’s “offensive nullified Riders” won the second quarter by 20 points to seven to take a 32-26 half time lead, but “Storm” mounted a super defensive effort in the third quarter restricting their opponents to just one point. Regrettable they were only able to score eight points themselves but that was enough to give them a 34-33 lead going into the final ten minutes of play.

“Riders” produced their best basketball of the game at the start of the fourth quarter to establish a 12 point lead before the spirited but eventually futile “Storm” fight back.

In the disappointing defeat Jokulis led the “Storm” scoring with 10 points but no other player could score in double figures.

**THIS WEEEND’S ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 17tth December**

**9-15am to 10-15am** Budding “Ballers” session

**10-15am to 11-30am** Junior “Ballers” session

**12.00 noon** Under 18 Boys versus Milton Keynes “Breakers II”

**2-30pm util 5-30pm** Under 11 YBL Central Venue Tournament

Northants “Storm”, Northants “Storm Too”

Coventry Crusaders Blue and White

Under 14 Boys travel to City of Birmingham “Rockets”

The home games will be played at the **Northants Basketball Centre** which is based at

**Northampton School for Girls,** Spinney Hill Road, Northampton NN3 6DG

Spectators are welcome admission is **FREE** and refreshments are available

For further information on this Press Release contact:

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