**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Last weekend saw two close losses for the Under 16 Boys and Under 14 Girls while the**

**Under 14 Boys had no problem beating Shrewsbury “Storm” but the Under 12 “Storm” team lost again to Derby “Trailblazers”**

**Under 16 Boys just pipped in a thriller**

**Under 16 Boys Midlands 1 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 66 -68 Coventry “Elite”**

With seconds of this Midlands Conference game remaining “Thunder” were awarded two free throws to tie up the game. In the event both shots were missed, “Storm” holding on for the 68 to 66 win.

The result was bitter disappointment for a much improved “Thunder” team who had battled back from a deficit which was as large as 16 points midway through that third quarter. Trailing 47-55 going into the fourth quarter, “Thunder” tied the scores midway through the quarter and then took a 66-65 lead thanks to scores by Angus Slater and Logan Ormshaw and from the team’s aggressive press defence; but they allowed that lead to slip away over the final minute of the game.

It would be easy to look at the two missed free throws at the end of the game as the decisive factor but by that time “Thunder” had already missed 12 shots from the charity stripe. They should also look at a number of inbound passes that were intercepted and some poor defensive rebounding which allowed “Elite” a number of put back scores.

The game was a topsy-turvy affair with both teams going on significant scoring runs. “Thunder” were narrowly outscored in quarters two and three but thanks to the efforts of Fran Guei in quarter two and Danielius Jokulis in quarter three were able to stay in touch and mount the final quarter charge.

In the disappointing loss Jokulis and Guei led the “Thunder” scoring with 24 and 14 points respectively.

**Under 14 Boys breeze past Shrewsbury “Strom”**

**Under 14 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 78 – 39 Shrewsbury “Storm”**

Just seven minutes into this Midlands Conference game “Thunder” had run up a lead and despite the best efforts of the Shrewsbury boys they could never significantly close the gap. Physically and technically superior “Thunder” dominated the game with the exception of the second quarter which was edged 16-12 by “Storm”. Any thought of a Shrewsbury comeback was well and truly dispelled when a revived “Thunder” team closed the third quarter with a 20-four charge.

In the comfortable win Elijah Badero was the standout “Thunder” player with a personal haul of 25 points and a hatful of rebounds. Logan Tanner supported well with 20 points while Cameron Ivienagbor and Lewis Spacey both contributed 10 points.

**Under 14 Girls just fail to achieve a ‘comeback’ win against Bromsgrove**

**Under 14 Girls North 2 Conference**

**Northants “Lightning” 61 – 64 Bromsgrove “Bears”**

The Northants “Lightning” Under 14 Girls were unable to keep their winning run going after they were narrowly beaten by Bromsgrove “Bears” last Saturday.

Both teams struggled to score during the first quarter which ended with “Bears” holding a narrow 12-8. The second quarter saw Campbell Spatcher find her range to score two baskets and a brace of free throws as “Lightning” began to find their offensive rhythm. Scores from Amelia Wesley-Maryam got the deficit down to two points but “Bears” responded with six points from the imposing, Joda to take a 30-24 lead into the locker room at half time.

“Lightning” maintained their energy at the start of the third quarter with Queendy Yeboah impressing at both ends of the floor and a six – zero run gave “Lightning” the lead for the first time since the first minute of the game. Trailing 36-41 “Bears” ‘went’ to their big centre Ifeguu Otisi and she obliged with six points ‘in the paint’ to cut “Lightning’s” lead to 46-45 by he end of the quarter.

Midway through the final quarter “Lightning” were still holding a narrow lead at 57-53 and the foul count was beginning to mount against “Bears” with two of their most influential players on four fouls. “Lightning” coach, Mark Spatcher sought to exploit this situation by employing a two player Pick & Roll offence between Spatcher and Oamen. “Bears” countered this with what Spatcher thought was a zone defence which is illegal with this age group. He attempted to point this out to the game officials and his protestations earned him a technical foul.

A single score from the resulting free throws gave “Bears” the lead and a final heart-breaking basket from Ifeguu Otisi took “Beras2 to a 64 to 61 victory.

In the narrow defeat Spatcher led the “Lightning” scoring with 25 points; Oamen scored 14 and good support came from Wesley-Maryam and Yeboah

**Different day ……… same story**

**Under 12 Regional 1 Mixed League**

**Northants “Storm” 56 – 82 Derby “Trailblazers”**

When these two teams met eight days previously “Storm” were able to match second placed “Trailblazers” for three quarters of the game but suffered a nightmare third quarter. On Sunday exactly the same thing happened with “Storm” only outscored 37- 48 over quarters one, two and four. Unfortunately “Trailblazers” totally dominated the third quarter which they won by 24 points to nine.

“Storm” fielded a very young team and some of the younger players struggled with the pace and physicality of the game, but they never gave up even when the ‘going’ was extremely tough. Yet again the “Storm” demise in the third quarter came because their play became too based on individual rather than teams play. Exactly the same thing had happened the previous week.

In the 26 points defeat Samuel Dominici scored 22 points, Dominykas Jokulis supporting well with 10 points but no other “Storm” player was able to make any significant points scoring contribution.

**Easy win for “Lightning” Under 12 Girls**

**Friendly Challenge game**

**Northants “Lightning” Under 13 Girls versus Leicester “Warriors”**

The Northnats “Lightning” Under 13 Girls took on a very young and very inexperienced Leicester “Warriors” winning by a massive margin.

Without doubt the highlights of the game came when “Lightning’s” two ‘guest rookies’ Neveah Cox and Arabella Rowlands scored their first baskets for the Club

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 11th February**

**As it is Half Term there won’t be any “Ballers” sessions.**

**Neither are there any home games.**

Under 16 Boys travel to Gloucester “Saxons”

Under 14 Girls travel o Mansfield “Giants” (To be confirmed)

**Sunday 12th February**

Under 18 Boys travel to Warwickshire “Hawks” (Ballers Heaven)

Under 16 Girls travel to Cambridge “Cats”

Under 14 Boys travel to Coventry “Tornadoes”

For further information on this Press Release contact: **John Collins** on 07801 533 151