**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Four away games for teams from the Northants Basketball Club last weekend with three victories including a revenge win for the Under 14 Boys against Coventry “Tornadoes”**

**Magic third quarter sees Junior Men home against “Ballers Heaven”**

**Under 18 Boys Midlands 2 Conference**

**Ballers Heaven Warwickshire Warriors” 63 – 74 Northants “Thunder”**

At half time in this Midlands 2 Conference game Ballers Heaven Warwickshire “Hawks” were leading “Thunder” by 33 points to 28 having outscored their opponents 19-12 in the second quarter thanks to an aggressive press defence. Not for the first time this season “Thunder” were able to turn in a sparkling third quarter which earned them the lead and ultimately the win.

Led by 11 points from skipper Dylan Dominici, three three-pointers and a full court zone defence “Thunder” outscored Ballers Heaven 26-12 to go 54-45 ahead going into the final quarter. During that final quarter the home side scored freely but almost every score was matched by a three-pointer from “Thunder” who took the quarter 20-18 and secure the 11 point win.

The game had started well for “Thunder” with Jack Lemon draining a brace of triples, this plus eight points from Ellis Phillips gave “Thunder” a 16-14 lead after the first quarter. Then came that poor second quarter followed by the now expected third quarter revival and a win which keeps “Thunder” on top of the Conference table.

In the hard-fought win Lemon and Phillips led the “Thunder” scoring with 15 points apiece good support coming from Dominici with 14 Benas Maldutis with 12.

**Much improved Under 16 Girls still lose to “Cats”**

**Under 16 Girls East Conference**

**Cambridge “Cats” 62 – 48 Northants “Lightning”**

Earlier in the season the Northants Under 16 Girls had lost to Cambridge “Cats” by 13 points so on the face of it this was a very similar result but after this latest game Coach Lee Meadows was keen to stress that he felt his team had turned in a much improved performance and but for a poor second quarter might even have got closer to their opponents.

The game very nearly didn’t get played as there were problems gaining access to the Long Road VIth Form College sports hall. When access was finally gained it was “Lightning” who got off to the best start and led by eight points from Karly Osgood won the first quarter 14-13.

“Cats” took control of the second quarter winning it by 17 points to 8 to take a 33-20 half time lead and despite some excellent defence from Lauren Eighteen and Cameron Keuberg the home side were able to narrowly win the final two quarters finally running out winners by 62 points to 48.

In the 14 point defeat Osgood top scored for “Lightning” with 16 points good support coming from Jenny Oamen and Iviannah Meadows with 10 and eight points respectively

**Fran and Jake see Under 16 Boys home against “Saxons”.**

**Under 16 Boys Midlands 1 Conference**

**Gloucester “Saxons” 63 – 72 Northants “Thunder”**

Twenty points apiece from power forward Fran Guei and guard Jake Muxlow were major factors in the win for the Northants “Thunder” Under 16 Boys. The win came after narrow losses on the previous two weekend’s and was unusual in two respects. First, the team travelled to the fixture in the ***H. P. Humphries*** sponsored mini bus and second overwhelmed by the luxury of being driven to a game coach Brad Hughes forgot the team’s kit.

So, clad in borrowed kit “Thunder” soon realised they were in for a tough game against a “Saxons” team that had only won one game all season. In the first minutes of the game “Thunder” players were too easily beaten on the dribble and as a team very guilty of some poor defensive rebounding. As the game became more and more physical “Thunder’s” press defence began to force turn-overs allowing then to tie the scores at 17 all after the first quarter.

The second quarter was not a good one for “Thunder” as their offensive discipline disappeared, and they became more and more reliant on one player attacking all five of the “Saxon” defenders while their defence became more and more porous. “Thunder” conceded 18 points during the quarter while scoring just 12 themselves to trail 29-35 at half.

Coach Hughes’s half time message was simple and clear, “Control the controllables and attack the offensive boards.” His team responded well and proceeded to outscore “Saxons” 25-15 during the third quarter, Fran Guei and Logan Tanner responding particularly well to Hughes’s plea for more offensive boards.

Leading 54-50 going into the final stanza “Thunder” saw that lead disappear and with five minutes of the game remaining the scores were tied at 56 all. At a time when control was needed Jake Muxlow provided this with some intelligent offensive play allied to some excellent team defence. Over the past five minutes “Thunder” outscored “Saxons” 16-7 to clinch a 72 points to 63 victory.

In the hard fought win Guei and Muxlow led the “Thunder” scoring with the Danielius Jokulis and the Logan’s Tanner and Ormshaw supporting well,

**Under 14 Boys get revenge against “Tornadoes”**

**Under 14 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Coventry “Tornadoes” 45 – 58 Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants Under 14 Boys gained revenge for a 52-55 defeat earlier in the season with a hard-fought win over a gutsy Coventry “Tornadoes” team and thanks to an excellent fourth quarter.

The game couldn’t have got off to a worse start for “Thunder” as they conceded an ‘And One’ in the opening seconds of the game. They battled back in a low scoring quarter which ended with the scores tied at 9 all.

“Thunder” edged ahead in the second quarter which they won 15-12 their morale being boosted by an offensive ‘put back’ from Elijah Badero against four opponents. Leading 25-21 at half time “Thunder” found scoring very difficult in the third quarter as the game became a battle between “Thunder’s” pass and move offence against “Tornadoes” pick and roll based attacks.

At 38-35 in favour of “Thunder” there was everything to play for in the final quarter as the “Tornadoes” supporters became more and more vociferous. The home side took the lead at the start of the quarter but a

7-zero run restored “Thunders” advantage and a 13-2 charge over the closing four minutes of the game saw them home by 58 points to 45.

In a very disciplined performance from the “Thunder” Logan Tanner top scored with 20 points excellent support coming from Oliwier Andrzekzak, Badero, and Cameron Ivienagabor,

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 18th February**

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

**Neither are there any home games.**

Under 18 Boys travel to Coventry “Elite”

Under 16 Boys travel to Warwickshire “Hawks”

**Sunday 19h February**

Under 14 Girls travel to Bromsgrove “Bears”

Under 12 Mixed travel to Walsall “Wizards”

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