**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

 

**PREE RELEASE**

**A mixed bag of results for teams from the Northants Basketball Club**

**after another busy weekend.**

**Junior Men win the battle but “Titans” think they’ve won the war.**

**Under 18 Boys Midlands 2 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 69 - 64 Northamptonshire “Titans”**

To all intents and purposes this game was set to decide the destiny of the Midlands 2 Conference title with both teams having lost one game “Thunder” to “Titans” before Christmas and “titans” to Ballers Heaven Warwickshire “Warriors” just last weekend.

The game saw both teams missing players who were playing with Moulton College in an international tournament in Hungary. Led by the talented Ethan Round, “Titans” took the lead in the third minute of the game and held it until the eighth minute of the fourth quarter when a three-pointer from Fiffi Boakye playing his first game of the season gave “Thunder” the lead at 62-61. “Thunder” finished the game with a 10-three run with “Titans” freezing the ball over the final seconds.

The “Thunder” players and their supporters were naturally delighted thinking they had inflicted a second defeat on their local rivals and taken a major step to winning the Conference title but it appears that “Titans” might be awarded the game against Ballers Heaven because the Coventry based team had fielded an illegal player. If that was the case, they would hold the advantage because they beat “Thunder” by more than the deficit in this game. It seems a little unfair that the Northants Club hadn’t been informed of this fact and the Basketball England website still shows two losses for “Titans”.

So, drama at the end of the game and lots of drama during the game with “Thunder” struggling to score against “Titans” 1-3-1 zone defence and cope with Round’s perimeter shooting and penetrative drives to basket. They were also hampered when their influential guard Benas Maldutis picked up his second ‘unsportsmanlike’ foul in the second quarter and had to sit out the rest of the game. Coach Darius Maldutis used a number of players in an attempt to contain Round and the team also had a lot of success with their zone press.

In the five point win Jordan Gbanja led the “Thunder” scoring capping a fine all-round game with 18 points. Fareed Issifu continued his fine run of form with 14 points while both Boakye and Ellis Phillips contributed 10 points.

**Much improved Under 16 Boys get close to “Warriors”.**

**Under 16 Boys Midlands 1 Conference**

**Leicester “Warriors” 66 - 60 Northants “Thunder”**

Earlier in the season the “thunder” Under 16 Boys lost by 28 points to Leicester “Warriors” and coming off a lack-lustre performance against Warwickshire “Hawks” the previous week things didn’t look bright for the team when they travelled to Leicester last Saturday. In the event they were able to produce a much better performance and a massive effort in the fourth quarter led by Logan Ormshaw saw “Thunder” get to within six points of their opponents.

“Thunder” were second best in the first three quarters but thanks to some determined play they were able to stay in touch and going into the last ten minutes of play were only trailing by 43 points to 54 but their big push which saw them take the quarter 17-12 proved to be not quite enough.

In the six point loss Ormshaw top scored for “Thunder” with 18 points good support coming from Danielius Jokulis with 13 points while Jake Muxlow and George Clipson both made useful contributions

**Under 14 Girls do down to “Wildcats”**

**Under 14 Girls North 2 Conference**

**Nottingham “Wildcats” 81 - 44 Northants “Lightning”**

The “Lightning” Under 14 Girls suffered a heavy defeat at the hands of Nottingham Wildcats” in a bruising and extremely physical contest.

“Lightning” made a good start to the game with back-to-back scores from Jennifer Oaman and Campbell Spatcher but things took a turn for the worst when the latter suffered a head injury after a heavy collision with another player. Suffering from suspected concussion Spatcher was unable to take any further part in the game.

Without the services of their primary ball carrier “Lightning” struggled against the “Wildcats” press defence and lost the first quarter 11-19. “Wildcats” continued to apply pressure in the second quarter which they won 21-9 to establish a game winning 40 to 20 advantage at half time.

That lead was extended to 68-31 by the end of the third quarter but to their credit “Lightning” were able to tie the fourth quarter 13 but still slipped to a 44 points to 81 defeat with Oman top scoring with 10 points while Campbell before her departure, and Grace Eighteen both scored eight.

**Under 14 Boys lose to table topping “Tigers”**

**Under 14 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Tamworth “Tigers” 88 – 83 Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants Under 14 Boys slipped to their third defeat of the season after leading table topping Tamworth “Tigers” for over three quarters of the game.

Shooting the ball well from the perimeter “Thunder” went toe to toe against the home side in the first quarter which was tied 20 points all. Thanks to 10 points from Oliwer Andrzekzak, “Thunder” were able to seize the advantage in the second quarter which they won 29-18 to lead 49-38 at half time.

“Tigers” made a big push in the third quarter in an increasingly raucous atmosphere, and they were able to take the quarter 22-14 and at 67-60 “Thunder” knew they were in for a tough final ten minutes and so it proved. As the game became more and more physical “Thunder’s” confidence ebbed and the Conference leaders were able to take control finally running out winners by 88 points to 83.

In the narrow loss Anrzekzak led the “Thunder “scoring with 21 points while Logan Tanner contributed 19 points Cameron Ivienagabor 15 and Wilson Carr 14.

**“Storm” suffer another heavy loss against “Breakers”.**

**Under 12 Mixed Region 1 League**

**Northants “Storm” 36 – 132 Milton Keynes “Breakers”**

Many teams in Under 12 Mixed League are refusing to play the talented Milton Keynes “Breakers” team but the Northants “Storm” fulfilled their commitment but suffered another very heavy defeat.

Fielding six players taller than any “Storm” player, “Breakers” dominated the early exchanges, but “Storm” showed a lost of determination and thanks to nine points from Sam Dominici were able to be competitive in the first quarter and this continued in the second quarter with six “Storm” players scoring.

Trailing 24-60 at half time “Storm” completely lost their way in the third quarter. Unable to enter their offence they became increasingly reliant on individual efforts which more often than not resulted in a turn-over or a forced shot. Showing no mercy “Breakers” mounted 15-zero and 20-zero charges while “Storm” could only manage a single basket from Alex Rados.

To their credit “Storm” were able to re-group in the fourth quarter and to they were able to outscore their opponents

8-4 over the final two minutes of the game.

After the game Coach John Collins commented, “This was a tough experience for my team, but we will always fulfil our fixture commitments. We are on a journey and the team is trying to play basketball properly. In games like this it’s difficult but we will only learn from playing against the best and my players never gave up.”

“I’d like to thank the parents for their magnificent support.”

**Under 15 Boys too strong for “Eagles”**

**YBL Under 15 Boys Primis**

**Abingdon “Eagles” 47 – 81 Northants “Thunder”**

On the back of 22 points from Henry Brandrick “Thunder” Under 15 Boys recorded a convincing win over Abingdon “Eagles” to pick up their fifth victory of the season.

“Thunder” dominated the early proceedings winning the first quarter 21-10 and their lead was extended to 44-22 by half time. Any hope of a comeback by the home side was quickly dispelled in the third quarter with no less than eight “Thunder” players contributing to the 20 points they scored in the quarter.

“Thunder” were guilty of relaxing their efforts in the final quarter but the final result was never in doubt Brandrick adding 22 rebounds to his points haul with 11 players contributing Coach Whitney Bain’s team final total.

**“Storm” dominate Under 11 YBL Tournament**

**YBL Under 11 Tournament**

**Northants “Storm” 56 – 17 Northants “Storm II” Coventry “Blue” 36 – 34 Coventry “White”**

**Northants “Storm” 62 - 5 Coventry “Blue” Northants “Storm II” 50 -11 Coventry “White”**

**Northants “Storm” 61 – 15 Coventry “White” Northants “Storm II” 39 – 23 Coventry “Blue”**

The hard work put in over the past few weeks by the club’s Under 11 players was clearly illustrated in the latest YBL Tournament. The “Storm” team containing the more experienced players won all three of their games with the only real challenge coming from the young “Storm II” team.

“Storm II” showed their quality in seeing off the two Coventry teams with Jude Constable, Ernie Harris and Jace Lothian looking particularly impressive; while for “Storm” Coach John Collins was very pleased with the way younger players, Rosen Ashu, Samy Ghilea and Liam Mcllhiney integrated into the team.

**“Thunder Too” Under 13 Boys undefeated at Hoopsterz Tournament**

**Northants “Thunder Too” 15 – 7 Kettering “Phoenix”**

**Northants “Thunder Too” 22 -15 Northampton “Cobras”**

**Northants “Thunder Too” 15 – 8 Duston “Hawks”**

“Thunder” Under 13 team coach Peter Dewsnap took a team of boys who rarely play in the YBL League and the team were able to win all fthree of their games with Dewsnap full of praise for all seven of his players.

**Intra Group game a great success**

**Northants “Lightning Maroon” 60 – 50 Northants “Lightning White”**

Unable to find an opponent for their large group of enthusiastic under 11 girls the Club decided to divide squad into two teams and play an Intra Group game. The game proved to be very competitive with the girls displaying an excellent level of skill.

**SELECTION SUCCESS**

Several boys and girls from the Club have been attending “Aspire” training sessions. The “Aspire” programme is the initial selection process for the Great Britain teams and the most talented players have been selected for

 ‘*Super Camps’* which begin this weekend. From these camps, *‘Super Hub’* regional teams will be selected to play in the *Inter Regional Tournament* in Manchester.

Four players from the Northants Club have been selected for the Camps they are; Campbell Spatcher who has enjoyed a very productive season the “Lightning Under 14 team plus team mates Jennifer Oaman and

Amelia Mae Wesley-Maryan and while on the boys’ side Jerome Maroodza will attend the *‘Super Camp’*

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES**

**Saturday 4th March**

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

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

12.00pm Under 14 Girls versus Derby “Trailblazers”

 2-15pm Under 16 Girls versus Brentwood “Leopards”

 4-39pm Under 12 Mixed versus Northamptonshire “Titans”

Under 16 Boys versus Milton Keynes “Breakers I”

Under 14 Boys travel to Milton Keynes “Breakers II” II

 **Sunday 5th March**

 Under 15 Boys travel to Oxford ”Hoops”

All 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: **John Collins** on 07801 533 151