**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**A quiet weekend for team from the Northants Basketball Club but a battling Promotional Play Off win for the Junior Men, a big win for the Under 15 Boys and an excellent performance for the**

**Under 11 Mixed team.**

**Play off win for Junior Men**

**Under 18 Boys Promotional Play Off**

**Northants “Thunder” 65 – 52 Surrey “Rams II”**

The M & J Evans sponsored Northants Junior men advanced to the next round of the Promotional Play Offs following a 13-point win over the Surrey “Rams” second string. The final score was no indication of how close the game was until the final two minutes of the contest when “Thunder” went on a 12-one final charge.

Both teams made a nervous start to the game with baskets at a premium in fact for the first few minutes of the game there were more fouls than points. Unaccountably “Thunder” opted to play in a controlled way allowing “Rams” to set up their 1–3-1 zone defence while they were very passive against their opponents ‘press’ In the first quarter “Thunder” scored a meagre 10 points while eight of the “Rams” 14 points came from the free throw line.

Scoring continued to be at a premium in the second quarter with “Thunder” failing to get the ball to their ‘big’ men close to the basket relying almost exclusively on perimeter shots. A Benas Maldutis three-pointer saw “Thunder” edge into a 19-17 lead but they were then hit by a 12-4 “Rams” charge which gave the Surrey team a 29-23 half time advantage.

The “Thunder” team that took the floor for the second half of the game was unrecognisable to the team that had looked so lacklustre in the first two quarters. On offence they began to run their fast break and look for their taller players in the half court while their defensive effort was much more aggressive. “Thunder” opened the third quarter with a 15-2 spurt to take a 38-29 lead but “Rams” regrouped and contained “Thunder’s” offensive threat restricting their lead to 43-37 going into the last ten minutes of play.

For the first six minutes of the fourth quarter the two teams exchange scores with “Thunder” unable to extend their lead. “Rams” then sprang into life inspired by the impressive Wheeler and a 6-zero run saw the Surrey outfit close the gap to just two points at 53-51. Encouraged by a large vociferous crowd “Thunder” ‘put the game to bed’ with an impressive 12-1 run to end the game earning them the 65-52 victory and a game against as yet, unknown opponents.

In the thrilling victory Maldutis and Rapolas Radivicius led the “Thunder” scoring with 15 points apiece while skipper Dylan Dominici supported well with 13 points.

**“Storm” turn on the style at Hoopsterz tournament.**

**Under 11 Hoopsterz Tournament**

The Northants “Storm” Under 11 mixed team competed in the final Hoopsterz tournament of the season and turned in an excellent display of running basketball combined with some impressive defence. Coach Emma Salisbury was pleased with the way her team performed and particularly the way they performed as team sharing the ball well in their four games.

The main emphasis of the tournament isn’t just about winning and losing but it was pleasing that “Storm” were undefeated over their four games.

**Under 15 Boys finish their YBL Primis season with a big win**

**Under 15 Boys YBL Primis**

**Nuneaton “Predators” 38 - 81 Northants “Thunder”**

Led by 34 points from Fran Guel and with all ten players contributing to the final points total the Northants “Thunder” Under 15 Boys closed their season with a convincing win over Nuneaton “Predators”.

With their ‘trapping’ defence working well “Thunder” were able to dominate the first quarter jumping out to a 24-12 lead with Guel scoring ten of those points. The “Thunder” centre continued to dominate the second quarter scoring another 12 points as the Northants boys extended their lead to 40-25 by half time.

Any thought of a “Predators” revival in the second half came to nothing as “Thunder” took the third quarter 22-8 and at 62-33 the game was over as a contest. A ruthless “Thunder” team closed the game out winning the fourth quarter 19-5 Guel taking his points haul to 34.

Already crowned YBL Primis champions “Thunder” now look forward to the Play Offs where they will face Abingdon “Eagles” in the semi-final.

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES**

With the **Northants Basketball Centre** closed for the Easter holidays there are no games until

the YBL Play Offs on **22nd April**.

Try Outs for the Summer Programme squads will take place on the week commencing **17th April.**

Any boyor girl not already involved with the Club who would like to try out for one of the club’s twelve teams

should contact the club on **northantsbasketballclub@hotmail.co.uk**

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