

NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB

PRESS RELEASE

“Thunder” slip out of National Shield after loss to local rival “Taurus”

Men’s National Shield (1st Round)

Northants “Thunder” 75 – 82 Northants “Taurus”

The Northants senior men were tumbled out of the National Shield last Sunday after suffering a seven point defeat at the hands of local rivals “Taurus”. Although this game was a home game for “Thunder” the Northants Basketball Centre wasn’t available so the game was switched to Moulton College which just happens to be the home court of the “Taurus” club.

The game was closely contested throughout and although it was physical it didn’t seem to merit the extraordinarily high 57 foul count, 33 of these being ‘called’ against “Thunder”. “Thunder” held the advantage for most of the first two periods of play but they were unable to open up a convincing lead and a strong “Taurus” surge at the end of the second quarter saw them take a 40-38 half time lead.

The third period of play saw scoring at premium for both teams. “Thunder” edged it 16-14 and with the scores tied up at 54 all there was everything to play for during the final stanza. The key moment came with four minutes of the game remaining when “Thunder’s” leading scorer, Matt Yates picked up his fifth foul with his team leading 66-64. “Taurus”, putting their height advantage to good use took the lead but a Johnny Yates ‘three’ got the score back to 75-76. Over the next few minutes all three of the “Thunder” guards were to foul out of the game as “Taurus” held on to win by 82 points to 75.

For “Thunder”, Matt Yates led his team’s scoring with 20 points good support coming from brother Johnny with 14 while Jacob Holt and Antonio Sarrío both contributed 11 points. For “Taurus” five players scored in double figures led by former “Thunder” player Thomas Vladika with 14 personal points.

Junior Men come up short against Shropshire

Junior Men’s Midlands Conference

Shropshire “Warriors” 75 – 72 Northants “Thunder”

Trailing, zero to 18 after the opening minutes of this Midlands Conference game the Northants junior men looked as if they might in for a torrid time for the rest of the game. That they battled back to within one point is testament to their resilience but in the end they couldn’t quite close the gap and ended up on the wrong end of a 75-72 score line.

After that initial nightmare beginning which saw a lethargic “Thunder” outfit run off the floor the Northants boys found themselves trailing 9-26 after the first period of play.

Things improved in the second quarter but “Thunder” were being ‘beaten up’ on the boards resulting in numerous “Warriors” ‘put back’ scores often with an ‘and one’ bonus. Despite this they stayed in contention and scores from David Nieva and Ed Wallhead at the end of the period helped them to outscore the home side 23-15 in the quarter to close the gape to 32-41 at half time.

“Thunder” were able to produce more energy to their play during the third quarter and thanks to baskets from Jake Nailer and Matt Major got to within four points of their opponents midway through to the period. “Warriors” rallied and by the end of the quarter had increased their lead to 12 at 57-45 leaving “Thunder” with a massive mountain to climb.

“Warriors were shooting well from the deep perimeter but back-to-back scores from Ayo Oluyede and Matt Major kept “Thunder” in contention. Coach Darijus Maldutis took a time out and asked his team for one final effort and his team responded superbly. “Thunder” outscored their opponents 9-zero and the gap was back to just three points and a remarkable comeback win was on the cards when Nailer connected with a ‘floater’. “Warriors” extended their lead to four with a three pointer but Oluyede reduced the deficit with a score inside the paint.

At this stage the game officials began to play a major part in proceedings. As “Thunder” tried to stop the clock by fouling they were called for an unsportsmanlike foul then fouls were ignored as “Warriors” were able to hold out for a three point win.

For “Thunder”, David Nieva led the scoring with 17 points while Jake Nailer contributed 14 points and good support came from Matt Major, Shekina Nyumba, Ayo Oluyede, and Ed Wallhead.

Under 14 Boys get back to winning ways

Under 14 Boys East Midlands II Conference

Ilkeston “Outlaws” 47 – 71 Northants “Thunder”

The Northants Under 14 Boys got back to winning ways after recording their second road win of the season thanks to a strong all-round performance against Ilkeston “Outlaws”.

There was very little between the two teams in the opening minutes of the contest before an 8-zero run by Thunder saw them jump out to the lead and forcing the opposition coach to call a timeout. This lead came thanks to scores from Henri Berry, Patrick Adedeyi and Jonathan Ntumba and this charge proved to be the difference between the two teams after the first quarter with “Thunder” leading 14-8.

“Thunder’s” full court man to man defence was proving to be too strong for the home side who repeatedly rushed their offence and turning the ball over. With Jonathan Ntumba displaying some excellent on ball defence against the “Outlaws” point guard “Thunder” were able to capitalise. When another defensive stop resulted in a Patrick Adedeyi layup “Thunder” had jumped out to a 38-17 lead. With Ntumba off the floor, “Outlaws” gained some confidence producing consecutive defensive ‘stops’ which sparked an 8-zero run to conclude the quarter with “Thunder” leading 38-25.

During the half time interval “Thunder” coach Rob Crump emphasised to his team the importance of maintaining their level of intensity. His players responded well and the second half opened with Ashley Kitchen and Jonathan Ntumba combining to extend “Thunder’s” lead by a further six points. When Ntumba picked up his third foul early in the quarter, Coach Crump withdrew him to the bench to avoid further foul trouble. “Outlaws” saw this as an opportunity to put pressure on “Thunder” and they were able to reduce the lead to 10 points with three minutes of the period remaining. Coach Crump was forced to risk re-introducing Ntumba back into the game to provide stability to “Thunders” performance. Confidence on offence was immediately restored sparking a 13-4 run to conclude the quarter, with “Thunder” leading 57-38.

With victory virtually certain Crump asked his players for a strong defensive performance to finish the game. They responded by limiting their opponents to just nine points while recoding 15 themselves to record an impressive 71-47 win.

In the 24 point win “Thunder” were led in scoring by Jonathan Ntumba with 26 points well supported by Patrick Adedeyi and Ashley Kitchen who scored 25 and 16 points respectively.

Coach Crump commented on his team’s performance “It was pleasing to get a win to restore confidence as a team; alongside that it was satisfying that the boys won all four quarters.”
“A special mention should go to Ashley, Patrick and Jonathan who combined to score 67 of our 71 points. However, it is important that all players develop confidence and take responsibility of the duties assigned offensively and defensively when on the floor. We do not want to be perceived as a two or three man team.”

“We will continue to have a specific focus defensively in practice this week. To ensure all players develop a high level of enthusiasm to play team defence for next week’s game against City of Birmingham

Coach Yates picks up Northampton ‘Long Service’ Award

At the Northampton Sports Awards last week, Northants “Thunder” senior men’s coach Grahame Yates received the ‘Long Service Award for Services to Sport’

After a distinguished career as a footballer, basketball player and track and field athlete Yates switched to coaching basketball. Initially involved with the Roade club in the Northants League he extended his commitment to the Northants Schools Basketball Club when his eldest son Johnny became involved. Over the past 20 years he has coached at all age group levels in the national league culminating with the senior men’s team of the Northants Basketball Club.

As a player Grahame displayed incredible competitiveness and this has been extended to his coaching as players past and present can testify.

THIS WEEKEND’S ACTIVITIES

Saturday 29th October

9.30am-11.00am
11.00 am

No Junior Ballers Session
Junior Men versus Notts Nova

Under 14 Boys travel to City of Birmingham
Under 14 Girls travel to County Upper ‘Wolves’

Sunday 30th October

11.00 am
1.00 pm

Cadet Boys versus Mansfield “Giants” (National Cup Round 3)
Junior Men versus Oakland College (National Cup Round 3)

Senior Men travel to Thames Valley “Cavaliers”

All the home games will be played at the Northants Basketball Centre which is situated at Northampton School for Girls in Spinney Hill Road, Northampton

Spectators are welcome and admission is FREE