**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

**PRESS RELEASE**

***Another busy weekend for the Northants Basketball Club, saw four wins, two losses a postponement and a ‘no show’. Pride of place went to the Junior Women for their win over “Titans” and the Under 13 Boys who maintained their unbeaten record with a win against Warwickshire “Hawks”***

**Dina and Gerda too much for “Titans”**

**Under 18 Girls North Conference**

**Northants “Lightning” 73 - 50 Northamptonshire “Titans**

The Northants Junior Women completed the double over local rivals Northamptonshire “Titans” with this comprehensive win at The Basketball Centre last Sunday, Emma Salisbury’s team winning by 23 points thanks to an excellent all-round team performance.

A big crowd saw “Lightning” go off with a bang as Dina Kosnikovska and Lucie Wilson-Gray drained three-pointers and this was followed up with a 12-zero charge which established a 19-9 lead after the first quarer.

“Titans” responded admirably at the start of the second quarter and their up-court pressure caused “Lightning” a great deal of problems. Led by Akanmu, “Titans” went on an 11 to three run to close the gap to just two points but a Salisbury time out allowed her to re-organise her team’s press break and they went on an impressive 16- four charge to lead 38-24 at half time.

This lead was extended to 51- 28 midway through the third quarter despite the mercurial efforts of “Titans’ Imogene Williams but there was a scare for “Lightning” supporters when Wilson-Gray” was badly ‘winded” after colliding with a wall when going for an interception. The warm reception the “Lightning” player received from the “Titans” supporters as she was helped from the court was a great credit to them. Without Wilson-Gray’s services “Lightning” lost their rhythm and were guilty of missing a number of open lay ups; even so they led 59-33 going into the final ten minutes of play.

“Titans” battled gamely throughout the final quarter but were unable to make any substantial inroads into the “Lightning” lead although they did win the final stanza 17-14 thanks to the efforts of Akanmu and Williams.

In the twenty-three point win the leading scorers for “Lightning” were Kosnikovska and Gerda Vienskaite with 23 and 19 points respectively. Fiona Arthur, Wilson-Gray and Fernanda Loberto supported well but the efforts and work rate of the other five players should not be overlooked.

Before the game started there was a bonus for the Northants Club with the news that Conference leaders Lancashire “Spinners” had been beaten in Durham the previous afternoon.

**Junior Men go on-and one over the weekend**

True to character the Northants “Thunder” Junior Men showed both the good and bad sides of their character last weekend with an abject performance against the Derby “Trailblazers” second team following it the next day with a sparkling effort against Leicester “Warriors”

**Under 18 Boys North 2 Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 57 – 80 Derby “Trailblazers II”**

Earlier in the season “Thunder” had recorded a narrow victory over the “Trailblazers” second string but they knew they would be in for a tough game in the return fixture but there is no way they should have lost by a twenty plus points margin. That they did was down to an appalling second half performance which saw them outscored by 44 points to 25. This after trailing by just four points 32-36 at half time.

Against an athletic Derby team, “Thunder” needed to control the game in the second half but instead they tried to match their opponents physically and they came off a very poor second best displaying poor discipline in the process.

In the disappointing loss only Ellis Phillips and Benas Maldutis scored in double figures with 13 and 10 points respectively while Dylan Dominic and Fareed Issifu manage nine points apiece.

**Northants “Thunder” 78 – 56 Leicester “Warriors”**

Less than twenty-four hours after their loss to “Trailblazers”, “Thunder” were back on court to take on the Leicester “Warriors” first string. To the relief of everyone watching it was a completely different team that took the court and their energy and discipline was too much for “Warriors” who found themselves trailing 15-22 after the first ten minutes of play.

During the first quarter no less than eight “Thunder” players had scored and in the second quarter they were able to capitalise on a number of mismatches and by half time they had extended their lead to 51-31 which would have been more had they not missed six free throws.

Sensing victory “Thunder” came out for the second half in determined mood and their 3-2 match up defence was too much for the “Warriors” who could manage just seven points in the third quarter while “Thunder” racked up 17 capped by an Ellis Phillips buzzer-beating ‘three’ at the end of the quarter.

Leading 58-28 going into the final quarter “Thunder” extended this lead with a 15-four charge with Kyle Haynes providing a pleasant point scoring cameo; but they might well reflect on the last four minutes of the game when they were outscored 13 to three.

In the comfortable win the “Thunder” scoring was led by Tom Greenfield, Benas Maldutis and Rapolas Radavicius with 12 points apiece while Haynes scored 11

**A blank weekend for the Under 14 and 15 Boys**

 **Under 15 Boys Your Basketball League (Primis)**

**Northants “Thunder” 20 – 0 Bournville**

The Bournville Under 15 team failed to arrive for this YBL Primis fixture so the game has been claimed

by the Northants Club

**Under 14 Boys (East Conference)**

**Northamptonshire “Titans” *Postponed*  Northants “Thunder”**

An outbreak of Covid in the “Titans” squad forced the late postponement of this game which will now

be played at a later date

**Under 14 Girls are ‘winners’ even in defeat**

**Under 14 Girls (Midlands Conference)**

**Northants “Lightning” 36 – 54 Derby “Trailblazers”**

Sports psychologists are keen to encourage performers that there is more then one way of winning than just on the scoreboard. This was certainly the case with the Northants under 14 girls last Saturday when they played a talented Derby “Trailblazers” team.

Last week “Lightning” battled to a win over Mansfield “Giants”, but their performance was patchy, but a win was a win. Against “Trailblazers” the team showed a lot more cohesion and can look back on a second half which they tied 26 all. By that time they were trailing 10-28 but the boost they got from the final twenty minutes can only give them confidence going into this weekend’s game against Daventry “Swifts”.

In fairness the Derby coach only used the talented Desmond and Kelly sparingly in the third and fourth quarters but “Lightning” can still be pleased with their efforts.

Nine “Lightning” players got onto the scoresheet led by Kelis Foster with 12 points and Jennifer Oamen with 8 points while for Derby Desmond and Kelly scored 40 points between them

**Under 13 Boys keep up the winning habit**

**Youth Basketball League (Under 13 Boys South)**

**Warwickshire “Hawks 30 – 67 Northants “Thunder”**

Winning has become a habit with the “Thunder” under 13 boys and they were in no mood to change that habit when they travelled to Warwickshire “Hawks” for their latest YBL game. They charged into a 22-eight lead after the first quarter and this lead was extended to 42-13 by half time with Elijah Badero, Cameron Iviengor and Logan Tanner proving to be unstoppable.

“Thunder” were guilty of taking their ‘foot off the gas’ in the third quarter and led by the talented Omari Kelly, “Hawks edged the quarter 10-five but after some stern words from Coach Steven Matthews it was business as usual in the fourth quarter which “Thunder” took 20-seven to complete a 37 point win and retain their unbeaten record.

 In addition to Badero, Iviengor and Tanner, Ayden Wright scored a dozen points while Coach Matthews was full of praise for the defensive efforts of Shaquille Dumbaya and Lewis Spacey.

**Classy Under 12’s see off below strength “Knights”**

**Under 12 Mixed League (East 1 Conference)**

**Northants “Thunder” 72 – 20 North Herts “Knights”**

Coach Mark Spatcher’s team turned in a classy performance in beating a below strength North Herts “Knights” team who their credit battled to the end of this game despite trailing by a massive margin.

“Thunder” dominated all four quarters despite being forced to take off their full court pressure defence after establishing a twenty-point lead. They continued to play intense defence and forced numerous turn-overs which they punished with excellent fast break offences orchestrated by point guard Anton Kelly.

In the big win four “Thunder” players, Kelly, Luca Garrett, Jerome Maroozda and Jowell Sleite-French all scoring in double figures with good support coming from Osagie Efosa and Campbell Spatcher.

“Thunder” remain second in the East One Conference with everything riding on their return game against Milton Keynes Basketball.

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION**

 **Saturday 12th February**

 **9-30 am to 10-30am** “Budding “Ballers”

 **9-30am to 11-00am** “Junior Ballers”

**There are no home games at the Basketball Centre this weekend**

 Junior Men travel to Mansfield “Giants”

 Junior Women travel to City of Birmingham “Rockets”

 Under 14 Boys ‘A’ team travel to West Suffolk “Wolves”

 Under 14 Girls travel to Daventry “Swifts”

For further information about this Press Release contact ***John Collins*** on **+44 7801 533151**