**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**

**PRESS RELEASE**

***Six games for the Northants Club last weekend with four wins***

 ***and two heavy losses.***

**Revenge is sweet for the Junior Men in ‘roller coaster’ game.**

**Under 18 Boys North 2 Conference**

**Leicester “Dynamite” 67 – 71 Northants “Thunder”**

Earlier in the season “Thunder” slipped to a disappointing seven points home defeat at the hands of “Dynamite”, so it was a determined group that travelled to Leicester last Saturday in search of revenge and it was achieved after a game which saw numerous lead changes.

“Thunder” made a poor start to the game with “Dynamite” jumping out to a lead but a time out by Coach Darijus Maldutis steadied the “Thunder” ship but they still trailed 12-17 after the first quarter.

“Thunder” produced some excellent basketball in the second quarter and three-pointers from Benas Maldutis and Ellis Phillips helped “Thunder” to take the quarter 24-15 and a 36-32 half time lead.

During the half time break Coach Maldutis emphasised the importance of keeping control of the game but his words fell on deaf ears and in the third quarter “Thunder” were guilty of rushing their offence and turning the ball over on a number of occasions. “Thunder” could manage just 13 points in the quarter as “Dynamite”

re-took the lead at 55-49.

As the fourth quarter developed fatigue was becoming and issue and Coach Maldutis was able to keep fresh legs on the court and this was to prove decisive and midway through the quarter Benas Maldutis drained a three-pointer and was fouled. The ensuing free throw gave “Thunder” the lead and this was followed by some disciplined defence and key steals from Dylan Dominici and Jack Lemon forcing “Dynamite” to foul hoping “Thunder” would miss from the free throw line. In the event they kept their cool and held out for the four-point win.

In the narrow victory Dominici, Fareed Issifu, Tom Greenfiled and Maldutis all scored in double figures good support coming from Phillips and Rapolas Radavicius. An interesting statistic was the fact that “Dynamite” actually scored more baskets than “Thunder” but the “Thunder” tally of seven three-pointers was decisive.

**Junior Women complete the double over Durham**

**Junior Women’s (North Conference)**

**Northants “Lightning” 59 – 33 Durham “Palatinates”**

Six days after “Lightning” had battled their way up to the frozen north the Durham girls made the trip to Northampton for the returned fixture. Both teams welcomed back key players and once again “Lightning” prevailed in a low scoring game.

“Lightning” won all four quarters of play and benefitted from nine players contributing to the final 59-point total against a determined Durham team. The “Lightning” scoring was led by the outstanding Lucie Wilson-Gray with 17 points, good support coming from Fernanda Loberto and Gerda Vienskaite while Katie Gunnett rebounded superbly. Once again, Coach Emma Salisbury was keen to stress that the win had come as the result of an excellent all-round team performance.

**Under 16 Boys move on step away from Conference title with win over “Swifts”**

**Under 16 Boys Midlands Conference**

**Daventry “Swifts” 26 – 84 Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants “Thunder” Under 16 Boys are just one win away from the Midlands Conference title after a routine win over a keen but very inexperienced Daventry “Swifts” team.

“Thunder” dominated the game keeping “Swifts” to single figures in all four quarters while their scoring was dominated by Rapolas Radivicius and Jordan Gbanja who both had 20 plus point hauls while Benas Maldutis scored 14 points. Coach Brad Hughes was disappointed that too many of his team’s points had come from putbacks following missed shots.

The team’s final game is against Leicester “Riders II” a team they comfortably beat earlier in the season.

**Under 13 Boys tame the “Bears”**

**YBL Under 13 Boys South Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 69 – 41 Bromsgrove “Bears”**

The Northants Under 13 Boys maintained their unbeaten record with a 28 point win over Bromsgrove “Bears” who fielded a brace of talented girls.

By half time “Thunder” had taken control of the game establishing a comfortable 39-18 lead with eight players contributing to the points total while the team’s effort on defence was excellent.

“Thunder” was guilty of relaxing their efforts in the third quarter which “Bears” edged 14-12 but “Thunder” re-established their control in the final quarter eventually running out comfortable winners by 69 points to 41.

The “Thunder” scoring was led by Logan Tanner with 16 personal points while important contributions came from Oliwier Andrzejczak, Cameron Ivienagbor, and Alfie Serbyn but once again it was the defensive efforts of the whole team that was a decisive factor.

**“Cats” no match for Under 12 Mixed team**

**Under 12 Mixed League East Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 87 – 25 Cambridge “Cats”**

The quest of the Northants Under 12 Mixed team to make the end of season Play Offs continued with an impressive and emphatic win over Cambridge “Cats” last Saturday. “Thunder” totally dominated the game both offensively and defensively conceding just 14 points in the final three quarter of play while pouring in 61 points themselves.

No less than ten “Thunder” players contributed to the final points tally with Luca Garrett, Jerome Maroodza Sam Dominici, Campbell Spatcher and Jowell Stiete-French all scoring in double figures

**Tough day at the office for Under 14 Boys**

**Under 14 Boys East Conference**

**Milton Keynes Basketball Club 88 – 41 Northants “Thunder”**

The Northants Under 14 Boys made the short trip to Milton Keynes last Saturday to take on the East Conference table-toppers.

Against an athletic and well organised team “Thunder” found scoring difficult throughout the game but as they became accustomed to the Milton Keynes’ defensive pressure, they finished positively with 15 points in the final quarter. They could also be proud of keeping their opponents a team regularly scoring in excess of a hundred points to 88 while there was also much to be pleased about the rebounding of Ted Osborne and the offensive efforts of Alex Bot, Logan Ormshaw and Kane Young.

**Under 14 Girls well beaten by talented “Riders”**

**Under 14 Girls Midlands Conference**

**Leicester “Riders” 66 – 13 Northants “Lightning”**

The Northants Under 14 Girls found the defensive pressure exerted by a talented and very aggressive Leicester “Riders” a little bit too much to cope with when the two teams met at the Morningside Arena last Sunday.

“Lightning” created a number of scoring opportunities but missed a number of easy shots. The team battled defensively throughout the game with Lauren Eighteen excelling and the eventual winning margin for “Riders” was less than when the teams met in Northampton earlier in the season

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION**

 **Saturday 5th March**

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

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

 **11-30am** Under 14 Girls versus Northamptonshire “Titans”

  **2-00pm** Under 13 Boys versus Worcester “Wolves”

  **4-30pm** Under 15 Boys versus Walsall “Wizards

These games will be played at the Northants Basketball Centre at Northampton School for Girls

in Spinney Hill Road, Northampton NN3 6DG

Spectators are welcome and admission is **FREE**

Covid restrictions have now been eased but spectators are respectfully requested to respect other people’s health by abiding to social spacing and sanitising whenever possible

 **Sunday 6th March**

Under 14 Boys ‘B’ away at Northamptonshire “Titans”

 Under 18 Girls travel to Liverpool

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