**NORTHANTS BASKETBALL CLUB**



**PRESS RELEASE**

***Happy Saturday turns into sad Sunday with three wins on Saturday followed by two losses on Sunday***

**Junior Women find it tough in Liverpool**

**Junior Women’s (North Conference)**

**Liverpool Basketball 75 - 51 Northants “Lightning”**

The Northants Junior Women were back on the road last Sunday travelling to Liverpool in the expectation of a tough game and so it proved. Just after Christmas “Lightning” won a very physical encounter at the Basketball Centre by just four points and Liverpool were keen for revenge and a vociferous crowd was on hand to help the home team.

From minute one “Lightning” knew the game was going to be physical as Liverpool used their height advantage to establish a 22-14 first quarter lead with Gerda Vilcinskaite scoring consistently for “Lightning”. Things got even tougher for the Northants girls in the second quarter and intimidated by the Liverpool ‘bigs’ posted close to the basket they resorted to speculative long -range shots. For the most part these were unsuccessful and Liverpool gobbled up the rebounds and ran in a number of lay up scores to take the quarter 27-7 and establish a 49-21 half time lead.

During the half time interval Coach Emma Salisbury pleaded with her team to ‘dig deep’ and play with pride and in the final two quarters they did just that. Thanks to the scoring of Dina Kosnikovska and the tremendous all-court effort of Fernada Loberto, “Lightning” won the second half by 30 points to 26 to make the homeward journey just a little more tolerable.

In the 24 points defeat Kosnikovska led the “Lightning” scoring with a 20 point haul, Vilcinskaite and Loberto supporting well with 11 and 9 points respectively. “Lightning” face another tough game this weekend when they entertain Conference joint-leaders City of Birmingham “Rockets”.

**Under 15 Boys cast a spell over “Wizards”**

**YBL Under 15 Boys Primis League**

**Northants “Thunder” 69 – 45 Walsall “Wizards”**

The Northants Under 15 Boys got back to winning ways with comfortable win over Walsall “Wizards” and their talented guard Ojeli. The win would have been even more emphatic had “Thunder” not totally switched off during the last four minutes of the game when they were outscored 14-4 to put a totally unrelastic look to the final score line.

After scoring the opening two baskets of the game “Thunder” rather went to sleep allowing their West Midlands opponents to take an 11-7 lead but some determined “Thunder” defence kept “Wizards” scoreless for the last four minutes of the quarter so establishing a 16-11 lead after the first ten minutes of play.

The second quarter saw “Thunder” take control of the game through Jake Muxlow as “Thunder” made their height advantage count. They won the quarter 21-7 to take a 37-18 half time lead and this was extended by a further 11 points in the third with Thomas Bates showing his class with nine personal points in the quarter.

Leading 57-27 going into the final quarter “Thunder” were guilty of some ill-disciplined play and after six points from Muxlow they allowed “Wizards” to go on that 14-4 closing surge much to the annoyance of Coach Brad Hughes. Despite the disappointing finale this was an impressive performance by the team with Bates leading the scoring with 18 points good support coming from Muxlow and Angus Slater with 16 points apiece while Danielus Jokulis contributed 10.

**Under 13 Boys go marching on**

**YBL Under 13 League South Conference**

**Northants “Thunder” 62 – 40 Worcester “Wolves”**

The Northants “Thunder” Under 13 Boys made it nine wins on the bounce when they beat a much-improved Worcester “Wolves” at the Basketball Centre last Saturday.

“Thunder” went into the game without the services of leading scorer Logan Tanner who took his turn to sit out the game in Coach Steven Matthew’s squad rotation policy. Without Tanner “Thunder” looked a little lost in the first quarter which they just edged 14-11. In the second quarter they looked far more comfortable and thanks to 8 points from Wilson Carr they took the quarter 17-8 to establish a 31-19 lead.

During the first half “Thunder” had been guilty of missing a number of close to the basket shots and this continued in the third quarter with “Thunder” extending their lead by just a single point to 48-35 going into the final ten minutes of play.

“Thunder” had dominated the game and should have been leading by more but any thoughts of a Worcester comeback were stifled by some excellent “Thunder” defence during the final ten minutes of play, “Wolves” being restricted to just 5 points with Carr displaying his defensive qualities.

In the 22 point win the “Thunder” scoring was led by Cameron Ivienagbor with 21 points while Carr contributed 14. Coach Matthews was quick to mention the impressive rebounding of Ivienagbor and Elijah Badero. The team will be looking to take their win tally to ten when they entertain Redditch this Saturday.

**Under 14 Boys ‘B’ team find a way of losing to “Titans”**

**Under 14 Boys Regional League**

**Northamptonshire “Titans” 51 – 46 Northants “Thunder Too”**

Not for the first time this season the Northants Under 14 ‘B’ team lost a game they should have won. That they did was thanks to a number of basic errors and their failure to convert numerous easy scoring opportunities while missing a total of 15 free throws didn’t help their cause.

“Thunder Too” made a dream start to the game rushing out to a 16-5 first quarter lead but four minutes without a score in the second quarter was a portent of things to come. “Titans II” won that quarter 14-10 but “Thunder Too” still held a 26-19 half time lead.

This advantage was eroded in the third quarter which saw a five minute scoring drought for “Thunder Too” as the home side took the quarter 18-7 to establish a 37-33 lead, a lead they were to hold onto for the remainder of the game. “Thunder Too” did drag the score back to 45-44 and restore hope in the possibility of a comeback win but “Titans II” were able to regroup and hold on for the win with a 6-2 final surge.

In the disappointing loss Luca Dominici led the scoring for “Thunder Too” with 12 points Brody Garrard and Seth Wilborn supporting well with 9 and 8 points respectively

**Under 14 Girls get back to winning ways against “Titans”**

**Under 14 Girls Midlands Conference**

**Northants “Lightning” 76 – 16 Northamptonshire “Titans”**

After a couple of heavy defeats the Northants Under 14 Girls got back to winning ways with a comfortable win over a game but very young and inexperienced “Titans” team.

Lead by 30 points from Jennifer Oamen supported by 17 and 14 point hauls from Kelis Foster and Iviannah Meadows, while Lauren Eighteen turned in another impressive display of defensive rebounding. “Lightning” dominated all four quarters but Coach Lee Meadows would probably have preferred to have seen a little more team play rather than the many scores coming from individual play and put backs. It is unlikely that these scores will be forthcoming when “Lightning” face Milton Keynes this coming Saturday.

Nevertheless this was a morale boosting win which lifts the team to fourth in the Midlands Conference while credit should go to “Titans” for fielding a full roster of players

**Lucy creates a little bit of history**

Last weekend former Northampton School for Girls and Northants “Lightning” player Lucy Needham

kitted up for Oxford University and played in the annual Varsity game against Cambridge University. Lucy is the first player from the county to be awarded a ‘Blue”, albeit a ‘Half Blue’ because basketball is looked on a as minority sport.

Lucy is studying geography at St Catherine’s College and unfortunately the Varsity match didn’t go Oxford’s way the Dark Blues losing to their Light Blue rivals by a single point.

**THIS WEEKEND’S ACTION**

**Saturday 12th March**

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

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

**11-30am** Under 18 Girls versus Birmingham “Rockets”

**2-00pm** Under 12 Mixed versus Norfolk “Angels”

**4-30pm** Under 13 Boys versus Redditch

Under 14 Girls travel to Milton Keynes

Under 14 Boys ‘A’ travel to Southend “Scorpions”

Under 15 Boys travel to Leicester “Riders”

Under 16 Boys versus Leicester “Riders II”

Under 18 Boys travel to Leicester “Warriors”

**Sunday 13th March**

YBL Under 11 Play Off Tournament

**10-15am** Under 11 “Storm” versus Swadlincote

**11-15am** Under 11 “Storm” versus Team Wolves “Slam”

**12-15am** Under 11 “Storm versus Worcester “Wolves”

Under 13 Boys travel to Bromsgrove “Bears”

All the home 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

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