



Warwickshire Basketball League

Press Release

Thursday 15th April 2010

/

Number 25

GRIFFINS STUN HAWKS TO REACH FINAL

Arden Griffins 123-108 Aylesford Hawks

Second Division Arden Griffins stunned high flying former league champions Aylesford Hawks to move into the final of the Warwickshire Basketball Inter-Divisional Shield

Hawks were confidently expected to dispose of the Knowle side, playing only their third season in the league, but they underestimated the tenacity of Griffins, who fielded only seven fit players – who played like a full squad to eventually win by fifteen.

For once, Coach Richard Curtis could not lift his men – until the final quarter, but by then, the hill to climb had become a mountain, and time was against them despite a frantic burst of activity around the Griffins' hoop. They started confidently enough, to reduce the fifty point handicap, and it was down to forty at the end of period one. On target so far, but things went awry in the second, as Griffins, with Tom Fletcher and Dan Opoku leading the way, conceded just fourteen and scored twelve into the bargain. Curtis still refused to panic though, knowing how ruthless his Hawks team had been throughout the competition to reach the semi final.

But ten minutes from time, when the scores were 88-53 and there was just one period remaining, it was time to go for the kill – if time allowed. Shots rained in on the Griffins basket, with Ricky Fennel grabbing three baskets inside two minutes. Alex Birch – a lone raider at times at Griffins' end, re-joined the fray as did Maarten de Jong, to set pulses racing, but Griffins had their own answer – score at the other end and it makes life really difficult. This they did with Opoku and Jack Forrest hitting the target and Hawks were running out of oxygen half-way up their mountain.

It became fractious after Forrest was called for an unsportsmanlike foul. Fennel received two technicals and was benched by Curtis but then he, and his charges realised the game was up and Griffins moved into the final. Birch led on 34 for valiant Hawks, with Opoku on 20 and Fletcher making 15 for the victorious Arden side.

Opoku, Birch, Fennel and a host of other high calibre players, including Crusaders Matt Smith and John Olinger will be turning out at this Sunday's All Star game at Warwick University. It climaxes Warwickshire's first Festival of Basketball which begins at 11am in the Main Sports Hall at the University in Gibbet Hill Road.

Featured throughout the day will be the cream of the County's Under 12, Under 14, Ladies and Wheelchair basketball players, before the All Star game begins at 3pm. Admission is free and there will be opportunities to buy Molten basketballs plus famous named sporting goods and memorabilia from the trade stand.

For further information on Warwickshire Basketball contact

Mike Maddox on 07900 403758 or e mail: mike.maddox@warwickshirebasketball.co.uk