



March 2017

NEWSLETTER

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THUNDERBIRDS MOVE A MOUNTAIN TO JOIN THE NEW BIRMINGHAM LEAGUE

Always looking for new opportunities to challenge and develop our fast improving teams, Kelly has set her sights on the new Birmingham Intermediate League, who made it made it very clear, that if teams were not present at the pre-season tournament on the 4th February, they would not be able to enter the forthcoming league!

Meeting this condition and fulfilling our commitments in the Coventry & Warwickshire league, Kelly and her team managers were left with a logistical minefield. It took the full support of **all club players**, many of whom were willing to play two matches to cover other teams. Add this to the administrative wizardry of Ellen Lavery, Thunderbirds were able to come up with the following solution:

Nine teams were entered: **U14A, U14B , U13A** (*U13 B played up, so that the 'real' U13A could commit to the Coventry fixtures for themselves AND play up for the U14A*) **U13B** (*most of the U12C played up again and helped cover these fixtures*), **U12A, U12B** (*U12C team played up covering the fixtures for the U12B who were playing in Coventry*) **U12C**, (*U11B covered these fixtures - winning lots of matches in the process!*), **U11A and U11B**. It was good to see lots of new club players make their Thunderbird's debut at this tournament.

Our persistent U11s, U12s & U14A came away undefeated and there was enormous satisfaction to be had watching both our U11's and U12's beat Parkside, who are several times West Midlands Regional and National Junior Champions. Thunderbirds would like to say a special '**THANKS**' to all our team managers for their leadership. On this occasion, Gemma Cook, Stephanie Boyle and Kizzy Galvin agreed to manage two teams each! Without all our volunteer Team Managers, we simply would not have been able to enter all these teams. We are equally indebted to Sarah Saffet-Cole for getting our new girls kitted out in time.

Birmingham League fixtures were due to start on Sunday (5th March) but sadly rain stopped play. For the next four weeks, (weather permitting), there will be a hectic overlap between these and the remaining Coventry fixtures. We thank all players, chauffeuring parents and team managers in advance for riding this busy but exciting new phase in our club's development.

PONTINS PROVES TOO POPULAR FOR OUR YOUNG CLUB

Following an overwhelming expression of interest by members to take part in this summer's netball weekend at Brean Sands, Somerset, the Thunderbirds committee have been forced to come to a very tough but necessary decision.

No less than 82 people, including parents, wanted to attend the first weekend in late June for U11, U12 and U13 teams. Regrettably, too many young players would have been unaccompanied, leaving those volunteers going with the huge responsibility of looking after so many young girls in an exciting and vast holiday park. The Pontin's tournament is highly regarded in netballing circles, however, Thunderbird has no experience of attending a residential event on this scale. With liability and duty of care ultimately falling on the committee, it was agreed that all our efforts should go into attending the second weekend (1 to 2 July), entering just two older teams. This will be treated as a fact finding mission in the hope of making this event a regular feature on our club's calendar and giving our younger Thunderbirds something to aspire to in the future.

The committee regrets any disappointment this decision is bound to cause but it does highlight the need for more parent volunteers. In the meantime, our girls can look forward to plenty of summer fun being planned, such as the one day tour to Bury. Ellen Lavery will be in touch with the U14s & U16s players directly, to finalise commitment and costs for Pontin's weekend. Thank you for your understanding.

U11s add Warwick Prep School Championship to list of conquests



Top left to right: **Sienna, Lara, Abbi, Lucy, Bella.**
Bottom left to right: **Molly, Issy, Charlotte, Holly**

Thunderbirds won all five of their pool matches, including a very close 3-2 victory against a strong Kingsley side.

The first half of the semi-final against Warwick Prep was very tight finishing at one goal a-piece, but Thunderbirds were able to pull away in the second half to win 5-1.

Having beaten two of their local rivals, Thunderbirds were now on a high and stamped their authority in the final against Maltmans's Green, winning 7-1.

Thunderbirds Club were thrilled to be invited by Warwick Prep to enter one U11 team into their annual netball tournament, featuring no less than 22 teams. As players gathered on 3rd February, it quickly became apparent that they would be up against many other Thunderbirds, only this time, their loyalties would be with their school, be it the Croft, Kingsley or hosts Warwick Prep.

This certainly added an extra competitive element to the matches as no-one wants to lose to members of their own club!



Fundraising News

The committee recently welcomed Ellie Davies on board with responsibility for fundraising. Not only has she a few fantastic ideas of her own, Ellie has seen through discussions already started for a sponsorship deal with NFU Mutual worth £1500. After the inland revenue have put a dent in it, this valuable boost to our club funds.

Thunderbirds extends its gratitude to Caroline Francis, who is our contact at NFU Mutual.




Meanwhile, Ellie has managed to book Thunderbirds in for a bag packing session at Tesco's in the Maybird Centre on Saturday 18th March between 9:30am and 5:30pm. Details to be confirmed but it is our intention to organise team shifts to cover several time slots.

Please put the date in your diary and consider letting us borrow your daughters to pack shopping bags and rattle a collection can. Proceeds would be used to subsidise summer tours such as Bury.

Big thumbs up also to parent, Alex Balzaretti, who has managed to get Stratford Thunderbirds onto the Community Matters Award scheme from Waitrose. Throughout the month of March, people can vote with their green tokens which good cause deserves a percentage of a £1,000 donation.

Please save up you tokens and ask family and friends to show their support at the local branch of Waitrose at the Rosebird Centre, Stratford.



SELECTON CRITERIA

Thunderbirds is now a well established competitive club, with experience in a handful of leagues and tournament. We are also lucky enough to have a large selection pool for our weekly matches. After consulting the committee, Kelly would like to take this opportunity to set out her criteria for selecting teams.

1) Attendance at training:

If girls miss sessions in the weeks running up to a match, priority for selection will go to those who did attend. Attendance is generally excellent so discretion will be used by Kelly and team managers. Under no circumstances should a girl feel penalised for missing training for a genuine good reason.

What is considered a good reason:

Illness (regular sickness will be taken into account)
 Family occasion
 School commitment
 Sporting commitment (assuming not too often)
 Friend's birthday party

What is considered a poor reason:

Too much homework
 Have too much going on
 No reason - just failed to show up.

If the player has a good reason not to attend, she may still have to miss the next match, as we often work on tactics. Attendance would be needed if we were to be able to put any new strategies into action. Kelly would, of course, explain this to the player.

2) Behaviour and Work Ethic at training.

Bad behaviour will not be tolerated and the girls will not be asked to play further matches until it improves.

Kelly will set out her expectations to the girls at training after half term. It is being mentioned in the newsletter now, so that parents will be aware that poor behaviour will influence selection.

3) Confirming availability.

It has also been agreed that team managers should use the same standard for emails when checking players' availability for matches, as follows:

"A FAST REPLY TO THIS EMAIL IS NEEDED – WE NEED TO KNOW IF YOUR DAUGHTER CAN OR CAN'T PLAY. IF SHE CAN'T THEN ANOTHER PLAYER WILL HAVE THE OP-PORTUNITY TO PLAY INSTEAD.

IF WE DON'T HEAR FROM YOU BY/...../..... THEN WE WILL ASSUME THAT YOUR DAUGHTER CANNOT PLAY. IF THIS IS THE CASE PLEASE BE AWARE THAT IF YOUR DAUGHTER TURNS UP AT THE MATCH - SHE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO PLAY"

4) Punctuality.

Finally if the girls stroll up to matches late - if we have enough players, they should not be surprised if they get less court time.



USEFUL CONTACTS

Name	Role	Email	Mobile
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BACS PAYMENT DETAILS

Using this method saves time and money for the club!

Thank you for your consideration.

Stratford Thunderbirds Bank Transfer Details:

Sort code 60-20-41

Account No 43812538