**Beverley Cougars 66 – 56 Hull Hornets**

After finishing a solid 5th in the league, a play-off place was out of reach for the Beverley Cougars going into this final match. They entertained Hull Hornets, the side who got the final play-off place thanks to back to back wins.

But, in the first quarter, the Cougars looked like the side who had guaranteed themselves a play-off spot. Returning James Moore seemed unstoppable as his drives to the basket worked nearly every time. Rob Brown showed off his improved three-point game, by netting a couple of chances. But it was at the defensive end where the Cougars really impressed. They were solid, thanks to Andrew Ladwiniec’s direction, only allowing one basket from free play to go in. The Cougars bagged an early advantage 27-4.

However, the job was far from done. In the second quarter, the Hornets showed some of the class that had got them into the play-offs. They tightened up on the defensive end and prevented the Cougars top scorers from getting any open shots. The Hornets also added a few points to their total, closing the gap to 33-19 at half time.

The third quarter was a much more balanced affair. Andrew Jamieson used his height to great effect as he got some valuable points and rebounds. But this didn’t dishearten the Hornets. They continued to play solidly, making very few mistakes. They won the third quarter narrowly, but it could have been a larger gap, if they had been more clinical from the free throw line.

Going into the final quarter, the Cougars had a large, but not decisive, 12 point lead. Again, the Hornets attacked, but the Cougars kept their composure. They kept on working at both ends of the court, taking nothing for granted. The final quarter was a balanced one, with both teams unable to take any advantage. As the final buzzer sounded, the Beverley Cougars had beaten the Hull Hornets, 66-56.

Head Coach Steven Lindsey was happy with the Cougars second half of the season, and looked forward to next season. He said, “We have improved massively in the second half of the season. We’ve grown in confidence and have developed a strong team spirit. I honestly believe that next year we can challenge for the title, especially with the players that we are bringing in.”

The Cougars’ next challenge will be the Overtime Basketball Summer Leagues, starting on the 19th June.