**Beverley Cougars 81 – 38 Lincs Lightning**

After overcoming the challenge of the Hornets in the last round of the Jones Cup, the Cougars faced the Lincs Lightning, a young team from the Development South league**.** A place in the semi-finals was at stake.

Despite the Lightning being a very young team, the Cougars didn’t take any risks. Head coach Steven Lindsey fielded a strong team, with plenty of experience. Straight from the off, one of these players, Chris Cummings, controlled the game, driving to the basket and finishing stylishly. On the defensive end, the Cougars were stronger than they’ve ever been before. The Lightning’s lack of height put them at a severe disadvantage when it came to rebounding the ball. The only highlight for the Lightning was a three point shot, in an otherwise disappointing first quarter. The Cougars lead, 25-4.

The second quarter started out in much the same way, with the Cougars scoring most of the baskets. Antony Barton helped out at both ends of the court, rebounding missed shots, and setting up plays, which furthered the Cougars lead. Mark Leason and Andrew Jamieson combined well together to prevent the Lightning from getting back into the game. At the half time break, the Cougars were comfortably ahead, 42-13.

After a reasonably easy first half, a place in the semi final was in the grasp of the Cougars. But the Lightning were not down and out yet. They started the third quarter brightly, playing the game they wanted to. Even when the Cougars did score, they stayed resilient and kept on pushing the Cougars. Antony Barton carried on his solid game, scoring late in the quarter, and keeping the Cougars’ comfortable lead, with the score at 55-25.

Going into the final quarter, the Cougars knew that they just had to avoid making any mistakes and they’d get through another round of the Jones’ cup. They started well, with familiar faces pulling the strings. Cummings’ passes, Jamieson’s rebounds and Barton’s points meant that they extended their lead to an insurmountable amount, winning 81-38. The Lightning left with their heads held high, but it was the Cougars who prevailed.

After the game, head coach Steven Lindsey praised the opposition. “The Lightning are a very young team, and they have plenty of potential, if they keep working as hard as they do now.” He was also delighted with his own side’s progress, not just in the cup, but throughout the season. “The boys have improved so much since September, and we have shown that with this run. To get to the semi-finals of the cup in our first year of existence is a massive achievement.”