**Beverley Cougars 80 – 38 P&O Pirates**

You could forgive the Beverley Cougars for feeling nervous going into this encounter with the P&O Pirates. They had already lost to the Pirates earlier this season, and went into this fixture with a depleted squad of only nine players. Also, head coach Steven Lindsey was missing, leaving assistant coach Matt Haughan in charge of the team, for the first time this season.

Despite all of this, the Cougars showed no signs of the slow starts that have plagued them so far this season. Some quick thinking from Rob Brown and James Moore allowed the Cougars to score 12 points early on, a run uninterrupted by the Pirates. When the Pirates did eventually score, it didn’t deter the Cougars. They carried on attacking, which meant they lead after the first quarter, 26-5.

The second quarter started in a similar way; Brown seemed unstoppable as he carried on his scoring streak. Baskets from Chris Roberts and Chris Cummings meant the Cougars could stretch their lead. Towards the end of the quarter, the Pirates began to show signs of a comeback. But their offence pressuring didn’t last long, thanks to some acute defending from the Cougars. At half time, the Cougars had a comfortable lead, 46-19.

The Cougars had dominated in the first half, and hoped to continue that in the second half. The Pirates, on the other hand, had different ideas. They showed some attacking intent which, when paired with their defensive solidarity, didn’t allow the Cougars to pull away. The third quarter was a much more even one, as it ended 60 – 32.

As the final quarter began, the Cougars knew that they were heading towards a second win in three games since returning from the winter break. James Moore continued his run of form, scoring 20 points, a season best for him. This haul was over shadowed though, by a record 30 points, achieved by Rob Brown. When the final buzzer sounded, the Cougars had won by a total of 80 – 38.

After the game Assistant Coach Matt Haughan was delighted with win, saying “The team were fantastic today. In difficult circumstances, we stepped up and played some of the best basketball we’ve played. It was great to see some great individual performances, especially as we head into the difficult second half of the season.”