

7/11 PTL Notebook: Four-way first place tie now cut in half

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NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – After his Prime Time League debut resulted in a 100-84 loss to L.L. Pelling Company/Goodfellow Printing, incoming Iowa freshman Melsahn Basabe said how he hated to lose.

On Sunday, the favor was returned.

Led by a 31-point, 14-rebound performance from Basabe, George Etre, Inc./Culver's of Coralville not only got a 94-83 win over Pelling/Goodfellow, but now has the inside track to the league's top seed in the playoffs, which start July 20.

This win for Etre/Culver's was its third straight, putting it at 4-2, while Pelling/Goodfellow fell back to 3-3. Basabe had a reason for his team's recent run.

"We're playing the whole game, and before, we were playing second halves," he said. "That's always a dicey game. We won one doing that, but we lost two doing that."

Pelling/Goodfellow was missing Iowa sophomore Eric May, who was out due to illness. But it did receive contributions from incoming Iowa freshman Zach McCabe, who had 18 points, all of which came shooting 6-of-10 from beyond the arc.

But McCabe said one of the biggest factors that determined the outcome of this game was a 13-0 run by Etre/Culver's late in the first half, a run that gave it a lead that wouldn't be relinquished.

"I think that killed our momentum a little bit," McCabe said. "We tried to fight back. They have a lot of good players."

Both of these teams entered Sunday with identical 3-2 records and part of a four-way tie for first place. Basabe called Etre/Culver's "the team to beat" after Sunday's win, and he may be right.

A win for Etre/Culver's next week over Jill Armstrong of Lepic-Kroeger Realtors, a team it beat on June 20, locks up the No. 1 seed thanks to a head-to-head tiebreaker with Vinton Merchants/Hawkeye Title & Settlement, who also got revenge on Sunday with a 109-85 win over McCurry's/Mike Gatens Real Estate.

Vinton Merchants/Hawkeye Title & Settlement 109, McCurry's/Mike Gatens Real Estate 85

Like the aforementioned match-up between Etre/Culver's and Pelling/Goodfellow, this was also a game featuring teams tied for first place.

It was also a game dominated by Vinton/Hawkeye, who avenged an earlier loss to McCurry's/Gatens on Sunday, winning 109-85. The win puts Vinton/Hawkeye at 4-2 and a win over Bob's Your Uncle & Monica's/Iowa City Ready Mix on July 18 clinches a first-round bye in the PTL playoffs next week.

However, it will also need Etre/Culver's to lose to Jill Armstrong next week, in addition to a win, in order to be the No. 1 seed, after Etre/Culver's defeated Vinton/Hawkeye on July 6, 102-100.

Vinton/Hawkeye had three players with over 20 points – UNI's Chip Rank with 23, former UNI guard Ali Farokhmanesh with 22, and former Iowa guard Darryl Moore with 20. Iowa junior Devon Archie had eight points and six rebounds as well in the victory.

Meanwhile, sophomore Cully Payne had 24 points for McCurry's/Gatens on 10-of-18 shooting from the field, but only had four assists after having 14 dimes on July 6 in a win over Bob's/Ready Mix. The loss now has McCurry's/Gatens sitting in a three-way tie for second place at 3-3.

Jill Armstrong of Lepic-Kroeger Realtors 88, Bob's Your Uncle & Monica's/Iowa City Ready Mix 79

It only had five players available. In fact, one of the players missing was junior Matt Gatens, who like May, was out due to illness.

But Jill Armstrong still found a way to overcome those odds and post an 88-79 win over Bob's/Ready Mix. The victory evens its record at 3-3 and puts Jill Armstrong in a three-way tie for second place with McCurry's/Gatens and Pelling/Goodfellow.

One of the players who was there for Jill Armstrong on Sunday was junior Andrew Brommer, who posted a double-double with 15 points and 10 rebounds. Brommer was among three players who had double-doubles in the win.

As for Bob's/Ready Mix, the loss dropped it to 1-5 and cemented it as the No. 6 seed in the PTL playoffs. One of the lone bright spots for Bob's/Ready Mix was incoming Iowa freshman Devyn Marble. Despite showing up late for the second straight game and not being able to start, Marble nearly had a triple-double in the loss, scoring 10 points and compiling eight rebounds and eight assists.

The Prime Time League resumes on Sunday, July 18 at the North Liberty Community Center with the first game taking place inside the New Gym at 3 p.m. between McCurry's/Mike Gatens Real Estate and L.L. Pelling Company/Goodfellow Printing. That first game can be heard on KRUI-FM 89.7 with Rob Miller and former PTL participant Robbie Lehman on the call.