

# 7/25 PTL Notebook: Pelling/Goodfellow, Vinton/Hawkeye advance

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – The championship game is now set.

Top-seeded Vinton Merchants/Hawkeye Title & Settlement and No. 3 L.L. Pelling Company/Goodfellow Printing found themselves on the winning end of Sunday's semifinal showdowns and will now meet on July 27 for the rights to the Prime Time League crown.

Pelling/Goodfellow got there by laying a smackdown on No. 2 George Etre, Inc./Culver's of Coralville, winning 99-72. Once again, it was Iowa sophomore Eric May who came up big in the spotlight. The Dubuque native finished with 31 points for the second consecutive game, and in the second half, he had dunks on four different occasions, putting the crowd into a frenzy.

His performance stands out not only because he was the game's leading scorer, but because he wasn't available the last time these two teams faced one another, a meeting that went in the favor of Etre/Culver's.

"He can easily drive in the lane and just get up quick and stuff like that," said Pelling/Goodfellow teammate Zach McCabe, who will be a freshman for the Hawkeyes. "Just having someone be able to drive and kick for us, that's how we generate our points."

The other thing May did to help his team is take on the challenge of guarding the 6-7 forward Melsahn Basabe, who had 24 points and 10 rebounds for Etre/Culver's.

"It's tough. When you're a guy who's undersized guarding a guy that can score in a lot of ways, it's tough," May said. "When he's not trying to force things, he can make some really good plays."

McCabe also contributed to the cause for Pelling/Goodfellow, finishing with 13 points and eight rebounds.

As for Basabe, the summer did not end how he wanted it to. Even though he will likely be named the league's Most Valuable Player in 2010, not being able to play in Tuesday's championship game has left him unsatisfied.

"I didn't get a championship. I failed," Basabe said. "I didn't reach my goal. It's that simple."

As for the second contest, Vinton/Hawkeye found itself trailing No. 5 McCurry's/Mike Gatens Real Estate for most of the first half before eventually turning it on at both ends of the floor in the second half to emerge with a 94-77 victory.

This game featured another solid outing for sophomore Cully Payne, who had 23 points to lead McCurry's/Gatens. But it was a shooting performance that he and his teammates would all like to forget, going 28-for-81 from the field, and 7-of-32 from beyond the arc.

"They made tons of shots, and we missed easy lay-ups," Payne said. "We missed like 13 3's in a row. That hurts."

Meanwhile, for Vinton/Hawkeye, it was led again by UNI's Chip Rank, who had 21 points. It also had 15 points from former UNI guard Ali Farokhmanesh.

Former Iowa guard Darryl Moore credited the adjustments made by Vinton/Hawkeye in the second half to propel his team to an appearance in the championship contest against Pelling/Goodfellow.

"We made a big adjustment on getting out on the shooters and

then rebounding," Moore said. "Running is part of our game, and we got out to run better in the second half."

Vinton/Hawkeye won the only previous meeting between the two squads this summer back on June 27, 94-84.

*The PTL Championship Game tips off at 6 p.m. Central on July 27 at the North Liberty Community Center. It will be carried on radio by KRUI 89.7 FM in Iowa City. Rob Miller will conduct play-by-play while former PTL player Robbie Lehman handles the color commentary.*