

Prime Time League: Final stats and thoughts

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Every summer when the Prime Time League starts up, opinions about its significance vary. Some believe it means very little to the grand scheme of things for the Iowa men's basketball team. Others feel the PTL can provide some sort of insight on certain players as the Hawkeyes will now spend the next three months preparing for the upcoming 2010-11 season.

With a new head coach in place now in Fran McCaffery, this summer maybe had a little more meaning for the Iowa players who participated, as a clean slate has just been presented. From my perspective as a reporter, I found from being down at the North Liberty Community Center every day and night there were games that the PTL is a decent measuring tool. By no means is it the end-all, be-all, but it does serve a purpose.

I know in November when the Hawkeyes' season starts, the question of how so-and-so did in the PTL this summer will be asked. With that in mind, I decided to take all the box score sheets I was given from PTL commissioner Randy Larson every night I was in North Liberty, and provide you all with statistics and some thoughts on each Hawkeye player I made from watching them this summer.

I'm going to specifically make mention of those on scholarship or look to be key contributors for the Hawkeyes in 2010-11. It should also be mentioned that two players – senior Jarryd Cole and incoming junior Bryce Cartwright – did not participate this summer. Cole was recovering from knee surgery, while Cartwright won't be on campus until fall semester.

Melsahn Basabe, Fr., 6-7, Forward

2010 PTL stats: 8 games, 30.6 PPG, 12.1 RPG, 2.9 APG, 96-of-155 FG (62 percent); 90-of-141 2P; 6-of-14 3P, 47-of-63 FT (75 percent)

Observations: *With the exception of maybe one or two games this summer, Melsahn Basabe came into the Prime Time League and took it by storm. He put up 36 points in his PTL debut on June 15 and was a rebound short of a double-double. In fact, that contest was only one of two games all summer where Basabe didn't have a double-double, en route to being one of the league's co-MVPs. There were times you could tell he was just a freshman and there are certainly some areas in his game he feels he can work on. But his determination to win is something that did stand out. I would look for Basabe to start at power forward for the Hawkeyes this season.*

Eric May, So., 6-5, Guard/Forward

2010 PTL stats: 9 games, 21.8 PPG, 6.3 RPG, 4.3 APG, 82-of-145 FG (57 percent); 61-of-100 2P; 21-of-45 3P, 14-of-24 FT (58 percent)

Observations: *The league's other co-MVP was Eric May, and after leading L.L. Pelling Company/Goodfellow Printing to the PTL championship this summer, you could see why. May got hot at the right time this summer, and his play rubbed off on his teammates. Having that freshman year now under his belt, it's clear that May is going to become a leader on this team (if he isn't one already) and someone that is going to be a major factor on the court for the Hawkeyes. I would expect to have a strong sophomore campaign for Iowa and possibly be the guy who benefits most from the style of play McCaffery will be implementing.*

Matt Gatens, Jr., 6-5, Guard

2010 PTL stats: 7 games, 27.3 PPG, 6.6 RPG, 6.1 APG, 62-of-121

FG (51 percent); 33-of-59 2P; 29-of-62 3P, 36-of-46 FT (78 percent)

Observations: *Some things with Matt Gatens didn't change, and some things did. Among the things that didn't change were his ability to drive to the basket and be someone that can score points when needed. However, he did lose some weight, and looking leaner is going to be of benefit for Gatens. In McCaffery's system, Gatens is someone that will primarily be a shooting guard. He won't be asked to do as much as far as the X's and O's are concerned, but Gatens might have the biggest role on the Hawkeyes this season now that he is an upper-classman.*

Cully Payne, So., 6-1, Guard

2010 PTL stats: 9 games, 19.7 PPG, 3.4 RPG, 8.9 APG, 67-of-142 FG (47 percent); 51-of-90 2P; 16-of-52 3P, 30-of-44 FT (68 percent)

Observations: *Of the returning Hawkeyes that participated in the PTL, one of the two guys who stood out to me most was Cully Payne. As bad as Iowa's season was last year, and as ugly as the scene was for the Hawkeyes' Big Ten Tournament game against Michigan, the one bright spot from that game was Payne, who had a career-high 25 points. That performance, I believe, was a turning point for the point guard, because his leadership on the court really stood out in every game I watched him play this summer. He'll still drive to the hoop and kick the ball back out along the baseline to an open shooter, but like that Michigan game, he wasn't hesitant about taking the lay-up when he drove inside. If he stays aggressive with the ball, I expect Payne to have a better sophomore year.*

Andrew Brommer, Jr., 6-9, Forward

2010 PTL stats: 8 games, 13.4 PPG, 7.9 RPG, 2.5 APG, 44-of-99 FG (44 percent); 40-of-80 2P; 4-of-19 3P, 15-of-42 FT (36 percent)

Observations: *I don't see Andrew Brommer starting over either Melsahn Basabe or Jarryd Cole when the season begins, but he was the other Hawkeye who stood out most to me this summer. His numbers won't always speak for themselves, but those of you who made the trek to North Liberty to see him play saw clear improvement. Brommer hustled at both ends of the floor for his team, and was never afraid to go in the paint, fight for loose balls, and haul in rebounds to set up transition. The fact that Brommer decided to stick with his commitment to Iowa speaks volumes, and it was something every one of his Hawkeye teammates took notice of this summer. He's going to be a much better player for Iowa with McCaffery around.*

Zach McCabe, Fr., 6-6, Forward

2010 PTL stats: 10 games, 17.9 PPG, 7.2 RPG, 2.4 APG, 66-of-136 FG (49 percent); 34-of-77 2P; 32-of-59 3P, 15-of-23 FT (65 percent)

Observations: *It was easy to see why former head coach Todd Lickliter was originally able to land Zach McCabe after watching him play his first few games this summer. McCabe demonstrated a lethal 3-point shot in the PTL and is someone that can come off the bench for the Hawkeyes and be that guy who provides a spark when they'll need it. But the other area of McCabe's game that stood out was his willingness to go inside, get rebounds, and not be afraid to get points in the paint. It's his versatility that is going show immediately as opposed to down the line, and he saved his best for the PTL championship game, leading Pelling/Goodfellow to the crown along with Eric May.*

Devyn Marble, Fr., 6-5, Guard

2010 PTL stats: 8 games, 18.3 PPG, 5.5 RPG, 3.4 APG, 54-of-130 FG (42 percent); 40-of-87 2P; 14-of-43 3P, 24-of-37 FT (65 percent)

Observations: *Devyn Marble had two things that worked against*

him this summer – being a true freshman, and being on the league's worst team. I don't expect Marble to start at all this season, and I don't honestly know how much of a contribution he'll actually make coming off the bench this upcoming season. With that said, I think Marble is the kind of shooter the Hawkeyes will eventually be relying on to score points. Playing behind Matt Gatens, I wouldn't expect much from him as a freshman, but the potential for Marble to be a really good player is there and I definitely think he will be a fan favorite.

Devon Archie, Jr., 6-9, Forward

2010 PTL stats: 5 games, 7.4 PPG, 5.0 RPG, 1.8 APG, 16-of-32 FG (50 percent); 16-of-31 2P; 0-of-1 3P, 5-of-13 FT (38 percent)

Observations: Seeing how Devon Archie ended up redshirting last season after suffering an injury at the start of fall practices, he was a player I was curious to watch this summer because I wanted to see what he could do. After watching him play, I don't see Archie providing much of a contribution at all in 2010-11. With Brennan Cougill being academically ineligible and now going to Kirkwood, Iowa is going to need depth inside. If Archie isn't able to contribute, it's going to be a challenge all season long. He had one really solid game in the PTL this summer, but outside of that, his team reached the PTL championship thanks in large part to the play of some past and present UNI players. If and when he does play this season, it will likely be late in games where the outcome isn't in doubt, one way or the other.