

6/19/2011: PTL Notebook – Hubbard wills team to win in PTL debut

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HawkeyeDrive.com

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – Before the Prime Time League kicked off its 25th summer of existence Sunday afternoon, the book on Anthony Hubbard was focused more on issues off the hardwood.

His actions on the court finally spoke to those on hand at the North Liberty Community Center, and what the spectators saw was a glimpse of how critical a figure Hubbard will be for the Hawkeyes next season.

Trailing 79-78 with 5:04 left, Hubbard ignited a late rally for Coach's Corner/Two Rivers Bank & Trust by scoring 11 unanswered points for his team en route to a 100-91 win over Jill Armstrong of Lepic-Kroeger Realtors. The junior college transfer finished with a double-double of 26 points and 13 rebounds to lead the way and credited his coach Kevin Lehman for how he managed to stand out in crunch time.

"He kind of put me into a situation where I can make some things happen," Hubbard said. "Coming off the screen when I had a little guy on me, putting me in the block. Then when they put the bigger guy on me, he put me out there on the wing and I used my quickness."

Hubbard has a knack for forcing defenders to draw contact, and it showed Sunday as he went to the charity stripe 16 times, knocking down 12 of his free-throw attempts, a number he wasn't satisfied with afterwards. Early in the game, he was finding ways to get teammates involved as three of his four

assists came in the first half.

He also displayed a leadership presence that made one of his Iowa teammates take notice.

“He brings a different aspect to our team,” said senior Jordan Stoermer, who is also a teammate of Hubbard’s this summer in the PTL. “He’s more of a driver, a stronger wing man that we really didn’t have last year. I think he’s going to fit in well.”

For Hubbard, this was a chance to finally display his talent, and he simply made the most of it while also being able to keep his emotions in check.

“It was pretty fun,” Hubbard said. “I was playing with some new guys, so it was kind of getting a feel for the guys and knowing what guys do best. But I had fun, plus we won.”

Iowa City Ready Mix/Vinton Merchants 96, Falbo Bros Pizza/Culver’s of Coralville 65

Out of the five Hawkeyes between these two teams, only one – freshman Aaron White – was on hand, and it was a game he and his team would just as soon forget.

Despite the absences of Bryce Cartwright and Gabe Olaseni, Ready Mix/Merchants cruised to a convincing 96-65 win over White and Falbo/Culver’s, which was missing a duo of Matt Gatens and Melsahn Basabe. In defeat, White came away with decent numbers – 18 points on 8-of-21 shooting, nine rebounds, and two assists.

The Strongsville, Ohio native didn’t seem phased, knowing that the make-up of his team will have a drastic difference when Gatens and Basabe are both in uniform.

“I know Mel will be able to hold down the lower block well and swing outside a little bit, and Matt being able to shoot and stuff like that,” White said. “It will be good to play with

them.”

Monica’s/L.L. Pelling Company 100, McCurry’s/Mike Gatens Real Estate 88

Not to be outdone by the earlier performance from Hubbard, sophomore guard Devyn Marble proved to be the difference for Monica’s/Pelling in a 100-88 win over McCurry’s/Gatens.

Marble finished with a game-high 32 points on 12-of-17 shooting from the field, and at times, just looked flat out dominant. A more confident Marble thinks it stems back from the end of last season, when he was inserted into Iowa’s starting line-up.

“Coach [McCaffery] had a lot of trust in me to execute his game plan,” Marble said. “Sophomore year, there’s going to be more expected of me, so I’m ready to take that on as a challenge.”

In addition to his mid-range jump shot, Marble is placing the most emphasis this summer on his ball-handling, as he was left with the impression after meeting with coaches at season’s end that his duties last year of backing up Cartwright at the point might continue.

Monica’s/Pelling also received solid contributions from senior forward Devon Archie. The third overall pick in last week’s PTL draft shot 6-of-8 from the floor and came away with 14 points and four rebounds in the win.

In defeat, junior Eric May led the way for McCurry’s/Gatens with 24 points and six assists, while freshman Josh Oglesby added 10 points.

The Prime Time League resumes from the North Liberty Community Center on Tuesday, starting with a pair of games at 6 p.m. The first game in the New Gym features McCurry’s/Gatens and Ready Mix/Merchants, while the Old Gym will have the contest between

Monica's/Pelling and Corner/Rivers. The nightcap in the New Gym is slated to start at 7:30 p.m. and will feature Falbo/Culver's and Jill Armstrong.