

PTL playoffs preview: 7/19/2011 (Semifinals)

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Here's a rundown of what Iowa basketball fans can expect Tuesday evening as the Prime Time League semifinals are set to take place at the North Liberty Community Center:

No. 3 Falbo Bros Pizza/Culver's of Coralville (5-3) vs. No. 2 Iowa City Ready Mix/Vinton Merchants (4-3)

6 p.m., Roberts Gym

The first semifinal features two teams that finished tied for second place in the PTL this summer in Falbo/Culver's and Ready Mix/Merchants, who won a coin flip following games on July 12 that gave it the first-round bye.

Falbo/Culver's made it to this point by defeating sixth-seeded McCurry's/Mike Gatens Real Estate 104-91 in the first round of the playoffs on July 17. In the win, Falbo/Culver's got an 18-point performance from Matt Gatens, as well as double-doubles from forwards Aaron White and Melsahn Basabe.

However, Ready Mix/Merchants has won both meetings between these two teams this summer, and both victories were rather lopsided. In the openers for both squads, Ready Mix/Merchants overcame the absences of both Bryce Cartwright and Gabe Olaseni to beat Falbo/Culver's 96-65 on June 19 in a contest where the latter was missing both Gatens and Basabe.

With both rosters complete, they met again on July 10 in a game won by Ready Mix/Merchants, 84-59. The story of this contest was the 3-of-16 shooting performance from Gatens, who only had 10 points. Cartwright had 15 points and eight assists

in this game, while Olaseni finished with 11 points and nine rebounds.

No. 5 Jill Armstrong of Lepic-Kroeger Realtors (4-4) vs. No. 1 Coach's Corner/Two Rivers Bank & Trust (5-2)

7:30 p.m., Roberts Gym

The second semifinal features another match-up of teams that met on both June 19 and July 10, with differing results each time. Jill Armstrong reached this game by narrowly defeating fourth-seeded Monica's/L.L. Pelling Company 93-91 in the first round on July 17. Leading the way was Zach McCabe, who finished with 26 points and 11 rebounds.

Corner/Rivers won its first five contests en route to securing the top seed in this summer's playoffs, but will be without the services of Anthony Hubbard, who left the Iowa men's basketball program on July 14. In seven PTL games, Hubbard averaged 23.7 points and 11.4 rebounds for Corner/Rivers, and in its most recent game, had 27 points and 13 rebounds.

Led by Hubbard, Corner/Rivers won the first meeting between these two teams on June 19, 100-91. In that game, Hubbard finished with 26 points and 13 rebounds to lead the way. Jill Armstrong took the rematch last week, however, emerging with a 107-96 victory. In that game, McCabe came away with 26 points and nine rebounds.

The storyline here will be how Corner/Rivers handles the absence of Hubbard from its line-up, especially after Jill Armstrong just won a game over a Monica's/Pelling squad missing Devyn Marble, who was hobbled by an ankle injury.

*Be sure to visit *HawkeyeDrive.com* following Tuesday's action at the North Liberty Community Center for ongoing coverage of the Prime Time League this summer.*