

6/19/2012: PTL Notebook – McCabe, Gesell, White highlight first night of action

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – On the first night of Prime Time League play this summer, individual performances are what really stood out.

In the first contest, Vinton Merchants/Mike Gatens Real Estate secured a 93-89 win over Jill Armstrong/Skogman Realtors thanks in large part to hot shooting from behind the arc by Iowa junior Zach McCabe.

Merchants/Gatens jumped out to an early 15-5 lead thanks in part to McCabe draining three 3-pointers during that run. The Sioux City native finished with a game-high 29 points and shot 7-of-10 from the perimeter.

“I’ve just been getting up shots all summer and I think the extra work we’ve had so far has helped a lot,” McCabe said. “I just came in confident and excited to play other people since we’ve been playing each other for a while now. I just came in, felt it and just kept shooting.”

McCabe had the high scoring output, but a pair of incoming freshmen – coincidentally from the Sioux City area as well – had the attention of the hundreds of spectators on hand at the North Liberty Community Center on Tuesday.

In what turned out to be a losing effort, point guard Mike Gesell shined for Armstrong/Skogman, finishing with 27 points,

six rebounds and five assists. He also proved to be a significant reason why his team was able to cut a deficit that got as big as 20 points down to a one-possession game in the final minute.

The key for Gesell going forward – both in the PTL and when his Hawkeye career begins – will be finding that perfect medium between getting his teammates involved enough while also taking shots himself when they're there for the taking.

"I'm just trying to do whatever's best for the team," Gesell said. "When someone's hot, we've got to keep going back to them and if my shot's falling, I've got to look to get my own shot. It's not selfish or anything, but as the point guard, you've got to get the best shot for your team."

Meanwhile, center Adam Woodbury only emerged with two points and eight rebounds in his PTL debut for Merchants/Gatens. He also ended up with seven fouls. However, Woodbury also spent the majority of the evening tussling at both ends of the floor with former Iowa center Jarryd Cole, who ended up with 19 points and 10 rebounds himself.

Afterwards, Cole had high praise for the 7-1 freshman.

"Being 7-foot, that's definitely going to help. His length is crazy," Cole said. "Whenever he figures out what he can and can't do, I think it's going to best benefit him and the Hawkeyes both. He definitely has the potential. I love his potential."

As for Woodbury, he described the battles as intense and was happy to get any sort of win on the court over his roommate, Gesell. He also expects "to play as hard as possible" every time he takes the court, whether it's during PTL this summer, or when things get real in November when the 2012-13 season gets underway.

"I don't have any real goals in mind," Woodbury said. "I just

want to win. I'm going to do whatever it takes to win. If that's getting five assists a game, if that's scoring, if that's rebounding, playing defense, I'm going to do whatever."

Other noteworthy performances from this contest include incoming transfer Jarrod Uthoff, the top pick in last week's PTL draft, finishing with 13 points and 13 rebounds for Merchants/Gatens. Meanwhile, junior Melsahn Basabe finished with 18 points and seven rebounds for Armstrong/Skogman, while sophomore Darius Stokes had two points and incoming freshman Kyle Meyer was held scoreless. Sophomore guard Josh Oglesby didn't play for Merchants/Gatens on Tuesday due to a conflict with a night class.

In the second contest, sophomore Aaron White was the star shining brightest with a game-high 40 points on 16-of-25 shooting and 16 rebounds. However, his efforts weren't enough for Culver's/Iowa City Ready Mix, who was beaten 97-94 by an L.L. Pelling/McCurry's squad that was missing junior Devyn Marble for the first half.

Marble arrived to the Jones Gym just before halftime after getting out of a night class he had and finished with 15 points while playing the majority of the second half. He said afterwards he originally wasn't going to play, but made the decision to do so after getting out of his class early and seeing on Twitter that his team was holding its own without him.

"Thanks to you guys in the media, I was able to tell whether or not it was worth the drive over," Marble said. "I just wanted to come in and fit in as far as trying to get into the rhythm of the game because it's hard to come into a game in the second half and barely got to stretch.

"It was difficult, but we pulled it off."

In addition to Marble's 15 points, Pelling/McCurry's got a decent showing from a much-improved Gabe Olaseni, as the

sophomore had nine points on 4-of-8 shooting and six rebounds in the win. As for Culver's/Ready Mix, it received a 21-point showing from senior Eric May and incoming freshman Anthony Clemmons finished with six points.

White said afterwards he thought Clemmons handled himself well in his PTL debut.

"I'm really impressed with his game, really impressed with his court demeanor, which you need out of a point guard," White said. "It's just one Prime Time League game, but he's going to keep working and I think you'll see strides in his game.

"He brings a dynamic to this team that I don't know if we had last year."

PTL play resumes Sunday afternoon at the North Liberty Community Center, starting at 3 p.m. Central when Merchants/Gatens takes on Culver's/Ready Mix. Pelling/McCurry's will play Armstrong/Skogman in the second game at 4:30 p.m. Central. Both games will be played in the Jones Gym.

Merchants/Gatens (GOLD) VS. Armstrong/Skogman (BLUE) (FIRST HALF VIDEO):

Merchants/Gatens (GOLD) VS. Armstrong/Skogman (BLUE) (SECOND HALF VIDEO):

Pelling/McCurry's (WHITE) VS. Culver's/Ready Mix (BLACK) (FIRST HALF VIDEO):

Pelling/McCurry's (WHITE) VS. Culver's/Ready Mix (BLACK) (SECOND HALF VIDEO):

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