

# 7/8/2012: PTL Notebook – White stands tall despite losses

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – Aaron White has yet to win a game in the Prime Time League this summer after being part of a team that won last year's PTL championship. By the same token however, no individual player has looked more consistently dominant this summer than the Hawkeye sophomore forward.

His team – Culver's/Iowa City Ready Mix – fell to 0-4 after losing 100-97 to L.L. Pelling Company/McCurry's on Sunday. But in a game where his team fell behind 11-0 out of the gate and trailed by as many as 23 points, White was the ignition to a near-epic comeback. He shot 13-of-25 from the floor and 11-of-13 from the free-throw line. His final stat line was 39 points and 16 rebounds – one point shy of the exact same numbers he had the first time Culver's/Ready Mix played Pelling/McCurry's.

Through four PTL games, White has averaged exactly 30 points and 14 rebounds per contest. Incoming freshman guard Anthony Clemmons, one of White's PTL teammates this summer, described his attitude as "killer mode."

"He's a special player," Clemmons said. "He can surprise you with a lot of different things. You never know if he's a 4, you never know if he's a 3."

Midway through the first half, Pelling/McCurry's was ahead 34-11 and looked like it would win rather comfortably. Yet White remained even-keel and the rest of his team followed

suit. What was a 23-point deficit became 14 at halftime after he capped a three-point play to end the half, then turned into a 63-62 lead for Culver's/Ready Mix in the second half.

White said there are times, even Sunday, where he admitted to being a little frustrated and even a little winded playing all but a handful of minutes in the second half. But he also believes he has gotten better with not letting any one moment overwhelm him. He also knows that sort of trait is what he needs to carry over into next season for the Hawkeyes.

"You can't get too high or too low. That's kind of something that my parents and my mentors have told me throughout my whole basketball period," White said. "You got to stay in the middle and keep grinding."

"It's just a grind taking care of your body, getting better for each game and each practice."

Pelling/McCurry's emerged thanks in large part to solid performances by both junior guard Devyn Marble and sophomore forward Gabe Olaseni. Marble had 25 points and seven rebounds while Olaseni finished a rebound short of a double-double with 15 points and nine boards.

But they both knew what they were up against in White.

"He's a really competitive guy and he doesn't want to lose to anyone," Olaseni said. "When you play against him, you always have to be aware of him because he's so active."

Culver's/Ready Mix had a chance in the final seconds to tie the game and force overtime, but was unable to get off a good look from behind the arc. In defeat, Clemmons finished with four points while incoming freshman forward Kyle Meyer had two points and 14 rebounds. Senior forward Eric May was out of town and didn't play Sunday.

But the story on Sunday was White, even though his performance

wasn't enough to engineer his team to a win.

"I knew he wanted to win, not having a win yet," Marble said. "I just told him politely, 'It won't be today.'"

The second contest of the afternoon was won by Vinton Merchants/Mike Gatens Real Estate, who defeated Jill Armstrong of Skogman Realty, 104-96. This marked the second time this summer Merchants/Gatens has won head-to-head and it will play next week against Pelling/McCurry's where the winner secures the league's top seed for the playoffs.

Merchants/Gatens won the first meeting back on June 19 despite a performance by incoming freshman center Adam Woodbury that may have left some Iowa fans with trepidation. This time around, Woodbury played what he said was "obviously" his best game this summer.

The Sioux City native shot 7-of-11 from the floor and finished with 16 points on Sunday after only scoring two points and finding himself in foul trouble the last time these teams met. He knew there were detractors after that initial game, and was determined to display the progress he has made not only through the PTL, but from the summer workouts conducted by the Iowa program.

"It was good for me to get out here and show [Iowa fans] that I was recruited for a reason," Woodbury said.

In addition to Woodbury's contributions, Merchants/Gatens also received strong showings from junior forward Zach McCabe and incoming transfer Jarrod Uthoff – both of whom had 17 points – as well as sophomore guard Josh Oglesby, who had 13 points and sealed the game with a pair of free throws late following a missed 3-pointer by former Iowa center Jarryd Cole.

"We just play well as a team, and I think that's different from all the other teams," McCabe said.

As for Armstrong/Skogman, Cole had the team-highs of 30 points and 11 rebounds, but right behind him in scoring was incoming freshman point guard Mike Gesell. The South Sioux City, Neb., native had 28 points on 13-of-26 shooting plus a team-high 10 assists, giving him his first double-double of the summer. Junior forward Melsahn Basabe finished with 10 points and 10 rebounds and sophomore forward Darius Stokes had three points.

"We did fall in a hole early and we got to jump out better," Gesell said. "This is a good team, the only team we've lost to in this thing."

PTL play resumes July 15 at the North Liberty Community Center, starting at 3 p.m. Central when Culver's/Ready Mix takes on Armstrong/Skogman. Pelling/McCurry's will play Merchants/Gatens in the second game at 4:30 p.m. Central. Both games will be played in the Jones Gym.

**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):**

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

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

**INTERVIEWS:**

**AARON WHITE:**