

White, May secure second PTL titles

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

NORTH LIBERTY, Iowa – For Aaron White and Eric May, the feeling is somewhat familiar.

Despite being on a Prime Time League squad that lost five straight games before the league held its playoffs, this duo of Hawkeye forwards proved instrumental in Culver's/Iowa City Ready Mix winning the 2012 PTL championship 113-102 over Jill Armstrong of Skogman Realty on Tuesday.

White has now won two straight PTL titles, while this marks the second time in three years that May has won.

"It's fun, especially this year winning no games regular season and then winning the last two," May said. "It was a good experience and I'm glad I got to do something like this."

The game began with Culver's/Ready Mix jumping out to a quick 7-2 lead before Armstrong/Skogman went on a tear to go ahead 16-9. It would become a back-and-forth game in the first half and Armstrong/Skogman held a 54-53 advantage at halftime.

However, the second half belonged to Culver's/Ready Mix. More specifically, it was the play of incoming freshman guard Anthony Clemmons that proved to be the difference. With his team up 74-67, Clemmons hit one of his three 3-point buckets on the evening to make it a 10-point advantage and from there, Culver's/Ready Mix didn't look back. The Lansing, Mich., native finished with 30 points on 9-of-13 shooting, with 25 of those points coming in the second half.

"We said we were going to win the championship anyway. We said

that from Day One,” Clemmons said, referencing how he and White would boast to teammates about winning the PTL despite early struggles. “I mean, it’s just exciting. I always try to come out and find a way how to win.”

May and White both had 22 points in addition to Clemmons’ 30, while incoming freshman forward Kyle Meyer contributed with nine points and six rebounds. White also pulled down 16 rebounds, which gave him a fifth double-double in seven PTL games. Leading the PTL in both scoring and rebounding this summer proved more than enough for White to be named the league’s MVP.

“I try to play hard every time I’m out there,” White said. “I thought I scored the ball relatively well in the summer and tried to rebound. If it’s a stats award, then I probably should have got it, but I’m just humbled by it.

“Every game, I try to go out and play my best and it’s nice to get a reward like that.”

As for Armstrong/Skogman, it was led by former Iowa center Jarryd Cole, who tallied a game-high 35 points and also pulled down 12 boards. Meanwhile, junior forward Melsahn Basabe also compiled a double-double, finishing with 24 points and 15 rebounds, and incoming freshman guard Mike Gesell scored 24 points and tallied nine assists, a category he led the PTL in this summer.

Gesell and Cole were also named co-receipients of the league’s Chris Street Award.

“The overall experience was a lot of fun,” Gesell said. “I didn’t think we’d have this much fan support and it just goes to show how excited the fans are for the season. I know it’s just a summer league, but anytime we lose... I’m a competitive person. I don’t like to lose.”

Gatens on hand, reflects back on Summer League experience

Former Iowa guard Matt Gatens was among those on hand watching the PTL championship at the North Liberty Community Center on Tuesday. Gatens was back in Iowa just days after finishing up play in the NBA Summer League over in Las Vegas.

Playing for the Phoenix Suns, Gatens had the opportunity to play for former Suns guard Dan Majerle. He said the biggest difference to him playing professionally as opposed to in college was the mindset of needing to fend for himself, even in team settings.

"It's a different mentality," Gatens said. "You've got to be aggressive, whether you're coming off the bench or starting. I did both. So it's just getting used to that and when your name is called, be ready to get in there, perform and be aggressive."

Gatens said he hopes to have a better idea soon whether the Suns will want him back when they open training camp or if he'll wind up getting another opportunity this fall with a different NBA team. He added that he would likely choose to play overseas should no NBA teams come calling.

"We'll see. There are positives both ways," Gatens said. "If I go [overseas], it's a great chance to see the world and play basketball and have some fun. So we'll see."

2012 PTL Championship: Culver's/Ready Mix (BLACK) VS. Armstrong/Skogman (BLUE) (FIRST HALF VIDEO):

2012 PTL Championship: Culver's/Ready Mix (BLACK) VS. Armstrong/Skogman (BLUE) (SECOND HALF VIDEO):

INTERVIEWS:

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