

PTL preview: 6/20/2013 games

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The Prime Time League starts its 27th year as a summer basketball league in Iowa on Thursday with a trio of games taking place inside the two gyms at the North Liberty Community Center.

After only having four teams in 2012, the PTL has six teams again in 2013 despite Northern Iowa not aligning itself with the summer league for the second straight year. All games will be played on Thursdays and Sundays (with the exception of July 4) and will conclude with the PTL championship game on July 21.

As usual, the names of the teams are solely based on league sponsors. There will be one game played at 6 p.m. Central, followed by two games starting at 7:30 p.m.

Jill Armstrong of Skogman Realty vs. Culver's/McCurry's

6 p.m., Jones Gym

The first game of the evening pits the top two picks of the 2013 PTL draft head-to-head. Via numbers drawn from a bowl, Culver's/McCurry's won the top pick and used it on Iowa junior forward Aaron White, who was the Hawkeyes' second-leading scorer and leading rebounder during the 2012-13 season.

Should White make the Team USA roster for next month's World University Games in Russia, Thursday would likely be his lone appearance in the PTL this summer. White, who joins fellow Hawkeye junior walk-on Darius Stokes on Culver's/McCurry's, has been on each of the last two PTL championship teams.

Meanwhile, Armstrong will be led this summer by Iowa sophomore

guard Mike Gesell, who rotated time as a freshman between starting at both the 1 and 2 guard spots for the Hawkeyes. Gesell played through both the Big Ten tournament and the NIT with a stress reaction in his right foot, so seeing how he plays in live action for the first time in over two months on that foot might be worth keeping an eye on Thursday.

Joining Gesell on the Armstrong squad this summer are junior walk-on Kyle Denning and sophomore walk-on Okey Ukah, who previously played at both Iowa City West High School and more recently Kirkwood Community College.

Greater Iowa Financial Group/Vinton Merchants vs. L.L. Pelling/Hawkeye Report

7:30 p.m., Roberts Gym

As is the case with White, Thursday could potentially be the only time this summer Iowa senior guard Devyn Marble suits up for Financial/Merchants, who took the Hawkeyes' leading scorer with the third pick in last weekend's PTL draft.

Marble will be joining White in Colorado Springs, Colo., for Team USA's training camp prior to the World University Games. If Marble makes the cut, Financial/Merchants would be without his services the rest of the summer and become heavily dependent on his Hawkeye teammate, junior guard Josh Oglesby. Something to watch for Thursday (and really over the entire summer) is how much confidence Oglesby is able to regain with his 3-point shot after seeing a decline in his 3-point shooting percentage between his freshman and sophomore campaigns.

Meanwhile, Pelling/Report will have a strong front-court this summer led by the Iowa duo of senior forward Zach McCabe and junior center Gabe Olaseni. Things worth keeping an eye on here would be how much emphasis McCabe is placing on knocking down outside shots and with Olaseni, what sort of strides he makes offensively after evolving into a lock-down defender for

the Hawkeyes late last season.

Comfort Care Medicare/Mike Gatens Real Estate vs. BlendCard

7:30 p.m., Jones Gym

The third game taking place in North Liberty on Thursday features five current Hawkeyes who will be on scholarship next season as well as a former Hawkeye when Comfort Care/Gatens plays BlendCard.

With the fourth pick of the PTL draft, Comfort Care/Gatens selected Iowa sophomore center Adam Woodbury, who along with White started all 38 of Iowa's games during the 2012-13 season. He'll be teamed up this summer with incoming freshman guard Peter Jok, redshirt freshman forward Kyle Meyer and former Iowa guard Jason Price. The front-court tandem of Woodbury and Meyer will be worth watching throughout the entire summer, as will seeing how Jok is able to blend in as someone who could be a threat next season as an outside shooter.

As for BlendCard, it features a pair of Hawkeye sophomores in forward Jarrod Uthoff and guard Anthony Clemmons. Uthoff redshirted last season after transferring from Wisconsin and will be on scholarship next season for Iowa after having to first join the program as a walk-on last year. As for Clemmons, his freshman season began with him spending nearly two months as the Hawkeyes' starting point guard before being summoned to the bench in favor of forward Melsahn Basabe. Whatever strides Clemmons is able to make to his game this summer could potentially impact his role on the Hawkeyes in 2013-14.