

2013 PTL final stats and thoughts

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

With the 2013 Prime Time League officially a thing of the past, I've once again compiled statistics of each of Iowa's scholarship players whom participated in the PTL this summer and will present those, along with a brief paragraph of observations I have about each player and how I feel they'll fit into the Hawkeyes' equation for the 2013-14 season.

Before going any further, let's get one thing out of the way right now: This should not be viewed as a "be all, end all" sort of thing. I cannot stress this enough. I have two reasons for doing this: No. 1, to provide those who regularly follow Iowa basketball an accurate portrayal of what I saw from witnessing every PTL game in North Liberty this summer, and No. 2, to give the same group of people (and probably even those who follow Big Ten hoops in general) what I believe to be a realistic synopsis of this Iowa team going forward, especially before it starts a season where many believe it will reach its first NCAA tournament since 2006.

Overall, this will undoubtedly be the deepest team Iowa has had in years. I know this isn't saying anything new, but this statement has even more validity now after everything that transpired in North Liberty this summer. I can legitimately say I saw some area of improvements with each Hawkeye player who played in the PTL this summer, which I believe is a testament to the work ethics of these guys. One thing I will say right now is I'll be very interested throughout the entire year to see the combination of rotations used by Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery because he'll have even more options now

than he did last season.

Two players worth discussing off the top here are senior forward Melsahn Basabe and junior forward Aaron White, both of whom finished last season as starters for the Hawkeyes. Basabe went back to New York this summer and didn't participate in the PTL. White played in one game before taking his talents to Russia playing for Team USA in the World University Games. White's stats from the lone PTL game he played in were as follows: *29 points, 14 rebounds, 4 assists, 12-of-28 FG (43 percent); 11-of-22 2P; 1-of-6 3P, 4-of-7 FT (57 percent).*

Regarding White, the one thing he mentioned needing to work on this summer was his shot and obviously playing overseas this summer gave him more opportunity to do just that. The more he starts hitting outside shots at a better rate, the more versatile a threat he can become because his strength has always been driving to the basket and drawing contact. Even if the shooting numbers don't improve much, I still believe he'll be one of Iowa's top scorers in 2013-14 and will probably lead the team in rebounding again like he has each of the past two seasons. He was also one of two players to start every game last season, so barring injury, he'll remain in the starting five.

Now as for Basabe, my opinion on him remains unchanged from what it was a year ago. I realize he started during the latter portion of last season, but the perfect role for him on this team is as the sixth man and last season was a perfect illustration of that. Basabe performed at his absolute best when he was that first guy coming off the bench and being that energy guy who sparked Hawkeye runs, especially in games where they got off to slow starts. He has also matured to the point where going back to that sixth man role won't bother him. If anything, I think it would motivate him that much more than he'll already be with this being his senior year. And because he'll be a senior and among the guys who were with McCaffery from the very beginning, I don't foresee a drastic cut to his

average number of minutes on the hardwood.

Below are the stats for the other 10 Iowa players on scholarship to play multiple games in the PTL this summer, along with my observations on each of them:

Devyn Marble, Sr., 6-5, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 27.4 PPG, 7.4 RPG, 6.4 APG, 65-of-150 FG (43 percent); 46-of-86 2P; 19-of-64 3P, 43-of-50 FT (86 percent)

Observations: *Marble missed two PTL games due to being at tryouts for the World University Games alongside White, but returned to the league after missing the first cut. Not a whole lot needs to be said here. Marble led the Hawkeyes in scoring last season and I imagine he'll do so again as a senior. He'll definitely start every game he plays in like he did a year ago. And while I think he'll likely start this season at the point given how he ended his junior year at that spot, part of me still thinks he might be better suited at the 2-guard, which is a position he'll definitely play at times depending on who else McCaffery has on the floor with him and what plays are being called. Marble is at his best (and frankly, Iowa is at its best) when he's scoring points.*

Mike Gesell, So., 6-1, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 8 games, 26.3 PPG, 6.9 RPG, 11.0 APG, 81-of-190 FG (43 percent); 60-of-133 2P; 21-of-57 3P, 27-of-34 FT (79 percent)

Observations: *While it's worth noting that Gesell broke his left hand in his PTL team's last game of the summer, I'm going to make the assumption here that he'll be fully recovered once the actual season arrives. One of my other reasons for saying before that I think Marble might be better suited at the 2-guard is because I definitely believe Gesell is better suited to play the point, and that's something I know he would agree*

with. Gesell ended up third on the team in assists as a freshman, but he probably would've led the Hawkeyes in that category had he not been dealing with a stress reaction in his foot that sidelined him for four games during the latter stage of the season. He had 88 assists this summer – significantly more than anyone else in the PTL – and the only Iowa teammates he had on his PTL squad were both walk-ons, which is why the 190 shots taken might stand out. It might not happen his sophomore year if he continues splitting time with Marble at both guard spots, but I truly believe at some point during his Hawkeye career, Gesell will lead the Big Ten in assists like Bryce Cartwright did during McCaffery's first season at the helm.

Adam Woodbury, So., 7-1, Center

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 23.0 PPG, 12.6 RPG, 2.4 APG, 61-of-125 FG (49 percent); 60-of-120 2P; 1-of-5 3P, 38-of-58 FT (66 percent)

Observations: *For all the strides made by Gabe Olaseni this offseason (which I'll get to here in a little bit), there is absolutely no way Woodbury isn't a starter. First of all, he (along with White) started all 38 of Iowa's games at center as a freshman and his production was about what one should've expected it to be. I think the test for Woodbury this season will be his stamina because I think his minutes climb up a little from where they were his freshman year. But that being said, the biggest difference in him now from even 3-4 months ago is his upper body strength, which is why it won't surprise me should his scoring and rebounding numbers make a noticeable jump. His presence is such that every team Iowa plays will have to account for him when assembling their game plans.*

Jarrold Uthoff, So., 6-8, Forward

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 21.9 PPG, 9.0 RPG, 2.1 APG, 58-of-100 FG (58 percent); 49-of-78 2P; 9-of-22 3P, 28-of-29 FT (97

percent)

Observations: *Barring injury, I'll be absolutely shocked if Uthoff isn't starting next season from Day One. What stood out to me about Uthoff this summer more than anything else was watching him without the ball. All of his teammates have raved about his basketball IQ and how he'll be a match-up nightmare because he can play all of the 3, 4 and 5-spots on the court. It doesn't matter what position he's being asked to play because he knows exactly where to be. Also, notice the 28-of-29 from the free-throw line (the one miss came in his last PTL game before traveling to Estonia). Remember all those close games Iowa lost last season? Now imagine McCaffery being able to have Uthoff on the floor in crunch time with his skill set and his basketball IQ. If the Hawkeyes meet or even exceed some of the loftier expectations that will be out there, I'll guarantee you right now Uthoff will be the biggest reason why, because he's as complete a player as the Hawkeyes have. One other thing to consider: Because Uthoff transferred from another Big Ten school, he had to join the Iowa program as a walk-on and forfeit a year of eligibility. Yet the minute McCaffery was first allowed to comment on him, he said Uthoff would be on scholarship once he became eligible. If either party didn't think he could provide an immediate impact, then why would Uthoff go through all those hurdles to begin with and why would Iowa go out of its way to make room for him on the roster? Keep that in mind.*

Zach McCabe, Sr., 6-7, Forward

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 22.7 PPG, 10.1 RPG, 2.3 APG, 58-of-98 FG (59 percent); 34-of-55 2P; 24-of-43 3P, 19-of-22 FT (86 percent)

Observations: *Like Basabe, I don't foresee McCabe starting next season. But my biggest takeaway regarding him this summer is he'll still play a vital role. Last season, Eric May was viewed as the glue guy, as the leader of the team that*

everyone looked up to, and May ended up playing more minutes than even I thought he would as a senior. When the question gets asked to McCaffery about who takes over the void left by May, I'll wager McCabe being the first name that comes out of his mouth because he has slowly begun to take ownership of this team like May did last year and that was evident the entire summer with the consistency he brought to the court. When McCaffery first took over and had to re-recruit his predecessor's incoming freshmen class, McCabe was the first to stay he was sticking to his original commitment. I'm pretty sure McCaffery hasn't forgotten or ever will forget that. One final thought here on McCabe: Don't be surprised if he's chosen by his teammates as one of Iowa's team captains for this upcoming season. That's how well-respected he is by everybody in the program.

Gabe Olaseni, Jr., 6-10, Center

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 25.3 PPG, 13.4 RPG, 1.6 APG, 75-of-110 FG (68 percent); 75-of-110 2P; 0-of-0 3P, 27-of-42 FT (64 percent)

Observations: As I said before, Woodbury isn't being taken out of the starting five. But there are two players I believe made the most improvement of anyone from where they were in April when Iowa's NIT run concluded up to now and the first player I'd mention here is Olaseni. There were times during the PTL this summer where I watched Olaseni and not only was he the most dominant player on the court, but it wasn't close. After starting to turn a corner with his defensive prowess late last season, I feel Olaseni has made the most stride this summer attacking the offensive paint on a consistent basis, which has to be an encouraging sign for Iowa fans. He mentioned how he wants to become that player that makes everyone in the arena stop what they're doing and recognize him whenever he enters the game. If he starts to dominate at the offensive end consistently like he has proven he can defensively, then I can see him becoming very crucial to Iowa's success.

Anthony Clemmons, So., 6-1, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 8 games, 25.1 PPG, 5.4 RPG, 6.0 APG, 63-of-119 FG (53 percent); 26-of-52 2P; 37-of-67 3P, 38-of-42 FT (90 percent)

Observations: *Olaseni made the most improvement of anyone I saw this summer, but Clemmons is a close second for me. During the first week of PTL play, Clemmons said the one thing he wanted to improve on more than anything else was becoming a more consistent player. From what I saw night in and night out in North Liberty, I'd say he met that goal. The one facet of his game most evident toward showing that consistency is his 3-point shooting. Not that he shot poorly inside the arc, but he never seemed to have an off-night shooting and the confidence always seemed to be there with him whenever he stepped on the court. Clemmons possesses the ability to absolutely take over a game when he's on, as evident by his performance against Iowa State last season. His M.O. has always been at the defensive end of the floor, which is why he'll see plenty of minutes regardless. But if that 3-point shooting carries over to the actual season, that would give McCaffery three point guard options that can all be dominant scorers in addition to facilitating.*

Josh Oglesby, Jr., 6-5, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 5 games, 17.0 PPG, 5.2 RPG, 4.0 APG, 32-of-76 FG (42 percent); 15-of-30 2P; 17-of-46 3P, 4-of-5 FT (80 percent)

Observations: *Oglesby's struggles from behind the 3-point line last season were well-documented and no one seemed more frustrated by it than him. As he enters his junior season, this is where it could get interesting as far as just how deep McCaffery goes with his bench. Because Oglesby has other attributes to his game that allowed to see him the floor as much as he did (i.e. passing to open guys, defense), he'll*

still probably play an average number of minutes early in the season similar to what he has played in the past. In fact, with Gesell likely not being able to play during Iowa's European tour, Oglesby could very well be starting at the 2-guard should McCaffery decide to keep Marble at the point as opposed to moving him off-guard and starting Clemmons. At the very least, he's someone McCaffery can and will trust in games until Peter Jok shows he has the stamina to play in the Big Ten. At the very most, Oglesby could still be that 3-point shooter that everyone has this image of him being and maybe even become more of a complete player than he was.

Peter Jok, Fr., 6-5, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 6 games, 29.5 PPG, 3.8 RPG, 1.3 APG, 62-of-110 FG (56 percent); 43-of-67 2P; 19-of-43 3P, 34-of-37 FT (92 percent)

Observations: *Jok made quite a first impression this summer with his shooting, mainly because of the stroke he has with his shot. Before a nagging injury to one of his knuckles kept him from playing in his PTL team's last game, his 29.5 points per game was tops among Iowa players who were regular PTL participants. He still has to work on his defense – which he acknowledged was the area he needed to improve most on this offseason – and this is why I think Oglesby will (at least early on) play ahead of Jok. If and when Jok shows he has the stamina, shows he can play defense and consistently knock down open shots when they're there, that's when his playing time will start to increase. Without question, the potential is definitely there and by this time next year, I can definitely envision Jok being a starter. But for at least the early portion of the 2013-14 season, I would caution Iowa fans to show a little bit of patience with Jok, especially since the Hawkeyes' non-conference slate will be far more grueling than what last year's group of freshmen endured.*

Kyle Meyer, #Fr., 6-10, Forward

2013 PTL stats: 7 games, 11.1 PPG, 7.6 RPG, 1.0 APG, 34-of-74 FG (46 percent); 27-of-58 2P; 7-of-16 3P, 3-of-3 FT (100 percent)

Observations: *Meyer redshirted last season, which he said allowed him to mature more both on and off the court. But even though he redshirted, I still think his minutes will be sparse this coming season. Other than perhaps Basabe, Meyer has more of a finesse repertoire to his game than anyone else in Iowa's front-court. Should Meyer see any playing time that doesn't come in the closing minutes of a blowout, my suspicion is those minutes would come with either Woodbury or Olaseni out there along with him (assuming neither is significantly injured). During the summer, Meyer definitely showed flashes that illustrated why McCaffery offered him in the first place and I could see him being vital for the Hawkeyes down the road. I just don't see him playing too often right now.*

Iowa also had three walk-ons participate in the PTL this summer – fourth-year junior forward Darius Stokes, junior guard Kyle Denning, and sophomore forward Okey Ukah, who transferred from Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids and will officially become a member of the Hawkeyes this fall. Below are their final statistics (Stokes missed all but two games this summer due to a sprained ankle):

Darius Stokes, Jr., 6-7, Forward

2013 PTL stats: 2 games, 19.0 PPG, 7.0 RPG, 0.5 APG, 18-of-29 FG (62 percent); 17-of-27 2P; 1-of-2 3P, 1-of-4 FT (25 percent)

Kyle Denning, Jr., 6-1, Guard

2013 PTL stats: 6 games, 5.0 PPG, 0.8 RPG, 0.8 APG, 11-of-26 FG (42 percent); 3-of-7 2P; 8-of-19 3P, 0-of-0 FT (0 percent)

Okey Ukah, So., 6-8, Forward

2013 PTL stats: 8 games, 15.3 PPG, 9.4 RPG, 1.0 APG, 54-of-95 FG (57 percent); 53-of-94 2P; 1-of-1 3P; 7-of-12 FT (58 percent)