

Hawkeyes advance to Battle 4 Atlantis final

By Brendan Stiles

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After needing overtime to defeat Xavier on Thursday, the No. 23 Iowa Hawkeyes didn't have as much trouble against UTEP on Friday and advanced to the championship game of the Battle 4 Atlantis after pummeling the Miners 89-53 at the Imperial Arena in Nassau, Bahamas.

Despite dealing with cramps from the night before, senior guard Devyn Marble was able to start Friday against UTEP and helped the Hawkeyes set an early tone, as Iowa jumped out to a 19-7 lead. From there, the lead would expand to 25 points at halftime – 47-22 – and only grow further.

Leading the charge Friday was junior forward Aaron White, who scored 17 points off 5-of-6 shooting from the floor and a perfect 7-of-7 evening from the free-throw line. Iowa was also aided by senior Melsahn Basabe coming away with 10 points and seven assists and senior forward Zach McCabe scored 14 points off the bench, which includes 3-of-5 shooting from behind the 3-point arc. Marble recorded a team-high six assists, along with seven points.

As a team, the Hawkeyes shot 31-of-59 from the floor, including 9-of-16 from 3-point range. Conversely, UTEP was held to 18-of-52 shooting from the floor and just 5-of-22 from behind the arc. Iowa also possessed a 45-24 rebounding edge on the Miners.

The Hawkeyes' finale in the Bahamas will come Saturday night against Villanova, who upset No. 2 Kansas 63-59 in the other semifinal played Friday night. Tip-off is set for 8:30 p.m.

Central and the game will be televised nationally on NBC Sports Network.