

PTL preview: 6/19/2014 games

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

The Prime Time League starts its 28th 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.

For the first time since 2011, the PTL features players from both the Iowa Hawkeyes and Northern Iowa Panthers, with the latter opting to return to the summer league following a two-year hiatus. All games will be played on Thursday nights for each of the next seven weeks, including two Thursdays (July 3 and 10) where games will be played at the Cedar Valley SportsPlex in Waterloo. The PTL championship game is scheduled for the evening of July 31. This year's edition features six teams.

As usual, the names of the teams are solely based on league sponsors (as of Wednesday evening, one team didn't have sponsors listed). There will be two games played at 6 p.m. Central, followed by one at 7:30 p.m.

L.L. Pelling/Comfort Care Medicare vs. Jill Armstrong Team at Skogman Realty

6 p.m., Roberts Gym

This contest features the league's top two draft picks. Pelling/Comfort Care drew the first overall pick and used it on senior center Gabe Olaseni, who averaged 6.5 points and 4.9 rebounds per game for the Hawkeyes last season.

Olaseni was among the Iowa players who impressed most in the PTL last summer, as he averaged 25.3 points and 13.4 rebounds in seven games. Joining him this summer on Pelling/Comfort

Care is senior guard Josh Oglesby, who could put himself in position to be a starter for the Hawkeyes in 2014-15 with a productive offseason both in the PTL and in summer workouts.

Armstrong will be led this summer by junior forward Jarrod Uthoff, who helped lead his PTL squad last year to a league championship. In his first full season of playing at the collegiate level, Uthoff averaged 7.6 points and 4.6 rebounds for the Hawkeyes in 2013-14 and like Oglesby, could potentially position himself this summer to become a starter for Iowa in 2014-15.

Uthoff will be playing alongside incoming freshman guard Brady Ellingson on Armstrong this summer. However, Ellingson isn't on the UI campus yet and isn't expected to make his PTL debut until next week.

**Culver's/McCurry's vs. Westport Touchless
Autowash/IAHomesForSale**

6 p.m., Jones Gym

Senior forward Aaron White and junior center Adam Woodbury headline this PTL affair Thursday evening. For the fourth straight summer, White will play for the Culver's/McCurry's squad coached by Ron Nove after he selected the 6-8 forward with the third overall pick in last weekend's PTL Draft. White will have more availability for Culver's/McCurry's this summer after only playing in one PTL game last year before taking part in the World University Games for Team USA.

As for Woodbury, he'll be the focal point of Randy Larson's squad this summer and looks to continue building off a strong 16-point, 8-rebound performance against Tennessee in the NCAA Tournament. Woodbury's team also features junior guard Anthony Clemmons, who has won the PTL championship each of the previous two summers.

Culver's/McCurry's also features incoming sophomore guard Trey

Dickerson. The junior college transfer won't be making his PTL debut however until July 3.

BlendCard vs. Vinton Merchants/Marion Iron Company

7:30 p.m., Roberts Gym

Thursday's PTL nightcap is the lone contest of the day where all Hawkeye players participating are expected to be available.

BlendCard was the only PTL squad to use a first-round pick on a Northern Iowa player (Seth Tuttle), but it also features sophomore guard Peter Jok, who had a 29.3 points per game average that led all Iowa players who participated in the PTL in 2013. Like Woodbury, Jok is also looking to build off a strong NCAA Tournament showing where he scored 10 points off the bench for Iowa in its first round game against Tennessee. In addition to Jok, BlendCard will also feature junior walk-on Okey Ukah, who averaged 15.3 points and 9.4 rebounds per game in the PTL last summer.

Merchants/Iron is led by junior guard Mike Gesell, who averaged a PTL-high 11 assists per game last summer and is coming off a sophomore campaign where he became Iowa's starting point guard. Playing alongside Gesell on Merchants/Iron this summer are a pair of freshmen making their PTL debuts Thursday. One is freshman forward Dominique Uhl, who will be in the mix for significant playing time in 2014-15 following the departure of Kyle Meyer. The other is freshman Nicholas Baer, who will be joining the Hawkeyes as a walk-on in 2014-15.