

T.J. Sayre finally a full-fledged Hawkeye

Written by Jim Ecker

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IOWA CITY — The guys on T.J. Sayre's intramural basketball team at the University of Iowa are out of luck this year.

He's not eligible for IMs anymore.

Sayre is now an official member of the UI men's basketball team, a fifth-year senior who hasn't played organized ball since he graduated from Xavier in 2006. Last year intramurals, this year the Big Ten.

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Until now.

"It really is a dream come true, in some aspects," he said after playing in Iowa's exhibition game against Illinois-Springfield at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. "I haven't quite gotten used to the idea that I'm playing for the Hawkeyes. It's been fun."

Sayre was a three-sport star at Xavier in football, basketball and soccer. He averaged 13.3 points, 5.2 rebounds and 4.8 assists as a senior and helped the Saints make the state tournament in 2005 and 2006.

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He said he was recruited by Cedar Rapids colleges and smaller schools in the area for basketball, but elected to go to Creighton and skip varsity sports.

Until now.

“He was a pretty good high school player, from what I understand,” new UI Coach Fran McCaffery said after the Hawkeyes drubbed Illinois-Springfield, 111-66. “He was invited to be on the team because of his size. Not only is he about 6-foot-7, he’s 225. It’s rare that you have a walk-on that’s that big.

“He’s not only physically a guy that can help you in practice ... he knows how to play. He does,” McCaffery said. “He’s been very impressive, and has been a big asset to our program.”