T-D Stars Of the Week

Each week, The Times-Dispatch honors state college football players for outstanding offensive and defensive performances of the previous weekend.

This week’s winners are William and Mary quarterback Bill Deery and Virginia Tech defensive tackle Bill Ellenbogen.

Previous winners have been Washington and Lee end Chappy Conrad, W&M tailback Doug Gerhart and Virginia Union’s Anthony Leonard (offense) and Richmond safetyman Bob Loprete, Virginia defensive tackle Dick Ambrose and Virginia linebacker Danny Blakley.

Tech’s Bill Ellenbogen Bathes in Glory

Gobblers’ Ellenbogen Week’s Best of ALL

On a Saturday afternoon in which the Virginia Tech defense covered itself with unaccustomed glory, tackle Bill Ellenbogen was the star of stars.

“Bill played the best game he’s EVER played,” said Tech defensive coordinator George McKinney. Southern Methodist, which wound up on the wrong end of a 13-10 score, would hate to think of the 6-2, 233-pounder could play any better.

ELLENBOGEN, WHO TRANSFERRED to Tech in 1971 after the University of Buffalo dropped its football program, made nine tackles and four assists. He also “sacked” SMU quarterback John Blackburn twice and pressured him into throwing bad passes on two other occasions.

But it was one play and a demonstration of second effort which earned Ellenbogen the plaudits of the Tech coaching staff. Late in the second period, SMU star halfback Alvin Maxson eluded Ellenbogen’s grasp at the line of scrimmage and sped upfield for what appeared to be a sure touchdown that would have given the Mustangs the lead.

Maxson does the 40-yard dash in 4.4 seconds, and Ellenbogen is no better than 5.0. Yet Ellenbogen bounced off the ground and gave chase. When Maxson made a cut near the Tech goal line to elude the last defender, Ellenbogen came up and slammed Maxson to the ground.

Tech held for the next three downs, and SMU had to settle for a field goal which tied the game.

“It was a tremendous display of second effort,” said McKinney. For that, and for his other contributions to the Tech defense, Ellenbogen is The Times-Dispatch Defensive Player of the Week.