Tech Defense Wary of W&M

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Don't anyone ever malign Virginia Tech's defense again.
The defense at Tech, which is supposed to be the Hokies' weak link when it comes to playing football, has quite a prominent spot in the record book.
The only thing is that Tech's defense isn't listed for its accomplishments in the Gobblers' record book. The name of Virginia Tech dominates the game against column under William and Mary records.
The Indians last year set four team records that Tech defensive coach George McKinney would just as soon forget. William and Mary collected its most first downs (34), ran its most offensive plays (100), completed the most passes (28) and racked up its highest total offense (543 yards) since starting a football team in the Gay Nineties.

"We were embarrassed," said McKinney in recalling that day, "It kind of hurts when they go up and down the field on you."
The Gobblers' offense managed 41 points while the Indians, in spite of their brilliant day against Tech's defense, scored only 30.
The thing about last year's game is that promoters of the Tobacco Bowl, site of the tomorrow's Tech-William and Mary meeting, are billing the contest as another duel of the offenses. The game starts at 1:30 and a capacity crowd of 22,500 is expected just to see two high-scoring outfits run up and down the field.
"We've improved quite a bit since last year," McKinney insisted. "But people are still scoring on us. However, we've got some better athletes at some positions. But we've also got some who are hurt."
Specifically, defensive end Rich Easterling and linebacker Tom Shirley are injured and lost indefinitely. And McKinney admits he frankly doesn't know how much this will hurt Tech's defense.

"Our defense can do better and get better," McKinney insisted. "But this group believes it can do some things. Last year they didn't really believe this."
"The players know what happened last year against William and Mary. The ones that played and the freshmen saw it. We'll look at films. I don't know if it was our worst game. The one against Houston was bad. Houston had better athletes, but I don't know that they executed any better."

What also must worry the Tech coach is that William and Mary's Jim Root says he frankly expects the Hokies' offense to score at least 30 points. He just hopes his team can come up with 31 points which means the pressure tomorrow could be on Tech's defense.

Root says his defense's goal will be to force Strook into throwing interceptions. "We want to intercept at least one out of every 10 passes thrown against us," he explained. However, the Indians have intercepted one of every 11 tosses tried against them and still have only a 3-4 record.

William and Mary officials tried all last week to get ABC to televise tomorrow's game regionally, but had no success. The regional game of the week for this area will match West Virginia against Penn State.