Indians Shock Tech in Tobacco Bowl

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RICHMOND — Virginia Tech, searching desperately for national limelight, got another slap in the face, another serious setback by a state powerhouse on Saturday afternoon in a Tobacco Bowl football game that was played in a sea of mud.

William & Mary shut-off a last-minute rally by Tech, giving the game to Virginia Tech in the 1972 Tobacco Bowl. A dramatic 43-39 victory came via a last-second field goal from Don Strock to bring Galloway in the final seconds of the game. Tech was leading 43-39, but Strock tied the game with 2:12 left.

Virginia Tech could have had the win, but the two-point-er in that situation is an automatic call. Charlie Coffey, the Tech head coach, never considered anything else.

Actually, Galloway had the pass. It hit him in the middle section, but William & Mary's John Hostetter hit Galloway from behind, another Indian got him from the front and the ground got the football.

"I didn't know he hadn't caught it until I saw it hit the ground," Hostetter said. Galloway knew, and so did Don Strock. Tech's traveling aerial show, who saw all.

The field sitting in the middle of the stadium's City Stadium was a 100-yard mud puddle. But that was no excuse. "I've seen worse," said Coffey. "And it was the same for both teams."

Mentally, Tech was in the game until the last few minutes when Strock directed this team to 54 yards with 2:12 left. It was obvious Tech was ready to play, but they don't look like the Tech of a football team. My job is coaching and my team wasn't ready."

"We weren't ready," Coffey said. "I didn't have them ready to play. William & Mary executed well, our offense played well enough, returning punts, intercepting passes, but I guess that's the life of a football team. My job is coaching and my team wasn't ready."

"It was my first crack at Tech," said William & Mary coach Jim Root. "We haven't had a lot of breaks before today, but they had some luck. But we also had great effort."

There was no question, W&M probably spending the week reading Tech's press clippings, was emotionally ready. Tech apparently thought it would show up and the victory would be automatic.

"It's a big setback," Coffey said. "But we've had setbacks before. It hurts like hell, and it'll hurt more in the morning and on Monday. I know one thing — we'll be easier to get ready for next week."

The game, first half, was pointed out later, could have been the key to the game. Tech did not take advantage of many opportunities.

W&M made it obvious, its intentions to win, by driving to the Tech 9 on the first second-half series. But the drive was stopped when Jerry Scharnus intercepted a Bill Davis pass. William & Mary got its first touchdown in the third quarter — with 25 seconds left to be exact. The drive lasted 60 yards and the scoring player was a three-yard run by Doug Gerhart who rushed for 90 yards.

The key play, however, was a 35-yard pass from Decory to flanked David Knight who caught such passes of 35 yards.

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yards. All Deery had to do to complete a pass to Knight was throw the ball somewhere on the playing field.

The Indians, now 4-4, scored again, this time a 34-yard fielder by Terry Regan, with 13:25 left in the game and Tech, for the first time, was in serious trouble.

It was about this time that the Hokies realized that the game had to be played before any verdict was rendered. Scharnus ran back a punt 57 yards to the W&M 22 and it took Strock only four plays—the big one a 18-yard toss to Rick Scales—to sneak it in the end zone. Dave Strock’s boot made it 10-10 after Coffey decided to go for one instead of two.

William & Mary, however, was not even close to being finished. The Tribe scored again with 2:29 left. This time Deery hit Mark Smith on a 32-yard pass play for the touchdown. Tech’s Bobby Dabbs had his hand on the ball, but Smith took it away from him. Regan kicked the point—W&M 17, Tech 10—and then the Indians braced for the comeback which fell short.

Strock hit Scales for 19 yards, but Tech had a holding penalty which moved the Hokies back to their 13.

Strock soon found himself faced with a fourth-down-and-24-to-go situation. All he did with that was hit Galloway for 35 yards. (“For Strock, fourth and 24 is like first and 10 for anybody else,” Root said.)

Then Strock hit Donnie Reel for 24 yards, then got a break with a pass interference call which put the ball on the Indians’ six. With 13 seconds left, Strock hit Scales for the touchdown.

The rest was up to Strock and Galloway and the William & Mary defense. Score one for the defense.

Tech made numerous illegal procedure mistakes, one which resulted in a touchdown being called back. But that is mental, said Coffey. That is not being ready to play.

Now Tech is faced with Southern Mississippi while William & Mary, unbeaten in its league, must go after the Southern Conference title. But, consider this: Tech is 2-0-1 against Southwest and Big 8 competitors, but 0-2 in the Big 5.