Tech Wants Two In A Row

BY BOB TEITLEBAUM
World-News Sports Writer

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Virginia Tech will be trying to break out of a one-and-one situation here tonight when it takes on host Davidson for the Charlotte Invitational Tournament championship.

It seems as if the Hokies, 4-3, will win a game and then lose one. It's been that way through the first seven contests. Last night the Gobblers came up with the hot hand in the second half and beat Rutgers 77-72. The loss followed a 57-56 upset at the hands of VMI in Tech's last outing and aoned, to some degree, for that stunning setback.

Davidson had no trouble in joining Tech for the finals. The Wildcats clobbered Georgia Tech 91-66. Davidson and Virginia Tech clash at 9:30 right after the Yellow Jackets and Rutgers square off in the consolation contest at 7:30.

Gobbler scoring leader Alan Brustow, who collected 26 points last night, was quick to point out that the Rutgers' win doesn't make up for the loss to VMI.

"This one doesn't redeem us. We can only do that by winning two in a row," said the 6-7 junior who jammed in 17 points during a second half rally against the Scarlet.

"We sort of get up and down, but for tonight's game we were up. In fact we were up more than usual. We needed the win."

Tech coach Don DeVoe echoed his star's sentiments. "It seems as if we win every other game. I hope we break it tomorrow (Thursday) night with a win against Davidson," said the rookie coach.

DeVoe may have to change his starting lineup again. For one thing, Tom Trice and Bill McNeer came off the bench to give Bristow most of his help along with starter Darwin Pipkins, who was in the opening lineup for the first time.

Charlie Lipscomb, Tech's 6-6 center, continued his slump. He made one out of five shots in the first half and didn't play in the last half.

"We're going to analyze the starting lineup situation," said DeVoe. "What Charlie needs is confidence in shooting. But I don't know if we can find any place on the rest of our schedule where he has time to get that confidence."

The story of last night's game was rebounding and second effort. The board work paid off as Tech held a whopping 45-26 advantage in rebounding against the taller Scarlet. Bristow and Trice collected 13 each and the latter even had Rutgers' 6-4 Gene Armstead to four second half points including a three-point play.

Pippin shot well from the outside as he cashed in on 11 of 21 attempts — the same as Bristow. Darwin ended up with eight points. The Gobblers were cold in the first half as they managed only 12 of 43 shots. But the Hokies perked up in the second half to hit 19 of 31 attempts in wiping out a 38-34 halftime deficit.

Tech, which had trailed by 10 points at one time in the first half, climbed ahead 45-46 in the second half on a 10-footer by Pippin.

The two teams stayed even from that point until Trice's two free throws pushed Tech ahead 75-71 with 49 seconds left. But Rutgers zipped down the court and Jim Snodgrass hit a long shot with 42 seconds remaining to cut the margin back to two.

Then McNeer put the game away. With 34 seconds remaining he slumped in for a layup and that finished Rutgers and the scoring at the same time.

"The thing we didn't do," said DeVoe, "was to control the tempo of the game. It was a run-and-shoot game, and this isn't our style."

"Fortunately, we were the team ahead by three or four points at the end."

Guard John Somorzi lived up to his advance billing for Rutgers. He tied Bristow for game honors with 26, but McNeer slowed him in the second half as he made only 11 points.

Davidson broke a 14-14 tie with Georgia Tech and ticked off 13 straight points to settle their game early. After that it was only a case of by how much the final margin would be. The Wildcats, who used substitutes liberally had 16-point efforts from Joe Butler and Paul Wagner to top their scoring.

Tech will be a busy team next week. The Gobblers return to Charlotte Wednesday to meet Duke and then go to Ft. Myer to compete in the Presidential Classic Friday and Saturday along with host George Washington, American University and Texas A&M.

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