W&M Fearful Of Host VPI’s Inside Game

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Virginia Tech, 8-8, may not rate with the region’s top basketball teams, but the Gobblers do boast a rugged “inside game.” In fact, the Techmen of first-year mentor Don DeVoe claim a pair of stellar players in forward Allan Bristow and center Charlie Lipscomb.

“I expect Bristow and Lipscomb to be the toughest individuals we’ve faced all season,” offers William and Mary Coach Warren Mitchell, who’ll send his team against the Gobblers in a Big Five battle tonight in Blacksburg.

Other action involving Big Five and Southern Conference teams this weekend has Virginia Military Institute hosting East Carolina; Cincinnati at Richmond (on television at 1:30, Channel 10) Davidson at Wake Forest and Brown at Furman.

All are non-league contests except the ECU-VMi battle at Lexington.

Remindful of W&M’s inability to combat strong inside play in its 83-79 loss to Georgetown Thursday night, Mitchell has braced his club for a similar test against the Techmen.

“They shoot real well, and they hit the boards awfully hard,” added Mitchell of the Gobbler duo. “I think Tech, although an up-and-down team, has adjusted well to a new coach and new system.”

“The main reason they have done as well as they have, I feel, is the play of Bristow and Lipscomb,” volunteered the Indian mentor.

Mitchell is hoping the insertion of sophomores Mark Ettier, a rugged 6-4, 200-pounder, into the Tribe lineup will offset the Gobblers’ inside advantage created mainly by Bristow’s 55.2 shooting norm (18th in the nation) and Lipscomb’s 11.4 rebound average.

Brislow carries only a 7.3 average for the Tribe, but has come on strong lately, scoring 13 points in W&M’s 76-59 triumph over VMI, followed by 17 markers in the loss to Georgetown.

Jeff Trammell, collecting 20 against the Hoyas, continues to lead the Tribe in scoring with a 16.3 standard, followed by George Spack at 12.3.

Other Tribe regulars are Jerry Fisher (12.0) and Steve Seward (10.5).

While the ECU-VMi battle matches the Southern leader and cellar dweller, it is a vital one for the Pirates who share the conference lead with Davidson and Furman.

“Anytime you take a team into Lexington, there’s reason for concern,” says ECU Coach Tom Quinn. “VMI is looking for someone to beat, and that includes the top teams as well as those at the bottom.”

Jerome Owens is the big gun for the Pirates, along with teammates Dave Franklin and Jim Fairley. Former Norfolk State star Charlie Lipscomb will play a key role in VMI’s leading scorer.