Tech Defense Stops Tulane

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BLACKSBURG — Bill Curl, the hefty sports information director at Tulane, sat on the bench before the game last night and patted coach Dick Longo on the knee.

“You know, coach,” Curl said, “the toughest job you’re going to have tonight is keeping your boys’ eyes off those cheerleaders and their minds on the business on the floor.” But Longo quickly realized he had many more problems than the distraction of having the shapely Virginia Tech cheerleaders jumping around in their tight hot pants and form-fitting jersey shirts.

The Gobbler’s defense, applied some physical punishment that caused Longo and his Green Wave a painful 40-minute nightmare.

When it was all over, the scoreboard read Tech 76, Tulane 55 and the Gobbler’s had pushed their record to 13-9.

It wasn’t that Tech’s play was so awful on offense but the defense was something else. If the Gobbler’s had matched their defense with some hot shooting, it would have been a complete rout.

As it was, Longo quickly admitted it was a tough night to endure.

“That’s the first time this season we’ve been completely humiliated,” Longo said. “We let them get us physically early in the game. We completely lost our poise and were run out of our game plan.”

But Longo quickly added, “If we get them at our place, things might have been different. The officials wouldn’t let them get by with a lot of that bun ping and hanging that went on there tonight.”

Tech coach Don DeVoe was pleased with the effort his boy got from his Gobbler’s. He had some kind words for the defense of Ed Frazier, the improved play around the basket of Charlie Lipscomb and the over-all aggressiveness of the Techmen.

He called the first half “probably the toughest we have played all year on defense.” The result was Tulane hit only six of 22 shots from the floor in the 20-minute period.

Tech’s percentage was little better with 13 for 44. But the Gobbler’s completely controlled the boards and they could afford to miss more shots.

Allan Bristow, who had a poor shooting night, basted in 18 rebounds while Lipscomb and Tom Trice each picked off 11. Tech won the board battle by a whopping 39-30 margin.

Bristow also led in scoring with 17 points but the talented junior was far from pleased with his play.

“Man, what a night,” he moaned as he scanned the stax sheet. “I played so badly I didn’t even get a personal foul.”

Jeff Morris hit 18 for Tulane but the overall play of the entire Green Wave squad was sluggish and ragged.

Tech has a week to sharpen its shooting eye and put some more polish on its defense before playing host to Loyola of Baltimore next Monday. The Gobbler’s then travel to Kent State Feb. 26 before returning home to play West Virginia March 1 and Eastern Kentucky March 6.

With continued improved play, Tech could finish 17-4 in its first season under DeVoe.

“We’re coming,” DeVoe said. “And I’m proud of the way the boys have worked. It’s a pleasure to coach such a group.”

Tech’s freshmen made the night complete with a 62-38 edge over the VMI Rats in the preliminary. Geoff Wiggins led the Gobbler’s with 15 points. Alan Hansen was high for VMI with 17.

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Tech’s Allan Bristow is ganged by Tulane’s Jim Stanczak (40) and Craig Pedersen (35)