Strock Doubles Up In 24-23 VPI Clash

BY HANK FROSHTHA Daily Press Sports Writer
BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech’s Spring intrasquad game Saturday turned out to be a case of quarterback Don Strock against quarterback Don Strock.

The Gobbler’s record-breaking signal-caller showed 4,500 Lane Stadium fans he has lost none of the aerial talents he displayed last fall, starring in the first half for the Orange team and the final two quarters for the Whites.

Strock in an Orange jersey defeated Strock in a white jersey, 24-23 for the day. The senior passer hit 33 of 52 tosses for 334 yards with two interceptions.

Newport News players were a key part in what Coach Charlie Coffey thinks is an improving defense.

"Last year we were not strong in any phase of defense," Coffey said, "but after today, it’s obvious progress has been made."

Howard Keyes, a rising sophomore defensive back out of Carver High, made an interception for the White team that set up its first touchdown in the initial period. Keyes picked off a ball thrown by Strock on his own 38 and returned it to the White 45. The Whites marched down and went 2 ahead, 10-7, after Soph Greg Toal plowed over from the one at 3:10.

"I saw Keyes do two or three things really well out there today," Coffey said. "That indicates he has some potential. We may have seven or eight sophomores starting on our defense."

Keyes has had only six practices with varsity and was shifted from offense to defense this Spring.

Coffey also praised two older Newport News performers, Bobby Dabbs, rising junior defensive back, and Jerry Scharnus, who will be playing his senior year next Fall at safety. Both are Ferguson High graduates.

Our defense secondary reacted well and tackled well," Coffey said. "Jerry Scharnus made two real fine plays when he knocked the pass receiver (Ricky Scales) out of bounds to prevent completions. He was real impressive."

"Last year we were missing tackles when we came up on the receivers. This year the receivers are only getting three or four or six yards. Last year it was 10 or 17 or 20."

Scharnus was alert in the second period, as running back Rusty Eddings fumbled when tackled hard. Scharnus recovered the ball for the Orange team. This led to a 52-yard field goal by Wayne Latimer. "Our plays later."

The three-pointer boosted the Orange team’s lead to 17-10 at 3:10 of the second quarter. The Orange team’s lead to 17-10 at 3:21 of the second quarter.

Dabbs played a solid and consistent game, as expected by Coffey.

"I don’t believe I watched Dabbs on more than two or three plays," the Tech coach explained. "I’ve got confidence in Dabbs. He’s earned that job (left corner) and I don’t know of anybody who can take it away from him."

Defense is the question mark for the Gobbler and the play of sophomore linebacker Tom Shirley delighted Coffey.

"Let’s see," Coffey said. "He caused a fumble, broke up three passes and broke (running back Jim) Polito’s nose. You’d have to say he had a pretty good day."

Coffey was also proud of defensive tackle John Spreen, a 220-pound senior.

"He really performed," said Coffey, "he dislocated his shoulder Wednesday, but he played the whole game today."

Strock thrilled the fans when h. hit rising sophomore Rich Heubner with a 58-yard touchdown pass with only 23 seconds left in the game. A pass from Strock to tight end Arians to give the Whites a chance to score their final touchdown.

Scharnus, Dabbs, Keyes Sparkle In VPI Defense

Continued From Page D-4

Rick Law for a two-point conversion for the Whites fell incomplete. The ball hit Law on the shoulder pads.

Coffey was pleased with the opening drive that saw the Orange team march 90 yards to score from the first kickoff.

Polito scored on a five-yard dive.

Dave Strock kicked a 54-yard field goal for the Whites to make it 7-3. Then came Keyes’ interception at Toal’s 10 yard line.

Strock’s passes sparked the Orange to a 14-10 lead as Tom C.ampa plunged the final yard late in the second quarter. Latimer’s 42-yard field goal boosted the Orange halftime lead to 17-10.

Campana tallied his second six-pointer on a two-yard dive for the only third-quarter score.

John Itri notched a fourth-period White touchdown on a two-yard run with 4:22 left. That cut the Orange lead to 24-17. Kent Henry interce. ofd arians to give the Whites a chance to score their final touchdown.