By MARSHALL JOHNSON
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BLACKSBURG, Va. (AP)—Bill Deery and Frankie Prochilo led an overpowering William & Mary ground game and Virginia Tech made almost every mistake in the book Saturday as the Indians rolled to a convincing 31-24 victory over the Gobblers in the football season opener for both teams.
Deery, a 175-pound junior quarterback who twice was taken out with an injured shoulder, ran 47 yards to set up the Indians' first score and tallied the second on a four-yard run.
While he didn't score, Prochilo ran for 83 yards on 22 carries as the Indians literally ground the Gobblers into the turf, moving 95 yards on 10 running plays for one score and 76 yards on 11 running plays for another.
Tech, meanwhile, lost four fumbles in the first half, one setting up a W&M touchdown and two others—at the Indians' 10 and 19—possibly denying the Gobblers two scores.
After intermission, Tech handed W&M one score on a 33-yard pass interference penalty and drawing two major infractions in the Indians' final touchdown march.
The Gobblers had no difficulty moving the ball. Senior running back James Barber ran 19 times for 134 yards, scored on a one-yard run and caught a nine-yard pass from quarterback Bruce Arians, but that came with only 1:01 left in the game.
Sophomore Phil Rogers ran 17 times for 85 yards, caught four passes for 11 yards and unloaded a 65-yard scoring bomb to wide receiver Ricky Scales on the first play of the final period that pulled Tech to within seven points.
But that's when the Indians came right back with a game-clinching 76-yard drive.
In the time he played, Deery scrambled for 64 yards on 12 carries and completed 3 of 4 passes for 40 more. His long run set up the Indians' first score and he picked up 19 of the necessary 23 yards for the second after Steve Dalton recovered Tech's fourth fumble of the first half at the Gobblers' 23.
The Indian quarterback hit Dick Pawlewicz with a 25-yard pass to spark a 74-yard march early in the third period after the Gobblers had pulled to 14-10 with an 80-yard drive in nine plays following the second half kickoff.
Sophomore Rick Popp started for the Gobblers and hit 12 of 15 passes for 94 yards, but it was his two fumbles that cost Tech two scoring chances before intermission.
The Gobblers had reached the Indians two the first time they had the ball, but Popp was hit by Dalton and W&M defensive tackle Bill Stockey recovered on the 10.
Tech moved to the Indian 16 after W&M's first score, but Popp fumbled again when hit by Randy Rovesti and Stockey again made the recovery, this time on the 19.