By JERRY REED
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BLACKSBURG—If there is comfort in a 10-game record, Virginia Tech grabbed it by the coat-tails Saturday and rode it to a 27-15 win over Virginia, putting an end to a dreadful losing streak and perhaps to Don Lawrence’s liveliness.

Clearly illustrating that coincidence moves in mysterious ways, Virginia Tech began putting itself back together just as Virginia became unraveled, thus braking a six-game decline. For Virginia’s Lawrence, it was the fifth loss in seven weeks—the third straight—indicating that the Cavaliers will have to be particularly deceptive if they are to rescue their coach from the firing squad.

In his third season, Lawrence needs a win in each of the final four games to salvage his first winning season. If his chances are gauged by Saturday’s performance, it will be difficult to do.

“The effort was there,” Lawrence said afterward. “I don’t know of any turning point. We were down there three times and we didn’t score.”

Six major infractions and three lost fumbles in the second half told the Cavaliers they were flogging a dead horse, which is precisely what Tech had been misreading.

“Anything is better than 0-7,” said Tech’s coach Charlie Coffey. “It’s been a long time coming.”

From the time tailback Phil Rogers unloaded an 80-yard pass play to receiver Ricky Scales for a touchdown a minute and a half into the first quarter, one suspected it wouldn’t be as long as it had been.

But less than four minutes later, Joe Jenkins converted a 48-yard field goal, a Virginia record, bringing the Cavaliers to within four. Quarterback Scott Gardner put Virginia into the lead with 6:34 still remaining in the first period on a 63-yard throw to tight end Jim Collier, who bobbled two Virginia Tech defenders before falling into the end zone.

And Virginia appeared to find some momentum, up to the point flanker Harrison Davis received an eight-yard offering from Gardner three steps across the goal line, before dropping the ball.

Two officials signaled a touchdown, but one ruled incomplete and, as stated in the rules, a negative opinion nullifies two post.

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