Gobblers Beat Cavs, 27 to 15
For First Win

By Bill Millsaps
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BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's football team, which searched in vain for just one big break in six consecutive losses, got a touchdown late in the game to beat Virginia Tech, 27-15.

In the 1st round, the Cavaliers:
• fumbled seven times and lost four;
• had at least two crucial officials' decisions go against them, and
• suffered six major penalties in the second half.

What made it all the more costly for the Cavaliers was the fact that Tech was in a "taking" mood. The Hokies got an 80-yard touchdown maneuver on the third play of the game, rolled up 205 yards rushing and got field goals of 55 and 19 yards from sophomore Wayne Latimer of Richmond.

Running backs J. B. Barber and Rick Rogers led the ground assault with 138 and 136 yards rushing, respectively, and defensive end Doug Thacker produced most of the big plays for a defense that heretofore hadn't been able to cut it. Thacker recovered two fumbles and threw Cavalier ball-carriers for losses on two key third-down situations.

Virginia was still very much in the game (in fact, it looked as if the Cava might win in spite of their misfortunes) until the last five minutes. But on a third-down play on the Tech 42, Harrison Davis fumbled at the end of a nine-yard flanker reverse, linebacker Dennis Dodson fell on it at the Tech 32, and from there the Hokies went 68 yards in 10 plays for the clinching touchdown with 1:06 remaining.

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Virginia Tech — U. Va. 27 0-0-15
U. Va. — FG Jenkins 48 (Cole kick)
U. Va. — FG Collins 33 from Gardner

Statistics:
U. Va. Tech
First downs 23 23
Rushes-yards 47-223 57-225
Passing yards 264 14
Return yards 16 52
Passees 14-30-1 6-15-1
Punts 4-30 5-35
Fumbles-lost 7-4 1-1
Penalties-yards 4-107 4-107

Hokiers Seize Breaks, Beat Cavaliers, 27-15

Rogers, who has now thrown two passes this season and completed both for touchdown, teamed with Ricky Scales to put the Hokies out front with the game only 1:24 old. Rogers, taking a pitchout to the right, pulled up and fired a strike to Scales on the Virginia 41. Scales raced untouched to the end zone.

Virginia came right back with a move that eventually produced a school-record 48-yard field goal by freshman Joe Jenkins. Then on the next Cavaliers possession, Gardner fired a short, look-in pass to tight end Jim Collar. The 200-pound junior broke through the secondary, carried a defender on his back the last eight yards and completed a 63-yard scoring play.

Tech held on, got the key call and the touchdown drive and went into intermission with a 14-9 edge.

A third-period fumble recovery by John Bell on the Virginia 49 set up Tech's next scoring play, the 55-yard field goal by Latimer.

Virginia retaliated instantly. Gardner found Davis behind the secondary on the right side and fired a bullet that the receiver pulled in on the Tech 15 and went into the end zone without a hand being put on him. A two-point conversion attempt failed when Gardner overthrew Davis in the right corner. That left the Cavs two behind, 17-15, going into the fourth quarter.

Billy Hardee's 35-yard punt return to the Virginia 26 set up another Tech score, and it, too, turned on a key officials' call. On a third-and-four on the Virginia 20, Popp bobbled off right tackle for two yards. He suffered possible torn ligaments in his left knee on the play, and the ball popped free.

Virginia's players began signalling Cavalier possession. The officials ruled no fumble, and defensive back Carl Barile complained a little too vigorously to suit Hackney. Barile was ejected. Virginia was assessed nine yards (which resulted in a first down) for unsportmanlike conduct and Tech eventually got a 19-yard field goal from Latimer. Without the penalty, Latimer would have had to attempt a 35-yard field goal into teeth of a strong wind.

That gave Tech a 20-15 lead and a little bit of breathing room with 6:24 remaining, but that cushion quickly melted when Mike Bennett returned the ensuing kickoff 64 yards to the Tech 27.

Virginia got a three-yard run, an 18-yard holding penalty and an incomplete pass before Davis was called on to run the reverse. He was whacked hard by safety Jerry Scharmoski, lost the ball and Dodson jumped on it with 5:03 left.

Tech followed with its last touchdown march, all of the yardies coming on the ground. "That drive," said Elated Tech coach Charlie Coffey, "was the greatest thing we could experience under the conditions. We had to keep the ball and we had to keep it in the ground.

INDIVIDUAL RUSHING
Virginia — Merritt, 13 carries, 61 yards; Copeland, 11-41; Gardiner, 11-53; Dowie, 4-14; Lacicka, 6-37; Keys, 4-1; Davis, 1-5. Virginia Tech — Barber, 21-138, 1 touchdown; Rogers, 24-36; Popp, 6-3; Scales, 1-9; Ladd, 1-3; Joyce, 3-6; 1 touchdown; Mullinax.

INDIVIDUAL PASSING
Virginia — Gardner, 14 completions, 30 attempts, 0 interceptions, 244 yards, 2 touchdowns. Virginia Tech — Popp, 7-14-1-34; Rogers, 1-1-0-80, 1 touchdown.

INDIVIDUAL PASS RECEIVING
Virginia — Davis, 8 catches, 119 yards, 1 touchdown; Copeland, 2-76, 1 touchdown; Merritt, 3-39; Bennett, 1-1. Virginia Tech — Joyce, 3-6; 1 touchdown; Hardee, 2-6-1; Rogers, 1-8; Dick, 1-8; Ladd, 1-7; Patterson, 1-1-0-0;.