Gobblers Win First; UVA Victims, 27-15

By JERRY RATCLIFFE
Times Sports Editor

BLACKSBURG—Freshman quarterback Eddie Joyce came off the bench for injured starter Rick Popp Saturday, and directed the Virginia Tech Gobblers to an insurance touchdown with 1:06 left to play, to give Tech a 27-15 victory over arch rival Virginia.

The win snapped Tech's six-game losing streak, one of the worst in the school's history, while Virginia went into a 2-5 tailspin.

Actually, Dennis Dodson, a linebacker and safety Jerry Scharnus, could be declared the heroes of the game.

After Wayne Lattimer's 19-yard field goal with 6:24 remaining, which gave Tech a 20-15 lead, Virginia's 5-10 sophomore Mike Bennett of Haver de Grace, Md., returned the kickoff 64 yards to the Virginia Tech 27-yard line.

From there the Cavaliers were tackled for a holding penalty that set them back to the Gobblers 42. On second down, Dodson broke up a pass in deep Hokie territory.

On third down, a pitchout was bobbed and instead of speedster Kent Merrit ending up with the ball, Harrison Davis picked it up and ran to the 33 where he was chilled by a waiting Dodson. Davis, who carries the ball loosely, coughed up the pigskin and Scharnus picked it up to end the UVA Wahoos drive.

With 5:20 left to play, freshman Eddie Joyce, of Salem, Va., came in after Popp had received an apparent knee injury to his left knee when hit in the previous series by linebacker Dick Ambrose.

Joyce used a ball-control ground game with backs James Barber and Phil Rogers of Gate City, Va. to drive down the field, 67 yards in 10 plays. A penalty-aided drive gave the Hokies the contest.

With a third and three, Joyce fell for a yard but was hit hard on a personal foul by a UVA player, unnecessarily. That tacked on 15 yards to the UVA 15 and gave Tech a first down rather than a fourth and two.

Rogers carried twice to the six. Then Barber to the 3. Joyce used a good stiff arm, and balance in carrying the ball over himself for the insurance TD. Latimer's kick was good and Tech had won it's first game of the season 27-15.

Tech got off to a perfect start when Rogers hit flanker Ricky Scales on an 80-yard touchdown pass on a halfback option play. Rogers is 2-for-2 on that play this year, hitting Scales on a 65-yard scoring strike earlier in the year.

Tech had an easy 7-0 lead with 13:36 left in the first quarter, as head Coach Charlie Coffey called every play.

The Techmen trailed only once when sophomore quarterback Scott Gardner hit tight end Jim Culleran on a 63-yard TD pass, after freshman place-kicker Gerald Jenkins booted his first field goal of the season, a UVA record 48-yarder.

Those scores combined gave the Wahoos a 9-7 lead, even though Billy Maxwell missed the point after conversion kick.

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Sigh Of Relief

Head Coach Charlie Coffey (left) and Offensive Co-ordinator Dan Henning take a sigh of relief after Tech goes ahead to stay against rival Virginia Saturday. It was the first win of the year for Tech after six losses—a long season.
Virginia Tech Whips Cavaliers

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Gardner hit Davis on two long passes, one of them an 8 yard pass, which was first ruled a touchdown when Davis caught the ball in the end zone but dropped it when hit hard by Scharius.

After a discussion, the pass was ruled incomplete and UVA had to settle for an attempted 22-yard field goal which was wide to the left.

Rogers and Barber combined for 274 of Tech's 295 yards rushing as the Hokies stuck mainly to the ground, although Popp did have 114 yards in the air.

The two backs were used on the next Hokie drive that began at Tech's 20 off the missed field goal. Barber carried from 13 yards out to put the Hokies in the lead for good with 3:07 left in the half, 14-9.

After two punts deep into Tech territory, the Gobblers gave the ball away via a punt at the UVA 36 midway through the third period.

Gardner hit Bennett on a pass to the Cavalier 49 but he was hit hard and fumbled with the Hokies' John Bell recovering.

It didn't take Tech long to capitalize on it as Popp hit Scharius at the 42. Rogers ran to the 57 and on a third and one, an incomplete pass was forced by a heavy UVA rush. So the Hokies called on the foot of Lattimer who booted a perfect 55-yard field goal, four yards short of Dave Strock's record. So with 5:11 left in the third period, Tech led 17-9.

But UVA came back. Merritt ran twice from his 20 to the UVA 46. A pass interference call gave the Cavs a first down at the VP 42.

But Tech pushed Virginia back. It didn't really matter as Gardner hit Davis for a 52-yard scoring strike over Scharius who had fell down after going for the interception. The Cavaliers went for two points on the conversion, but a heavy rush forced Gardner to underthrow a pass to Davis in the end zone. With 5:30 left in the third quarter, Tech led only 17-15.

That's how the quarter ended.

UVA converted three straight third down conversions in a lengthy drive down to the Tech 42. But another incomplete pitch to Merritt fell short with defensive end Doug Thacker pouncing on it for Tech.

The Hokies couldn't move, but punted into the end zone. Virginia had to punt also, with Billy Hardee nearly breaking it on the return all the way back to the Virginia 26. That's when Popp was injured, two plays later, when a personal foul took the ball to the 9. Joyce entered, but after three carries, it was 4th and goal on the 2. Coffey didn't want to gamble, with it 17-15, so ordered Lattimer to kick a field goal, which he did, from 19 yards out with 6:24 left in the game.

Then came Bennett's great open field run of 64 yards to the Tech 27. Virginia could have gone into the lead and possibly won, if Dodson hadn't caused the fumble at the 33.

Tech had 295 yards rushing and 114 passing, with Barber carrying 21 times for 138 yards. Rogers carried 24 times for 136 yards.

Scales caught two passes for 87 yards.

For Virginia, Merritt rushed 13 times for 61 yards, while Gardner carried 11 times on the option for 53 yards and Copeland rushed 11 times for 41 yards. UVA had 222 yards rushing and 244 passing.

Davis caught 8 passes for 118 yards and one score. Tech is at undefeated and perhaps No. 1 in the nation Alabama next week for the last in those two school's series. Virginia is at Wake Forest.

STATISTICS

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<th>UVA</th>
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<td>First Downs</td>
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-Return of Punts, Interceptions, (not kickoffs).