Tech topped Tide in plays, 80-70

BIRMINGHAM Ala. (AP)—What's on a football coach's mind when his team succumbs to a rout early in the game and is on route to a rout?

"Anytime we have a game won, that's the time I start thinking about next week and next year," Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant of Alabama said Sunday, "about not getting people hurt and getting young people in for experience.

"We send in the youngsters and let the chips fall where they may. And last night the chips were falling our way mighty fast."

They fell so fast in second-ranked Alabama's 77-6 humiliation of Virginia Tech that the Crimson Tide set NCAA records in both total offense and running yardage, the first time a team has established new marks in those categories in one game.

"I never heard of a team that won with a score like that, that ran fewer plays than the losing team," Bryant said. Alabama had 70 plays to 80 for VPI.

The reason was that the Tide was scoring so quickly it didn't keep the ball very long at a time. The Tide did not drive for scores, it exploded.

With 12 runners grabbing big chunks at a time, Alabama averaged 11.8 yards at a carry. James Taylor ran for 142 yards, Wilbur Jackson 138, Calvin Culliver 127 and Richard Todd 102, tying an NCAA mark of four runners getting more than 100 yards in one game.

The 828 total yards of Alabama offense and the 743 yards on the ground both are new records.

"I don't like to see anybody take a beating like that," Bryant said, narrating televised films of the slaughter.

"You suffer those things," VPI Coach Charlie Coffey had said. "That's part of the game."

Bryant used 68 players to try to keep the score down but the youngsters ran almost at will against a thin and tired VPI defense.

"I'm really embarrassed over the score," Bryant said. "I didn't want any score like that, and I hope Coach Coffey realized that."

Coffey described undefeated Alabama as "a great, awesome offensive team."

Bryant said Alabama is good but not great "because we still do things that a great team doesn't do—penalties, fumbles, not rushing the passer like we ought to, not intercepting enough passes and not tackling well.

Bryant said one of his first teamers commented in the dressing room that "they played so little they weren't going to take a shower."

One who did not work up a sweat was punter Greg Gantt, whose 47.2 yards a kick is best in the nation. Alabama never had to punt.