Indians Easier Prey
When Beat Up a Little

When they start tallying up the pluses and minuses of the Virginia Tech football season, I think somebody should discuss the schedule change that made William and Mary the first opponent instead of the last.

Charlie Coffey, who made that decision, says the crowd would be better in September because it was cold in November. The crowd for Tech-W&M was good, better than 20,000 without the students.

That, however, is only one side of the story. Tech lost its opener to W&M and never recovered. Hindsight, as always, is easy, but anybody with a familiarity of W&M football knows the Indians are much better in September than they are in November.

I thought the decision to make the switch was unwise at the time and I still think so. W&M had a veteran team. Tech was young. But, historically, depth-shy W&M always gets beaten up by late season. Tech figured to improve.

Looking at the way the Indians played the last two weeks in losing to East Carolina and Colgate proves that point. Catching them the week after Richmond would always be an advantage.

If the two teams played Nov. 24, as originally scheduled, I'm sure Tech would win. Assuming the Hokies beat VMI Saturday, that would have given them three closing wins and (for what it's worth) the state Big Five title. That would at least be something to build recruiting hopes around.

It is my belief that the move was made because Tech was slated to play three road games in a row to start the season, and Coffey thought that one home victory would provide the impetus for the year. Like many other things at Blacksburg this year, the move backfired.