White Edges Orange In Spring Thriller

By BILL MASON
Sports Editor
BLACKSBURG—It took all the heavily-favored White squad could muster to defeat the determined Orange 27-21 in Virginia Tech's spring football game, in which a sophomore walk-on almost stole the show from junior running sensation Phil Rogers of Gate City.

Waynesboro's Tony Helf was the scholarship with a two-touchdown performance for the Orange but Rogers apparently headed for another record-setting year, instead of three touchdowns for the White and was named the game's Most Valuable Offensive player.

Rogers carried 17 times for 97 yards, other breaking longs from 1.9 and 22 yards. While his other score was a 50-yard punt return behind some key blocking, he also scored from two and six yards out capping two Orange drives and just one fumble on another penetration deep in the fourth quarter.

Jack Coors, a rising star from South Boston, was named Most Valuable Defensive player for his stand-out play for the Orange.

Rogers got help in the ball carrying department from Greg Tool, 11 times for 32 yards and running back Junior Eddie Reid of Norfolk, Va., six for 26 with a 22 yarder and 42 yarder to give the Orange two touchdowns and the largest run of the game, 59 yards. Morris Maldonado had 68 yards for nine attempts and a long gainer of 15 with more running back Steve Galloway had 27 yards in eight attempts. Galloway also scored on a 20-yard pass from quarterback Rusty Bailey.

Head coach James Showell told reporters after the game: "We were pleased with the hitting and the enthusiasm. Obviously we have a long way to go, but we were pleased with the general execution of the offense, a lot of the mistakes we can correct." Bailey added: "We're glad we got our backs on the field. We've got to improve the running game offensively and defensively." Bailey said: "I thought our defense was strong on the ground, but we had a lot of penalties on ourselves that we have to get cleaned up on. Our defense held our own, but we have a lot of work to do."

Concerning the quarterbacks Bailey said: "Bruce (Aaron) is out front. He's been in battle before. (Eddie) Bead has come on strong, the last week or ten days. He described in detail what the big picture and said "It's all go and move the football." Added whether 39 will call all plays from the bench next fall or show him all the plays, Bailey said: "I think where the technical offense between me and Tech is well suited to the coach calling the plays."

But he added "Once we get a feel for their defense and our quarterback understand, we can be pretty good." The coach added several Bruce McDaniels brings from 30-40 minutes a day practice to locking under pressure, to improve the kicking game. (Place-kicker Wayne Liner missed only out PAT attempts and a 40 yard plus field goal attempt was long enough, but not on target.)

Sharpe said there is a possibility that 39 will play his defense at high school could start at least one play for Tech in November. He observed: "I'll have to have Brussel's who could hold the ball" Sharpe added that 39 has a possibility that 39 would be a quarterback or a receiver. "He's a kid with a lot of potential, he could play the quarterback position." Sharpe said that Rogers' running game definitely is back, the ball spent some time in the air, Aaron completed 7 of 11 for 54 yards for the White. Bailey has four out of nine, two interceptions and one touchdown for 65 yards. Total, Mitch Barnes completed four out of five for 65 yards. Orange had 15 rushes for 208 yards in White's 04 rushes for 20 yards. In passing yards 174 to 54. Rogers again in second quarter touchdown from 19-yard pass to beat Tech's Spring game.

Photos By Bill Mason

Here comes Rogers—Junior running back Phil Rogers of Gate City was stopped one yard short on this play, but plunged over for that final yard one play later on the White team come back to tie the Spring football game at Lane Stadium.

GATE CITY EXPRESS—Phil Rogers hauls freight for the White team on a 19-yard touchdown, one of four, he was to score as White edged Orange Saturday. Pete Garritt (24) tried to head the runner off.

HIGHTY TIGHTIES—The Tech Corps of Cadets pep band, the Highty Tightsies, marched and played before the Spring game and played during the contest before an estimated crowd of 6,359, most of them students.

Rogers Steals Show

80-YARD RAMBLE—Soph defensive back Gary Payne took a Bruce McDaniels punt on his own 20 and steam up the middle for 80 yards and a touchdown in a play that brought Virginia Tech's Spring football crowd to its feet. (NEWS MESSENGER photos by Bill Mason.)