Cooke Shot Puts VPI Over UVA

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BLACKSBURG — Larry Cooke’s 10-foot jump shot with nine seconds to go preserved, then extended Virginia Tech’s home-floor victory skein over in-State foes to 53 Saturday night, barely shading University of Virginia, 74-73.

Much-relieved Coach Don DeVoe rendered full credit to Cooke afterward, but then quickly cited “the best rebounding performance” of West Point’s Duke Thorpe “since he came to Tech” and also clutch shooting and board work by 6-foot-8 freshman Sam Fogglin as major contributions to the triumph.

Insertion of Fogglin and Thorpe midway in the first half rallied the Gobblers from behind and sent them in front, where they stayed until the spunky Cavaliers made a last-ditch bid to smash Tech’s State supremacy — and almost succeeded.

After having frontal the homesteading Gobblers by as much as nine points (21-12) before intermission and then lagging by as much as eight at the nine-minute mark in the last half, UVA forged a tie and jumped on top 73-72 with just four seconds of action remaining.

Eighteen seconds later Tech called time out when UVA’s Billy Langleh went to the free-throw line on Russell Davis’ second personal foul. Heartbreakingly, for the Cavaliers, he missed and Thorpe picked off the rebound.

The Gobblers quickly moved down-court and set up Cooke’s net-splitting and decisive two-pointer, after which UVA signalled time out with seven seconds to go. When play resumed, Langleh was prevented from making any long pass, dribble the length of the floor and pumped up a shot just before the buzzer.

Again Thorpe came through in the pinch, getting a piece of the ball in flight and the shot didn’t come close. Once more Thorpe was there to grab the carem, but the buzzer had sounded and the sellout crowd broke into wild, ecstatic cheering.

The decision improved the Gobblers’ record to 8-5 and tagged the Cavaliers of Coach Terry Holland with their fifth loss in nine games, despite their poised yet frustrated efforts.

DeVoe lauded the coolness of Tech’s arch-rivals, but added, “it’s just great to be on the winning side after these two straight defeats, coming at the hands of St. Bonaventure and South Carolina and labeled “very disappointing.”

If DeVoe sounded great relief over the outcome, it was much-warranted.

Besides taking the Gobblers right down to the wire, UVA’s early and hot shooting gave every indication they meant to run off from their hosts. Tech scored first but was quickly tied 2-2, then the lead swapped hands five times until the Cavaliers found the field-goal range and went in front 9-8 and 11-8.

After the Gobblers cut the deficit to 11-10, UVA ran off six consecutive points with Dan Bonner and Wally Walker setting the pace.

A deuce by Kyle McKee broke the spell, then the Cavaliers expanded their advantage to nine points twice, 21-12 and 23-14.

When UVA was ahead 27-20 and 9-27 remained in the half, Fogglin and Thorpe entered the fray, and the tempo quickly changed, the Techmen taking control of the boards.

Fogglin finished the half with 10 points and Tech went ahead at 30-29 with 5:50 before the halftime rest and held the upper hand until UVA started making its upset bid.

VIRGINIA VIRGINIA TECH
Iavarone 7-2-3 16 Davis 7-4-4 18
Walker 8-3-4 19 Cooke 5-0-2 10
Bonner 5-2-2 17 Collins 3-2-2 8
Langloh 2-4-4 5 Sensibaugh 4 0-0 2
Bonini 4-2-2 10 McKee 2-0-2 4
Koesters 3-2-2 8 Thorpe 3 0-0 3
Carr 0-0-2 0 Fogglin 1-2-2 11
Newlin 0-0-0 0 Cartwright 1-2-2 6
Totals 29 19-27 73 Totals 27-19-74

Fouled out: Iavarone
Team fouls: Virginia 17, Virginia Tech 18