No Word for Hokies

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Virginia Tech is still waiting to hear from the NCAA baseball tournament.

But at least the Gobblers have the consolation of knowing they’re not alone.

On a Monday when the NCAA’s Baseball Committee was scheduled to fill the remaining nine at-large berths for the 34-team field, Hawaii was the only club selected.

That leaves eight spots, and Tech in a “holding pattern,” according to NCAA Controller Lou Spry. It’s a similar situation to last week, when the Gobblers hoped to earn a berth in either the Atlantic or South Regional, but were bypassed.

“We will not award any more at-large berths until next Monday,” said Spry, who acts as coordinator for the six-man NCAA Baseball Committee but is not on the panel itself. “We talked by conference call for 2½ hours this (Monday) morning, but only picked Hawaii.

“One reason we hesitated has to do with the number of conference races that end this coming weekend in which conference runnersup would be strong teams and certainly candidates for the tournament.”

In waiting to award more bids Monday, the NCAA will have only three or four days between the time teams will accept bids and then play in a regional. The Northeast and South-Central regionals start Thursday, May 26, with the West, Mideast, Midwest and Rocky Mountain tourneys opening the following day.

“We have eight openings, with 10 teams as possibilities,” said Spry. “I know it’s tough on the schools having to wait, but the committee has a tough, tough decision, too.”

Besides runnersup in seven conferences, the three independents being considered for at-large berths are Tech (34-7 with a 31-game winning streak), Florida State (37-13) and the University of New Orleans (34-7). Florida State won the recent Metro Seven Conference tournament, but that league does not get an automatic NCAA spot.

“Frankly, the committee is having problems with the schedules of Virginia Tech and New Orleans,” said Spry. “I’m not trying to stir a controversy by saying this, because I know how the schools feel about it. I’m just trying to tell the truth about how the committee is looking at the situation.”

Tech Coach Bob Humphreys, who refuses to become embroiled in discussions on his team’s schedule, was matter-of-fact on the Gobblers waiting another week to learn whether or not their season is over.

“I can’t say that I’m happy with staying in a ‘holding pattern’ for another whole week,” said Humphreys, “but we’ve done all we can do.”