Hokies Handed 21-20 Defeat

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inside the end zone. Bennett's conversion from placement gave State its first lead but, with 5:50 remaining, Tech sent Kenny Lewis around left end for a touchdown.

Little more than a minute later, Dennis Windmuller picked off a Patterson pass, and at that point the Hokies appeared to be sure-fire winners.

At this point, a fumble led to the Tech downfall.

One second and eight from the State 27, the planned handoff from quarterback David Lamie to Roscoe Coles charging off the right side misfired. Coles was past Lamie before he let the ball go. It fell to the ground where Mike Casinelli recovered for the Tigers.

Exactly 2:54 remained when State (3-1) began its win-the-game push. Patterson was way off target, throwing behind Wright. He then hit Wright, who caught six in all, for eight yards. Patterson rolled to his right on third-and-two for seven yards and a first down at the Memphis 49.

It rained most of the game here, and it was raining at game's start. The field was slick, the ball slippery throughout. But Patterson, a hometown product, ignored the less-than-ideal conditions when it counted most.

He kept the drive moving with a long pass down the right sideline that went for 35 yards to Gray at the Tech 25 when Nick Rapone, defending, slipped and fell just as the ball arrived. Cage turned left end for 10 yards to the 15.

With 1:47 left, Patterson, unable to locate a receiver, scammed to his right and almost reached the end zone, being knocked out of bounds on the one. A five-yard penalty for illegal procedure pushed State back to the six. Cage promptly got the five back and, when Patterson called his number again, Cage again responded.

In all, Patterson completed 11 of 23 passes for 203 yards. He ran eight times for 56 yards. "He's a heckuva quarterback, running and passing," said Tech coach Jimmy Sharpe.

"I'm really at a loss for words," he continued. "There seems to be some injustice there."

Following a 7-3 season-opening loss to Mississippi, Memphis State turned big plays into 27 and 31-point performances. For a half against Virginia Tech, though, big could only be used to describe the Hokie defense.

State's only threat before intermission died at the enemy 20 because of a fumble. Meanwhile, Tech was operating primarily tackle-to-tackle in near-flawless fashion when it had the ball. The Hokies ran 48 plays to State's 24 in the first half, 18 on an 80-yard drive that accounted for their first touchdown.

Engle capped the Hokies' first two possessions with field goals from 49 and 46 yards into a stiff wind. He also missed from 53 yards with the wind.

Dennis Scott went the final yard to pad the Tech advantage with 1:42 to go in the second period. It was a picture drive, the Hokies converting three third-down and two fourth-down situations, with second and third unit performers at most positions most of the way.

At the break, State had only 87 yards, 17 rushing (16 carries) against a Tech defense which was playing without its leader, linebacker Rick Razzano, who suffered a leg injury last week against Texas A&M. He appeared for a couple of plays when State reached the Tech one late in the game.

"Our defense played well, but their big plays hurt us," said Sharpe, who later second-guessed himself over settling for one point instead of going for two after his team's second touchdown. "By not going for two points we probably made a mistake."

Major penalties helped Tech regain the lead as the game was winding to a close. A personal foul for piling on after the punt return put the Hokies on the State 49. Coles ran for nine yards and another 15-yard penalty was immediately charged to the Tigers when Tim Cruse grabbed Coles' face mask. Two plays later, Scott scored.

Lamie, who shared the quarterback duties with Don LaRue, completed passes of eight and 20 yards to Ron Zollicofer and another for 12 to Ellis Savage to give Tech one last chance to pull the game out. The lack of timeouts — they wasted two earlier when they didn't have enough men on the field — finally caught up with the Hokies, however. They called their last with two seconds remaining to give Engle an opportunity for heroics, an opportunity that Flint spoiled.

"We overcame some adversity tonight," Sharpe said. "We won't let them down next week."

INDIVIDUAL RUSHING Virginia Tech — Lamie, 16 carries, minus 3 yards; Coles, 21-78; Scott, 5-24; Holway, 16-50; Comer, 7-19; LaRue, 6-13; Lewis, 3-21; Memphis State — Patterson, 8-56; Hill, 9-15; King, 6-31; Cage, 6-16; Leche, 4-10; Gray, 1-12.

INDIVIDUAL PASSING Virginia Tech — Lamie, 5 completions, 2 attempts, 2 interceptions, 50 yards; LaRue, 1-2-0; Memphis State — Patterson, 15-29-1-203, 2 TDs.

INDIVIDUAL PASS RECEIVING Virginia Tech — Drinkard, 1 catch, 14 yards; Savage, 2-28; Zollicofer, 2-28; Holway, 1-2; Memphis State — Gray, 4-109, 1 TD; K. Wright, 6-18; Hill, 1-6.