Tech Team Meeting
debt 'Erosion' Blow

Jerry (Lindquist)

Exactly 38 seconds into the final quarter, and Virginia Tech having just gone ahead by 17-0, a couple of William and Mary partisans hoisted a homemade sign and paraded around City Stadium, CULTURE VS. AGRICULTURE. That was the kind of day it was for W&M. On and off the field the timing was all wrong.

With eight - count 'em - eight turnovers plus atrocious punting and major penalties that killed a potential first-period score, not to mention being victimized by an onside kick to open the second half, the Indians gave new meaning to the field. We were our own worst enemy cliché.

What's more, they enabled the hated Hokies to be born again.

A loss here, in the 25h Tobacco Festival game, and Tech would have been 0-4 and a strong candidate to finish 2-9, at the very best. Maybe that's why coach Jimmy Sharpe was shaking, his voice quivering when he spoke, at game's end.

She was certainly recognized the implications. Very simply, Tech had to win. "I almost forgot what it was like," Sharpe said.

In all, the Hokies had dropped six straight including the last three a season ago. Last week Clemson had 21 points before Tech had a first down. The final was 31-13, and the spirits got going.

A negative attitude was eroding whatever chances the Hokies had of bouncing back. There were, admitted linebacker and familiar team speaker Phil Razza a safe list of problems. The seniors called a team meeting Monday, and we aired them out. Everyone said what was on his mind. Then we called coach Sharpe down and told him how we felt.

She was having a good deal of fun in practice. We had so many injuries the players were being timed. The attitude was, "Maybe I'm going to be next."

The Hokies were, Razza explained, "lack confidence.

Sharpe not only heard, he apparently listened, too. "He understood everything we said. We had fun in practice. Practices were shorter. We got together again," Razza said.

David Lamie, Tech quarterback named game MVP, "Everything is positive now."

LAMIE, ALONG WITH alternate quarterback Don LaRue, had been feeling the heat. The rap against Tech has been pointed in two major directions, quarterback and secondary which, until yesterday, had been gosh-awful when confronted with the forward pass.

Against William and Mary, Lamie personally accounted for 121 of the Hokies' 333 yards in total offense and both touchdowns. He was intercepted twice and lost a fumble but the junior from Bristol, Tenn., gained 121 yards on eight carries including a 77-yard touchdown burst at the outset of the final quarter.

"Three quarters of the time the people in the stands don't recognize anyone but the quarterback," Lamie said.

With 18:06, it would have been difficult not to recognize Tech linebackers Jerry Sheehan and Razza as well as defensive backs Gary Smith and Dennis Windmiller. Sheehan and Razza were making all the tackles, or so it seemed.

Sheehan was credited with a staggering 31 including 19 initial hits, Razza 15. Sideline prior to the season with a dislocated shoulder, Smith made his '77 debut by intercepting a pass that led to Tech's first touchdown, making six tackles among them an open-field, touchdown-saving grab of fleet Jimmy Krusi at the Tech 19 and generally plugging the leaks that heretofore had made Tech so susceptible to a thrown ball.

Tom Rozantz, who Riddled Tech overheat last year (27-15, W&M) and was expected to do likewise again, completed 11 passes (for 184 yards) to 1 touchdown and another four to the Hokies. Windmiller picked off two.

"I seemed like he looked a long time at where he was going to throw," said Smith who invariably took advantage.

William and Mary coach Jim Root almost withheld Rozantz from the starting lineup and afterwards he was second-guessing himself. One of the state's best - if not the best - quarterbacks, Rozantz had his knee drained of fluid Thursday and while it didn't keep him from dashing 59 yards to set up the Indians' touchdown, he wasn't as mobile as usual, and the Tribe refrained from going to the quarterback option except on rare occasions. "We tried to get by without it," Root said.

Both teams had to get by without full duty from their chief running threats. A hip pointer, limited Krusi to two carries in the second half, and, at one point, he took himself out of the game. Roscoe (3,000-yards-plus) Cokes injured his left ankle on the first play from scrimmage in the second quarter and appeared only briefly thereafter, gaining 22 yards on 10 carries in. II. Later Cokes was limping noticeably.

Last year, Razza said Tech shouldn't play some state schools, including William and Mary. He said it hurt the Hokies' chances of being selected for bowl games, and yesterday, in the cigar-smoking Tech dressing room at game's end, he didn't back down.

"If we won, it didn't do much for us. If it was close or we lost, it really hurt our chances (in the past)," Razza said. "We have had trouble getting up for state teams but that was when we were winning and beating people like Auburn. There wasn't any trouble getting up today ... and I don't think they (W&M) were ready for us. I don't think they thought we were as good as we are.

"All that talk about how much they hate Tech, and how much money W&M have. That's a bunch of baloney. They have a lot of cocky people on that club."

It was a very emotional outing for both teams, and it should be difficult for anyone to recall the last time Tech and its rabid supporters celebrated a victory over William and Mary with such enthusiasm and abandon. "This was an important game," said Root, holding court in a more subdued manner from the sideline corner of the field. He was attempting to put the whole thing in proper perspective.

"No matter where you work, it seems like there's at least one Hokie ... and if you don't win, you know you'll have to put up with that guy for another year."