Virginia Tech Wins 17-8

BY ED RICHARDS

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RICHMOND — William and Mary dug its own grave against rival Virginia Tech in the Tobacco Bowl Saturday afternoon.

The Indians piled up 435 yards in total offense — 100 more than the Hokies — but buried themselves with eight costly turnovers.

The Hokies clipped in with five turnovers of their own and the evisceration of errors caused away puffing 114 yard victory.

The Hokies’ defense bore best, but broke only once before the disconsolate crowd of 16,000.

It was a cherubified victory for the Hokies, ending a six-game losing streak stretching back to last year.

I’d almost forget what it’s like to win,” said Virginia Tech Coach Jimmy Swearingen in his postgame remarks.

Tech’s defense may have given up a nod of real estate but came up with the big play when the emergency arose.

The eight points represented the lowest point yield by Tech since their last victory — a 28-7 victory over West Virginia in the eighth game of the 1978 season.

The Hokies pounced on four fumbles and bashed in four interceptions, easily the most turnovers they’ve come up with in a long time.

Six-foot-one junior linebacker Jerry Beekman, a terror all day on defense with 19 tackles, 12 assists and two fumble recoveries, put the Hokies in position for the only score in the first half — a 39-yard field goal by Paul Eagle — by jumping on a fumble on the Tribe 8.

Eagle’s boot came with 9:19 to go in the mistake-prone first half, which featured three turnovers by each team.

An interception by junior defensive back Gary Smith at the Tech 49 on the stage for VPI’s first touchdown, a one-yard sneak by junior quarterback David Laneville with 7:30 left in the third quarter.

Eagle’s extra-point boot tied the score to 7-7, giving the Hokies some breathing room on page D-3.

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Breathing room for the first time, Laneville, voted the game’s “Most Valuable Player,” broke the game open early in the fourth quarter with a nifty 77-yard scramble for a 17-7 cushion.

After muffing numerous opportunities, the Indians finally scored on a one-yard plunge by halfback Keith Fiman with 3:10 to play.

A 18-yard dash by quarterback Tom Housh highlighted the 77-yard march.

Housh’s head bar off the 34-yard line, but fumbles and penalties just killed off the needed four.

Another indication that it wasn’t meant to be the Indians’ day came in the second quarter when sophomore Steve Liberal attempted to tie the game at 3-3 with a 46-yard field attempt.

The boot was long enough but hit the top of the left crossbar and bounced off harmlessly.

The Hokies’ pass defense proved a genuine surprise. Coming into the game, they had managed only three interceptions.

Two of the biggest thieftos were pulled off by Table High product Dennis Windmuller. The walkon free safety helped prevent a touchdown by picking off passes in the end zone on the first play of the fourth quarter.

The theft came on a second-and-goal situation from the Tech 4.

Windmuller, a 180-pound junior, also bailed out a tipped pass in the red zone with 2:38 left in the game to kill the Tribe’s final drive.

Other defensive stalwarts for the Hokies included senior linebacker Nick Kazaros, 15 tackles, and junior defensive back Gary Smith. Playing in his first game, Smith registered six tackles, intercepted one pass and broke up two more.

Laneville emerged the game’s leading rusher with 181 yards on 10 totes.

Rossettis wound up with 45 yards, overstepped and on 11 of 16 passes for 184 yards.

Except for Laneville’s long touchdown dash, the Indians’ defense gave ground gradually. It made one terrific goal-line stand in the second quarter, holding Tech on four downs from the Tribe 2.

The W&M defense also rose up shortly thereafter following a fumble recovery by Bashaun at the Tribe 8. Three plays later, the Hokies had gained only three yards and had inarrest for Eagle’s field goal.

Linebacker Jim Ryan and defensive end Ralph Carawan and “Mud” Mason Martin combined for 16 tackles to lend the W&M charge.

Neither of the teams’ leading rushers played a major factor. Tech’s Bruce Collins, a 260-pounder, managed only 20 yards on 16 carries.

Coke saw little action after limping off the field early in the second quarter.

The Indians’ Jimmy Kraus, meanwhile, gained only 44 yards in 12 runs before taking himself out in the second half with a hip-pointer.

Several other bowl records were set, including the four lost fumbles by W&M and the most interceptions by two teams, six.

The Indians showed they could strike quickly as they zoomed 75 yards in four plays on the second possession of the game. Rossettis hit wide receiver Joe Mandlerfield on a 45-yard pass and Rossettis away for 18 yards on the Tribe 3.

That drive, like all but one for the Tribe, fizzle out, this time because of an infeasible 156-yard performance by the Tribe.

The Indians lost not only the game but also defensive halfback Terry Hullah for the season. The 6-foot-year-old suffered a cracked bone in his neck on the first play of the second quarter.

Windmiller additionally added 105 yards rushing. His 3-yard dash was the only rushing score.