Jerry Sheehan Comes to Rest Atop William and Mary Tailback Jim Kruis
Tech Linebacker Assisted Tackle Doug McDougald (behind Sheehan) on This Play

Sheehan Gets a Lift
As Lineman of Week

By Mike Bevans

Jerry Sheehan, a red-shirt junior linebacker, had virtually nothing to show for his first three seasons at Virginia Tech. "I was down... felt bad at times," he admitted. Four games into the 1977 season, however, his spirits have been lifted considerably.

Having earned a spot in the starting lineup during the pre-season, Sheehan gained a bonus yesterday when he was named The Associated Press national lineman of the week for his efforts in helping Tech stop William and Mary, 17-6, in the Tobacco Festival game Saturday at City Stadium.

SHEEHAN WAS CREDITED with 17 tackles, eight assists, two fumble recoveries and two deflected passes as the Hokies ended a six-game losing streak dating back to the final three games of last season.

"I was just trying to get to the ball like in any other game," said Sheehan, a 6-1, 212-pounder from Wilmington, Del. "I didn't know how many tackles I really had during the game."

Sheehan was sidelined by an injury his freshman season, then was red-shirted as a sophomore. He lettered as a reserve linebacker last season.

"I just wanted to play... do my best," Sheehan said of 1977 goals. "You've got to get into the game first, before you can do anything else."

Sheehan said the Hokies ran their basic defense and he was at a loss to explain the unusual number of tackle opportunities afforded him.

The fumble recoveries were his first at Tech. On both occasions he was chasing down the ballcarrier, when another Tech defender jarred the ball loose. "You get near the ballcarrier and sometimes you get the ball, too," noted Sheehan.

His recovery of a first quarter fumble at the W&M eight-yard line set up Paul Engle's 23-yard field goal, the only score in the first half. Sheehan pounced on another loose ball in the third quarter to halt a W&M drive at the Tech 34.

SHEEHAN IS THE THIRD state player to be named national lineman of the week in the past four seasons, Virginia Military linebacker John Willis received the honor in 1974 and Richmond linebacker Orlandus Branch was named last season.

Willison and Branch both were selected for performances against Virginia Tech. Willison, Branch and Sheehan all were cited for efforts on City Stadium turf.