Tech Needs Leaders

By Mike Bevans

Virginia Tech's second play from scrimmage last Saturday at Texas A&M had quarterback Mitchell Barnes overthrowing wide receiver Moses Foster. A perfect pass might have resulted in a 57-yard touchdown.

Foster had the room and the angle to make it to the end zone and who knows what an early 7-0 lead on such an explosive play would have done for the Hokies.

As it turned out, Tech wound up with minus-10 yards to show for its first offensive series, 58 yards of total offense for the game and a 16-13 defeat when it was over. The Aggies made certain the Hokies never again had such a scoring opportunity.

"It hurt our pride that we lost and the offense was disappointed that it didn't score," said Tech fullback Paul Adams of the Hokies first shutout in 67 games. "But we really don't feel like we have to come back and prove anything."

The Hokies' had rolled up 599 yards in a 23-3, season-opening victory at Wake Forest the week previous, but "Tech was going up against last year's No. 1 defense in the nation at College Station."

THE AGGIES WERE a huge and physical band of veterans on defense and Adams was the lone Hokie ballcarrier able to contend with the strength of A&M. He led Tech's 57 first-half total yards and wound up with a team-high 50 yards on 12 carries.

Through two games, Adams has yet to be stopped before or at the line of scrimmage.

"I'd like to keep that up all year," said Adams, a 3-0, 220-pound senior. "My size probably makes a difference and I hit the biggest back on the team."

"We prepared hard for the game (with A&M) and we thought we could possibly pull off an upset. Size was a factor and we made some mistakes. If we played them again, we would handle the situation differently. We'd know what to expect and we'd do some things we didn't do first time."

Adams' 80 yards on 3 carries helped the Hokies after two games. He had been the fullback spot in the Wake game and senior George Heath, who notched 17 carries.

Tech has yet to pull off a big play. In the likes of what a punt return against A&M might have produced, Foster hooked up for a 37-yard TD pass against Wake with Foster making a great catch and run in the back of the end zone.

TECH OWNED A 13-0 lead at the half, however, and that score was far more than insurance. Heath's 8-yard dash at the one minute against A&M was the only highlight for either team and it was far too little, far too late.

"Somebody's going to have to pick up a team," said Adams. "In the past, it's taken three or four weeks for the offense to come around. We can't afford that this year."

"We've got a good offense, a good defense, but I don't feel like I've carried my share of the load or other guys don't either."

The Hokies will play next to receive Mississippi in their home opener at Lane Stadium. The Southern was beaten last week at East Carolina. They pass for 276 yards, running up 472 yards (196 rushing) and giving up 174 to Southerners on 176.

"We plan on coming back against Adam," said Adams, "but this isn't Eastern. Southern Mississippi, this is us -- we're against Southern Mississippi. This will be tougher than from my freshman year and this one will be tough."

"We're not looking at what somebody did. They'll be like us -- a lot different this week."

SOMETHING DIFFERENT For Tech will be that rallying point -- a big play可以说是 offense. Halfback Roscoe Cates said he was supposed its strength. Last week he had a 94-yard pass against the Aggies. And Adams will have another this season.

"Basically," explained Adams, "the one thing we need to do is somebody to step up and be a team leader. I don't know who to pick."

What about Paul Adams? "I don't know," he said. "I don't know."

"I've been around a while. If I have to be, I could be the one."

Paul Adams:

"I could pick the team up. A couple of times last year we needed a good run and I would break out for one. Maybe Saturday I can get things started coming around."

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