The N.I.T.
Champs Start
Off Slow

BY DAVE J. BISSET

Va. Tech '73 N.I.T. Champions, opened the season with a 62-51 win over a scrappy bunch of Keydets from VMI before a sellout crowd in the Tech Coliseum Saturday night.

The Gobblers had to struggle throughout the game and many area fans want to know what was wrong with their champions.

Tech Coach Don DeVoe told it like this after the game: "Our team was too over-anxious at both ends of the court to play well...Having the final minutes of the N.I.T. really payche us out...the game was very physical and we muffed a lot of shots. Even our shot selection was poor. VMI kept us shooting from the perimeter the whole game...not allowing us to get the ball down in deep to Craig or Kyle."

But on the plus side, Bobby (Stevens) played a good game and Kyle (McKee) did a fine job on the boards (high man with 11 rebounds) Calvin (Wade) chipped in with 12 points and Duke Thorpe's 7 rebounds in six minute of action is a lot concerning this was his first varsity game ever, added DeVoe.

It took Tech almost two minutes before hitting a bucket as Charlie Thomas found Wade underneath for a quick 2-0 lead. But with three and half minutes gone, Curt Reppart hit a bucket to give VMI the lead at 5-4. That's the way the entire first half was played. Nip and tuck with the lead exchanging hand nine times.

Tech's biggest margin was 21-15 thanks to DeVoe's second unit which entered the game with 6 minutes remaining before half. This team is consisted of Tim Harvey, Mike Collins, Dennis Shrewsbury and Dave Sensabaugh. Sensabaugh quickly stole the ball and laid it up for two for that six point lead. However, Reppart and Steve Chapan hit for VMI. McKee added a free throw but Charlie Tyler sank one from the corner and added a foul shot to send VMI out in front 23-22.

With seconds left in the half former Bobcat star Tim Harvey cut loose a jump shot which swished the cords as the buzzer sounded and Tech regained the lead at 24-23.

Defense was the name of the game in the second half for the Techmen as they held VMI to six points in the first eight minutes. Tech lead 40-29, but then several costly turnovers saw the Hokie lead melt away as VMI struggled to cut it to 42-37 with just 10 minutes to go in the contest.

Senior Ed Fraizer added a two free throws and Sensabaugh's bucket made it 46-37. Then, Tech came down the court and attempted a shot near the press table when an avid fan decided to throw a coke on the floor. It splattered on one game official a security guard and a photographer. With this incident, taking place the game was halted for several minutes until the coke was cleaned up from the new Tech floor and the avid rooter was escorted from the coliseum by two security guards.

In the next eight minutes Tech failed to score a field goal but VMI constantly fouled the Hokies where the covered 11 out of 14 from the line and slowly pulled the game out of the fire.

So, just what's wrong with Tech? Well DeVoe probably said it best: "Are big men need more experience because they (McKee and Thorpe) are still young and as a unit we don't play well against a small team. But, added DeVoe we will have to grow up as a team, since Aubyn is the next opponent. They started two freshmen two sophomores and an junior last week in a game with Clemson and then on Monday we face Tall Alabama."