Gobblers Shade Bonnies, 77-75

By STAN SHALETT
Daily Press Sport Writer
BLACKSBURG — Shades of the NIT! Virginia Tech's basketball team swept past tall, talented St. Bonaventure, 77-75, here Saturday with the kind of late heroics that carried the Gobblers to the National Invitation Tournament championship in New York a year ago.

A jam-packed crowd saw the Gobblers rally from a 30-24 deficit in the first half to earn the victory, their sixth of the year in 11 starts and 17th straight at home. The Bonnies are now 9-3.

Tech took the lead for good with eight minutes to play when Craig Lieder keyed a six-point spurt by the Gobblers with a short jump shot for a 62-61 advantage.

St. Bonaventure cut the margin to a single point at 69-68, but Charlie Thomas opened it to three again with a jump shot with 3:40 left.

After Ed Frazier's tip-in, St. Bonaventure's fine center, Glenn Price, tallied on a three-point play to make the difference a scant two points with 1:58 remaining.

Thomas and Lieder put up a score of 14, but Price scored again inside and came up with a steal and a driving layup seconds later.

However, Price was called for charging on the play and left the game with his fifth foul. Reserve Howie Harrison scored seven outside with 20 seconds left and Tech was down to a two-point margin.

With three seconds left, Thomas missed a pair of free throws. St. Bonaventure got the ball but missed a desperation shot as the buzzer sounded.

Don Devoe, Virginia Tech's head coach, was pleased with the victory but not with the Gobblers' defense.

"We let them set the tempo and do what they wanted to do," said Devoe.

"I was worried for a full 40 minutes. I'm glad we were ahead." Devoe had high praise for sophomore Kyle McKee, who scored 18 points, mostly from outside. "This was his best game for us offensively," said the coach. "He gave us some punch."

The Bonnies let the 6-foot-6 soph shot at will from long range, and McKee took advantage.

"Our scouting reports had him down as a weak scorer," as we told Price to key to," said Devoe. "We kept him outside and help out against Lieder underneath," disappointed Jim Satalin said.

Price was the game's top scorer with 25 points. Teammate Essie Hollis had 20. Both scored 14 in the first half, which the visitors led, 38-36.

Duke Thorpe played Hollis in the second half in a match of freshmen and slowed the youngster down.

McKee and Thomas led the Gobblers with 18 points each.

ST. BONAVENTURE VIRGINIA TECH

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St. Bonaventure: 38-77 Virginia Tech: 35-97