Spiders Nip VPI, 90-86

BY BOB MOSKOWITZ
Daily Press Sports Writer

RICHMOND — Richmond edged VPI to a 54-37 halftime lead and then hung on for dear life to salvage a 90-86 conquest of Virginia Tech Tuesday night before 8,500.

Bob McCurdy, the transfer from the University of Virginia, paced the triumph with a game-high haul of 34 points. He was followed by Ann Stewart's 27 points, which gave him a career total of 1,022.

Virginia Tech's Charlie Thomas scored 19 points and the pride of West Point, Duke Thorpe, had 16 points and 12 rebounds. Stewart hauled in 12 off the boards.

The Gobbler closed the gap to 38-30 with 1:28 to play but then a surge led by McCurdy and Stewart, fell behind by 50-42 with 23 seconds to go.

For the first 13 minutes of the first half, play was patinated as a series of peaks and valleys with the separations for both teams fairly even.

Then, with Richmond up 28-25, the Spiders reeled off 12 points in succession to leave the Gobbler reeling, a condition which they suffered the rest of the half which wound up with the hosts leading 54-37.

Richmond, getting an unceasing attack from its front line, led by 50-31 with 1:24 left before the break, for its healthiest advantage of the first 20 minutes.

Tech led twice, once at 2-0 on Bobby Stevens' shot and then at 16-8 with 15:24 left in the first period when Craig Beecher scored from inside.

The rest of the half belonged to the hosts with the exception of a nine-point charge by Tech which began with 10:23 remaining.

The count before the rally was 35-26 and Tech, 9-5 on Stevens' drive in left Richmond up at 28-16.

Then Duke Thorpe, Charlie Thomas and Frazier combined for the Tech string that narrowed the bulge to 28-25 with 7:18 remaining.

From there the play belonged to the pressing, advancing Spiders.

Play was interrupted with 1:37 left when two dogs decided to cavort in center court.

Virginia Tech's game by then had obviously gone to the dogs and far beyond.

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Virginia Tech: 27 - Richmond: 16

Virginia Tech 54 - Richmond 36

Total: 90

38,747 in attendance

N.C. State: 90 - Virginia Tech: 89

Point guard: Virginia Tech: Collier, technical foul: Thomas.