State Teams Unimpressive So Far

Just three weeks into the college football season and many people in Virginia are already sitting around, waiting for basketball to start.

Again this year, Virginia's Big Five might be more aptly described as the Little Three and Medium Two. For three of the five, the only thing big has been disappointment.

After their first two games, VMI, Virginia and Richmond are all still winless. All are 0-2. Tech stands 2-1 with a loss that is nothing to be ashamed of, but the Gobblers haven't looked like the team everyone expected.

What William and Mary is doing, no one knows. The Indians have now won three in a row, including their win over Richmond to end last season. Two of those three they were expected to lose. Again this week, W&M will be expected to lose to East Carolina, but even if it does, it has already done enough to sit back and brag about.

Richmond might actually have a good football team. The Spiders have lost to Tulsa and Maryland on the road. Their schedule becomes more realistic this week when they play VMI.

Virginia is Virginia. The UVa band puts on one of the best halftime shows around, but it's too bad it is sandwiched on both sides by UVa football. The Cavaliers had no right losing to William and Mary Saturday, but they made it look natural. It will be another long year in Charlottesville, but what's different about that?

VMI has changed things around this year. The Keydets apparently are in need of a defense, which is the only thing they have had in the past. It's been many a year since teams like W&M and Appalachian could push the Keydets around on the defensive line.

Obviously, either VMI or Richmond is going to win a game this week since they play each other. The Keydets are 0-2 in the Southern Conference, but UR is no longer in the conference. If Richmond is going to have a successful year, it must beat all the SC teams it plays.

Tech is idle this week. The Gobblers are strong on defense, but can't move the ball well. Roscoe Coles is the only real threat Tech has for a big play. Chuck Nuttycombe, George Heath and Paul Adams might pick up yardage, but Coles is the only explosive player in the backfield.

Last year, the Hokies found an offense midway through the season. That might happen again. But unless it does, Tech's record won't be indicative of the true quality of the team. The Gobblers' defense is good enough to carry the team through most of the season, with maybe one more loss.

But the Gobblers don't have a 10-1 or 9-2 offense. To be a nationally recognized team, Tech will have to do better on offense.

Some good games around the state are shaping up. Virginia's only remaining hopes for wins seem to be VMI and Lehigh. But one of VMI's few hopes to win is Virginia. That might be a brutal encounter.

The Keydets also have The Citadel, Delaware and Indiana State on their schedule. Little is known about Indiana State, but The Citadel and Delaware like to grind it out on the ground. That's where VMI seems to be vulnerable.

Tech should still have too much for the other teams in the state, unless William and Mary can continue. That should be four wins for the Gobblers.

But if Tech is truly a Top 20-caliber team, it would win those games with ease, at least three of them.

Teams from this state are fortunate because they have other teams from this state to play. If William and Mary had started with Richmond's schedule, it would probably be 0-2 also. The Indians have a right to be proud of beating the Cavaliers. But things should be put in proper perspective. The Indians happen to be the 11th team in a row to beat UVa. That's the longest current losing streak in the nation.

Tech and William and Mary might have good teams. VMI, Virginia and Richmond might surprise some people. But unless things change drastically, the basketball season will start in about two months to a sigh of relief.