No one game makes or breaks an entire season, but last Saturday’s win over Southern Mississippi did “make” the month of September for Virginia Tech by giving the Hokies a winning mark in the opening month of a campaign for the first time since 1967.

It wasn’t fancy perhaps, but it was at least as important as last year’s win over Richmond and there was marked similarity.

The Gophers, having lost their first two contests, were in need of a win, which they got, 21-9, in a performance that wasn’t highly impressive, but it was the start of a four-game winning streak during which the Hokies become more impressive.

The “big play” against Richmond was a 69-yard TD dash by Roscoe Coles. Against Southern Mississippi the redoubtable junior blazed 37 yards for the score that got the Gophers untracked.

For Coles, it was the eighth 100-plus rushing performance of his career, tying Terry Smoot for second on Tech’s all-time list. Coles next will tie him with Phil Rogers. Beyond that, Coles will be setting targets for future Hokies to shoot at.

Putting his achievements into perspective, you measure against Tech’s three most productive running backs during the last 10 years, Smoot, J. B. Barber and Roger Coles.

Coles already has scored more TDs, 18, than Rogers did, 17, in his career, and sometime during the next two or three games Roscoe will surpass the career rushing marks of both Barber and Smoot—marks that were considered very noteworthy at the time.

Coles, as well as Sharpe and staff, know that records will take care of themselves. What they really want is for the offense to establish itself. And it most likely will.

In each of Coach Jimmy Sharpe’s two previous seasons, the Gophers haven’t really liked it all together until the fourth game.

With an open date this Saturday, there will be an unusual wait, but even that isn’t likely to be bad since the Gophers will use the off time this week (Tech has the open date) to let heal some injuries that has hurt the Hokie cause.

And the layoff also will allow Sharpe and staff some time, usually not available, to concentrate on further development of some promising young talent. It could prove to be a mini Spring practice in terms of developing playing depth.

Sharpe has indicated that some freshmen in particular will be capable of contributing substantially as soon as they understand “the big picture.”

And that’s what the first few days of this week could develop.

Aside from having won an opening game for the first time since 1967 and having posted a winning record in September for the first time since then, and having developed a defense worthy of the name for the first time in almost as long, another department has burst suddenly upon the scene, a kicking game that is worthy of note.

Sharpe was hopeful and positive, but still, before the season opened, it was untested.

George Roberts’ punts were obvious factors in last Saturday’s win.

Paul (Chick) Beattie’s field goal range and accuracy has proved comforting.

And freshman Eric King’s kickoff range has become a plus.

Auditing September’s trial balance, Sharpe hasn’t got much to kick about.

TORN JERSEY DAY—Roscoe Coles, whose jersey was torn by a USM tackler, is removing the old tear-away jersey before a team manager helps him put on a new one.

A defender grabbing at a Tech runner sometimes is left with a handful of his jersey as the runner keeps going.