Starved For Action, Hokies Are Hungry

By Mike Bevans

Virginia Tech football players, hungry for game conditions, will end a two-week famine tomorrow when they line up opposite William and Mary at Lane Stadium. An open date, as was the case for Tech last Saturday, might be welcome by the wounded, but for the healthy starved for action, it's a drag.

Witness defensive tackle Mike Faulkner, a very healthy 6'2, 250-pound sophomore.

"I don't wish for another," Faulkner said of idle Saturdays. "You get used to playing every week, then when you practice all week and don't play on Saturday it's a letdown."

"That week of practice flies when you have a game on Saturday."

And so they have progressed this week. "The practices we've had this week are probably the best couple back-to-back we've had this year," noted Faulkner.

The Hokies are 2-1 and the defense has provided most of the high points of a campaign previewed as bowl material. Wins over Wake Forest and Southern Miss have been sandwiched around a loss at Texas A&M.

"WE'VE BEEN PLAYING good football, but not enthusiastic football," said Faulkner. "I'm not saying we've been down... don't get me wrong. We could be playing a lot more enthusiastically and I look for it to happen this week."

Faulkner had probably his best game against Texas A&M, recording two quarterback sacks among nine tackles. He came back against Southern Miss and made nine initial hits to go along with two assists.

The Hokies' last signee two years ago, Faulkner moved into the lineup two games into his freshman season and has started ever since. He gained The Football News freshman All-America squad a year ago.

"I really feel like I'm into it a lot more this year," he said. "I had a good summer workout and I knew what to do when I got back. I had learned the ropes."

Unlike a great many members of the Hokie defense, Faulkner began his collegiate career on the upswing, helping Tech to an 8-3 season built on a fast-improving defense. Just prior to last season, losing records and porous defenses were the rule.

"I COULDN'T ASK for anything better," said...