W&M Tops VPI 27-15, Looks Keen

By GEORGE WATSON
Daily Press Sports Writer
BLACKSBURG - William and Mary's Indians would have squelched once and for all Saturday anyone's doubts that they are for real and to be considered among the elite of the South. Coach Jim Root's charges played a nearly-flawless game, offensively and defensively, to decisively whip highly-regarded Virginia Tech 27-15 in a contest where the final score was not a true indication of the Tribe's dominance.

With the Tim Rozantz-directed offense controlling the ball for a total of 38 minutes, and fullback Keith Firmian racing through holes and over the Tech defense, W&M's Indians scored three touchdowns, outrushing the Hokies 220-100. The Indians gained 35 first downs to Tech's 21 and outscored them in rushing, passing, and total offense.

The Indians failed toumbles or throw an interception, were penalized only three times for 27 yards, and no crucial breakdowns on defense and got an outstanding performance from their kickers - punter Joe Agee and place-kicker Steve Libanaz.

"Boy, I'd tell you this was the biggest, best damn win ever for us," an exuberant Root shouted in the wild W&M dressing room. "I never doubted we could stay with VPI and beat them, but I never thought we could dominate like this."  

"VPI is an outstanding team, but some folks have got to start believing we are pretty darn good ourselves," added the Tribe boss, who has now beaten the Techmen three of his five years on the Reservation.

Besides seeing their record dip to 3-2, Coach Jimmy Sharpee's Gobblers were defeated in their second straight game.

Here is the game summary:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>W&amp;M</th>
<th>VPI</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First downs</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushing yards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Penalty yards</td>
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W&M - Fullback Keith Firmian (45) 
VPI - Fullback Steve Libanaz (64) 
W&M - Quarterback Joe Agee (15) 
VPI - Quarterback Jim Root (22) 
W&M - Linebacker Steve Libanaz (52) 
VPI - Linebacker Gary Brown (51) 
W&M - Running back Tim Rozantz (15) 
VPI - Running back Dave O'Neill (22) 
W&M - Wide receiver William Watson (80) 
VPI - Wide receiver Joe Agee (15) 
W&M - Tight end Joe Agee (80) 
VPI - Tight end Dave O'Neill (22) 
W&M - Offensive tackle Pete Griffin (74) 
VPI - Offensive tackle Gary Brown (51) 
W&M - Defensive tackle Mike King (90) 
VPI - Defensive tackle Steve Libanaz (52) 
W&M - Linebacker Steve Libanaz (52) 
VPI - Linebacker Gary Brown (51) 

VPI's Gene Binn (45) Steve Cannon (64) Corral Tom Rozantz

No Errors Mar Effort For W&M

Continued From D-1 also had two six-game winning streaks come to an end one against State schools and the other against teams visiting Lane Stadium.

While the Indians were performing so smoothly, the Gobblers would certainly have been willing to share some of their minutes with the visitors. The shots finished four times (leading one which led to the Indians first score), were guilty of one interception and had 16 penalties stopped against them for 68 yards. 46 of those in the first half.

"When you play a W&M team, you have to get on top of them right away," Root observed. "That's exactly what the Indians did."


In seven plays the Indians were on the scoreboard via Firmian's one-yard plunge of left tackle. The big play in the series came with a third-and-nine situation at the 23 when Rozantz connected on a 15-yard gainer over the middle to Gray Oliver.

W&M's second TD came with 6:26 left in the half following a 12-play, 85-yard drive which started after Tech punter George Roberts, who staged a strong make with Agee, returned a 65-yard punt.

Again it was the Rozantz-Oliver combination that got the Indians in scoring position with an 18-yard completion to the 2. Two plays later Firmian, who carried 22 times for 46 yards, bulled his way for a score, the extra point missed.

Libanaz added his second extra point to make it 14-7.

The highly-patient crowd of 33,000 finally had something to cheer about when the Gobblers scored on a fluke play 1:11 before halftime. With a first down at the W&M 33, Barnes lofted a bomb to Moses Foster which Tribe cornerbacks Kenny Smith batted away right into Foster's waiting arms for the six-pointer.

This was the Gobblers first penetration of W&M territory and came as a result of Henry Bradley's 12-yard return of an Agee punt from the end zone. That got the ball on the W&M 47.

Libanaz got the Indians on the scoreboard again midway through the third period with a 24-yard field goal, his first of two for the day. His other came with 6:41 left in the game from 41 yards out.

The freshman from Annandale has now connected on six of seven for the year.

Mark Mallady's 27-yard punt return and a 13-yard personal foul penalty set up the winners' final touchdown in the closing seconds of the third period.

Although under a strong rush, Rozantz connected with Firmian in the flat for a 4-yard TD pass.

For the afternoon, the sophomore Tribe signal-caller connected on 8 of 15 passes for 181 yards while also adding 33 on the ground in seven carries.

Jim Kraus, the Indians' leading rusher for the year and ranked 21st in the nation, was held to 16 yards in 20 carries.

The game's "tipped" ruher was the Gobblers' highly-touted Ronnie Coles, who accumulated 115 yards in 15 attempts.

However, most of Coles' yardage came in Tech's 99-yard touchdown drive in the closing minutes against W&M reserves.

The junior speedster from Virginia Beach did not break off his patented long-gainers against the tough Tribe defense until a 19-yard scampare late in the fourth quarter when the outcome was already decided.

Tech's final touchdown came with 1:36 left on George Hatches 44-yard run. Coles ran the two-point conversion.

One of the contest's top performances was turned in by the punters. Roberts averaged 47.8 yards for eight boots and Agee, who had a disappointing performance against East Carolina last week, got off six for a 46.5 average.