Tech Makes It This Time

By DOUG DOUGHTY
Sports Writer

CHARLOTTESVILLE — For 59 minutes they lay unmoled, two little strips of white adhesive tape crossed in the shape of an ‘X’ in the University of Virginia end zone.

“Only four people knew they were there,” said Virginia Tech assistant Bruce Ariens, who was responsible for the simple form of handiwork. “And, if one of them hadn’t touched it, I know I wouldn’t have told a soul.

“I touched it. I touched it,” said Hokies’ running back Roioe Coles and, contrasted with a similar situation two years ago, there was no denying the Hokie running back’s claim as Tech rallied to beat the Cavaliers, 14-10, Saturday.

The ‘X’ marked the spot where Adriane’s bid for a two-point conversion fell short in a 28-27 loss to Virginia the last time the teams met in Charlottesville in 1974.

“I told him it didn’t do any good to touch it,” said Ariens, noting that the spot was a yard deep in the end zone.

“He had to go past it.

Coles’ scoring run with 1:08 remaining capped a six-minute, 70-yard drive by the Hokies that left first-year UVa Coach Dick Bestwick no closer to his first win than when the season opened six games ago.

Favored to lose by as many as 14 points, the Cavaliers trailed the entire game until Franklin County’s Raymond Keys vaulted one yard for the go-ahead touchdown with 7:12 to play.

“I thought we had it won at that point,” said Virginia nose guard Sam Pfnas, who made 12 tackles from his defensive spot, "but this has happened before. There’s no way we have to let them go all the way down the field on us.

Just as the pendulum was beginning to swing back in favor of the Cavaliers, the Hokies’ Ellis Savage denied his blockers by taking the ensuing kickoff five yards deep in the end zone and returning it to the 30.

Several times it looked as if Savage would be stopped deep in his own territory, but ultimately it took a saving tackle by Derrick Glasper to keep him from going all the way.

"Any time you stop ‘em back there, it severely limits them," said UVa linebacker Joe Turner, who had a 50-yard interception return earlier in the game. "We shouldn’t have let them get out of that hole.

Coach Jimmy Sharpe’s team had scored on its third possession of the game as Paul Adams broke three tackles from seven yards out, but the Hokies’ wishbone attack was victimized by turnovers and horrible field position all day.

The last drive went off without a hitch, however, as the Hokies were faced with only one "must" situation, a fourth-and-one on which Coles gained three yards from the Virginia 15.

It was close enough that there was no question Tech would go for the first down, although Sharpe admittedly debated the possibility of kicking a field goal and having to accept the result tie several times during the drive.

"Thank goodness we didn’t have to make that decision," said Sharpe, "but I think the players would have made us go for it.

Doing it the easy way, the Hokies picked up a first down on the Cavalier three-yard line as the result of two runs by Adams and a six-yard pickup by Dennis Scott. Coles finally went over for the score after he and Adams had both taken a crack at Virginia's stacked defensive line.

It was a satisfying run, but the play was no less crucial than the desperation tackle Coles made as Turner was threatening to turn his intercepted pass into a touchdown with 7:12 to play in the first half.

Fighting off a convoy of four blockers, Coles made a diving stop on Turner at the Hokies’ 17 and it took just one play to get the ball back, as Keys fumbled the ball after a particularly jarring hit by Mike Faulkner.

Linebacker Mike Stollings recovered for the Hokies and the Cavaliers were denied at least a three-pointer, just as they were early in the second quarter when Andy Hitt fumbled the snap on a 21-yard field goal attempt.

Ever modest, Coles said he couldn’t remember when he made a tackle of like importance.

"Where was he when the play started?" the fleet-footed running back was asked.

"I was on the ground," Coles replied. "I was still on the ground when he ran past me.

The Hokies’ junior also spent a considerable amount of time on the bench, nursing an accumulation of injuries that has forced Sharpe to hold him out of practice the last three weeks. Still, Coles managed 86 yards in 18 carries, tying him for the game rushing honors with teammate Adams.

Virginia’s quarterback, Hitt, was able to capitalize on an inexperienced secondary—Eddie Snell started only three days after moving over from quarterback at midweek—in the first half. For the final 29 minutes, the Cavaliers openly disclaimed the run, going to running backs Billy Copeland—before he was injured—and Keys.

See Virginia Tech, Page D-4

Tech Had It in the Clutch—Page D-4

Virginia Tech

| Tech | Tech-Adams 7 run (Ellings kick) | 7 – 10 |

Staff Photos

By Jack Gaking

A ‘Key’ Gain

Raymond Keys of Virginia goes high in an attempt to score the Cavs’ first touchdown of the day against Virginia Tech in Charlottesville Saturday afternoon. However, he was grounded on the Gobbler one-yard line on this play. Keys eventually did score two plays later.

VIR.—FG Jenkins 35; C’Ville.—Keys 1 run (Jenkins kick) Tech.—Coles 1 run (Ellings kick) A.—TIE.

IN THE STATISTICS

Tech | UVa | Tech | UVa | Tech | UVa

First Downs | 27 | 36 | 10 | 17 | 0 | 0

Total Yards | 316 | 300 | 108 | 144 | 0 | 0

Passing—C-A-C | 11-25-174 | 11-26-139 | 0-0-0 | 0-0-0 | 0-0-0 | 0-0-0

Total Passing | 130 | 139 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0

Penalties—Yards | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0

Fumbles—Lost | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0

INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

RUSHING: Virginia Tech—Coles 16-164; Adams 8-56; Hitt 1-48; Scott 2-5; Raves 2-4; Lamb 2-1; King 7-17; Virginia—Copeland 15-94; Keys 16-76; Gobbler 4-29. Total 264; Total 237. FUMBLE–Jenkins 1-lost, Scott 1-lost.


RECEIVING: Virginia Tech—Foster 3-38; Dohlin 2-20; Virginia—wicks 6-88; Bynum 3-13; Gobbler 1-14. Total 12-173; Total 13-147.