Countdown Is Now 22

By JERRY RATCLIFFE
Senior Sports Editor

On the wall in Virginia Tech’s team meeting room were the words “Countdown to Greatness 24”.

Reduce that to 22 now. That’s how many days remain in Tech’s regular season football future. If the remaining 22 days are as great as Coach Jimmy Sharpe anticipates, then the Hokies may add a couple of other weeks to the season via a bowl invitation.

“I had confidence in our team today,” he said after watching his Hokies pile up victory number six against two losses.

Confidence. That’s what a coach and team has when it wins the toss and elects to kickoff with the wind behind them. The strategy was no big thing, but it sure didn’t hurt Tech.

“Our offensive coaches wanted the ball, but I felt if we could keep them pinned in down there, we’d have a good chance.”

Tech’s aggressive defense caught West Virginia’s offense in a rout. The Mountaineers were stymied on their first five possessions, twice by fumbles, once by an interception and twice by punts.

WVU, which controlled the ball only 20 minutes of the game, got off only nine offensive plays in the second quarter.

If it hadn’t been for some Tech mistakes, mostly two lost fumbles, the game might have been over at halftime.

“I thought Coach Cignetti did a great job of getting his team ready defensively,” praised Sharpe.

Sharpe was a bit surprised that the Mountaineers didn’t use the draw play. “They’ve used it with success in the past and we had prepared for it.” But it never came.

WVU did pass nearly every down for the last quarter and part of the third.

“I felt we should’ve had more points in the first half. But give West Virginia credit for good defense.”