Lamie Accepts Blame

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RICHMOND — Contrary to popular belief, it was not the wishbone offense that killed Virginia Tech in a 16-0 loss to Richmond Saturday.

No sir, quarterback David Lamie. It was the Hokies who executed themselves.

"Nobody can tell me the wishbone isn't a come-from-behind offense," said Lamie, who was asked on three separate occasions to resurrect the Gobblers' punchless attack.

"That isn't it at all. No offense can be successful if it doesn't execute."

That was the technical side of an afternoon that saw the Hokies accumulate a mere 224 yards for the game, just 70 of that in the second half.

Added to that, when Rick Razzano departed after the first play of the game keeping his streak of consecutive starts alive at 51, any emotional edge the Hokies may have had left the field with him.

"Rick's more than just a player, he's our spiritual leader," said defensive tackle Mike Faulkner, nodding his head when asked if Richmond had picked on Razzano's vacated spot in the middle.

"He's emotional and we can always count on him to fire us up. It just wasn't the same without him in there."

If the Tech defense felt lost without its leader, the offense experienced a similar lack of direction. Barnes started despite a broken arm, but was largely ineffective, completing three of nine passes for 53 yards.

Lamie wasn't much better, as he gained just two yards on nine carries and had the one pass he threw intercepted by Spider Ricky Crawford.

Barnes refused to talk to the press after the game. Only Lamie, the sophomore from Kingsport, Tenn., stayed to take the blame for the Hokies' quarter backing woes.

"Sure, it's tough to come off the bench," he conceded, "but that's what I'm here for. I thought we were moving the ball pretty well there at the end (Lamie moved the club to the Richmond 41 before the interception), but then it was too late."

In the past, the Hokies have been able to survive an off day from Barnes, primarily because of the running of Roscoe Coles. The 5-9, 170-pound junior went into the game with 918 yards and seemed a cinch to crack the 1,000-yard mark for the season.

Not only did Coles fail to get his 82 yards for the day (he was held to 41 yards in 16 carries), but the Spiders stopped him for minus one yard rushing in the second half.

"Is that all?" said Coles, informing his rushing statistics after the game. "That's terrible, ain't it."

Asked to explain why Richmond had succeeded where other teams have failed, Coles replied that the Spiders were keying on him all afternoon.

"When I moved to the left, they had the left cornerback (Crawford) move right along with me. When I went to the other side, it was No. 35 (Mike Andrus)."

It was Crawford and line backer Olandus Branch who combined to stop Coles inches from the goal line moments before the first half ran out. The Hokies had first and goal at the three-yard line, but Coles could not get the touchdown, first on a sweep around right end and then on a drive play up the middle.

"I don't think I got in," said Coles, silencing those fans who felt Tech got the short end of the referee's decision. "Maybe my head, maybe my shoulders went over. But, not the ball."

Unlike last week's 35-31 loss to Tulsa, which triggered a tremendous outpouring of grief and sorrow in the VPI locker room, the Hokies knew they had been whipped when they came off the field at City Stadium.

"It's really embarrassing to be beat by Richmond," said Coles. "The only way I can explain it is to say this loss was a leftover from the Tulsa game."

"I just think we were overconfident," said Lamie, who disagreed with Coles, contending that Tech had forgotten the Tulsa game.

"I feel like you can't take anybody too lightly," concluded Faulkner, who faced a number of Richmond's players in Washington, D.C., prep circles.

"Do you think that was the case here today?" Faulkner was asked.

"Probably," was his reply.