GOING FOR RECORD — Larry Key (44) needed 96 yards to set a Florida State yardage record going into last night's game against Virginia Tech and he got them with a 97-yard touchdown dash in the first period. The run also set an FSU record for longest run from scrimmage as he outran Tom Beasley (77) and Mike Hugnes, among other Gobblers. FSU beat Virginia Tech, 28-21, in Tallahassee.

Big Plays Sink Tech, 28-21

By John Puckett
Times-Dispatch Sports Writer
TALLAHASSEE — Big plays were the order of the evening Saturday night for Florida State University, and one of the biggest — a 96-yard pass play with 5:45 left — made a loser out of Virginia Tech.

Freshman quarterback Jimmy Jordan's bomb to split end Kurt Unglaub enabled the Seminoles to register a 28-21 victory in the final game of the season for both teams.

Jordan, who came on early in the fourth quarter in relief of starter Jimmy Black, had brought Florida State to within one point earlier in the final period with a 33-yard TD pass to flanker Jackie Flowers.

Prior to those two big plays, the Seminoles had excited a small Campbell Stadium crowd of 16,146 with a 97-yard touchdown run by tailback Larry Key and a 73-yard TD pass from Black to flanker Mike Barnes.

The Hokies, who completed their season with a 6-5 record and a three-game losing streak, gave FSU an opportunity for the final big play when Seminole defensive tackle Walter Carter of Richmond's Maggie Walker High School recovered Ronnie Cole's fumble at the four.

Clinging to a 21-20 lead, Virginia Tech appeared to be heading for the clinching score, when Cole, who broke his own single-season rushing mark earlier in the game, lost control of the ball and Carter fell on it.

Jordan didn't waste any time, cracking up from his end zone and finding Unglaub in the clear at the FSU 45. Tech's Chip Keatley had one last shot at Unglaub on the Hokies' 15, but Unglaub eluded the tackle and completed the longest TD pass in the school's history.

Tight end Ed Beckman caught a two-point conversion pass from Black to account for the final margin.

Tech had the ball for only three plays, the remainder of the game, as FSU forced the Hokies to punt from their 19 and kept the ball for the final four minutes to end its season with a 5-6 record.

"I guess it just wasn't meant to be for us," said Tech coach Jimmy Sharpe. "They hit with more big plays than anybody has gotten on us this year. I'm proud of the way our players rebounded from the past two weeks (losses to Richmond and Tuscaloosa). They played with great emotion."

The Hokies had recovered from a 14-6 halftime deficit to take the lead on one-yard runs by fullback Paul Adams and Cole, who finished with 101 yards on carries to push his season's rushing total to 1,119 (1,065 was the previous mark).

Cole's score came on the third play of the final period and capped a 79-yard drive that started when Gene Bunn came up with Tech's third interception of the evening.

The margin didn't remain 21-14 very long, as Jordan connected with Flowers less than two minutes later. The Seminoles went for two points, rather than the tie with 12:14 to go, and Rick Razzano broke up a passing attempt.

Tech's abortive drive came next and then one more big play, causing FSU coach Bobby Bowden to say, "I can't believe it. I can't believe it. I'm not going to believe that 96-yard touchdown. That's the only thing you could do against those guys."

Virginia Tech got on the scoreboard first, moving 52 yards in five plays on its second possession of the game. Cole contributed 28 yards, but Adams went the final 12 up the middle with 9:36 left in the opening quarter.

Paul Enache's PAT try was short, however, so the Hokies had to be content with a 6-0 advantage.

The teams traded turnovers (Tom Cooper had an interception for Tech) later in the period, before the combination of a 45-yard punt return by George Roberts and the mishandling of the kick by Nat push hanging the Seminoles back to their three.

On the first play, Key burst off left tackle, spun away from a defender and raced 57 yards to tie the score. DAVE CAPPENEL'S extra point gave ECU the lead two minutes before the first quarter ended.

An interception by Razzano stopped another Seminole threat early in the second quarter, but another big play — this time a pass — allowed Florida State to increase its bulge.

The Seminoles were forced to start from their four, because a 45-yard punt by Roberts, and the fourth downs against the Seminoles brought the ball to the 25, setting up a second-and-first.

Black faked a handoff into the line and went back to pass. Barnes worked his way behind two defenders and Black got the ball to him, completing the 25-yard TD pass. With 7:27 remaining in the half, FSU led, 14-6.

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STATISTICS

Virginia Tech — Cole, 20 carries, 160 yards; Adams, 15-27; Haggard, 11-52; Barnes, 4-14; Nastouk, 3-12; Virginia Tech — Key, 12-34; Thomas, 3-21; Black, 14-43; Lattig, 4-11; Latins, 9-13.

INDIVIDUAL PASS RECEIVING

Virginia Tech — Barnes, 4 completions, 7 attempts, 6 receptions, 37 yards. Florida State — Black, 13-3-110, 1 TD; TDs, 4-5-83, 2 TDs. 2 TDs. 2 TDs. 2 TDs. 2 TDs. 2 TDs.