Sharpe ‘Proud’ Of VPI, Speaks Of Future Needs

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Rondal Davis is one of the 16 Virginia Tech seniors who played their last collegiate football game Saturday night.

Following the Gobblers' 28-21 loss the big tackle on offense from Tennessee approached Coach Jimmy Sharpe and obviously fought back the tears.

“A few of us want to talk to you,” Davis said and walked away.

“That’s one of the reasons that makes my job so satisfying,” Sharpe said.

The scene in the dressing room under the Florida State stands was, to be sure, one of mixed emotions.

The Gobblers, who started four seniors on defense and six on attack, finished with a 6-5 ledger. The hardest part to swallow was that the crucial mistake was a fumble by Roscoe Coles, the brilliant running back from Virginia Beach.

Coles had fumbled and lost the ball only once all year until Saturday. Then he coughed it up twice despite gaining 160 yards to bring his year’s haul to 1,119.

Sharpe, of course, talked about being “proud of the way we showed emotion and the way we executed on offense.”

He also talked of going out recruiting -- immediately! Top target, says the third-year coach, will be linebackers, even though brilliant Rick Razzano returns.

Obviously, the time to seek replacements is before such stalwarts depart.

If the loss left a sour taste any place it concerned the secondary, which was stung three times for long scoring plays.

Sharpe, however, chose to ignore placing the blame individually, merely referring to “disappointing breakdowns.”

The departing players who start on offense are receiver Moses Foster, center Blair Buskirk, tackle Keith Gibson, quarterback Mitchell Barnes, fullback Paul Adams and running back George Heath.

The defensive starters are ends...