Tech Sleepwalks Over Charleston

By STEVE WAID
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BLACKSBURG — Running the gamut from boring to brilliant, Virginia Tech ran up its second win in three days over an inferior opponent by crushing Charleston Baptist 98-70 Monday night.

The Hokies didn't look impressive, except in spots. Their lack of consistency could've been brought on by the fact that they were playing a team that posted a 2-24 mark last season, but Coach Charlie Moir saw that as no excuse.

"It's not exactly what you would call an artistic win," said Moir, who recorded his second triumph in two outings as Tech coach. "We didn't play a lot of offense or defense in the first half and our defense at the end of the game was almost non-existent.

"We were fortunate that we hit some tough shots in the first half because we stood around and watched them hit."

After watching the Hokies struggle with the Buccaneers for almost eight minutes of the first half, Moir decided it was time for a change. He lifted the entire first team and sent in the backups—Sam Fogg, Les Henson, Chris Scott, Ronnie Edwards, and Wayne Robinson.

The second team was effective, playing for almost seven minutes and outscoring Charleston Baptist 8-0 at one point while building up as much as a 12-point lead.

"The first team wasn't playing well," said Moir. "It didn't play with enthusiasm. The second team sparked us a little, but we didn't play good defense. I know we can because we've shown it in practice."

Tech starter Phil Thieman said, "We weren't playing worth a damn," he said. "We were just out there swapping baskets with them and Coach Moir decided he'd better get someone out there to put points on the board."

Tech led, 54-40, at the half and it was decided in the locker room that the defense had better improve.

"We decided to hold them to 20 points in the second half," said Thieman.

That's when Tech changed from indifferent to outstanding. The Hokies began to dominate the boards and work the ball inside to Duke Thorpe, a tactic Moir feels his team has to do if it is to win. Also, the Hokies capitalized on Buccaneer turnovers and scored on fast breaks, most of which were capped by Marshall Ashford, who had 17 points in an excellent performance.

As Moir put it, the Hokies "stood around with their hands on their knees" after building up an 80-50 lead and the Buccaneers responded by outscoring Tech 4-2 in two minutes before the Gobblers recovered.

"I feel we'll be all right," said Thieman. "We feel we have to take our man and if you get stuck by a pick, you have to get by him. We need to be fired up."

Thorpe led all scorers with 18 points, mostly from the inside, with Thieman, Ernest Wansley and Fogg in contributing 13 apiece. Joe Nix led Charleston Baptist with 16 points.

"I thought we executed well in the first half," said Danny Monk, the Buccaneers' coach, "but we're too young and too small."

"I hope we play more hard-nosed against West Virginia," said Moir of the Hokies' upcoming toughie at Morgantown Wednesday. "I don't want the team to pat itself on the back and think it belongs in the top 10. We've got a lot of work to do."

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Staff Photo by Jack Gaking

Tech's Ernest Wansley (50) Gets Past Charleston Player
Watching Is Gobblers' Duke Thorpe (33)