Tech Reserves Gain Composure

By JERRY VERDON

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It may sound unbelievable, but a couple of questions arose during Virginia Tech's 85-50 crushing of Northern Illinois University Monday night in Cassell Coliseum.

Of course none of the 3,060 fans who gathered for this atrocity ever questioned who the victor would be. Tech needed less than nine minutes to prove its supremacy over a Huskie squad who may have embarrassed at least one hamburger chain in town.

Big questions like when would the Huskies score their first field goal or why was Tech Coach Charlie Moir screaming at his second unit when the Huskies held a 23-point lead must have kept most of the fans on the edge of their seats.

The audience nearly climbed into the stands with 11:39 left in the first half. That's when 6-5 Huskie forward Paul Dawkins dropped in his squad's first of only 21 field goals of the night. "I honestly believe they have a better ball club than N.I.U. showed us tonight," said Moir, a happy, yet surprised Moir after the near scrimmage. "They beat Centenary (72-68) at Centenary and that's an accomplishment."

The Huskies also whipped tough Wisconsin (87-67) only last week, but after Monday night's debacle it's hard to believe N.I.U. has won two of its seven games this year.

The Huskie squad played an inside game reminiscent of an elephant's dexterity. The players just could not lift their heavy feet from the floor to jump or even run during this game.

The luck of adversity gave Coach Moir an opportunity to play his second unit nearly as much as his first. In fact, Tech reserve forward Les Henson was the game's top scorer with 23 points. The 6-6 freshman displayed latruncular accuracy on the court as he connected on eight of ten field goals and two of two free throws.

"Les needed this game," said Moir. "He's been pretty down since the Alabama game."

In fact the entire second unit got a much needed boost during the weighty affair. But before its confidence was uplifted Moir gave the squad a piece of his mind in the first half. When the reserves came in halfway into the first period they refused to work for the inside layups that had proven so effective for first stringers Ernest Wansley and Duke Thorp. The two big men hit on 13 of 17 field goals for a combined 36 points.

"We were cracking their defense so well," recalled the coach, "that we didn't need shots hanging up into the rafter. I hate to see us come down, make one pass and throw up a 25-footer with no one on the boards."

Most responsible for this mistake was postman Sam Pfojgin who received several angry gestures from his coach before being convinced that the inside shot was the best move in this game. "He has that tendency," said Moir, "but he can hit from outside."

The Huskies threw a zone defense at the Hokies which Moir never expected, but like the visiting squad's ineffective offense it looked like a game of pattycake as the Hokies pulled down 44 rebounds to the Huskies 33 while forcing 23 N.I.U. turnovers.

Despite the unbelievable ease of this contest, Moir left the game would help his Hokies recover from Saturday night's embarrassment at the hands of seventh-ranked Alabama.

"Saturday night we put our subs in Alabama tore us up and they (subs) got kinda down," he explained. "But tonight they did a good job."

No one on the Huskies' squad offered any kind of decent performance. Even highly regarded Matt Hicks who averaged 22.5 points a game turned out a poor effort. The 6-4 senior forward hit only five of 19 field goals and two of seven free throws (12 points). Sophomore forward John Harris shared team scoring honors with Hicks.

Hankie forward Dawkins threatened to save N.I.U. a little disgrace in the first half when the 6-5 stomped on three of his team's first four field goals. But Dawkins picked up his fourth foul before the opening half ended and was called for three more of the remainder of the game. He cooled down early in the second period.

Moir credited the seniors for...