TURNOVERS TELL TALE 65-60

Gobblers Topple UVA, Win Crown

By TOMMY SEWARD
Associate Sports Editor
RICHMOND — Virginia Tech took advantage of the University of Virginia's mistakes to capture the first Times Dispatch invitational basketball tournament championship with a 65-60 victory Thursday night.

Virginia was guilty of doing something it normally doesn't do — making turnovers by the bushel, particularly in the second half in which the Gobblers took command.

Virginia Tech gained the lead for good on a fast break layup by Ron Bell at 13:37 for a 37-36 edge.

It then took the Gobblers about five minutes to expand the advantage to 53-47.

A field goal by Steve Castellan and two free throws by Marc Iavaroni sliced Virginia Tech's lead to 53-51. However, it was in reality a last-gasp effort because VPI, led by Bell and Ernest Wansley, ripped off eight points in a row while playing a stall offense.

As it turned out, the Cavaliers committed four less turnovers in the second half than they had in the first, losing possession 24 times in all, but it seemed as though UVA had more than the 10 lost possessions it was charged with in the final 20 minutes.

Twice in the second half Virginia Tech, led in scoring by Marshall Ashford and Bell, each with 19, had scoring streaks of eight unanswered points.

The first helped erase Virginia's lead and sent the Gobblers into a 41-36 advantage. And the other lifted the victors to their highest margin of the game at 61-51. It was in that second spurt that Bell and Wansley had four points apiece.

Iavaroni and Castellan each had 17 points for Virginia, while the Cavaliers' scoring leader, Billy Langholt, was held to just seven after coming into the game with a 17.4 average.

Langholt, who has been shooting at a 69.7 percent clip, made 2 of 8 tries from the floor against Virginia Tech, which raised its season's record to 7-3.

Virginia is 4-2 and Monday hosts Davidson, where Coach Terry Holland starred as a player and head coach before coming to Virginia three years ago.

In the field goal department, it was a complete turnaround for the two teams. Virginia Tech went from 35.7 percent for the first half to 60 percent in the second 20 minutes, while the Cavaliers shot 61.9 percent before going into a tailspin at 35.4.

During the last four and a half minutes, Virginia Tech elected to play keepaway with its guards, forcing Virginia to foul in order to stop the clock. The Gobblers made only two field goals, and the rest of the way while picking up eight points from the free throw line.

Virginia, which reached the finals by defeating Virginia Commonwealth University 65-56 Wednesday by coming on strong after the intermission, couldn't do the same against VPI. The Gobblers shot 53.8 percent.

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ASHFORD, BELL PROJ

Virginia Tech Sur

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Gobblers edge Richmond in the first round 59-58.

The Cavaliers and Gobblers meet two more times this season, Jan. 12 at the Hampton Coliseum and in Roanoke Feb. 12.

Virginia caught Virginia Tech in a cool spell in the early going to build a 6-1 lead and although the Gobblers managed to come back from eight down to trail by a point, the Cavaliers were able to pull away again for a 23-24 halftime lead.

Iavaroni's nine points were high for the first 20 minutes for Virginia while West Point High's Duke Thorpe led VPI with eight. Each club had a pair of shooters with six points apiece — Castellan and Otis Fulton for Virginia and Bell and Ashford for the Techmen.

For most of the initial half, Virginia was in front by seven and eight points before Thorpe led a charge by the Gobblers.

The Cavaliers, ahead by 23-16, saw...