It’s just like old times for Tech’s Moir

By BOB TEITLEBAUM
Sports Writer

RICHMOND — Call it vintage Charlie Moir.
Or vintage 1972 Roanoke College as a national championship college division team.
That’s the way Virginia Tech best Virginia 85-60 here Thursday night in the finals of the Richmond Times-Dispatch tournament.

By name, the strategy is the solo double pick. That means nothing to the average fan unless you explain that it is a maneuver designed to free the guards for a shot at the head of the circle.

Roanoke College’s 1972 team made a living off that offense under Moir. And Thursday night one would almost swear that Dickie Adams and Hal Johnston were out there shooting for Tech.

Only they weren’t. The guards this time were Marshall Ashford and Ron Bell, who each hit 19 points in the guard-oriented offense.

“I guess it did look like Roanoke College in the old days,” said Moir. “These are the best shots the guards have had for us all year.”

Moir devised the offense when he was an assistant at Tech in the 50s.

“It was nothing new,” he said, “but I put some variations in it.”

Since Virginia has two more games left against Tech this year, the Cavaliers will be trying to figure out a way to stop it. But many teams have tried to figure it out before — and failed.

“I think this is the best game we’ve played together,” said Bell. “I think we’re getting used to Coach Moir’s offense. Everyone is working together and knows what they’re supposed to do.”

Ashford said it was certainly one of the best games for the two guards this year.

“We did well against North Carolina, but the difference from tonight is that they have two experienced guards and more speed than the Virginia guards,” he said.

There is another reason the old offense clicked so well. Bell and Ashford are finally getting used to each other. Ashford played sparingly last year at Tech and Bell is a junior college transfer.

“When I met Ron Bell,” said Ashford, “both of us were out for the same position. I didn’t think both of us would start.”

And they didn’t — until the second game. Originally, Moir planned to use one guard in the offense. That was also like 1972 when Adams didn’t start at the first of the year at Roanoke.

But Bell and Ashford teamed up in the second game and they have been starting ever since.

“When we did start,” said Ashford, who was voted the tournament’s most valuable player, “we began working together in practice.

Tonight we had something to prove — that Tech guards aren’t the weakest part of the team. I believe we proved it.”

The game also proved something else for Tech. Tech can play when leading scorer Duke Thorpe isn’t at full speed. Thorpe, playing on a gimpy knee, was in the game as much as foul trouble would permit. But he wasn’t a factor with only eight points and a scoreless second half.

“We have 12 guys in practice,” said Phil Thiemann, Tech’s other forward opposite Thorpe. “And it’s so competitive. Sometimes you can’t tell who the starting five are. We’ve lost a lot with Duke not at full speed, but we have a strong bench.”

“I couldn’t bend my knee and I didn’t move as well as I know I can,” said Thorpe.

But the good news is that Thorpe is expected to be well by the time Tech plays its next game Texas Wesleyan Wednesday night against Blackburg.

The game except that Virginia played the first 20 play the Cal era of 1898-1912.

Associated Press

Tech’s Marshall Ashford (23) puts clamp on UVA’s Billy Langlof

The World-News

Sports

Roanoke, Va., Friday, December 31, 1976

In the second half, Ashford and Bell were the sparkplugs along with Thiemann as Tech took the lead at 23-20. But it was Bell’s layup that gave Tech the lead, and the Bobcats never lost it.

“When we got the lead,” said Ashford, “that turned it around for us. It fired us up and our fans fired us up.”

The Hokies bustled on top 40-37 before

See ASHFORD, Pg. 17, Col. 6

 favored by

VCU

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Virginia

Wake Forest

Duke

Delaware

Boston College

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Richmond

Washington

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Kentucky

East Tennessee State

Baylor

Binghamton

Michigan

Loyola

Hartwick

Wartime Score: 26-24, Richmond

Albany: 6:00