Hokies Smash TWC Rams

By DAVID J. BISSET
Sports Writer

When a Tech team comes out of the dressing room prior to the game and nearly every basketball player yawns except the trainer and the head coach, one tends to wonder if the team is both mentally and physically ready to play the encounter.

In fact, it could be said that the Hokies were suffering from a sleeping disease which helped to keep Texas Wesleyan in the contest for a half.

The Hokies never did get untracked in the first half although they led by as many as nine points twice. Tech simply could not penetrate TWC's zone and the stubborn Rams, who are a NAIA team, managed to stay in the contest for one half.

But once Coach Charlie Moir read the riot act to his team at intermission a noticeable change came over the squad.

The Hokies scored 52 second half points en route to a 96-71 triumph.

It was Tech's eighth win in 11 outings while Texas Wesleyan suffered its fifth setback in 14 games.

"We had them outclassed and our guys knew it," declared Coach Charlie Moir after the contest.

"There was very little defense from our people (second unit), in the first half but I can't deny that Texas Wesleyan (TWC) isn't a good offensive team. They played Navy the night before and scored 87 points against the Midshipmen who were ranked number two in defense in the nation."

"I thought our guards played" (See HOKIES, Page 7.)

The Hokies increased their lead to 20 with 9:04 to go and from that point on it was how much could Tech score in the closing minutes.

Former Blacksburg Indian John Byers along with John Green, were two of the many subs Tech used in the final minutes of action.

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"I felt that we lacked enthusiasm in the first half, but we also mishandled the fast break when we had them three on one and four on one. We had the opportunities in the first half to open the game up but didn't take advantage of it."

"We were careless and I was unhappy with our second unit during the first half," Moir remarked.

"When I went into the lockerroom you could have dropped a pin on the floor and heard it. They (Tech's second unit,) knew I was upset with them, but I told our kids to come and play 100 percent in both practice and during the game or otherwise some of them would be getting bench sores. I have confidence in the second unit but they must be mentally ready to play," he added.

Tech ahead 44-37 at the half took Moir's advice at the half to heart and in the second half blew out to a 13 point lead in the first minute and a half.

The key play in this early series came when Ron Bell drove for a bucket and scored then added two free throws enabling Tech to cash in for a quick four points to lead 51-39. The Rams never recovered from that and were outscored 18-7 in the next three minutes.

TWC's leading scorer, Donnie Kliever who had 11 at the half, managed only one bucket and four free throw attempts in the last 20 minutes as the Tech defense stymied the senior guard.

Wesleyan's Wayne Wayman, who also collected 17 points for the night, and guard Carl Webb, who chipped in with 15, kept attempting to keep TWC in the contest in the final ten minutes.

But too many droughts by the Rams combined with Duke Thorpe's ability to block out on both boards and Phil Thieneman's soft one hand jumpers kept Tech on top.

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"If he's able to play we will certainly use him," Moir added.

Byers, a former Indian captain, failed to score, but did come up with a steal and an excellent pass to Chris Scott for a layup.

Thorpe led all scorers with 18, followed closely by Thieneman with 16 and Marshall Ashford with 15. Ron Bell added 10 for the Hokies who now travel to St. Bonaventure on Saturday.