Hokies Fall, 94-82

Bonnie Blitz Tech

By JERRY VERNON
Sports Writer

ALLEGANY, N.Y.—It wasn’t easy, but Bonnie Hollis had gotten what he wanted out of St. Bonaventure's 94-82 win over Virginia Tech Saturday night. But the 6-4 center would face homicide charges today.

“We wanted to kill them,” said Hollis in the cigar-smoked locker room after the New Yorkers ran their season record to 7-3. “We didn’t beat them like we wanted to, but I guess we’re satisfied.”

The Bonnies gained the top spot in the Atlantic 10 standings, which coincided with St. Bonaventure's last season 15-7, came from one of the hottest shooting exhibitions ever staged on a college court. Hollis became the fifth-highest career Bonnie scorer (1,477), as he sank 15 of 25 field goals for a game-high 72% of his shots.

The Bonnies missed only four of 25 floor shots in the final half while Tech netted 15 of 29 attempts in the last twenty minutes. The two squads traded baskets for the first 13 minutes of the decisive period with the Bonnies holding a 74-70 edge with 7:42 remaining.

Then it happened. Tech managed only four more field goals for the remainder of the game as the Bonnies continued to stifle the offense.

“I don’t think our players could believe the way St. Bonaventure was shooting,” lamented Morris. “But what worried me was the way we didn’t get back on defense and the way we gave up too many boards. We should have stopped them.”

Tech high scorer, Duke Thorpe with 23, agreed with his coach. The 6-4 Hokie forward drew the assignment of guarding Hollis, who scored 37 points, and the Bonnie senior’s most productive game ever.

“This was the worst game defensively I’ve ever played,” admitted Thorpe. “If I was the coach I would bench myself. I wouldn’t blame him if he did.”

Morris was not as critical of Thorpe’s play, but did notice that the shots looked too easy.

“At times our defense seemed to lack a move or two. The shots were too easy.”

Maybe his groin injury was bothering him,” said the coach. “Duke doesn’t play as good on defense when his back is to the hoop.”

The smaller, but quicker Bonnies pushed the inside Hokie offense back with unflattering outside shooting from 6-4.

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Sanders and 6-0 guard Glenn Hagan who scored 13 points.

“We tried to go to Eastie because we knew Thorpe had three fouls on him,” said Bonnie Coach Jim Satas. “But we putted his cigar symbolizing revenge from last year’s defeat.

“We talked about last year’s game before this one,” he said.

“Kids forget pretty quickly, but I don’t. I remember me.”

Despite the two man performance by Hollis and Sanders the Bonnie coach argued Tech should feel no shame over the loss.

“They’re two excellent offensive players,” praised Satas. “But the guy who brought St. Bonaventure out of a two game losing skid. It’s no disgrace when someone has problems guarding them.

For a good part of the game St. Bonaventure had problems guarding a Tech offense that shot a respectable 37% per cent for the game.

Tech forward Phil Thiesman fired in eight of 13 field goal attempts for an individual season high 62 points while 6-11 Ernest Wansley collected 11 points. Tech’s outside shooters, Ron Bell, Marshall Ashford and Ron Edwards, hit nine of 17 shots to keep the Bonnie inside alive.

The shorter St. Bonaventure squad almost battled even with Tech on the boards—33 to 31. But Tech hit Hollis claimed a game high 11 rebounds while Thorpe picked off ten missed shots. Thiesman and Wansley both managed six rebounds for the Hokies.

Tech grabbed the lead three times in the first half only to watch St. Bonaventure’s two strong men regain control of the contest, and lead the Bonnies to a 48 per cent shooting night from the floor.

If a two man act ever threatened the extinction of the Hokies, Hollis and Sanders did so in the first half. The Bonnie duo scored 10 of 20 St. Bonaventure’s first 12 points, helping the New Yorkers to a 12-2 spread with the game less than four minutes old.

But when Hollis missed the last shot of a three point opportunity the Bonnies started to fade. Tech’s Thorpe led the Hokie resurgence as he scored eight of his 14 first half points and Tech pulled ahead 18-16 with 11.10 minutes remaining in the opening half.

After a four minute interlude of cold hands from the two-man Bonnie game, Hollis reshaped his floor plan. Beginning with a crowd-pleasing dunk at the 10:20 mark Hollis fired off eight of the Bonnies’ next ten points for a 26-22 St. Bonaventure lead with 7:38 remaining.

Tech fought back to its last lead of the night, 30-29, but to see Hollis and Sanders turn-up their respective 19 and 14 point first half performances