Virginia’s Torrid Foul Shooting In Second Half Downs VPI 55-50

By TOMMY SEWARD

The University of Virginia Cavaliers were able to do as the first throw line Wednesday night in the second half what the offense otherwise was having difficulty in doing — scoring.

As a result, Virginia kept its Hampton Coliseum undefeated string alive with a 55-50 victory over Virginia Tech before a crowd of 6,956.

"I don't know how long our defense can continue to carry us without getting some sort of offensive punch," added UVA coach Terry Holland after viewing the statistics that showed the Cavaliers had a field goal shooting night of only 29 per cent.

"I'm sure Virginia Tech's defense did something to add," Holland, "but offensively we just have to gain a little confidence."

After the first half ended in a 21-21 deadlock, the Cavaliers were able to get only six field goals while the Hokies pulled out to a lead of 31-26 after the first five minutes.

Thanks to 22 points from the free throw line, Virginia was able to pull back in front and held off Virginia Tech, which is 8-4 on the season and now even against Virginia for the year with the rubber match coming up Feb. 23 in Radnor.

Virginia had 26 chances from the free throw line in the second half after hitting only seven of 14 attempts in the first.

The Cavaliers, now 6-4, moved out to an eight-point lead late in the contest at 43-35 before Virginia Tech, sparked by Ron Bell, ripped off four field goals in a row over a five-minute span. Then with the score knotted at 40-40, and a minute and 43 seconds remaining, Virginia closed off the Gobblers' attack and converted six consecutive free throw chances to lead 55-49 with 18 seconds left.

Virginia Tech Coach Charles Moir agreed with Holland in the post-game analysis that "it wasn't a pretty game to watch."

"But, it was mighty important for us to win," quickly added Holland, whose Cavaliers had lost three straight and return to the Atlantic Coast Conference wars Saturday night at home against North Carolina State.

"Yes, maybe we ought to schedule more games here (Hampton Coliseum)," said Holland after being reminded that now Virginia has won all six games it has played on the Peninsula.

Together the two teams shot only 42 times from the field. "Forty-three shots?" questioned Moir. "That's not us, but Virginia put up an aggressive defense for 40 minutes and we turned the ball over too many times."

Also, there were 54 personal fouls called, 31 against Virginia Tech, which added to the reasons for the low field goal totals.

After Virginia grabbed the biggest lead of the game and Virginia Tech started its comeback, some fans were beginning to wonder if history was going to repeat itself. Two weeks ago...

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HUSTLING BOBBY STOKES PASSES OFF AFTER SCRAMBLE FOR BALL
Virginia Tech's Duke Thorpe Watches Virginia Foe In Hampton Coliseum Action

Iavaronl Hits 15 To Pace UVA Win

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Virginia led by as much as 10 points over the Gobblers only to have VPI rally to the second half for a 63-60 triumph.

Marshall Ashford, who had teammate guard Ron Bell shared the starring honors in the Richmond encounter, pulled off a steal for a layup to trim Virginia's lead to 40-43. Wayne Robinson tipped in a two-pointer before Bell made a pair of field goals for the tie.

That was only the fourth tie of the game.

Bell, with 10 points, was the only double-figure scorer for the Gobblers, while Marcus Lavarone, who fouled out with more than seven minutes left, led the Cavaliers with 12 and Steve Castellan had 11.

Virginia's leading scorer, Billy Langhob, bobbled by a muscle pull and the tenacious VPI defense, was held to only one field goal (he tried six) and four points from the foul line. He had been averaging 15.8 per game.

On the other hand, VPI's leading scorer, Duke Thorpe of West Point, got five points. He had a 17.3 average.

Holland credited former King William High standout Bobby Stokes with the spark that ignited the Cavaliers in the second when he stole a pass under his basket and drew a foul. His free throws closed the gap to 31-30. Bell raised it to 33-30 before Virginia started its heroic at the free throw that proved too much for the Gobblers.