JU's Ray Deposits a Breakaway Dunk Shot

Gobblers Take the Gas Out of JU

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Kent Glover, his throbbing ankle still mumified in tape, took a deep breath and whistled softly. The drained emotion of another losing effort was beginning to set in.

"I wish I had an excuse to offer," the senior guard said. "It's true we haven't been getting many good breaks lately, but we shouldn't be in a position where we have to rely on them. You can't count on breaks to win a game for you."

Jacksonville University saw its record slip to 6-9 in a 74-68 loss to Virginia Tech in the Coliseum Saturday night, as the season-long spectre of turnovers reared its laughing head at the Dolphins once again.

VIRGINIA TECH, 9-5, instituted a slowdown pace from the start, later turning a tight, hotly-contested battle into a Gobbler bon voyage behind Duke Thorpe's 22 points and nine rebounds.

"We tried to get the ball inside and we did," said Glover, who experienced a second straight below par shooting night (8 for 13). "Jamey (Ray) and Felton (Young) played very well and I felt both teams were pretty even all the way.

"We had a little more quickness, but they had the patience. Tech wouldn't rush it against our zone and just waited for us to have to foul and play a little foolishly."

The Dolphins lost any grip they might have had on victory during a scoreless four-minute slice of the second half. From 11:39 when Glover popped in a 15 footer at the key to 7:35 when Ray sank one of two free throws to end the drought, the Virginians outscored JU 8-0 to take a 53-42 margin.

TECH MOVED INTO a semi-stall, then the four corners down the stretch, ending with 12 of 14 free throws to sew up the small gashes JU could make in the Gobblers' court control.

"When you play hard, emotionally, eventually you're going to run out of gas," said 10-point scorer Johnnie B. Williams. "All the intensity tires you out. It got to us."

Yet the Dolphins played splendidly in the heavily-trafficked front court, getting a combined 40 points (20 each) and 13 rebounds from Ray and Young.

"Our inside game has gotten to the point where I don't see where it could be much better," said Coach Don Beasley. "It's consistent, too. Ray hustled hard for the shot and anytime Felton's facing the basket, he's good up to 15 feet.

"But the key to this one was the turnovers. I believe we had 20 right? When your outside game gives up a number of those hit-picking turnovers, you've got trouble."

The mistakes were there, to be sure, but so was a newfound diligence on the part of the Dolphins. Guard Ricky Williams exemplified a more aggressive defensive effort with kamikaze-like dives and many-fingered steals at the steal.

"The only thing I can say is that we cut our turnovers, said Williams. "The defense we played was better in any other game this season."