Hokies Trip Marshall, 84-81

From Staff and Wire Reports

HUNTINGTON, W.Va.—Virginia Tech threatened to make a runaway out of Wednesday night's game with Marshall's Thundering Herd.

But the Herd did thunder back into action after Tech led by 12 points on four occasions during the first half, with Marshall's Dave Miller leading a comeback rally to tie it at 40-all. Tech did lead 48-42 at intermission.

Gobbler senior Phil Thieneman had 20 points and Marshall Ashford 16 to help the Hokies stave off a late Marshall flurry to win it 84-81.

Greg Young fired in five quick points for Marshall (now 6-10), to draw the Herd within one point at 82-81 with 10 seconds left. But Virginia Tech's Duke Thorpe, who had 14 points, sank both ends of a one-and-one free throw situation to preserve the victory.

Marshall went ahead for the last time at 72-71 with just over six minutes to play. However Tech guards Ron Bell and Ron Edwards both scored to put the Hokies back out front at 75-72.

Miller hit two free throws for the Herd, while Thorpe scored on a stickback and hit a foul shot making it 78-74. Tech. The Hokies then went into the four corners offense with Ashford and Bell hitting for two free throws apiece making it 82-7 with only 30 seconds remaining.

Miller ended the game the high scorer with 26 points, while Yound added 25.

Tech, now 11-6 and hosts Wisconsin-Milwaukee Saturday night, held the lead virtually all the way. Marshall led only twice, both advantages coming in the second half.

Miller's field goal put the Herd ahead 65-63, and Harley Major shoved Marshall in front at 72-71 with six minutes left. But Edwards canned his only field goal of the game and Tech took a 73-72 lead with 5:11 remaining and never trailed again.

Marshall rallied to tie the score even times. The Herd trailed as many as nine points in the second half and trailed by 12 four times in the first half.

Thieneman, though spending most of the game on the bench, led Tech with 10 points more than his average. Ernest Wansley and Bell had eight each, with Thorpe and Chris Scott four each, to pace the first half scoring.

Scott's four points came after the Herd had knotted it at 40. Tech Coach Charlie Moir had been concerned about Marshall's size, and especially with the new eligibility of 6-11 center Danny Hall, a transfer from Kentucky. Hall ended the game with eight and was dominant on the boards.

But Moir got what he wanted, a road win and hopefully some momentum for the upcoming home stand. "We feel with this victory on the road, it will give us some momentum for the next few days. Most of our next few games are at home and if we can win those it will be a great season for us."

Besides Wisconsin-Milwaukee Saturday, the Hokies host West Virginia Tuesday, then travel to George Washington Feb. 5 before three consecutive home games against Memphis State, Army and Birmingham-Southern.