WVU Socks
VPI 86-78

By ED RICHARDS
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BLACKSBURG — West Virginia didn't bear any resemblance to a team that lost five straight games on the road coming into the Virginia Tech Coliseum Tuesday night.

In fact, the Mountaineers played as if they were right at home in downing theGobblers 86-78 before some 8,200 surprised fans.

The West Virginians, one point victors over the Gobblers earlier this season in Morgantown, won for the first time in Blacksburg since 1971-72.

Led by six-foot-seven junior center Maurice Robinson with 25 points— including three slam dunks—the invaders took a 38-32 halftime advantage and never lost control.

West Virginia enjoyed a hot hand from the field all night, hitting 58.0 percent in the first half and 60.1 after intermission. The Gobblers connected for 48.5 overall.

"It didn't appear that we were ready to play. I guess our guys felt they could win handily at home," pointed out Coach Charlie Moir. "We just got out-hustled the first eight to 10 minutes and didn't play with any aggressiveness at all."

Moir made the most aggressive move of the night for the Gobblers as he gave one of the officials a piece of his mind after the game.

The loss left Tech 12-7 and virtually killed any hopes it had of seeing any post-season action this year.

The Mountaineers, 11-7, bothered their hosts with a frustrating zone defense.

"We weren't taking good shots the first half and rarely got a second shot," said Moir. "West Virginia played a heckuva game offensively and got the good shots."

The Gobblers, propelled by forward Phil Thieneman's season-high 24 points, had fits trying to work the ball inside against WVU.

After being held to four points in the first half, former West Point star Duke Thorpe started getting open more inside and finished with 17 points for the hosts.

The hot-shooting Mountaineers never let Tech come closer than six after intermission and mounted a 16-point cushion (61-45) with 11:10 to play.

The Gobblers cut the margin to 84-78 with 14 seconds left, but WVU held on.

Both teams were hot at the free throw line. The Mountaineers cashed in on 16 of 22 to 12 of 14 for Tech.

Winning Coach Jody Gardner wasn't that emotionally elated about the victory.

"That's one of our best games on the road, but not the best," he commented. "We shot 54 and 56 percent in some of our other games and lost. Our shot selection was real good and we never got excited."

Gardner remained relatively calm throughout the game on his bench, mainly because he vividly recalled last year's experience in the Tech Coliseum.

"I got thrown out of here in the first half last year," he admitted.

For a change, everything seemed to fall in place for the Mountaineers, who are only 2-6 on the road.

WEST VIRGINIA VIRGINIA TECH
Chapman 10 - 4 49 24
Robinson 4 3 0 25 30
Boal 0 2 0 4 2
Huggins 3 - 6 12 10
Robinson 2 - 1 3 5
Ray 4 2 2 6 6
Pearson 0 2 0 4 2
Totals 35 16 22 86

West Virginia: 38 48 86
Virginia Tech: 16 12 78
