If there is anything worse than the way Virginia Tech played Tuesday night, and the officials that called the game, it was the crowd (mainly the students).

What makes the situation worse is that it is not an isolated incident. It has become a growing condition at Tech for some students to disagree with officials calls by throwing debris of different sorts onto the court.

Some may say that it is harmless paper airplanes and paper cups that are being thrown, but anything can be slipped on by the players, and not necessarily an opponents’ player.

Boots and “bullshit!” are one thing, but foreign missiles are another.

What will the continuation of the paper throwing lead to? Ice, balls, tin cans, bottles. You say it could never hurt anybody? That’s probably what the man was saying right before he threw a bottle that hit a referee in last year’s Minnesota-Dallas football playoff game. He was removed from the field with a slight concussion.

Of course the condition is not just growing on the Virginia Tech campus. It is a mere example of what is happening around the country, as sports turns from a game people watch for the fun of it, to a job people bet their life on.

The Hokies were not beaten by the referees, but even if they were, there would be no excuse for the kind of behavior demonstrated by many of the students. Endangering the health of players and referees, and damaging the reputation of the school and student body are the only effects of the crowd’s actions.

The referees are not intimidated by such antics, but only influenced to judge the home team more harshly. No, the referees didn’t give the Hokies any breaks, but some students didn’t help the situation.

With a local television audience looking on, the image of this university was projected in the paper strewn on the floor and the “bullshit!” cheers loud and clear over the air. And these heathens want a bigger library? People say. These actions, combined with Carol “E” Newman written on the SGA petitions instead of Carol “M” Newman will really impress the General Assembly.

There can be only one good thing said about the crowd that showed up at Cassell Coliseum. They showed up.

There were 2,500 tickets available for sale the morning of the game. That means 2,500 students did not pick up tickets. The 3,000 tickets available for the general public are all season tickets.

Tech is one of very few universities in the country which reserves more than half of its basketball seats for the students. If just a little over a third of the students can’t make it to the games, especially ones as big as Oral Roberts and West Virginia, then I’m sure arrangements can be made for more season tickets to become available.

The home court is supposed to be an edge for the home team, but when the Coliseum is not full and the crowd boisterous is a constructive manner, it is a depressant to the home team, and maybe even a lift for the opponent.

The coaches, players, and Athletic Association appreciate student enthusiasm, but not when it gets out of hand.