JOYOUS DAYS OF CONFUSION

By BOB MOSKOWITZ

When Old Dominion was through decimating Georgetown in the Hoyas' gym last week, the losers' Coach John Thompson refused to wilt on one point. "Injuries," he said, "had nothing to do with the outcome" of the Monarchs' 86-58 triumph.

Nevertheless, the Hoyas were without standout Ed Hopkins, who had been nursing a leg injury, and 6-foot-6 sophomore Garry Wilson had just recovered from an injury to the right ankle Wednesday's NIT skirmish against Virginia Tech in Blackburg, the bandage brigade has unfortunately increased in numbers.

Now, lacking sophomore Tom Scales out of Alexandria is limping from effects of an injury incurred against ODU and Hopkins remains "questionable." The description fits more than Hopkins. Abilities of both teams to play consistently remain questionable.

Tech, more than Georgetown, showed signs of having shaken their off-season-brightening tendency to quickly revert from excellent to poor. The Gobbler, however, will have idle 10 days by Wednesday. Indeed, Phil Theineman, the nation's leading free throw shooter (252-of-259) remained off campus as a late-afternoon practice began Monday. He did arrive later, but was hardly rested and ready for heady instruction.

Meanwhile, in McDonough Gym, Thompson pushed his charges through a four-hour early morning session, fretting over their three-day layoff. On the other end of the stick, in Norfolk, Old Dominion's Monarchs worked out late Monday evening.

It is, of course, a period for excitement and the unexpected. Even conjecture over attendance for this game which sends the winner to Madison Square Garden in two weeks has people talking. For only the third time this year, the Gobbler anticipate a sellout something that had been commonplace.

Monday's practice did little to change the feeling. Some 3,500 tickets were sold in Blackburg, which apparently had the jump on ODU, because the Monarchs don't start selling their tickets until this morning (See story elsewhere this section).

Actually, the Georgetown-Tech adventure stacks up as a good game, even considering the Hoyas' ailments. There is a point where the Techems really turned around, it was with about 15 minutes left against Memphis State. What had all the earmarks of a massacre by the Tigers wound up as a fantastic 70-69 conquest for the Hoyas.

Through the final six games, Tech did lose twice, but once was at Ohio University and the other was against Marquette in the regular-season finale. "I think we finally got our consistency," says Coach Charlie Moir.

He is especially high on the late-year efforts contributed by freshmen Wayne Robinson and Les Henson and junior Sam Fogg, sort of the Gobbler's forgotten man. A highly-touted freshman, he has done little the first two-and-half years.

Now, in the late stages of his junior campaign, the 6-9 West Virginian has scored at a 12-point clip through six games. "He has,"3
inside Moir, "the ability to play as anyone on our squad." Up until now, however, he has been more of a spoiler than anything else. If the Gobbler are to advance to New York, most certainly must make Moir's praise ring true.

For the Hoyas, certainly, their top gun remains junior Derrick Jackson, 16.4 scorer with 88 assists. At Dutch, a 6-7 sophomore scores at a 13.3 clip and Hopkins stands at 10.3. Despite their ECAC elimination, the Hoyas expected to make the NIT field. The Gobblers admittedly were surprised by their selection. The outcome makes for interesting conjectures.