Sports Roving

with

BILL HALL

BLACKSBURG—The Virginia Tech Hokies now find themselves in Madison Square Garden playing in the second round of the National Invitation Tournament (NIT) and only a week ago most folks had written the Tech team off for any post season play.

The Hokies won their way to the Garden by defeating Georgetown 83-79 Wednesday night on their home floor in Blacksburg.

The play of Tech has impressed many people including Pete Carlesimo, NIT chairman of the selection committee, who was at Wednesday’s game.

Carlesimo revealed that Tech was to have played Villanova in the first round and Maryland was to have played Old Dominion in Norfolk.

After Maryland made certain demands, Carlesimo withdrew the Maryland bid and offered it to Georgetown University.

Carlesimo said the athletic director at Maryland demanded to play a team such as Georgetown that they had already played in regular season.

“When he said that “I withdrew the bid”, Carlesimo stated.

He went on to say that he was very pleased with the reception the 16-team tournament is receiving this year. The NIT had previously been played in New York, but this year the format was changed to the regional concept.

Carlesimo said he feels this is a good way to play the tournament with the top eight teams ending up at the Garden.

He did say that next year he would like to see the games played on Thursday after the bids go out on Sunday. “Tuesday and Wednesday games are pushing it a little, he said.

All of this is fine for background, but what matters to the Hokies and their followers is that they will be playing in the Garden Monday night against a team they have faced this season.

Tech was bombed by Alabama in the Dayton tournament, which was early in the season.

Tech defeated Memphis State by one on the home floor after trailing as much as 25 points during the contest.

The Hokies defeated Alabama by one point in the 1973 NIT on their way to the championship.

There were a few signs in the coliseum tonight reminding the players and fans of the fantastic wins in that outing.

The Hokies won four games by five points and won the championship on a last second shot by Bobby Steen.

The NIT Championship banner hung in the east end of the coliseum tonight and was the center of focus by many that remembers the 1973 road to the championship.

The Hokies will carry a 19-8 record into the Monday night game which will be carried on the Virginia Tech Basketball Network.

UNDER THE BASKET ACTION—Les Henson, 21, of Virginia Tech and Georgetown’s Mike Frazier fight for a rebound under the Hokie basket. Henson came off the bench for six points in the Tech win.

THORPE HITS—Duke Thorpe shoots from the outside and hits as hands from Georgetown play fly at him. Thorpe hit for 12 points in the NIT opener.

DRIVING—An offensive foul was called on Ron Bell on this play when he knocked a Georgetown player to the floor while attempting a basket.