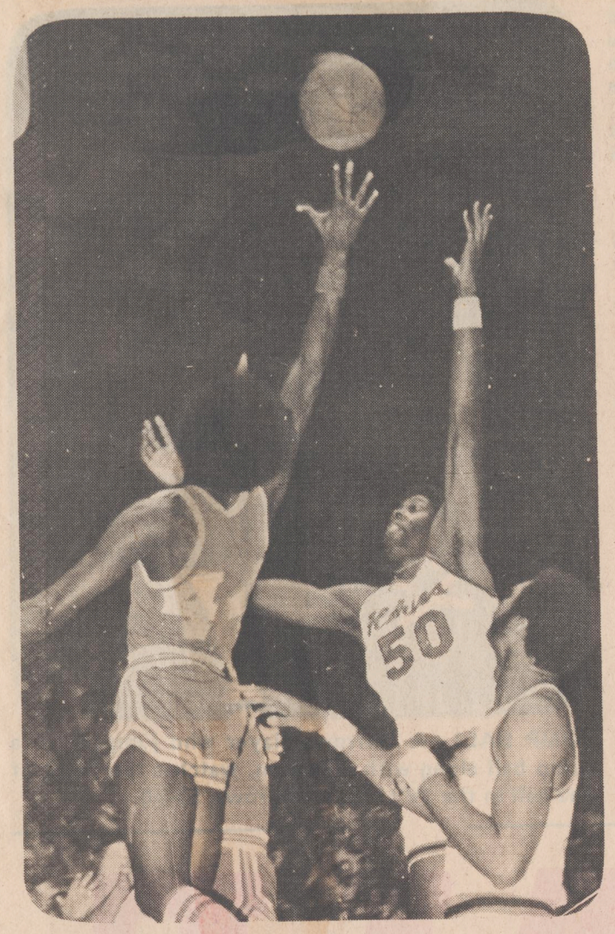
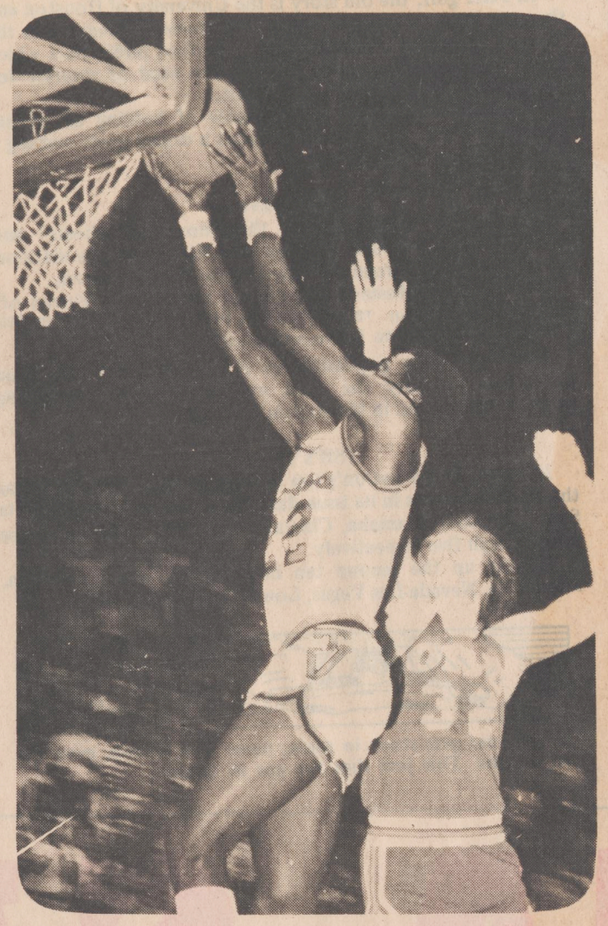
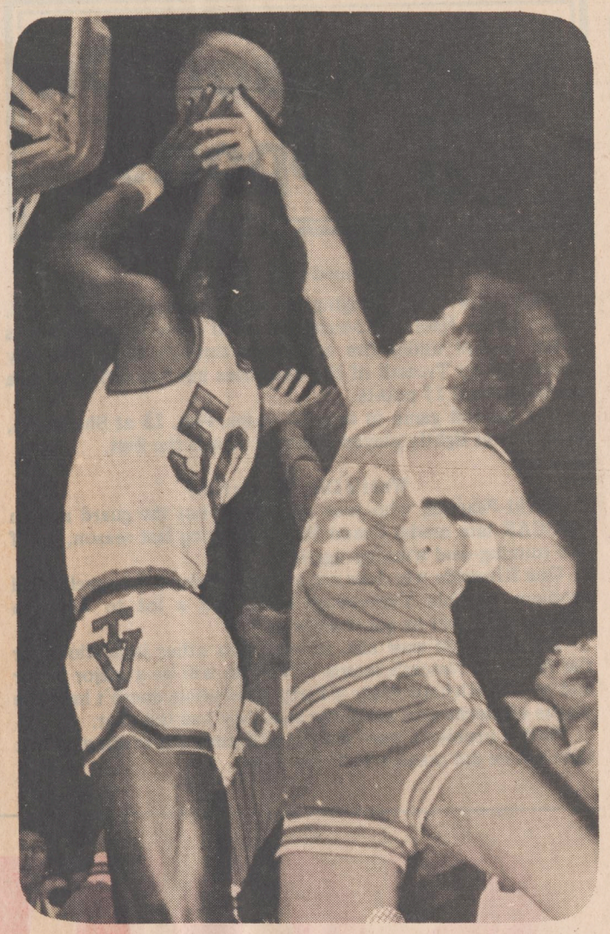


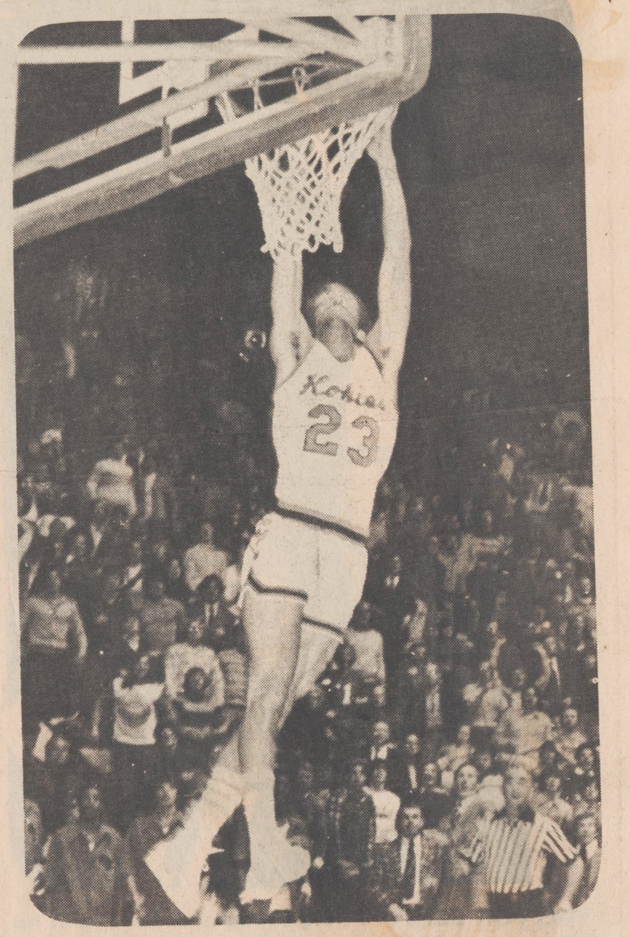
ERNEST HOOKS—Virginia Tech center Ernest Wansley fires a hook shot at the basket in first half action againt the Titans of Oral Roberts. Leaping up to try to block the shot by the 6-11 Wansley is ORU's 6-7 senior Alvin Scott (left).



LAYUP BY BELL—Tech guard Ronnie Bell outraces Oral Roberts 6-9 freshman center Chuck Dahms to the basket to score two of his 19 points of the evening.



TITAN DEFENSE—Getting there a little late for a defensive effort is Chuck Dahms of Oral Roberts as Virginia Tech's Ernest Wansley tries a layup from under the basket.



IGNITES RALLY—A dunk by 6-2 sophomore guard Marshall Ashford of the Hokies, watched by Tech players, coaches and fans (background) and the viewing audience of WDBJ-TV, Roanoke's Ch. 7, gave the Hokies the lead midway through the second half and struck the spark of a rally. (Staff photos by Bill Mason)

Strong Second Half Fails As Virginia Tech Falls To ORU 77-70

By Bill Mason
Sports Editor

BLACKSBURG—Missed shots and opportunities and spotty defensive play hurt Virginia Tech, which battled back from a 13-point deficit in the second half, but wound up losing to the Titans of Oral Roberts U, 77-70 Monday night before television cameras and a less than capacity crowd at Cassell Coliseum.

Oral Roberts took an early 6-0 lead on two jump shots by Anthony Roberts and one by Alvin Scott as the game began.

The game was physical and both Tech's Ernest Wansley and ORU's Roberts accumulated three personals and spent some time on the bench.

With Roberts temporarily out of the game, ORU lost nothing in scoring efficiency nor did Tech benefit offensively.

Senior Arnold Dugger of Bronx, N.Y. took up the slack with ten first half points, Tech slumped and ORU raced to a 39-26 halftime lead.

Tech raced back inthe second half with faster, more alert play on offense and defense. The Hokies beamed confidence with Wansley back in the lineup and all five starters had a hand in the uprising.

A ten point outburst from guard Marshall Ashford from 17:23 to 9:49 was climaxed by his fast break dunk at that time, giving Tech a 57-56 lead and brining a cheering crowd of 5,500 to their feet.

The game's momentum was slowed visibly by five time outs in the second half. After their long hot streak the Hokies went cold again late in the game and most of the Titans' final edge was in the form of free throws after Tech fouled to gain possession as ORU went into a stall.

Roberts put on a shooting exhibition that socrched the nets and drew gasps from the crowd. He scored 29 points, slightly below his average and hit on a burning 13 out of 16 field goal attempts from nearly everywhere.

The crafty Dugger connected for 16 points and dealt out six assists.

Tech hit on a chilly 32% on field goal attempts in the first half but picked it up to 50% in the second 20 minutes. This was no match for ORU's 57% in the first half and 51% in the second half. The Hokies held a 39-38 rebounding edge.

Senior forward Duke Thorpe and junior guard Ronnie Bell tied for Hokie high with 19 points and Ashford came through with 16.

The summary:

The Hokies season record dipped to 9-6 with Fairleigh-Dickinson next on the schedule in a home game Saturday night. Tech takes to the road for a game next Wednesday at Huntington, W. Va. against Marshall's Thundering Herd.

GO, HOKIES!—An enthusiastic, happy crowd jumps to its feet after Marshall Ashford's dunk shot to cheer their team on in the second half comeback against Oral Roberts.