

Virginia Tech beats Washington 103-79 in 2K Classic

By DENIS P. GORMAN

NEW YORK (AP) — Washington's Nahziah Carter drove the lane and attempted a dunk, only to have the ball bounce off the rim and into Virginia Tech's Chris Clarke's waiting hands. The ball moved up-court toward Justin Bibbs, who knocked down an open 3-pointer for the Hokies.

A sequence which took all of seven seconds thoroughly encapsulated Virginia Tech's 103-79 victory over Washington in the consolation game of the 2K Classic on Friday.

Everything went right for the Hokies (3-1) while the Huskies (2-2) were overmatched throughout.

"I thought how we responded from start to finish was more in-line with what we've done since the day after Labor Day," Virginia Tech coach Buzz Williams said.

Bibbs scored 30 points on 10-of-15 shooting to lead Virginia Tech. The two games in New York were his first of the season after sitting out the first two games of the campaign due to disciplinary reasons.

"He's responded pretty good. I thought he handled all of that, what's the word, (aplomb)?" Williams said of Bibbs. "I thought he handled that really well."

Ahmed Hill finished with 23 points, Nickeil Alexander-Walker had 20 and Justin Robinson added 11 for the Hokies.

Jaylen Nowell scored 21 points to lead Washington, which lost its second straight. Carter had 12 points.

Whereas Williams felt better about his team, Washington coach Mike Hopkins viewed the blowout loss as a teachable moment. "It's a great lesson," Hopkins said.

Not 24 hours after Williams publicly questioned his team's character, the Hokies were dominant in the blowout. After spotting the Huskies the first basket of the game, the Hokies would go into halftime with a 59-28 lead.

"Last night was the highest number of bad shots we had taken for the year. It was the highest number of good shots we had taken for the year and the lowest number of perfect and the lowest number of great. We eclipsed that number in the first half," Williams said.

Virginia Tech made 18 of its 27 first-half shots, including 11 of 14 from behind the arc, and knocked down 12 of 14 free throws. They were just as dominant defensively. Virginia Tech forced nine first-half turnovers and limited Washington to 26.3 percent shooting from the field.

Virginia Tech shot 59 percent from the field (30 for 51) and 68.2 percent from 3-point range (15 for 22). Washington would only make 27 of 63 shots from the field (43 percent) and misfired on 13 of 18 3s.

The Hokies extended its lead to a game-high 34 in the second half.

"It was one of those games," Hopkins said. "Hopefully we become a better team from this experience."

BIG PICTURE:

Virginia Tech: The up-tempo, attacking Hokies returned to form. Mere hours after being limited to 71 points by Saint Louis, Virginia Tech equaled that output when Chris Clarke made a free throw with 13:50 remaining. Through four games, Virginia Tech is averaging 104.25 points per game.

Washington: Following Thursday night's loss to Providence, first-year coach Mike Hopkins said he saw positives. Outside of outscoring Virginia Tech 51-44 in the second half, there wasn't much for Hopkins to point toward as a foundational piece to build the program upon.

NOTABLE:

Virginia Tech: With the win, the Hokies improved to 15-6 all-time at Madison Square Garden.

Washington: The Huskies are 0-2 all-time against Virginia Tech. Washington dropped an 88-77 decision to the Hokies on Dec. 21, 1974, in the first matchup.