

**WEEK FOURTEEN**  
**MARSHALL AT VIRGINIA TECH**

BLACKSBURG, Va. -- Ryan Willis had the best half of his career, Virginia Tech set the tone early, and the Hokies are going to a bowl for the 26th straight season.

Willis threw touchdown passes to four receivers before halftime, and Virginia Tech extended its nation-best postseason streak with a 41-20 victory against Marshall on Saturday.

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"We came out hot, the defense played great, and my receivers made plays for me," Willis said after completing 18 of 26 attempts for 312 yards.

He wasn't the only first-half hero.

Senior Ricky Walker made a strip sack of the Thundering Herd's Isaiah Green on the first play from scrimmage, setting a tone from the outset in the game that was scheduled specifically so the Hokies could try to extend their streak.

Virginia Tech (6-6) paid the Thundering Herd \$300,000 to play the game, then put together one of their best efforts of the season.

"That set the tone," Walker said of the sack and fumble, which TyJuan Garbutt recovered at the Marshall 17. "Guys were excited, and from there on, we just played."

The opening drive ended with a field goal, but then Willis took over. He threw scoring passes of 46 yards to Hezekiah Grimsley, 45 yards to Tre Turner, 7 yards to Steven Peoples and 32 yards to Eric Kumah as Virginia Tech built a 31-6 halftime lead.

"Certainly getting to the number 26 was a part of this," Hokies coach Justin Fuente said of the bowl number, "but I really felt like it was bigger than that. Those kids in that locker room stood tall, stood strong when other people ran and things weren't well and things were tough. They stayed together and continued to battle."

Willis, a transfer from Kansas who became the quarterback after Josh Jackson was injured in the third game of the season, boosted his total to 22 touchdown passes this season.

"He threw the ball extremely well, and their receivers made plays," Marshall coach Doc Holliday said. "I hadn't seen that all year out of those guys."

The Thundering Herd (8-4), which received future scheduling considerations for agreeing to play the Hokies, turned the ball over on its first two drives and each time the Hokies converted. Garbutt's fumble recovery set up the first of two field goals by Brian Johnson, and Bryce Watts' interception in the end zone set up an 80-yard touchdown march.

"It's hard to dig out of that," Herd left guard Jordan Dowrey said. "It's the points they scored but also the points we didn't score because we lost possession. That stuff hurt us big."

Watts' interception was the Hokies' first since Reggie Floyd had one against Notre Dame on Oct. 6.

Brenden Knox ran for 204 yards and two touchdowns for Marshall, and Green hit Xavier Gaines with a 34-yard TD pass.

Grimsley dropped what would have been a fifth scoring throw in the third quarter, setting up Johnson's second field goal. It was the only scoring in the quarter, in which the Hokies had been outscored 77-3 in their previous five third quarters at home, four of them losses.

Virginia Tech's bowl streak is the longest in the nation. Florida State had a string of 36 years in bowl games snapped with its 5-7 finish this year.

**THE TAKEAWAY**

Marshall: The Thundering Herd got off to a horrible start when Walker's hit on Green knocked the ball loose. Marshall held the Hokies to a field goal, but the start fired up the crowd of 31,336 on a rainy, cold day and gave the home team momentum it never relinquished.

"It's awesome. I'm happy for him," defensive coordinator Bud Foster said of Walker. "That play obviously gets that quarterback thinking about the rush a little bit."

Green finished 19-for-34 for 220 yards.

Virginia Tech: Good fortune played a role in the Hokies' getting to a 12th game. Their tying touchdown last week in their 34-31 overtime victory against Virginia came when they recovered a fumble in the end zone after it went through the hands of a Cavaliers player. They required no such lucky bounces against the Herd.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
MRS	6	0	0	14	20
VT	10	21	3	7	41

**Scoring Summary -----**

	MRS	VT
<b>FIRST QUARTER</b>		
VT FG 13:49		
Brian Johnson 32 Yd Field Goal		
4 plays, 2 yards, 1:05	0	3
VT TD 5:20		
Hezekiah Grimsley 46 Yd pass from Ryan Willis (Brian Johnson Kick)		
8 plays, 80 yards, 3:29	0	10
MRS TD 0:00		
Brenden Knox 2 Yd Run (Justin Rohrwasser PAT failed)		
5 plays, 76 yards, 0:00	6	10
<b>SECOND QUARTER</b>		
VT TD 13:45		
Tre Turner 45 Yd pass from Ryan Willis (Brian Johnson Kick)		
4 plays, 72 yards, 0:00	6	17
VT TD 4:10		
Steven Peoples 7 Yd pass from Ryan Willis (Brian Johnson Kick)		
6 plays, 80 yards, 2:09	6	24
VT TD 1:12		
Eric Kumah 32 Yd pass from Ryan Willis (Brian Johnson Kick)		
4 plays, 63 yards, 0:49	6	31
<b>THIRD QUARTER</b>		
VT FG 2:41		
Brian Johnson 32 Yd Field Goal		
10 plays, 44 yards, 4:15	6	34
<b>FOURTH QUARTER</b>		
MRS TD 14:54		
Xavier Gaines 34 Yd pass from Isaiah Green (Justin Rohrwasser Kick)		
6 plays, 75 yards, 2:47	13	34
VT TD 4:56		
Jalen Holston 40 Yd Run (Brian Johnson Kick)		
9 plays, 84 yards, 4:53	13	41
MRS TD 1:43		
Brenden Knox 5 Yd Run (Justin Rohrwasser Kick)		
10 plays, 75 yards, 3:13	20	41

Team Stats	MRS	VT
First Downs	19	21
Total Yards	452	454
Total Plays	69	64
Avg Gain Per Play	6.6	7.1
Net Yards Rushing	232	142
Rushes	35	38
Yards Per Rush	6.6	3.7
Net Yards Passing	220	312
Comp-Att	19-34	18-26
Yards Per Pass	6.5	12.0
Times Sacked	1	3
Yds Lost To Sacks	-8	-26
Interceptions	1	0
Punts	5	5
Punt Average	41.8	39.4
Penalties	11	4
Penalty Yards	67	41
Fumbles	3	0
Fumbles Lost	1	0
Possession	30:14	29:46

**Individual Stats**

<b>RUSHING</b>						
	Rush	Yds	Avg	Long	TD	
<b>MARSH</b>						
20 Brenden Knox	27	204	7.6	67	2	
17 Isaiah Green	6	25	4.2	15	0	
21 Anthony Anderson	2	3	1.5	3	0	
<b>VT</b>						
32 Steven Peoples	14	78	5.6	12	0	
13 Jalen Holston	4	54	13.5	40	1	
11 Tre Turner	3	10	3.3	4	0	
33 Deshawn McCleave	8	10	1.3	5	0	
6 Hezekiah Grimsley	1	9	9.0	9	0	
5 Ryan Willis	6	-15	-2.5	8	0	

<b>PASSING</b>							
	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
<b>MARSH</b>							
17 Isaiah Green	19	34	220	6.5	1	1	114.1
<b>VT</b>							
5 Ryan Willis	18	26	312	12.0	4	0	220.8

<b>RECEIVING</b>						
	Rec	Yds	Avg	Long	TD	
<b>MARSH</b>						
15 Armani Levias	5	69	13.8	27	0	
11 Xavier Gaines	2	54	27.0	34	1	
7 Obi Obialo	4	37	9.3	21	0	
9 Marcel Williams	1	25	25.0	25	0	
8 Tyre Brady	2	24	12.0	12	0	
2 Artie Henry	3	13	4.3	7	0	
20 Brenden Knox	2	-2	-1.0	5	0	
<b>VT</b>						
11 Tre Turner	3	99	33.0	45	1	
6 Hezekiah Grimsley	2	64	32.0	46	1	
83 Eric Kumah	4	63	15.8	32	1	
33 Deshawn McCleave	2	57	28.5	54	0	
29 Dalton Keene	5	20	4.0	8	0	
32 Steven Peoples	1	7	7.0	7	1	
16 Coleman Fox	1	2	2.0	2	0	