

WEEK FOUR
VIRGINIA AT NC STATE

RALEIGH, N.C. -- North Carolina State's offense is still finding playmakers ready for bigger roles.

Freshman Ricky Person, Jr. ran for a season-high 108 yards while sophomore receiver Emeka Emezie had his own big day to help North Carolina State beat Virginia 35-21 on Saturday, claiming its Atlantic Coast Conference opener along with a 4-0 start.

Person hadn't played since the opener due to a hamstring issue, but provided big-play burst to the Wolfpack's grind-it-out ground game. And Emezie gave NFL prospect Ryan Finley yet another receiving target at an already stocked position.

"Good teams have good depth," Finley said, "and that's what you're seeing from us."

Person ran six times for 5 yards in the opening win against James Madison and hadn't played since -- and he's still not fully past the hamstring issue. But he's the team's first 100-yard rusher this season -- in just 14 carries -- and earned the game ball afterward from coach Dave Doeren.

"I knew my time was coming," Person said. "I just had to take advantage of it."

Then there's Emezie, a 6-foot-3 sophomore with five catches for a career-best 90 yards and a second-quarter TD for the Wolfpack (4-0, 1-0). Doeren pointed to Emezie following the lead of fellow receivers Kelvin Harmon and Stephen Louis.

"What Steph and Kelvin do, they work as hard as any player in the country," Doeren said. "And he just said, 'I want to be just like you.' He went everywhere they went for a whole offseason."

"It's easy to say you've got great leaders but it also takes the followers to know who to follow."

Bryce Perkins connected twice with Olamide Zaccheaus for touchdowns for the Cavaliers (3-2, 1-1), including a 35-yarder for Virginia's only lead at 7-3. But the Wolfpack responded with 24 unanswered points to lead 27-7 in the third, putting the Cavs in catch-up mode the rest of the afternoon.

"I think they earned the victory today," Cavaliers coach Bronco Mendenhall said. "We played well enough to make it interesting but not well enough to win the game."

THE TAKEAWAY

Virginia: Perkins and Zaccheaus (nine catches, 109 yards) were tough matchups all day, but Virginia's offense struggled to get much going until after N.C. State led big. Virginia got a late touchdown, recovered an onside kick and drove inside the 10 before Dexter Wright batted and intercepted Perkins' pass with 1:06 left to seal it.

"I thought we had a great chance there to finish this off and possibly pull a comeback," Mendenhall said. "Again, we just weren't consistent enough to make that play."

N.C. State: This showed N.C. State doesn't need Finley -- who passed on going to the NFL for a final college season -- to be at his sharpest to win. As an example, look at Emezie's 39-yard catch on a flea-flicker into double coverage and his 16-yard TD grab in a tight window against Brenton Nelson at the front left pylon. Finding more playmakers can only help.

ANOTHER BIG DAY

Harmon, another NFL prospect, finished with six catches for 94 yards and a touchdown on a back-shoulder throw from Finley in the fourth quarter.

RUNNING BETTER

Playing behind Reggie Gallaspy, Person had four runs of at least a dozen yards to help N.C. State post a season-best 176 yards rushing.

"Reggie's going to run hard, he's going to run through people," Doeren said, adding: "But you still want that guy that can put his foot in the ground and change direction -- and Ricky can do that."

MORE ON ZACCHEAUS

Zaccheaus' third 100-yard receiving day this season moved him past Kris Byrd (2008-11), Tyrone Davis (1991-94) and Germane Crowell (1994-97) into fourth on the school's career yardage list (2,196).

BETTER FUTURE?

N.C. State is 4-0 for the first time since doing so in 2014 and 2015. Those teams both finished 3-5 in ACC play.

Final	1	2	3	4	T
UVA	7	0	7	7	21
NCST	3	17	7	8	35

Scoring Summary -----

	UVA	NCST
FIRST QUARTER		
NCST FG 12:07		
Christopher Dunn 34 Yd Field Goal		
7 plays, 58 yards, 2:53	0	3
UVA TD 2:51		
Olamide Zaccheaus 35 Yd pass from Bryce Perkins (Hunter Pearson Kick)		
8 plays, 67 yards, 4:01	7	3
SECOND QUARTER		
NCST TD 11:50		
Emeka Emezie 16 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
13 plays, 75 yards, 6:01	7	10
NCST TD 0:52		
Cary Angeline 14 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
9 plays, 80 yards, 3:50	7	17
NCST FG 0:00		
Christopher Dunn 44 Yd Field Goal		
6 plays, 22 yards, 0:35	7	20
THIRD QUARTER		
NCST TD 7:48		
Reggie Gallaspy II 2 Yd Run (Christopher Dunn Kick)		
10 plays, 76 yards, 4:51	7	27
UVA TD 3:11		
Olamide Zaccheaus 9 Yd pass from Bryce Perkins (Hunter Pearson Kick)		
9 plays, 82 yards, 4:32	14	27
FOURTH QUARTER		
NCST TD 7:25		
Kelvin Harmon 16 Yd pass from Ryan Finley (Ryan Finley Pass to Emeka Emezie for Two-Point Conversion)		
8 plays, 79 yards, 4:48	14	35
UVA TD 3:08		
Jordan Ellis 7 Yd Run (Hunter Pearson Kick)		
11 plays, 75 yards, 4:17	21	35

Team Stats	UVA	NCST
First Downs	20	25
Total Yards	351	433
Total Plays	64	71
Avg Gain Per Play	5.5	6.1
Net Yards Rushing	93	176
Rushes	29	39
Yards Per Rush	3.2	4.5
Net Yards Passing	258	257
Comp-Att	20-35	22-32
Yards Per Pass	7.4	8.0
Times Sacked	4	0
Yds Lost To Sacks	-30	0
Interceptions	2	0
Punts	4	3
Punt Average	0.0	0.0
Penalties	6	7
Penalty Yards	62	80
Fumbles	0	1
Fumbles Lost	0	0
Possession	27:46	32:14

Individual Stats

RUSHING

UVA	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Olamide Zaccheaus	2	39	19.5	0	25
Jordan Ellis	13	30	2.3	1	8
Bryce Perkins	14	24	1.7	0	20
NCST	Rush	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Ricky Person Jr.	14	108	7.7	0	38
Reggie Gallaspy II	14	47	3.4	1	8
Brady Bodine	5	19	3.8	0	7
Ryan Finley	3	7	2.3	0	4
Team	2	-2	-1.0	0	0
C.J. Riley	1	-3	-3.0	0	0

PASSING

UVA	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Bryce Perkins	20	35	258	7.4	2	2	25.4
NCST	Comp	Att	Yds	Y/A	TD	Int	QBRat
Ryan Finley	22	32	257	8.0	3	0	88.4

RECEIVING

UVA	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Olamide Zaccheaus	9	109	12.1	2	35
Hasise Dubois	6	67	11.2	0	23
Tavares Kelly	3	57	19.0	0	32
Joe Reed	1	14	14.0	0	14
Terrell Jana	1	11	11.0	0	11
NCST	Rec	Yds	Avg	TD	Long
Kelvin Harmon	6	94	15.7	1	29
Emeka Emezie	5	90	18.0	1	39
Jakobi Meyers	4	30	7.5	0	14
Thayer Thomas	3	15	5.0	0	9
Cary Angeline	1	14	14.0	1	14
C.J. Riley	1	6	6.0	0	6
Reggie Gallaspy II	1	5	5.0	0	5
Stephen Louis	1	3	3.0	0	3