

WEEK THIRTEEN
LIBERTY at VIRGINIA

Perkins, Virginia cruise past Liberty, 55-27

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. -- Virginia had every reason to come out flat against Liberty, especially with a showdown looming next Friday against arch-rival and 25th-ranked Virginia Tech with a chance to win the ACC's Coast Division championship for the first time in program history.

That the Cavaliers overcame that challenge, winning 55-27, shows appreciable maturity, coach Bronco Mendenhall said.

"The outside pressure to look past (the Liberty game), really, that's all they heard," Mendenhall said.

The Cavaliers came out dominant, then appeared to lapse into cruise control before a defensive play changed everything.

On first and 10 from the Virginia 38 and with Liberty ahead 14-10, Flames quarterback Stephen Calvert dropped back, faced pressure, scrambled and threw the ball deep downfield, even though there was not a player wearing the same jersey anywhere nearby.

Safety De'Vante Cross was, though, and not only intercepted, but returned it 52 yards to the Flames' 42.

"That kind of snapped us back into it," Mendenhall said.

Five plays later, Lamont Atkins 3-yard run gave Virginia a lead it would only build on.

First-year Liberty coach Hugh Freeze was disappointed the rest of the way.

"Up 14-10 and we just went off the rails doing things that we haven't done," Freeze said. "I felt like it kind of carried over into the locker room and we just never responded. ... It appears that it affected us more than I would like to admit."

Bryce Perkins threw for two touchdowns and ran for another for the Cavaliers (8-3), who scored a season-high total.

Perkins hit Terrell Jana for 8 yards and Joe Reed for 7 and scored on a 1-yard run. Mike Hollins and PK Kier also had scoring runs for the Cavaliers, and backup quarterback Brennan Armstrong completed a 44-yard scoring pass to Dontayvion Wick with 1:58 remaining.

Calvert threw for two touchdowns for the Flames (6-5). The interception was the fourth-year starter's first in 296 pass attempts, and Cross later got him again, again when Calvert threw deep into Cavaliers territory.

THE TAKEAWAY

Liberty: The Flames are dangerous with the tandem of Calvert and Gandy-Golden and can qualify for a bowl game in their first year eligible next Saturday against visiting New Mexico State (1-9 coming into the day). First-year Flames coach Hugh Freeze has made a huge impact on Calvert, a gun-slinger who looks for the big play and threw 18 interceptions last year. This season, he's thrown for 25 touchdowns with just five interceptions. Gandy-Golden had six catches for 60 yards, including a one-handed touchdown grab in the third quarter.

Virginia: The Cavaliers' depleted secondary got a lift from sophomore Heskin Smith, who had played sparingly but was thrust back into action two weeks ago because of injuries. Late in the first half, the 5-foot-11 Smith broke up consecutive passes intended for the 6-foot-4 Gandy-Golden from the Virginia 25, forcing a 43-yard field goal try that sailed wide left, preserving Virginia's 24-14 halftime lead.

HIGH STAKES

Virginia has lost to the Hokies in the last 15 meetings, a trend Mendenhall promised to change when he arrived four years ago.

He never used the words Virginia Tech during his postgame comments, but wasn't shying away from the importance of the game.

"The Coastal championship will be on the line and I think that reflects just growth and progress within the program," he said.

The winner of the Coastal gets a date with No. 3 Clemson in the ACC title game.

TRICKERATION

Virginia led 24-14 when it went into field goal formation from the Flames' 31. But it was a fake, and Armstrong hit linebacker 6-foot-7 Charles Snowden with a pass that went for 24 yards, setting the Cavaliers up at the Flames' 7. Two plays later, Perkins hit Reed for the TD.

"It was a really nice job by Brennan Armstrong and it wasn't an easy catch," Mendenhall said.

Asked if the talented Snowden has a future at receiver, Mendenhall answered quickly: "No."

| | | | | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Final | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | T |
| LIB | 7 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 27 |
| UVA | 10 | 14 | 14 | 17 | 55 |

Scoring Summary -----

| | | | | LIB | UVA | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|------------|--|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| FIRST QUARTER | | | | | | | |
| UVA TD 10:49 | Terrell Jana | 8 Yd | pass from Bryce Perkins (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 9 plays, 47 yards, 3:27 | | | | 0 | 7 | | |
| UVA FG 3:39 | Brian Delaney | 26 Yd | Field Goal | | | | |
| 12 plays, 48 yards, 5:50 | | | | 0 | 10 | | |
| LIB TD 1:39 | Frankie Hickson | 6 Yd | Run (Alex Probert Kick) | | | | |
| 7 plays, 75 yards, 2:00 | | | | 7 | 10 | | |
| SECOND QUARTER | | | | | | | |
| LIB TD 12:25 | Noah Frith | 32 Yd | pass from Stephen Calvert (Alex Probert Kick) | | | | |
| 7 plays, 65 yards, 2:09 | | | | 14 | 10 | | |
| UVA TD 4:59 | Lamont Atkins | 3 Yd | Run (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 5 plays, 42 yards, 2:41 | | | | 14 | 17 | | |
| UVA TD 2:40 | Mike Hollins | 4 Yd | Run (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 4 plays, 59 yards, 1:32 | | | | 14 | 24 | | |
| THIRD QUARTER | | | | | | | |
| UVA TD 11:21 | Joe Reed | 7 Yd | pass from Bryce Perkins (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 8 plays, 59 yards, 3:39 | | | | 14 | 31 | | |
| UVA TD 4:41 | Bryce Perkins | 2 Yd | Run (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 5 plays, 15 yards, 2:36 | | | | 14 | 38 | | |
| LIB TD 2:29 | Antonio Gandy-Golden | 8 Yd | pass from Stephen Calvert (Alex Probert Kick) | | | | |
| 6 plays, 75 yards, 2:12 | | | | 21 | 38 | | |
| FOURTH QUARTER | | | | | | | |
| UVA TD 13:26 | PK Kier | 4 Yd | Run (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 7 plays, 81 yards, 3:58 | | | | 21 | 45 | | |
| LIB FG 11:33 | Alex Probert | 37 Yd | Field Goal | | | | |
| 8 plays, 57 yards, 1:53 | | | | 24 | 45 | | |
| UVA FG 8:07 | Brian Delaney | 29 Yd | Field Goal | | | | |
| 7 plays, 47 yards, 3:26 | | | | 24 | 48 | | |
| UVA TD 1:58 | Dontayvion Wicks | 44 Yd | pass from Brennan Armstrong (Brian Delaney Kick) | | | | |
| 6 plays, 55 yards, 3:01 | | | | 24 | 55 | | |
| LIB FG 0:00 | Alex Probert | 31 Yd | Field Goal | | | | |
| 8 plays, 45 yards, 1:58 | | | | 27 | 55 | | |
| Team Stats | | | | | | | |
| | | LIB | | UVA | | | |
| First Downs | | 20 | | 25 | | | |
| Passes for First | | 14 | | 13 | | | |
| Rushes for First | | 4 | | 10 | | | |
| Penalties for First | | 2 | | 2 | | | |
| Third Down Efficiency | | 7-17 | | 9-15 | | | |
| Fourth Down Efficiency | | 1-2 | | 1-2 | | | |
| Total Yards | | 392 | | 499 | | | |
| Total Plays | | 70 | | 78 | | | |
| Avg Gain Per Play | | 5.6 | | 6.4 | | | |
| Net Yards Rushing | | 79 | | 227 | | | |
| Rushes | | 23 | | 44 | | | |
| Yards Per Rush | | 3.4 | | 5.2 | | | |
| Net Yards Passing | | 313 | | 272 | | | |
| Comp-Att | | 18-47 | | 21-34 | | | |
| Yards Per Pass | | 6.7 | | 8.0 | | | |
| Times Sacked | | 3 | | 3 | | | |
| Yds Lost To Sacks | | -8 | | -23 | | | |
| Interceptions | | 2 | | 0 | | | |
| Punts | | 5 | | 2 | | | |
| Punt Average | | 0.0 | | 0.0 | | | |
| Penalties | | 8 | | 5 | | | |
| Penalty Yards | | 77 | | 50 | | | |
| Fumbles | | 0 | | 0 | | | |
| Fumbles Lost | | 0 | | 0 | | | |
| Time of Poss | | 21:15 | | 38:45 | | | |
| Individual Stats | | | | | | | |
| RUSHING | | | | | | | |
| LIBERTY | Rush | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG | | |
| Frankie Hickson | 15 | 88 | 5.9 | 1 | 33 | | |
| Joshua Mack | 3 | 10 | 3.3 | 0 | 5 | | |
| Peyttion Pickett | 1 | 3 | 3.0 | 0 | 3 | | |
| Stephen Calvert | 4 | -22 | -5.5 | 0 | 1 | | |
| VIRGINIA | Rush | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG | | |
| PK Kier | 10 | 82 | 8.2 | 1 | 38 | | |
| Lamont Atkins | 9 | 61 | 6.8 | 1 | 33 | | |
| Bryce Perkins | 13 | 30 | 2.3 | 1 | 8 | | |
| Mike Hollins | 8 | 27 | 3.4 | 1 | 13 | | |
| Tavares Kelly Jr. | 1 | 16 | 16.0 | 0 | 16 | | |
| Billy Kemp IV | 1 | 8 | 8.0 | 0 | 8 | | |
| Brennan Armstrong | 2 | 3 | 1.5 | 0 | 3 | | |
| PASSING | | | | | | | |
| LIBERTY | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A | TD | Int | QBRat |
| Stephen Calvert | 16 | 40 | 283 | 7.1 | 2 | 2 | 40.9 |
| Landon Brown | 2 | 6 | 30 | 5.0 | 0 | 0 | 61.0 |
| DJ Stubbs | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0 | 1.1 |
| VIRGINIA | Comp | Att | Yds | Y/A | TD | Int | QBRat |
| Bryce Perkins | 18 | 30 | 199 | 6.6 | 2 | 0 | 64.6 |
| Brennan Armstrong | 3 | 4 | 73 | 18.3 | 1 | 0 | 100.0 |
| RECEIVING | | | | | | | |
| LIBERTY | Rec | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG | | |
| CJ Yarbrough | 4 | 83 | 20.8 | 0 | 47 | | |
| Antonio Gandy-Golden | 6 | 60 | 10.0 | 1 | 14 | | |
| Peyttion Pickett | 1 | 56 | 56.0 | 0 | 56 | | |
| Noah Frith | 2 | 43 | 21.5 | 1 | 32 | | |
| Johnny Huntley | 2 | 36 | 18.0 | 0 | 25 | | |
| Brody Brumm | 1 | 22 | 22.0 | 0 | 22 | | |
| Mason Yost | 1 | 8 | 8.0 | 0 | 8 | | |
| Damian King | 1 | 5 | 5.0 | 0 | 5 | | |
| VIRGINIA | Rec | Yds | Avg | TD | LONG | | |
| Terrell Jana | 4 | 56 | 14.0 | 1 | 25 | | |
| Dontayvion Wicks | 2 | 49 | 24.5 | 1 | 44 | | |
| Billy Kemp IV | 4 | 42 | 10.5 | 0 | 22 | | |
| Joe Reed | 4 | 31 | 7.8 | 1 | 12 | | |
| Hasise Dubois | 2 | 31 | 15.5 | 0 | 21 | | |
| Charles Snowden | 1 | 24 | 24.0 | 0 | 24 | | |
| Tavares Kelly Jr. | 1 | 13 | 13.0 | 0 | 13 | | |
| Terrell Chatman | 1 | 10 | 10.0 | 0 | 10 | | |
| Lamont Atkins | 1 | 9 | 9.0 | 0 | 9 | | |
| Tanner Cowley | 1 | 7 | 7.0 | 0 | 7 | | |