

WVU dominates Virginia Tech in Blacksburg 33-10 Black Diamond Trophy stays In Morgantown in Border Battle Mountaineers balanced attack too Much for the Hokies

Next Up: Mountaineers travel to Texas October 1st to Battle the Longhorns at 7:30 on Fox Sports 1

Well Mountaineers hopefully we have seen the real West Virginia football team after a very spirited dominating victory on the road against longtime rival Virginia Tech. It was a great way to end, at least for the foreseeable future, this Black Diamond Trophy showdown with back-to-back wins against the Hokies.

West Virginia came into this game with a 1-2 record that could have easily been 3-0 without a couple of poor decisions and some bad luck and with a lot of unanswered questions about what kind of a football team we actually had in this 2022 season. A lot of those questions were answered in last night's performance. The Mountaineers needed this game and apparently wanted this game more than Virginia Tech as there was this feeling that West Virginia was in control of the game even when they were down 7-3 in the first quarter.

Despite several trips to the Red Zone early in the game the Mountaineers had to settle for two Casey Legg field goals of 23 yards after a beautiful 92-yard drive stalled with a 4th and goal at the 5-yard line and a 35-yard field goal with 1:50 to go in the first half. At that point I figured we would go to the break trailing 7-6 and battle it out in the 2nd half, however, after a quick 5 play drive saw the Hokies punt the ball back to the Mountaineers they took over at their own 30 with just 44 seconds left in the half WVU offensive coordinator Graham Harrell wanted more and after driving to the Hokies 24 yard line with 0:11 to go in the first half Mountaineer transfer quarterback J.T. Daniels found senior Sam James with a stunning 24 yard touchdown pass in the back of the endzone and the Mountaineers took a 13-7 lead into the break. This score was so important as Virginia Tech would get the ball to start the second half and having a lead at that point was big.

The Hokies got the ball to start the second half and failed to score and WVU survived a muffed punt by sophomore wide receiver Reese Smith

when it was recovered by the Mountaineers. The WVU offense proceeded to drive 79 yards in 14 plays taking over 7 minutes off the 3rd quarter clock before the drive stalled at the Hokie 8-yard line and once again the Mountaineers settled for a 25 Casey Legg field goal, the 3rd of the game for the talented senior kicker and West Virginia had a two score lead at 16-7 with about 7 minutes to go in the 3rd quarter. It was at this point that I believed for sure that WVU had too much for the Hokies to come back and win the game. Virginia Tech Head Coach Brent Pry seemed to help the Mountaineer cause by continuing to run the football and eat more of the clock even though they had been totally unsuccessful in doing so from the first drive of the game, in fact they only had 35 rushing yards on 18 carries the entire game for 1.9 yards a carry. However, the Hokies would answer the WVU field goal with one of their own on a 9 play 50 yard drive that stalled at the WVU 24 with junior kicker William Ross banging one home from 44 yards out and with 4:19 to go in the 3rd quarter in was a 16-10 West Virginia lead.

The Mountaineer offense would come right back and answer the Virginia Tech field goal with a 9 play 75-yard drive that would eat up the rest of the 3rd quarter and result in a beautiful 6-yard touchdown run by 3rd string tailback Justin Johnson Jr and with 14 minutes to go in the football game the Mountaineers had a 23-10 lead and never looked back. After a 3 and out by the Hokie offense and the bewildered Marshall transfer quarterback Grant Wells the Mountaineer offense would tack on 3 more points on yet another Casey Legg field goal, this time from 38 yards out and with 10 minutes to go in the game WVU had a 26-10 lead and on the ensuing offensive series by Virginia Tech the Mountaineers would ice this Black Diamond Trophy victory with a stunning pick 6 when true freshman cornerback Jacolby Spells jumped the route and picked off Hokie quarterback Grant Wells and returned it to the house and just like that it was 33-10 Mountaineers. After the Hokies failed to convert on 4th and 16 from the Mountaineer 35 WVU was able to run out the clock on 6 consecutive running plays featuring all 3 Mountaineer tailbacks and took a knee on the Hokies 13-yard line to end the game. The 23 point victory was the biggest victory margin by the Mountaineers at Blacksburg in the long history of this series. As the voice of the Mountaineers Tony Caridi appropriate states after every big Mountaineer victory Its A GREAT DAY TO BE A MOUNTAINEER, WHEREVEER YOU MAY BE.

Once again West Virginia displayed about as balanced an offensive attack as you could get rushing for 218 yards led by the secret weapon that is not really a secret anymore true Freshman C.J. Donaldson as the big 242lb tailback rushed for 106 on 23 carries. Quarterback J.T. Daniels, who appears to be better than advertised completed 20 of 30 passes for 206 yards and a touchdown with no picks.

You would think that most of Mountaineer Nation would back off of the "Coach Brown must go" talk but after this game many are now angry because they believe this team could be 4-0 going into the Texas game on 10/1 if not for poor game decisions by coach Brown. At the beginning of this game there were 68,000 crazy Hokie fans sure of a victory and ready to storm the field at the end of the game but after the pick 6 fans started to bail out in large groups and at the end of the game there were less than 30,000 fans still in Lane Stadium.

Now it off to Austin Texas to face the 2-2 Longhorns. This is a place where the Mountaineers have actually had some success. This will certainly be a season defining game. If WVU could come out of Texas 3-2 with Back to Back road victories and reach 1-1 in the Big 12 the October 13th Thursday night match up with the Baylor Bears in Morgantown becomes a very important football game. Baylor has never traveled across the country and won at Mountaineer Field. They are 0-5 against West Virginia in Morgantown and 3-1 against the Mountaineers in Waco Texas.