

<http://www.dailypress.com/sports/dp-01227sy0oct29,0,574532.story?coll=dp-sports-local>

Virginia Tech: Severe concussion startles Manning

By Norm Wood
Daily Press

October 29 2003



BLACKSBURG -- As Brandon Manning watched video last week of Virginia Tech's 28-7 loss at West Virginia, he realized he was seemingly seeing parts of the game for the first time.

For a guy who finished with a team-high 16 tackles, the experience frightened him. He couldn't answer any of the coaches' questions about why he was or wasn't at a certain spot. Manning couldn't remember any part of the second half. Why? He sustained a concussion in the first quarter.

Manning, a junior, wasn't aware that the helmet-to-helmet collision he had with Mountaineers tailback Quincy Wilson was that severe. He didn't inform Virginia Tech's trainers about the impact because he didn't think there was anything to tell.

"I've had a lot of big collisions in my career, and a lot of big collisions this season," said Manning, who has been cleared to play Saturday against No. 2 Miami. "This one didn't seem any bigger than any of the other ones. I just think it was the location of where I got hit in my head. It just hit the right spot and blanked me out."

Manning was treated and cleared to play at halftime, but for a separate injury. Hokies trainer Mike Goforth found out about Manning's injury Monday.

"The first thought is obviously fear," Goforth said. "It happened with (Hokies flanker) Chris Shreve in the first game, and he doesn't remember about eight plays. (Manning) didn't even report it. These guys can be fully functional and not really be completely OK."

Manning was equipped with a Head Impact Telemetry System device in his helmet for the West Virginia game. The HITS device is used to gather data on blows to the head in order to possibly make equipment modifications, tackling technique adjustments or rules changes that could help prevent concussions in the future.

It's a device Virginia Tech has used in the helmets of eight randomly selected players each week this season in practices and on game days. Manning also wore it the week of the Syracuse game.

Though the HITS device can provide insight into the severity and frequency of blows, results of those blows are not immediately available. Therefore, equipment changes to help decrease the risk of further injury can't be made on the fly during games.

"Did having this system on the sidelines for the WVU game affect the way we handled Brandon Manning? I think the answer is obviously not," said Gunnar Brolinson, Virginia Tech's team physician. "It's a technology that is still in its infancy."

NO DOUBT. Virginia Tech coach Frank Beamer sent an irrefutable message to his defense Tuesday: Get after Miami quarterback Brock Berlin.

When asked how important it was to get pressure on Berlin to prevent Tech defensive backs from having to spend a lot

of one-on-one time with the Hurricanes' receivers, Beamer had one word.

"Critical," he said.

Beamer has to be aware of the rift in the sack statistics for Miami and Virginia Tech. The Hurricanes have given up four sacks this season, the least in the Big East. The Hokies are fifth in the conference with 11 sacks.

ADJUSTING THE SECONDARY. With cornerback Garnell Wilds out for the season with a torn meniscus in his left knee, Eric Green is a starter on the side opposite DeAngelo Hall. Vincent Fuller is listed as the backup at both cornerback spots, and sophomore Brian McPherson has moved into the rotation.

INJURY UPDATE. Linebacker Mikal Baaqee has progressed in rehabilitating a stinger he sustained in his neck and shoulder in the West Virginia game. But Beamer said Baaqee's availability for Saturday's game is still in question.

Shreve, who is recovering from a separated shoulder, and Baaqee are listed as questionable. If Baaqee can't start, Jordan Trott will likely start in his place.

Kicker Carter Warley has shown no ill effects from a back injury this week and is probable.

Miami safety Sean Taylor, who is recovering from shoulder surgery, is questionable. Receiver and return specialist Roscoe Parrish, who sustained chest and abdominal injuries against Florida State on Oct. 11, is probable.

Norm Wood can be reached at 247-4642 or by e-mail at nwood@dailypress.com

Copyright © 2003, [Daily Press](#)